T.R.

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INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

SOCIAL CRITICISM IN THE REVOLUTIONARY THEATRE OF EDWARD BOND AND AZIZ NESIN

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PhD Thesis

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(KİRİŞ YATAĞAN, Yasemen, *Edward Bond ve Aziz Nesin'in Devrimci Tiyatrosunda Toplumsal Eleştiri,* Doktora Tezi, Isparta 2023)

ÖZET

Antik çağlardan bu yana, sosyal bilimlerde geniş yer bulan toplumsal eleştiri, toplumsal sistemdeki aksayan yönlere işaret ederek toplumun nasıl organize olması gerektiği konusunda doğrudan ve dolaylı olarak kılavuzluk etmektedir. Toplumsal eleştiri, edebiyatta da yoğun olarak işlenmiştir. Dünyadaki birçok oyun yazarı gibi Türk ve İngiliz oyun yazarları da toplumlarını dönüştürmek için toplumsal eleştiriye başvurmuşlardır. Türk Tiyatrosunda Aziz Nesin, İngiliz Tiyatrosunda da Edward Bond, eserlerinde toplumsal eleştiriye sıklıkla yer veren önemli sosyalist oyun yazarlarındandır. Bu tez, Nesin'in *Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz* ve Bond'un *Lear* oyunlarında yazarların toplumsal konulara nasıl yaklaştıklarını ve toplumsal sorunların ve aksaklıkların fark edilmesi için eleştirilerini topluma nasıl yönelttiklerini irdelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca, bu çalışma, yazarların, eserlerinde kendi toplumlarında toplumsal ahlak ve yapıyı nasıl eleştirdiklerini de karşılaştırmalı olarak incelemeyi hedeflemektedir. Mevcut adaletsizlikleri ve aksaklıkları göstermek için seçilen oyunlarda, Nesin'in mizahtan ve Bond'un şiddetten faydalanmasına odaklanılmıştır. Yazarların, toplumu kanıksanmış adaletsizliklerle yüzleştirip toplumlarını dönüştürmek için devrimsel nitelikte değişim sağlamak uğruna harekete geçmeleri için nasıl çabaladıklarına değinilmiştir. Nesin ve Bond'a göre toplumsal yozlaşma, toplumsal adaletsizlikten ve işleyişteki bozukluklardan kaynaklanmaktadır. İki yazar da bu durumdan yöneticileri sorumlu tutmakta, fakat aynı zamanda, yozlaşmış toplumsal yapıyı görmezden geldikleri için toplumun diğer kesimlerine de eleştirmişlerdir. Sağlıklı bir gelecek için, bireylerin sistemdeki haksızlıkların farkına varmaları ve radikal değişim için sorumluluk almaları hayati önem taşımaktadır. Bu çalışma, sonuç olarak, Nesin ve Bond'un sanatın insanları silahlanmadan veya güç kullanmadan, sadece sorumluluk alarak ve kendi araçlarını yaratarak hegemonyaya veya, başka bir deyişle, mevcut duruma karşı isyan etmeye motive etmesi ve yönlendirmesi için bir araç olması gerektiğini savunduğunu göstermektedir. Nesin dezavantajlı yaşam şartlarını vurgulayıp baskı gören toplumun durumunu ve baskıcı devleti ele alırken Bond baskıyı hem baskı yapan hem de baskı görenlerin açısından toplumun durumunu ve baskıcı rejimleri göstermektedir. Bu çalışmada nitel araştırma metodu ile metin analizi kullanılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Toplumsal Eleştiri, Devrimci Tiyatro, Edward Bond, Aziz Nesin, Mizah, Şiddet, Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz, Lear

(KİRİŞ YATAĞAN, Yasemen, *Social Criticism in the Revolutionary Theatre of Edward Bond and Aziz Nesin*, PhD Thesis, Isparta 2023)

ABSTRACT

Social criticism has been a prominent topic in social sciences since ancient times. It provides both direct and indirect guidance to how society should be organised while highlighting the dysfunctions within the social system. In literature, social criticism has been addressed by various writers. Turkish and British playwrights have also written plays handling social criticism to transform their societies. Aziz Nesin is a well-known socialist playwright in Turkish Theatre, while Edward Bond is regarded as one of the most significant playwrights in English Theatre. Nesin's *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* and Bond's *Lear* handle social issues by criticising oppressive governments. This thesis aims to explore how they treat social issues and direct their criticisms to society to face the social problems and ills inflicting on it. The study also tries to compare and contrast their criticism and treat their respective communities' social morality and structure in their works. Moreover, it focuses on Nesin's humour and Bond's utilisation of violence in selected plays to exhibit the prevalent injustices and flaws, such as corruption in society, and it demonstrates how both playwrights strive to make society face the inured injustice and take action towards revolutionary change to transform communities. To them, social corruption stems from social injustice and malfunction. Both blame the rulers, but they also direct their criticism to the members of the society who maintain the rulers in power and ignore the corrupt social structure. To ensure a healthy future, individuals need to acknowledge the injustices within the system and take responsibility for implementing radical change. This study has concluded that Nesin and Bond believe that art should serve as a tool to motivate and direct people to revolt against the hegemony or, in other words, against the status quo without taking arms or using force but by taking responsibility and creating their means. To highlight the disadvantaged living conditions of society and the oppressing regimes, Nesin provides a perspective of the oppressed, while Bond offers a perspective of both the oppressor and the oppressed. The study assumes a qualitative research method incorporating textual analysis.

Key Words: Social Criticism, Revolutionary Theatre, Edward Bond, Aziz Nesin, Humour, Violence, Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies, Lear

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DEDICATION

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YAŞAR NEITHER LIVES NOR DIES* & *LEAR

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. SOCIAL CRITICISM THROUGH ART: THEATRE FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

This thesis focuses on the social criticism in the selected plays by Edward Bond and Aziz Nesin and their aims of encouraging social change from capitalism to socialism by their satirical plays which they use as a tool of propaganda. Therefore, social criticism is an important term that will assist the comprehension the playwrights' aims.

Social criticism is a broad term used in almost every field to gain an outer perspective and awareness of individuals' lives and the operation of the system. It handles the relationship between social institutions as part of social structure and society in terms of justice and human dignity. It includes direct or indirect guidance on how society should become organised, highlighting the flaws of the social system and the problems in the running of the system.

The term social criticism is frequently used interchangeably with critical thinking. Social criticism is not critical thinking in its general meaning. Critical thinking involves asking relevant questions, defining problems, analysing arguments from different perspectives, gathering and utilising pertinent data, and ultimately making well-reasoned judgments.[1] It aims to evaluate the present data to draw sound conclusions from it. Scientific data is crucial for critical thinking, which requires analytical skills. On the other hand, criticism is "judgement,"[2] and social criticism is "a form of academic or journalistic criticism" concentrating on "social issues of modern society."[3] It adopts the idea that power relations determine cultural relations.

[1] Qtd. in. Robert E. Martin, "Academic Piracy: Rebranding Social Criticism as Critical Thinking", *The Independent Review,* Fall 2015, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 249-264, p. 251.
[2] Aldo Scaglione, "Croce's Definition of Literary Criticism", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, Jun. 1959, Vol. 17, No. 4, pp. 447-456, p. 449.
[3] Robert Blanchard, "Social Criticism and Their Types", *Global Journal of Sociology and Anthropology,* March 2022, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 001-002, p.1.

In other words, elites in power hold the political and production tools and cause the oppression of ordinary people. This oppression is encouraged by the self-interest of the elites. Their privilege empowers them, creating an unjust distribution of "wealth, opportunity, and privileges."[4] Social criticism involves analysing how social structure contributes to various sociological processes. It struggles to recognise these instances of injustice and intolerance and advocate for social justice through political action to achieve fairness in the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within society through the pursuit of justice.

The practice of social criticism, along with social reform, is vital in promoting an idea and advocating for a better society. These concepts hold the same meaning as criticism and reform, yet, with the addition of the word 'social', they take on a more intense and radical significance. By skilfully combining and directing them to the elements of social structure, social critic offers solutions to trigger reforms or radical changes or revolutions to improve the existing structures or totally change them to create a fairer society where individuals can benefit from all opportunities equally.[5]

Social criticism is a mighty force in literature. Moving away from religion, literature has turned to the progressive perspective through science, ethics, philosophy and social theory, which address society's awareness. Moreover, in the modern ages, the social side of literature has increased and this kind of analysis benefits from both sociology and sociology of literature.[6] As any types of social structure studies are "inherently interdisciplinary,"[7] literature is a multi-dimensional art form, taking its source from society. It has concentrated on the individuals' state within the world, their struggle to recognise themselves, the limited perception of reality that leads to their suffering and their inability to control their actions as they wish.[8]

[4] Martin, "Academic Piracy" p. 253.
[5] Nerina Jansen, "Toward a General Theory of Social Criticism and Social Reform", *Social Science,* Summer 1976, Vol 51, No. 3, pp. 155-160, p. 157.
[6] Ertuğrul Aydın, "Edebiyat-Sosyoloji İlişkisinde Sosyolojik Kaynak ve Ölçütler", *Turkish Studies: International Periodical For the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic,* 2009, Vol. 4, No. 1-I, p.357-370, p.359.
[7] James S. House. "Social Structure and Personality". *Social Psychology: Sociological Perspectives.* Ed. Morris Rosenberg & Ralph H. Turner, New Brunswick, Transaction Publishers. 2004. p. 528.
[8] Sevda Şener, *Drama Sanatı*, Mitos-Boyut Yayınları, İstanbul, 2011, p. 78.

A large number of literary works have been dealing with the state of individuals by looking into the social structure, the institutions, power relations or working of the system and justice distribution with a critical eye, establishing a cause-effect relation. Moreover, writers are preeminent social critics. Handling these issues, they have found an opportunity to present their interpretation and ideologies in their articles, interviews or literary works, gaining the power to influence society. Their aim is to utilise their powerful tool to present sometimes practical solutions or often deeper solutions, reforms and radical changes, in other words, revolutions.

Because we are free at the rate of our responsibilities; escaping is not salvation.[9]

According to Sartre, writers are considered as "*antibourgeois," discovering their* "identity "outside" society," but through their detachment, they gain a deeper understanding of it.[10] However, culture is determined and sustained by the bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the rest of the society is not interested in the social life organisation as they are not allowed to contribute to the social system. With the decay of the dominance of the bourgeoisie, *alienated intellectual workers*[11] have endeavoured to be integrated into the culture organisation process that art groups have led the society with the slogan calling for the integration: "it is forbidden not to participate".[12] That is, writers utilised literature as a tool for propaganda to encourage for the formation of a new society.

As purposeful and responsive living beings, humans are motivated by their sense of purpose. The power of propaganda in art may give them the purpose they require. Art and propaganda coexist; even "propaganda is the *raison d'être* of greatest arts," providing a "religious, ethical, racial," class-related and moral basis for all forms of arts.[13] Propaganda is hidden in artworks to make it more appealing to the average

[9] Aziz Nesin, *Yol: Böyle Gelmiş Böyle Gitmez -I, Öz Yaşam Öyküsü*, Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2016, p. 145.
[10] Helmut K. Anheier and Jürgen Gerhards, "Literary Myths and Social Structure", *Social Forces,* 1991, Vol. 69, No. 3, pp. 811-830, p. 814.
[11] J.V. Martin et al., "Response to a Questionnaire from the Center for Socio-Experimental Art Situationist International", *Situationist International Anthology*, Ed. Ken Knabb, Bureau of Public Secrets, Berkeley, 2006, p. 183-184.
[12] Ibid, p. 184.
[13] William Pickens, "Art and Propaganda", *Art and Social Change: A Critical Reader*, Ed. Will Bradley and Charles Esche, Tate Publishing in Association with Afterall, London, 2007, p.75.

viewer or reader without compromising its intended impact. Moreover, art is the best way to propagandise; in the form of art, when the audience is watching a theatre performance, reading a poem, story or novel, they "are better persuaded" as they "don't realise that they are being persuaded;"[14] otherwise, once subjected to direct propaganda, people may resist. Nevertheless, the captivating nature of artwork can mitigate resistance to propagandist messages.

Writers use literature as a powerful tool of propaganda to promote social change. One of the essential goals of literature is to increase awareness in society and encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own lives and the lives of others. For this reason, a writer must "play an interventionist role."[15] Their task extends beyond amusement; they also offer critical perspectives on societal issues because, as writers are affecting the society, it is their responsibility to contribute to society through their literary works. The writers who adopt such responsibilities are "normally considered to be propagandist(s)."[16]

Various writers of all literary genres, including novel, poetry, drama, short story, etc., prioritise creating works to deliver their social messages. However, among others, theatre stands out since, by "its very nature", it explores "the tensions and contradictions between individuals and society," delving into "the major conflicts" people face while seeking "happiness amidst the contingencies of reality."[17] Enjoying the opportunity to be staged around various routes, the theatre has the advantage of delivering its messages regarding a nation's cultural, social, political and economic structure, to the audience through face-to-face interaction, which heightens its influence, helping people "internalise core values and beliefs that are germane to development."[18]

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[14] Ibid, p.75.

[15] George Anaso - Christopher Eziafa Nwabudike, "Transition, Literature and the African Writer", *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science,* 2014, Vol. 19, No. 6, pp. 45-52, p. 47.

[16] Qtd. in. Maiga Abida Aboubacrine - Coulibaly Aboubacar Sidiki, "The Social Role of Literature and the Accountability of the Artist", *International Journal of English Literature and Culture*, Nov. 2016, Vol. 4, No. 9, pp. 193-203, p. 196.

[17] Vivian Martinez Tabares, "Theater in Revolution", *Estudos Avançados,* 25 (72), 2011, pp. 161-179, p. 161.

[18] Olalekan Ganiyu Akashoro, Jimi Kayode, Shaibu Husseini, "Theatre and Development: Opportunities and Challenges in a Developing World", *J Communication,* 2010, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 107-112, p. 107.

Supporting people's desire for change perpetually, playwrights, as the masters of symbolic language, have played an influential role in providing a new vision and mission. They have almost always found themselves at odds with the operation of the system against the disadvantaged classes. Moreover, in democratic countries, social and political demands upon the writers might be great. So, this might lead to an increase in the responsibility they have: to contribute to the moral, spiritual, cultural, social and intellectual realities in relation to their social and political ideals. Their aims are to enlighten the people about the current status quo and inspire them for the new possible human condition in the following periods.

> *If theatre can change lives, then it can change society.[…] Theatre is not an external force acting on society, but a part of it. It's a reflection of the way people within that society view the world.*[19]

Every nation has its very own theatre in close touch with the social norms, social order, as well as cultural, political, social and economic issues. They handle the problems regarding the people in their own countries. Nevertheless, like other genres, theatre is a global heritage. Thus, one of its most important functions is to "improve the writer, the reader, society and the entire universe as a whole" to construct a better future for each living being in the world. In other words, the universality of a play is as essential as its nationality. Moreover, when a theatre play transcends beyond the time and place it is written, it becomes truly remarkable.

This thesis focuses on the two writers who transcends beyond time and place: Edward Bond and Aziz Nesin. It handles the social criticism in their selected plays and their aims of altering and encouraging social change by using their satirical language and literary talents as a tool of propaganda in harmony with socialist art. They are among the most influential activist playwrights in contemporary British and Turkish literature. Their plays have attracted the attention of the masses, going beyond the time and place they are written. They have focused much of their literary energies and public lives on social criticism, highlighting the corruption of the system and social decay.

[19] Qtd. in. Laura López Peña, "Witnesses Inside/outside the Stage. The Purpose of Representing Violence in Edward Bond's Saved (1965) and Sarah Kane's Blasted (1995), FOLIOS, Vol. 29, 2009, pp. 111-118, p. 112.

Both playwrights have expressed strong disapproval of society's inactivity in reacting against the system for their disadvantaged position. Their common aim is to depict various types of violence, unfairness and inequality on stage to make the audiences aware of their disadvantaged status, the realities and injustice imposed by the dominant privileged class and react against them, taking responsibility for changing the social system. By doing so, they believe, they can cause a person to change; and if one person can change, with a snowball effect, society can change. Furthermore, they are aware that radical changes or revolutions do not come about all of a sudden; instead, such transformations require long processes. Yet, as Jana Sanskriti explains, there must be a process "in which people could sustain participation – not a quick-fix solution, but a strengthening of the social fabric of society so that people no longer accepted passivity as a condition […]"[20] Similarly, in his preface to *Lear*, Bond argues the urgent requirement for a method of change.

In order to see their social criticism in their plays written in different styles on separate topics but pursued very similar goals, *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* by Nesin and *Lear* By Bond is analysed in this thesis.

1.1. The Scope of the Study

This thesis entitled "The Social Criticism in the Revolutionary Theatre of Aziz Nesin and Edward Bond" is a contrastive study attempting to analyse Nesin and Bond who are included among the most controversial and prominent writers in their countries. Nesin was born in 1915, and Bond in 1934. Both produced many of their most critical literary works in the twentieth century. Being aware of the capability of the theatre's immense influence, they have given a special interest in writing plays pursuing similar goals.

This thesis attempts to answer mainly three research questions: The first one is 'What do Nesin and Bond criticise in their plays?'. The second research question is 'How do Nesin and Bond handle social criticism in their revolutionary theatre?' The last one is 'What are the solutions they offer to overcome the problems and enable

[20] Qtd. in. Sandra Mills, "Development in Practice", *Development in Practice,* Jun. 2009, Vol. 19, No. 4/5, pp. 550-559, p. 551.

equal as well as fair conditions for individuals, especially the working class?' To answer these questions properly, before the main chapters concerning the two playwrights, some background information is given about the relationship between sociology and literature, social structure and revolutionary theatre in the chapter of theoretical background.

In the following chapter, the background of the writers is handled to have a better understanding of how they have become what they are, and how their lives have affected their social and literary identities. Moreover, the playwrights' ideas, aims and perspectives regarding the reasons for writing plays are examined in this chapter.

In the next chapter, one prominent play from each writer is analysed in detail to try to give answers to the above-mentioned research questions on a more accurate and sturdy ground. Regarding Turkish drama *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* (*Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz*) (1977) by Nesin is analysed. The original format of the play was a radio play, which was then adapted into a theatre play and eventually transformed into a novel. Moreover, there are movie versions of the plays.[21] Similar to his other works, this play is also satiric in tone and intention, yet it presents hope that will encourage people to struggle for change. The play handles the protagonist Yaşar's journey towards a new personality and his experiences that lead him through the prison. Besides *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* by Nesin, *Lear* by Bond is analysed. It refers to and parodies Shakespeare's famous tragedy *King Lear* but from a more politicised and satirical perspective. The play narrates the journey of Lear, the protagonist, towards a new state of mind - a kind of illumination - and his experiences as a King and an ordinary citizen. Both plays are good samples of political and social satire; however, one of the plays is written in a more humorous tone, while the other is in a more violent tone. In this chapter, both plays are analysed in detail separately.

The final chapter of the thesis delves into findings and conclusion, comparing and contrasting the aims, methods, and solutions of the two playwrights in writing revolutionary plays, with reference to the plays previously analysed. This analysis is supported by the information and insights presented in the preceding chapters.

[21] The play was adapted to a movie directed by Ergin Orbey in 1974. Moreover, in 2008, it was readapted to a movie directed by Atıl-Ulaş İnaç.

1.2. The Aim of the Study

Literature is a heritage only if there is an heir. A worthy and capable heir is not the one who just keeps the heritage, but he is the one who put it to use. It is only possible when

> its ideological leadership must be provided by a social and intellectual movement, whose members subscribe to a progressive national ideology, have a knowledge and understanding of history, as well as a highly developed and genuine feeling for it, and are aware of the fact that they are deeply rooted in the whole of their country's historical past and of their great responsibility, as citizens, for its present and its future.[22]

Literary works can be reinterpreted in the context of current problems and circumstances and can create a consciousness which contributes to the intellectual advancement of humanity.

The objective of this thesis is to examine the perspectives and concerns of two playwrights, with a historical, theoretical, and critical approach. Our focus is to highlight the similarities, while acknowledging the differences, in their views on the conditions and circumstances of people in their respective countries. Additionally, we deal with the playwrights shedding light on the corruption and disorder within social structures that worsen the lives of individuals and result in unfair and unequal treatment. This thesis delves into the socialist ideologies presented by the playwrights and the systems they propose to achieve a fair and just society. Additionally, it explores the responsibilities and duties of individuals in creating better living conditions for all.

1.3. The Significance of the Study

This research aims to make a contribution to the field of comparative theatre studies by examining the works of two highly debated playwrights from Türkiye and Britain. The plays and perspectives of writers transcend time, making their recipes relevant both now and in the future. What they suggest for people and the system - the structural change – has a potential to trigger not only personal improvement but social development of the countries as well. Moreover, the problems and the solutions they have highlighted cannot be limited to the borders of Türkiye or Britain; they have the

[22] Gennadiy Nikolayeviç Pospelov, "Literature and Sociology", *International Social Science Journal,* 1967, Vol. XIX No.4, pp. 534-549, p. 547.

capability and power to reach beyond any territorial borders, offering solutions for the dysfunctional issues in social structure.

Bond and Nesin are revolutionists, and their plays are revolutionary, aiming to unsettle the present way of thinking, living, governing, being governed, behaving, and acknowledging. Envisioning just and equal conditions for societies, both writers adopt socialist art as revolutionary art. With this thought, they propagate socialism in their plays. In this regard, this study also contributes to the literature studies as a sample analysing how socialist ideology is propagated in the works of theatre. Furthermore, it also exemplifies how sociology, ideology and literature or theatre are interrelated.

Bond has authored over fifty plays, with a primary focus on theatre. On the other hand, Nesin has written more than twenty plays, in addition to novels, poems, journals, and other genres. Although both writers are viewed as prominent playwrights of Modern British and Turkish theatres belonging to the same period approximately, and they have created their plays pursuing similar goals, there is no study that unites both. This thesis will be the first study to compare and contrast Nesin and Bond under the light of their revolutionary theatre, primarily *Lear* and *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies*. The reason why these plays are chosen is that they are the most effective and successful plays that reflect the playwrights' social criticism and revolutionary theatre.

Nesin consistently emphasised the significance of his plays and expressed disappointment in the lack of analysis and commentary on them. Nevertheless, there has been a scarcity of recent studies that thoroughly examine his plays referencing his theoretical writings and interviews. Being very limited in number, less then fourthy theses has dealt with Aziz Nesin and, to my best knowledge, only twenty-two theses have been written regarding his works and less than ten are related to his theatre. Just one of those theses has been written in English, which is also a comparative study of the novel version of *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies*. Thus, the theatre version of *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* is largely untouched, although it is originally written in play form. Although Nesin's works and plays have been translated into many other languages, except for his autobiography *İstanbul Boy*, *Laugh and Lament: Selected Short Stories of Aziz Nesin* (2016) and *Socialism is Coming: Stand Aside* (2002). Only a few of his books have been translated into English. As this thesis is in English, all

translations, including the original Turkish version of the autobiography, unless specified otherwise, are by the writer of this thesis. This comparative study offers a comprehensive analysis of Nesin's idea of writing and playwriting as well as his play's detailed analysis with a comprehensive summary including some extracts from the play in English. The chapter about Nesin, written in English - a language spoken by around 1.5 billion people worldwide, will serve as a useful resource for foreign researchers studying this renowned Turkish writer and critical thinker.

1.4. The Limitations of the Study

Within the frame of comparative literature, this study is to present the common and divergent points in the mentioned playwrights' perspectives relating to life, humanity, society, and the management echoed in their plays. In order to present a more comprehensive analysis, I have collected theoretical writings, books, letters, interviews and articles related to both playwrights. However, I have obtained some of his books via book sharing system of libraries in Türkiye, and accessed e-books, articles, and interviews from multiple sources like Modern Drama Utp journals, Journal Store, archive.org, bloomsbury.com, library of Suleyman Demirel University and the Kindle e-book app. However, I had the difficulty in accessing to some sources, particularly, books that contain letters as there are no e-book versions available and Turkish libraries only have a limited number of volumes. Shipping processes have also been problematic. Besides, the data regarding the biography of Bond is very limited and sources lack detailed information about his life mostly as he was evacuated as a child due to the bombardment in the Second World War.

Likewise, although Nesin is one of the leading literary figures in Turkiye and his books are easily available, there are very few critical accounts that would unpack his unique style. Thus, except for those few books, the main sources used in his chapter are written by him, and the interviews or articles gathered or translated by the staff of Nesin Publications.

Bond has written his plays - *Early Morning* (1967-68), *Saved* (1965), *Bingo* (1973) and others - to criticise and show the dark sides of society, the corruption and cruelty of the people and the people in power. Likewise, Nesin has written all his plays

- *The War between the Whistlemakers and Brushmakers* (*Düdükçülerle Fırçacıların Savaşı*) (1968), *Do Something Met* (*Bir Şey Yap Met*) (1959), *Will You Come Here, Please?* (*Biraz Gelir Misiniz?*) (1950) and others - to criticise and remark on public enemies and the corruption in the social structure, society and the people in power. A complete analysis of all the plays would necessitate a lifetime of study. The topic is vast, and its breadth and depth are so extensive that a thorough examination would require several volumes of study. Thus, their goals in writing plays, and their revolutionary theatre are restricted in the analysis of social criticism in *Lear* and *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies*. Other plays by the playwrights are beyond the scope of this study because these two plays best represent their revolutionary ideals and social criticism.

1.5. The Method of the Study

This thesis is composed depending mainly on comparative literature with a heterogeneous methodological basis to intensify and encourage comparative studies and eclectic research methods, as well as an explanatory approach to present a more comprehensive analysis of the similarities as well as differences in the revolutionary theatre idea of Bond and Nesin. Comparative literature is, more than a specific discipline, based on the theories of critical humanities and social sciences, which shelter various theoretical approaches as well as a broad range of methodologies. A thorough examination of the literature on these playwrights' lives and creative activities enables a detailed analysis of the texts' background, backdrop and pragmatic implications, helping to establish a highly required connection with the social structure. Therefore, in this study, the collected data from various reviews, interviews, articles, books, diaries, letters and any other sources regarding the revolutionary idea of both playwrights under the light of the selected plays are analysed comparatively and contrastively.

1.6. Literature Survey

To be able to evaluate the playwrights' aims and demands regarding society more comprehensively, the relationship between sociology and literature, social structure and revolutionary theatre are handled in the theoretical background chapter.

Among others, the below list only comprises major authors and their books that concentrate upon the above-mentioned subtitles.

> Arendt, 2006; Charques, 1966; Cragun & Cragun, 1987; Crothers, 1996; Giddens, 2006; Laurenson & Swingewood, 1972; Leach, 1994; Skocpol, 2015; Todd, 2003; Trotsku, 2005.

When discussing revolutionary theatre, it is important to refer to Leroi Jones' article "The Revolutionary Theatre" from 1965. This article is significant because it defines the parameters of revolutionary theatre and highlights its essential characteristics within a more precise context.

Harshly criticised at the beginning of his career by *Saved*, Bond has gained a reputation when his plays' targets of social evils are clearly understood. He has become one of the most activist playwrights who struggled to trigger a revolutionary change in the social system. He has written many informative articles as prefaces to his plays. That is the reason why analysing what he has criticised in his plays, his prefaces are the fundamental sources to understand his point. Besides, many critics and researchers have written articles and books and published interviews about the social criticism and violence regarding Bond's plays. Most helpful and remarkable books are as follows:

> Billingham, 2013; Bradley, 2010; Coult, 1979; Davis, 2009; Lappin 1987; Scharine, 1976; Spencer, 1992; Stuart, 2000; Tuaillon, 2013; Hirst, 1985; Trussler, 1976; Mangan, 1998

Aziz Nesin is known as one of the most activist writers throughout the twentieth century in Türkiye. His reputation comes from his witty, sincere language that communicates with people easily in an impressive way. As he wrote numerous articles regarding his perspective towards various flaws in the system, his own articles, which are gathered in books by Nesin Publishing House, are the most basic reference books for understanding his viewpoint, criticism and humour. Besides, it is possible to mention other books analysing his perspective and literary works. However, the scarcity of books regarding Nesin's perspective and analysis of his works causes disappointment. Nevertheless, there are various articles or interviews in journals or newspapers, as well as some theses written on his works. Most remarkable books are as follows:

Nesin (Ali), 2019; Yücel, 2007; Kabacalı, 2007; Yüksel, 1997, Nesin, 1973; Nesin, 1994; Nesin, 2010; Nesin, 2011; Nesin, 2011; Nesin, 2013; Nesin, 2014; İpşiroğlu, 1998; Şener, 2006; Şener, 2011.

This is the short but striking list of the books that comprise Bond and Nesin and their works. In addition to the aforementioned books, reference is also made to remarkable articles and theses. Articles, in particular, prove to be highly beneficial as they provide valuable insights when analysing the plays and contributing to the discussion. They will be mentioned in the bibliography.

CHAPTER II

BACKGROUND: CONCEPTUAL FRAME

1. SOCIOLOGY AND LITERATURE

> *Literary works are limpid pools of creative thought par excellence and the springs of social life that gush from the bottom and feed these works can usually be quite seen, provided one wants to see them.*[23]

Sociology and literature deal with human beings; they derive from society, and they, in return, present what they get from society with a more intense and explicated actual life experience.[24] As the primary emphasis is on humans in a society, nation or the world, they are interested in the surrounding of the human being, the social institutions and social processes where the human being is the subject matter.

The French author Auguste Comte coined the term sociology "as the most significant and complex of all the sciences" and addressed it as "the queen of the social sciences."[25] The research area of sociology is the social structure which embodies not only social institutions but religious, economic, political, familial, social and cultural patterns, as well as sudden or gradual changes in society and the resultant influence of it on social structure. Sociology is also related to social interaction and the clashes between classes, groups or individuals, which are regulated by the social institutions of the governments, either with success or with failure.[26] It aims to specify the laws of the social world, which has been changing perpetually with the effect of the French Revolution and improving industrialisation, seeking to reorganise society to ensure welfare and better living standards. Moreover, it depends on the behavioural codes of human beings; thus, the laws of the social world are established through empirical evidence obtained from observation, comparison and experimentation.[27] Likewise, Emile Durkheim, with a more modernist perspective, emphasised the urgency of

[23] Ibid, p. 537.
[24] Ibid, p. 534.
[25] Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*, Polity Press, Malden, 2006, p. 12.
[26] Diana Laurenson & Alan Swingewood, *The Sociology of Literature,* Paladin, 1972, p. 11-12.
[27] Giddens, 2006, p. 10.

analysing social facts in the new social order; it is sociology's task to examine the effect of social aspects on how people think, act or feel. For instance, it analyses how the economic state affects people's life, actions, feelings or thoughts. In addition, he argued that social phenomena possess a coercive influence over individuals. However, individuals may not always be aware of this influence and mistakenly believe that their actions result from their free will.[28] People in society often share similar experiences and beliefs, which can lead to a repressive effect on individuals. As a result, those who challenge the established social order or system may face punishment. This can make it challenging for members of society to come into conflict with the conventional ways of life and system.

In 1918, Stuart Chapin argued that certain writers of that time placed sociology at the top of the hierarchy on the list of scientific branches since it has, in one way or another, included other fields such as other social sciences, economics, ethics, politics, etc. This led the critics to evaluate sociology as "a little bit of everything and nothing at all."[29] With the difficulty of determining the borders of this science, Anthony Giddens has defined sociology as "the scientific study of human social life, groups and societies."[30] What sociology struggles to manage is to point out "the need to take a much broader view of why we are as we are, and why we act as we do" with the reason to "teach us that what we regard as natural, inevitable, good or true may not be such and that the 'givens' of our life are strongly influenced by historical and social forces."[31] In the modern world today, sociologists work on various topics such as "macro-structures that organise society, such as race or ethnicity, social class, gender roles, [...] family" or "social processes that represent the breakdown of macro-structures, including deviance, crime, and divorce" or "micro-processes such as interpersonal interactions and the socialisation of individuals."[32]

Throughout history, philosophers and sociologists have evaluated sociology and sociological studies under various branches, such as pure sociology, applied

[28] Ibid, p. 13.
[29] F. Stuart Chapin, "What is Sociology?", *The Scientific Monthly,* Sep. 1918, Vol. 7 No. 3, pp. 261-264, p. 261.
[30] Giddens, 2006, p. 4.
[31] Ibid, p. 4.
[32] Ryan Cragun & Deborah Cragun et al., *Introduction to Sociology*, Blacksleet River, 2006, p. 13.

sociology, critical sociology, humanistic sociology, Marxist sociology, etc. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Stuart Chapin expressed that sociology could be evaluated under pure and applied sociology. Pure sociology has been interested in "the laws that govern the origin, growth and evolution of social customs, standards and institutions" to demonstrate and contribute to the comprehension and origins of biological, geographical, technical, psychological, anthropological and social circumstances or relations, while applied sociology analyses the reasons of poverty, social reasons of crimes or sicknesses as well as the causes why the people live below normal standards to reduce or prevent the underlying causes from appearing again. In short, while pure sociology characterises "normal human tendencies and standards", applied sociology struggles to "preserve and re-establish them."[33]

A sociologist is supposed to present and show the new path to a better society with the help of critical sociology as it is critically interested in values such as equality, justice and freedom as both the "questions and the answers;" and by these values, it analyses "how social structures create relations of domination between social groups" because it serves to "progressive social change."[34]

Similarly, humanistic sociology attempts to transform the world into a better place. Kenneth Boulding, an economist, has defined the task of social sciences with a question which defines the responsibility of humanistic sociology: "What is better, and how do we get there?"[35] The humanistic sociologist is responsible for the people; their task is to organise and improve social systems and design "effective social arrangements, institutions, and social forms that improve the conditions of the living" and to meet the requirements of people much better and in a more proper way.[36] To manage this, a sociologist must first detect society's needs and then search for ways to transform society to meet those needs.

It is also possible here to mention Marxist sociology. Some basic laws of Marxist sociology which specifies the underlying causes for the leading motives for

[33] Chapin, "What is Sociology?", p. 261-264.
[34] Steven Buechler, "What is Critical about Sociology?", *Teaching Sociology*, Oct. 2008, Vol. 36, No.4, pp. 318-330. p. 319.
[35] Qtd. in. William Du Bois and R. Dean Wright, "What is Humanistic Sociology?", *The American Sociologist*, Winter 2002, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 5-36, p. 5.
[36] Ibid, p. 5.

the urgency of social change. It has two levels: base and superstructure. Firstly, base is closely connected to the superstructure. According to Marx, in capitalist societies the ruling class possesses the means of production. The working class, on the other hand, are labour forces. The relations between these classes in terms of production relations, and property relations constitute the base or the substructure of the society. Moreover, superstructure is the ideologies, religion, media, philosophies, values and culture of a society. In capitalist societies, the ruling class controls the base or substructure and the superstructural elements, such as ideology or culture, are determined by them and accepted by the working class.[37] Therefore, base or substructure and superstructure are interdependent in their relationships. Economic distribution directly or indirectly affects the political, cultural and ideological achievements in a society. On the other hand, societies change in relation to the conflicts and struggles of some groups.[38] Therefore, social progress is only possible with the transformation of "societies and their institutions, proceeding from simple to complex social forms, which is most advantageous for the largest possible number of their members, or for all men" for the welfare of whole society.[39]

It is with the help of sociological idea that various events or acts which seem individual are, in fact, more comprehensive.[40] An individual' experiences are mostly public issues as well, experienced by many other members of society. This helps people gain a much broader vision when they read or see a play, a novel or a literary work. They realise that a writer narrates a character's story on the surface, but in the background, she/he speaks to every member of that society or every individual in the world, implicating that it is the shared story of all people in a nation or the world. Therefore, literature has an influential and unique area to show them their situation or circumstances within their surroundings by addressing the whole society by offering just a slice of a character's life.

[37] Hiroshi Onishi, "Superstructure Determined by Base", *World Review of Political Economy*, Spring 2015, Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 75-93.
[38] Oleg Mandić, "The Marxist School of Sociology: What is Sociology in a Marxist Sense?", *Social Research*, Autumn 1967, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 435-455, p. 438-439.
[39] Oleg Mandić, "The Marxist School of Sociology: What is Sociology in a Marxist Sense?", *Social Research*, Autumn 1967, Vol. 34, No. 3, pp. 435-455, p. 438-439.
[40] Giddens, 2006, p. 7.

Studies of sociology and literature are reasonably related to each other. The literature presents a slice of the social life of one or more member(s) of the society; therefore, it is required to see from a sociological perspective to achieve a better comprehension of that work. Literature can greatly benefit from various types of sociology, including pure sociology. Through applied sociology, the literature sheds light on abnormal conditions that force society to continue living under such circumstances. Characters and societies portrayed in literature hold messages that can help prevent or reduce the motivations behind these disadvantageous situations.

Literature and sociology share a common interest in exploring human beings and beyond. Both fields delve into the social and historical aspects of human life, including man's relationships, conflicts, and tensions with himself, other individuals, family, society, and social institutions in general. Additionally, literature provides insight into the writer's perspective on man's position and role in society. Writers are supposed to draw characters moving through their destinies while exploring society's values and norms. Through their works, they uncover the flaws and issues within the operation of social institutions, social structures, behavioural codes and attitudes. While literature goes beyond the scientific analysis of society, it offers one of its most distinct features: *feeling.*[41] It is undeniable that literature and sociology are complementary to each other as Richard Hoggart has expressed, "[...] works of literature give an insight into the life of an age, a kind and intensity of insight, which no other sources can give. [...] Without the literary witness, the student of society will be blind to the fullness of society's life..."[42]

Literature is a powerful tool for depicting the anxieties, hopes, and aspirations of individuals. It serves as an effective sociological barometer, reflecting humanity's response to social forces.[43] In addition, engaging in sociological thinking necessitates a critical and sceptical approach to identifying, comprehending, assessing, reacting to, and challenging familiar beliefs and established information.[44] In that vein, Leo Lowenthal has emphasised that it is the responsibility of sociologists of literature to

[41] Laurenson & Swingewood, 1972, p. 12-15.
[42] Sue Owen, *Re-Reasing Richard Hoggart: Life, Literature, Language, Education,* , Cambridge Scholars Publishing, UK, 2008, p.67.
[43] Laurenson & Swingewood, 1972, p. 17.
[44] Buechler, "What is Critical about Sociology?", p. 319.

connect the experiences of a writer's fictional characters and scenarios to the historical context in which they originate.[45] Therefore, to comprehend the playwright's concepts or uncover the underlying themes of their plays, one must view them through a sociological lens.

Throughout history, the impact of art on society has been evident in every stage of the artistic process, from creation to post-publication. This close relationship between society and art highlights the vital connection between sociology and artistic expression.[46] When considering the relationship between literature and sociology, it is important to examine the writer's social environment, ideology, position in society, social themes in their work, ideas presented, social purpose and impact on society. The interaction between literature and sociology is valuable as literature can aid in understanding a nation's social and cultural life, while social structure can aid in comprehending a literary work.[47] Literature has a unique ability to deeply reflect on society. Literary works often contain sociological elements that can be easily discerned. Therefore, to gain a clearer understanding of a particular period in history, literature is an invaluable resource. Literature can provide insight into conflicts, crises, relationships, behavioural norms, morals, and social issues that have significant impacts on society.

A novel, a play or a poem, any creative writing appears as a result of a process within a society within a certain period and space. The writing process is like a harvest through which the creative writer gathers their interactions, observations, experiences and criticism to propound his work. Thus, the resultant product shelters the traces of his society and its social structure, including the social, economic, political, ideological, and national circumstances of their surroundings. As "the great thing in literature" is the "national spirit,"[48] from a literary work, the structuring of society, values and feelings can be deduced. Literary works can offer insight into societal

[45] Brian Stableford, *The Sociology of Science Fiction,* Borgo Press, USA, 1987, p. 9.
[46] Rudolph E. Morris, "What is Sociology of Art?", *The American Catholic Sociological Review,* Dec. 1958, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 310-321.
[47] Ahmet Cuma, "Edebiyat Sosyolojisi ve Karşılaştırmalı Edebiyat Bilimi - Sanat ve Bilimin Sınır Ötesi Etkileşimi -", *Selçuk Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi,* 2009, Vol.22, p. 81-94, p.86.
[48] Pospelov, "Literature and Sociology", p. 545.

changes and the individual responses to these changes, as well as how people are socialised within the current social structure.

2. SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The social system is a broad term encompassing both culture and social structure with no clear boundaries. They cover each other. Culture is commonly referred to as the shared set of cognitive and evaluative beliefs within a social system that is transmitted to new members. On the other hand, social structure refers to the persisting and fixed pattern of social relationships among individuals of positions in a social system.[49] They are inseparable, interrelated and complementary studies of human behaviour.

Understanding a particular period's social conditions and behaviour patterns requires familiarity with its social structure. Analysing the different components of the social structure can help uncover the root causes of various social issues and provide solutions. By examining these issues, how the social structure operates and addresses the underlying problems can be identified. This way, the problems can be solved fundamentally by altering the social structure.[50]

The concept of social structure is a crucial element in sociology, focusing on the various components of a social system. Its analysis involves examining the relationships between social institutions and individuals across different social classes.[51] The social structure encompasses a wide range of factors, such as social classes, roles, norms, organisations, institutions, and religion, as well as economic, political, and cultural structures.

The level and frequency of sharing beliefs and values can significantly affect people's thoughts, perceptions, emotions and actions. As a result, this shapes and directs their overall behaviour.[52] In a society, three primary structures shape an

[49] House, "Social Structure and Personality", p. 542-543.
[50] Linda A. Mooney - David Knox - Caroline Schacht, *Understanding Social Problems,* Wadsworth, Belmont, 2013. p. 4.
[51] Yuri Alexandrovich Levada., "Social Structure", *International Journal of Sociology,* Spring - Summer 1973. Vol. 3, No. 1/2, pp. 3-9.
[52] Robert J. Brym - John Lie, *Sociology: Your Compass for a New World, Brief Edition: Enhanced Edition,* Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing, 2009, p. 5.

individual: microstructure, macrostructure and global structure. The microstructure comprises face-to-face interactions within family, friendship, and business circles. On the other hand, the macrostructure refers to social relations beyond the micro-level, including class relations, bureaucratic organisations, gender inequality, and religious institutions. The role of these structures is vital in shaping society. Furthermore, the interconnected economic, political, social and cultural relations among countries constitute the Global Structure.[53] Social actors play a significant role in shaping and being shaped by cultural, political and economic structures through a dynamic process of identity formation.[54] So, an individual's identity contributes to society's identity and global identity formation. Hence, microstructure, macrostructure and global structure are inseparably interconnected. As a snowball effect, a slight change in microstructure may lead to a significant shift in the macrostructure and global structure. Meanwhile, understanding problems in microstructure broadens the understanding to overcome and suggests appropriate solutions.

The social structure is an umbrella term encompassing the interconnected relationships between individuals, institutions, and social groupings. It outlines how personal behaviour, attitudes, attributes, and trajectories are influenced.[55] M. N. Srinivas delves into the concept of social structure, exploring the various relationships among individuals and groups. He examines the similarities and differences in their social roles and analyses the predetermined factors that determine social relations. These include the differentiation of social positions based on gender, status, and employment, such as those between chiefs and commoners or employers and employees.[56] Thus, social structure can be examined by analysing the links of person to person, person to group, or person to institution at economic, political and cultural levels.

Every element of social structure is interrelated, and together they constitute a whole; thus, each structure regarding the society bears capital significance for the better comprehension of the organisation and the evaluation of the social structure and

[53] Brym – Lie, 2009, p. 5-6
[54] Ion Rossi, *Frontiers of Globalization Research: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches*, Springer, New York, 2007, p. 56.
[55] Charles Crothers, *Social Structure.* Routledge. New York 1996. p.4.
[56] M. N. Srinivas, "Social Structure", *Sociologocal Bulletin,* Vol 13, No 1, March 1964, p. 12-21.

the relations within that structure. They affect and are affected by one another correlatively.[57] The errors in one part, group or element of a structure may disrupt other structures. Similarly, the change in one phase may gradually or suddenly trigger a revision or manipulation in the other elements constituting the social structure.

A country's social structure has the power to shape the individuals living within its borders. The inequality of power, status and economic privileges equips members of the society with specific varied opportunities, advantages and disadvantages, which identifies the different social classes.[58] Melvin Kohn has stated that "...one aspect of social structure, hierarchical position, is related to almost everything about men's lives - their political party references, their sexual behaviour, their church membership, even their rates of ill health and death;" and all is affected by the class of its members.[59] So, norms and values may vary among classes, and different classes may have conflicting values and standards. Similarly, specific rules may exist not necessarily because they are widely agreed upon but because those in authority positions enforce them. Additionally, individuals tend to follow these rules without even realising they are doing so.[60] According to Marx, social structure is determined by power. The ideas of the ruling class are always dominant ruling ideas, which means that the class that holds the material power in society also enjoys intellectual leadership.[61] When a class has control over the means of material production, they also gain control over the means of mental output. As a result, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are often subject to control. Firth argues that social structure values consistency, continuity, form, and pervasiveness throughout the social field. Consequently, there is an implicit expectation or obligation of sameness.[62] The social

[57] Alfred R. Radcliffe-Brown, "On Social Structure", *Perspectives in Cultural Anthropology,* Ed. Herbert A. Applebaul, State University of New York Press, New York, 1987, p.125

[58] Nico Wilterdink. "Social Structure". *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online.* Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2016. Web. 06 Feb. 2016. www.britannica.com

[59] House, "Social Structure and Personality", p. 548.

[60] Wilterdink. "Social Structure".

[61] İdris Güçlü, "Karl Marx and Ralf Dahrendorf: A Comparative Perspective on Class Formation and Conflict". *Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi İİBF Dergisi,* 2014, Vol. 9, No. 2, pp. 151-167.

[62] Permanent or gradual disconnection between, or 'lack of fit' or misfit of the the individual and the society is named as 'alienation' by Marx and 'anomie' by Durkheim, and 'social stress'", each of which may cause frustration, mental and physical damage or illness, "deviant behaviour, and suicide or homicide". See. House. "Social Structure and Personality", p. 557. According to the Marx, the main reasons for the alienation of individuals "from their humanity" are 'wage labour and factory

structure profoundly influences people's beliefs and behaviours, but individuals also hold the power to shape the structure itself. This results in an ongoing exchange between society's members and its structures.[63] A person's beliefs, values, and behaviour can indeed be shaped by their position in society. This means that social class or status can impact one's thought processes, behaviour, cultural norms, and political and economic influences. It is essential to recognise that all aspects of social structure contribute to the overall maintenance of social order, and it is the task of social organisations to adjust and regulate social order by organising norms, roles and behaviour.[64]

Norms, roles and behaviours displayed within a society are not immediate results of the innate characteristics of individuals. Instead, they are shaped by the social structure that binds them together.[65] According to Radcliffe-Brown, social structure is not fixed or unchanging. Similar to the way the human body or organism continually renews itself over time, social structure is also refreshed and updated due to the ongoing nature of social life.[66] The social structure evolves through social change, including various factors such as cultural, economic, political, and technological trends and updates in norms related to macro-structure that encompass "societies, organisations, communities, social classes, racial or ethnic groups."[67] Additionally, industrialisation, urbanisation, and social mobility processes play a significant role in facilitating social change. [68]

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production,'" that once people or workers cannot fulfil their expectations both emotionally and economically, either they become alienated from society or the society becomes alienated for them, and in both situations there appear "boredom, sadness and frustration." See. Shane Sharp - Jeffrey L. Kidder, "Emotions". *Handbook of Social Psychology,* Ed. John DeLamater - Amanda Ward, Springer, New York, 2013. p. 348. Simmel explains another reason of anomie, urban living which is quite away from the traditional rules and mores, which causes a kind of misfit of individuals to the new social structure of urban living. Durkheim sees the problem as the lack of belonging between the individual and social life that when there cannot be found any satisfactory answer to the existential question of "to what purpose?", the feeling of being ill and debility, depression and thus alienation occurs; and the cure of this problem is to enable unity - which will guarantee the social belonging feeling conducted through emotions - within the society. See. Sharp – Kidder, "Emotions", p. 348.

[63] Crothers, 1996, p.4.

[64] Srinivas.. "Social Structure". p. 12-21.

[65] Radcliffe-Brown, "On Social Structure", p.123.

[66] Ibid, p.125.

[67] House, "Social Structure and Personality", p. 526

[68] Ibid, p. 526.

Marx argues that the fundamental element of structure is economic:

> [...] relations of production constitute the economic structure of society - the foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general.[69]

This means that other factors in social structure depend on the economy. So, when material productive forces change, then as a revolution, all superstructure is triggered to change.

As a result of the active interaction among people, social structures are formed and altered through society's appreciation, expectation and grievance, which is an informal process affected by the individuals' values, abilities, and needs. Social structure is a constantly changing unit with the effect of the "informal communication and exchange processes among the members of the organisation" in bureaucratised government communities; thus, members of the society are active agents to expect and demand what they require according to their values, talents and needs.[70] Moreover, the effective spread of social knowledge within society also triggers change in modern societies. There are social scientists or effective social agents whose utterances and actions are evaluated as "critical factors in 'social engineering'" and who are aware of "the power of propaganda in modern society" and, thus, consider some arguments and facts to acquire certain results.[71]

Social actors consciously highlight the need for social change or a change in social structure by presenting compelling reasons to trigger or demand such changes. Social actors can be individuals, institutions, or organisations within the social structure. Their goal is to actively participate and contribute to social structure - the cultural, political, and economic structures - that promote the development of ethnic, national, and global identity and awareness. This, in turn, helps to shape and reinforce sociocultural identity and strengthens the dynamics of social structures.[72] As social actors, writers can impact, transform, and advocate for change in the social structure.

[69] Kaleb Shimp. (2009). "The Validity of Karl Marx's Theory of Historical Materialism". *Major Themes in Economics*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 35-56.
[70] House, "Social Structure and Personality", p. 555-556.
[71] Srinivas, "Social Structure", p. 12-21.
[72] Rossi, 2007, p.56.

Raising awareness amongst individuals, they encourage them to recognise their capacity to shape society, the social system, and the social structure. People need to assume responsibility for their lives, their country, the world, and the system. Writers promote this by making people aware of the problems in the structure, reflecting on them, and making informed choices about their circumstances. Bond and Nesin are social actors who strive to highlight the urgent necessity for a transformation in the social structure through their efforts and actions.

In capitalist societies, the defining factor of class conflict is socioeconomic interests. The working class in this structure seeks access to education, culture, services, and prestige. However, in pre-capitalist societies, conflicts arise from differences in political and ideological interests. In contrast, socialist societies are distinguished by centralised state regulation of societal production, services and culture, emphasising management, planning and education. The social ownership of the means of production alters the definition of property. Moreover, social status is determined by the participation of separate individuals and groups in fulfilling socially recognised requirements. These requirements are based on their functional activity in relation to the socialist principles. In a socialist system, social status, property, or power cannot be inherited; all individuals or groups are evaluated by the state, which is created by the social system. In addition, the evaluation methods involve expressing the value of labour results and comparing them with plan indicators and other guidelines. There are also diverse incentive systems that provide temporary or lifelong rewards, such as titles.[73]

Bond and Nesin emphasise the superiority of the socialist structure over the capitalist structure when considered and demanded better conditions in terms of political, economic, social and cultural structure for all people regardless of their classes or status, which can be seen in their revolutionary plays.

[73] Levada., “Social Structure”, p. 3-9.

3. REVOLUTIONARY THEATRE

It may not be entirely possible to make a full definition of revolution that unites and pleases all perspectives. Revolution and revolutionary are terms with positive and negative connotations that can evoke feelings of pride and abuse as well as praise and opposition.[74] The term, revolution, was initially used in the contexts of astronomy and geometry. However, over time, it has found its way into discussions about history, politics, literature, arts, and sciences to describe the course of development. After 1789, the term was frequently employed to represent a significant shift or deviation from conventional or established thinking patterns, beliefs, conduct, social norms, or political and social structures.[75] Military coups, civil wars, or rebellions are not synonymous with revolutions, but they can act as catalysts for revolution. In today's world, the term can encompass a broad range of changes, such as a revolution in fashion, communication, or technology, among other areas.[76]

Allan Todd argues that a revolution occurs when individuals aim to entirely change society's social, economic, political, and ideological aspects. For any revolution to happen, a significant number of individuals must acknowledge that the current state of affairs is fundamentally corrupt and cannot be reformed. The only solution is to eradicate it entirely and replace it with something new. Therefore, revolutionary people who seek a new social system are demanding significant change and transformation in the existing social structure. Typically, the revolutionaries are from the poor, working-class or other less privileged classes; so, a complete revolution is considered a *festival of the oppressed* who believe the possibility of a positive change as the requirement of a revolutionary perspective.[77]

The idea of revolution does not appear suddenly; instead, it requires decades to mature. In addition, prior to revolutions, it is necessary to unveil new ideological advancements that challenge the existing status quo, institutions, structures, and modes of thinking. To achieve success in a revolution, adopting a new mindset that introduces

[74] Allan Todd, *Revolutions, 1789-1917,* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2003, p.1.
[75] I. Bernard Cohen, "The Eighteenth-Century Origins of the Concept of Scientific Revolution", *Journal of History of Ideas,* Vol. 37(2), Apr.-Jun. 1976, pp. 257-288, p. 258-262.
[76] Todd, 2003, p.1.
[77] Ibid, p. 2-3.

fresh systems and operations for the economic, social, and political systems is crucial. It is vital to have the active participation and support of a significant portion of the population for a revolution to prosper.[78]

There are two main types of revolution: political and social. Political revolutions occur at times when there have appeared some economic and social developments, yet political structure, in one way, restricts further transformations. As such, it is necessary to implement changes in the political structure, including staffing adjustments, to facilitate faster economic and social progress. The wealth distribution among classes is neither the reason nor the result of such revolutions. Instead, such revolutions are often instigated by wealthy groups or elites seeking to remove barriers restricting their wealth growth. This is why this type of revolution almost always takes place without violence. On the other hand, social revolutions are more fundamental attempts to "transfer economic assets and power, and social and political status and privileges, from one social group to another."[79] Gizavhew Tiruneh suggests that social revolutions are not solely caused by economic factors. Other significant factors include social, political, and external aspects. The primary reasons for such revolutions are a relatively low level of economic development, non-democratic regimes, and ineffective states.[80] Due to the potential for a significant transformation of social structure, this type of revolution is inclined to be more violent. When the current economic and social systems fail to progress, social revolutions occur to establish a new social structure that promotes societal advancement without discrimination against any particular group.[81] For a social revolution to occur, there must be a significant shift in the societal and class structures. This means that political and societal structures must transform or change simultaneously.[82]

Hannah Arendt states that revolution began to be discussed with the advent of social inquiry:

[78] Ibid, p.3.
[79] Ibid, p.4.
[80] Gizachew Tiruneh, "Social Revolutions: Their Causes, Patterns, and Phases", *Sage Open,* July-September 2014, p. 1-12, p.1.
[81] Todd, p.4.
[82] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions,* Cambridge University Press, New York, 2015, p. 4.

> In the modern age and not before, men began to doubt that poverty is inherent in the human condition, to doubt that the distinction between the few, who through circumstances or strength or fraud had succeeded in liberating themselves from the shackles of poverty, and the labouring poverty-stricken multitude was inevitable and eternal.[83]

This is the doubt that is needed to shake the existing structure up and start a process of total change through revolution.

M. Julian Benda has depicted the last decades of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century as the period of the *intellectual organisation of political hatreds*. The hatred of criticism of the age has been expressed intellectually, politically, aesthetically and morally through manifestations, literature or articles.[84] Thus, the circumstances pave the way for the emergence of revolutionary literature.[85] As stated in the previous chapter, literature and sociology are united in examining or mentioning the circumstances of society. Thus, it is rather expected for a writer, playwright or poet to include themes concerning politics, economics, culture and social life. Almost all the time, they have aimed to open a perspective from their own look to draw attention to a point, criticise something in the operation of the social system, raise awareness in society, or disseminate the doctrine of a particular movement such as socialism, capitalism or communism.

It is worth noting the Marxist concept of revolution, which aligns closely with Nesin and Bond's revolutionary ideals. German Ideology (1845) and The Communist Manifesto (1848) co-authored by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels are two works laying down the core beliefs of Marxism. They examine the nature of reality based on the interplay of base and superstructure. Base belonging to the bourgeoisie is about the economic means of production controlling all ideologies and human interactions and institutions whereas superstructure refers to all the products of base such as legal, social, economic, political, religious and educational systems and institutions including art, in order words literature produced. Most Marxist theorists contend that art is a product of superstructure, so it reflects the bourgeoisie beliefs, ideology, and hegemony. It was French Marxist critic and philosopher Louis Pierre Althusser (1918-

[83] Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution,* Penguin Books, London, 2006, p. 22.
[84] Julian Benada, *The Treason of the Intellectuals*, Transaction Publishers, New Brunswick, 2009, p. 27.
[85] Richard D. Charques, *Comtemporary Literature and Social Revolution,* Haskell House, New York, 1966, p. 47.

1990) who rejected the assumption that superstructure explicitly reflects the base. He contends that literature cannot be strictly related to superstructure. To Althusser, the superstructure can influence the base by art to inspire revolution. Dominant bourgeoisie values and hegemony can be challenged by art, in other words, literature if the proletariat creates their own art rejecting the bourgeoisie hegemony. "Although the dominant class can use military and police force to repress the working class in order to maintain its dominant position and to achieve interpellation [hailing the subject], it chooses to use the 'Ideological State Apparatus', or the hegemony"[86] What Althusser argues is that the working class can initiate revolution by creating their own literature such as novels, poems, music, dramas and painting to establish an alternative hegemony to tackle the bourgeoisie's hegemony. By this token, we could argue that Nesin and Bond aptly employ the Althusserian assumptions in their works to change society and challenge the bourgeoisie superstructure.

Korean Writers Union emphasises the significant role that revolutionary literature plays in shaping an individual's revolutionary character. To manage this, socialist realism in literature gains importance. It is closely related to the subordinate classes. The goal of socialist realism in literature is to trigger people to realise the revolutionary goals to attain socialism.[87] In this context, the tasks of literature and writers come to the forefront. M. Benda emphasises that artists must be responsible towards their societies as social philosophers.[88] Writers feel the social, political and economic necessities from a different angle.

According to Leon Trotsky, revolutionary art can either depict the revolution directly in its subject matter or be inspired by the revolution and the growing consciousness without explicitly addressing revolution in the artwork. To create genuinely revolutionary art, the artist must possess a revolutionary spirit that seeks to shape a new generation through their vision of revolution and awareness.[89] Bond and Nesin are revolutionist writers who, with their plays, challenge the status quo to trigger

[86] Charles E. Bressler, *Literary Criticism: An Introduction to Theory and Practice*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1999, p. 217.
[87] Kim Jong Il, "Developing a New Type of Revolutionary Literature", *Korea Friendship Association,* February 7, 1966, pp. 1-7.
[88] Charques, 1966, p. 41.
[89] Leon Trotsku, *Literature and Revolution,* Haymarket Books, Chicago, 2005, p. 188.,

the formation of a totally new structure. They criticise the existing social system from their own socialist perspectives advocating socialism with indirect, allusive, and implied language in their plays. They express the urgent need for a revolutionary change in social structure to improve living conditions and eliminate corruption. They believe it can only be managed by a revolutionary transformation from a capitalist to a socialist structure. Therefore, they adopt revolutionary art, particularly revolutionary theatre, to promote socialism.

According to Robert Leach, theatre that brings about revolution is a type of theatre that is most effective and can only stay true to itself when it is connected to a specific purpose. [90] Leroi Jones asserts that the key tenets of revolutionary theatre are centred on changing negative perceptions of black people and fighting against anti-black sentiments. While the revolutionary theatres cover various subject matters, they follow similar principles. According to Jones, the fundamental features of revolutionary theatre are as follows: It should encourage change; it has to unmask the concealed or unnoticed truth; it should arouse a feeling of shock to correct; it should bring attention and challenge anything that can be criticised and opposed since it is a platform for victims to recognise their circumstances and acknowledge their inner strength, realising their potential and power to challenge and change the flawed systems; it should depict reality and make propaganda for the wit of human mind; its language should address everyone in society, yet refined by the poet's expertise to ensure clarity; it should be shaped by the world and in turn, it should reshape the world; it should depict victims for the audiences to see them as their brothers, helping them comprehend that they are also victims, which will help them recognise their responsibilities to take action.[91]

The principles Leroi Jones draw for the requirements of the revolutionary theatre are the product of a real revolutionary experience. The revolutionary theatre idea of Nesin and Bond is compatible with those of Jones. They attack the system to protect the people victimised by the capitalist structure by establishing a socialist structure.

[90] Robert Leach, *Revolutionary Theatre*, Routledge, London, 1994, p. xiv.
[91] Leroi Jones (Amiri Barbara), "The Revolutionary Theatre", *Liberator*, July 1965, p.4-6,

CHAPTER III

AZİZ NESİN

1. SOME REMARKS ON AZIZ NESIN'S LIFE

It is worth mentioning Nesin's life to understand and comprehend his humour, criticism and his aim for writing. As he has written his autobiography, the information about his life can be obtained from his own words correctly. Therefore, the most preferred reference book for this sub-section is his autobiography titled *Böyle Gelmiş Böyle Gitmez* (1966) (*That's How It Was But Not How It's Going To Be, İstanbul Boy: The Autobiography of Aziz Nesin*).

Coinciding with the battle of Gallipoli, Mehmet Nusret - Aziz Nesin's real name - was born in 1915, in Heybeliada, İstanbul, as the son of an indigent family. He attended a local school here.[92] At the age of five, his father introduced him to a progressivist, revolutionary dervish, and calligraphist with sufficient knowledge of Arabic, Persian, French, and mathematics. This dervish supported Mustafa Kemal and the country's revolution. Nesin learned literacy from this dervish whom he called Uncle Galip. He learned the Koran and became hafiz at the age of eight.[93] He also learned French, calligraphy, arithmetic and geometry besides Greek and Islamic philosophies and the tenets of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, İbn Khaldun and Mevlana.[94] He received an education from a reformist dervish, which enabled him to gain knowledge in both science and religion simultaneously. The foundation of his intellectual background shaped his perspective in multiple directions, paving the way for his broad viewpoint.

Nesin's mother and Uncle Galip wanted him to become a student at the Republican Government School; nevertheless, his father had a strong opposition towards the government due to his support for Sultan Abdulhamid.[95] Nesin reported that his father and some of their neighbours expressed their disapproval of Mustafa

[92] Nesin, 2016, p. 28-31.
[93] Ibid., p. 36.
[94] Ibid, p. 37, 40, 47, 80.
[95] Ibid., p. 148.

Kemal, as they believed he intended to eliminate Islamism.[96] Therefore, he opposed the Republican School, thinking that this school's education went against religion[97] and that the students could become either Christian or non-believers.[98] However, Nesin loved the Republic "as much as [his] father [did] not like it."[99] His mother and Uncle Galip had a greater impact on him, which caused him to adopt their desire towards innovation and improvement; yet it was evident that he had inherited his father's tendency to have an oppositional mindset.

In 1924, the School of Kanuni Sultan Süleyman[100] evaluated his abilities in various subjects, including reading proficiency, Quranic knowledge, grammar, mathematical skills, and comprehension of nature and geography, through teacher assessments. They decided to have him continue the third grade at the government school.[101] For the following two years, he attended Darüşşafaka High School with the help of a document declaring his father's death.[102] Rıfkı Bey, a teacher at Darüşşafaka Boarding School, played a significant role in shaping Nesin's character formation. As a helpful guide, he suggested that students reflected on their actions from the day, considering both their positive and negative deeds in order to strive towards personal growth and become better people the other day. For this, they were to do two evaluations; to question "whether or not [they] deserve to live" and to remember "what [they] have done and how much [they] have worked to deserve to live in this beautiful world."[103] It is clear that Rıfkı Bey had a significant impact on Nesin, as the concept

[96] Ibid., p. 144-145.
[97] Ibid., p. 240-241.
[98] Ibid., p. 46-47.
[99] Ibid., p. 287.
[100] Name of the school is later changed into The Seventh School of İstanbul. Nesin evaluates these kind of reforms such as the change of the school names as formal and superficial without populist approach. See. Nesin, 2016, p. 266.
[101] Ibid., p. 264-265.
[102] As his father Abdul Aziz Efendi was a treasure hunter, he had been away for long time that even Nesin and her mother could not hear from him. At the fourth grade with the help of a teacher, Salim Bey, Nesin took an exam for Darüşşafaka boarding school. As it was secondary school for orphans, his teacher asked Şevket Efendi, the imam at Heybeliada, to arrange a certificate declaring the death of Abdulaziz Efendi and orphanhood of Nesin in order him to be able to attend Darüşşafaka boarding school. Regarding this, he stated that "it is true or not for a person to do a favour, sometimes, conducting an illegal act without looking after one's own interest; it is difficult to answer. But I am a person who have acted like this many times, who get into trouble many times for the sake of doing favour to others. That is the reason of my dismissal from the military service." See. Nesin, 2016, p. 340-351.
[103] Ibid., p. 401.

of deserving to live and die is prominently featured in his literary works. While it may not be accurate to say that this is the sole underlying theme of his plays, it is certainly distinguishable.

Nesin pursued his education at Kuleli Military High School (1935), followed by Military Academy (1937). He graduated as a military officer from the Academy of Military Science (1939), and simultaneously studied at the Fine Arts Academy for two years.[104] When serving in the military, writing was often frowned upon and could even elicit negative reactions. As he started writing as an officer, he used different pseudonyms. Eventually, he chose to write under his father's name, Aziz.[105] Over time, the use of this pseudonym caused the author's real name to fade into obscurity, and nearly all of their literary works were released under the name Aziz Nesin.

In 1944, he was discharged from the army due to misconduct.[106] Facing challenging circumstances, he took various jobs to make ends meet, such as;

> sheepherding, soldiering, bookkeeping, painting, news dealing, running a bookshop, tutorship, photography, authorship, journalism, grocery business, being a prisoner - this is also an occupation, even among the hard occupations - unemployment - this is the most difficult of all the occupations - shoe shiner, running a barbershop, etc.[107]

Change of occupation has raised awareness in Nesin. He frequently acknowledges the steep expenses of everyday life and difficulties associated with societal living conditions in his autobiography. Through this experience, he becomes more attuned to his surroundings across diverse social strata, allowing him to write about a multitude of topics in various forms and genres.

Simultaneously with other above-mentioned occupations, he wrote for several magazines, including *Yenigün*, *Yeni Adam*, *Akbaba*, and *Karagöz*, as well as newspapers *Tan* and *Vatan*. He also collaborated with Sabahattin Ali to create *Markopaşa,* a humour newspaper. It was not seldom that he was arrested and sentenced for his articles in these newspapers.[108] The prison experiences greatly provided for him

[104] Aziz Nesin, *Cumhuriyet Döneminde Türk Mizahı,* Akbaba Publications, İstanbul, 1973, p. 370
[105] Aziz Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2011, p. 279-281.
[106] Mesud Küçükkalay – Müjdat Özmen, "Aziz Nesin ve Nikolai V. Gogol'da Bürokratik Devlet Mekanizması: Kamu Tercihi Teorisi Bağlamında Çarlık Rusya'sı ve Türkiye Karşılaştırması", *Eskişehir Osmangazi Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Dergisi,* 2010, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 7-24, p. 10.
[107] Nesin, 2016, p. 9.
[108] Nesin, *1973,* p. 370

to employ an abundance of topics in his writings, and enriched his perspective. Moreover, they accumulated his desire to fight for the transformation, and work up his enthusiasm for writing the shortcomings of the system.

1.1. Nesin as A Playwright

That's how it was, but not how it's going to be

With the declaration of the Republic, it appeared that the artists that aligned themselves with the republic are perceived as populists. Moreover, all progressivist artists collaborated with the government to a certain extent. Over time, there was a growing disconnect between the government and society, leading to an increase in populism and a lack of progress. Nevertheless, despite changes in the political climate, there were still writers and artists who maintained their support for the government for their self-interests. Progressive socialist writers, on the other hand, tended to take a stance against the government. However, their opposition caused them to face challenging conditions. According to Nesin, there appeared to be a trend in the government's preference for publishing books written by authors with close ties to them. Unlike them, as progressivist writers, he and his peers were often overlooked in school books, television or radio programmes and theatres. Moreover, the writings by socialist authors who support progressivism were frequently recalled and banned by the government, which indicated a disconnect between the government and society.[109] Due to those circumstances, he, adopting the persona of Nesin, a fierce opponent, vehemently opposed such practices of the government and the people, especially writers seeking to take advantage of the situation.

For the above-mentioned suppressed environment, Zehra İpşiroğlu suggests that in countries where neither a liberal democratic environment - the basis of which depends on enlightened thought - nor the shadow of totalitarian government, is dominant, there appears a twilight. During twilight, there is no certainty that dark can be seen as light or light can be seen as dark[110], which provides writers with a broad scope to work with. Thus, twilight likely provides the optimal setting for humour and

[109] Nesin, 2016, p. 267.
[110] Zehra İpşiroğlu, *2000'li Yıllara Doğru Tiyatro,* İstanbul, Mitos Boyut Publishing, 1998, p. 102.

satire. Yücel Erten narrates this environment in his poem *Twilight.* Adapting from Nesin's stories and satires, *Twilight* reflects Nesin's perspective of the circumstances in his country in brief and as a whole. For his country, he cherishes hope, yet he feels a sense of hopelessness much like the twilight, which "is neither dark nor light; just in between, away from daylight, closer to the dark side;"[111] neither Westerner nor Easterner; neither developed nor underdeveloped. Moreover, this state of twilight is perpetual; it exists but lacks; and it lacks but exists. In the twilight,

> law both exists and lacks... Exists for some and lacks for others. Sometimes exists, and sometimes lacks. Somewhere exists, somewhere lacks. Human rights, just as if it existed but lacked; just as if it lacked but existed anyway. Democracy; democratish... Social justice; social justicish...[112]

The illusion of twilight can deceive people into thinking that darkness is actually light. For this deception and the conditions, two feelings shine out in Nesin's works; admiration for his people; and disappointment with the politicians and bureaucrats hindering Türkiye's social and economic advancement.[113] These individuals are expected to work for the benefit of the people but often end up being the root of the problem, obstructing the system's functioning. Such bureaucrats or people in power cause the state to shelter "reactionaryism, bigotry, fanaticism and fundamentalism."[114] Under such circumstances, Nesin acknowledges the importance of enhancing the well-being of individuals. Therefore, he encourages individuals to pursue a path of enlightenment encompassing both personal and social growth, facilitating positive change and progress in the operation of the system and the government as well as the people working on behalf of the government.

Nesin's anger for this twilight has been fuelled by his love for his people.[115] He feels a strong sense of responsibility towards the people of his country, driven by his passion. He expects the same sensibility from all enlightened people. For him, it is incumbent upon the intelligentsia to possess two key traits: a sense of responsibility towards society and the world at large, as well as a responsibility to enlighten those

[111] Yücel Erten, *Azizname'95*, Mitos Boyut Publications, İstanbul, 2007, p. 55.
[112] Ibid, p. 55.
[113] Alpay Kabacalı, *Gözyaşından Gülmeceye Aziz Nesin,* Gürer Publications, İstanbul, 2007, p. 111.
[114] Gökçe Yazın, "Aziz Nesin'e Düşsel Sorular, Sahici Yanıtlar", *Güzel Yazılar,* July-August 2004, Vol. 28, p. 15.
[115] Konur Ertop, "Ölümsüzleşen Gülmece Ustası için Aziz Nesin'lik...", *Varlık Journal,* 1995, Vol. 1055, p. 36.

who may not yet be aware of certain issues or concerns.[116] To discharge this responsibility, it is imperative that they safeguard their culture, freedom, honour, value judgement and awareness. It is only then, they can deserve to live in that nation.

The sense of responsibility he feels is the driving force behind his decision to become a socialist.:

> The events I have told made me indebted, responsible and liable to my society. Therefore, I have become a socialist. My socialism is an indispensable struggle of paying a debt to my mother, Uncle Galip, Rıfkı Bey, and all the people I have received help from. I owe society for every cell of my material and spiritual being.[117]

Concerning this, he contends that people like him have two options in life. One is to move up to the upper class and enjoy the privileges it brings; the other is becoming a leftist and socialist to fight for the rights of the people.[118] He has decided to embrace a leftist and socialist ideology, adopting a specific worldview. He believes that writers with these beliefs in Türkiye are progressive artists who tackle social themes and issues in their works.

The seeds of socialism have appeared in him and many other intelligentsias as a sentimental impact throughout the social struggle.[119] When a writer adopts a socialist ideology, s/he approaches every subject from a socialist standpoint. Therefore, their plays, novels, or poems, like all forms of art, are determined by their social class. Coming from a poor working-class family member, he has an innate inclination towards socialism.[120] For this reason, dealing with the problems he has experienced or

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[116] Hardy Micajah Griffin, "Humanist Humanism: Aziz Nesin's *Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz* and Kurt Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*", *Boğaziçi University, The Institute for Graduate Studies in Social Sciences, (Unpublished Doctoral Thesis),* İstanbul 2015, p. 101.

[117] Ibid., p. 500.

[118] Aziz Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2013 p. 152.

[119] Mustafa Baydar, "Aziz Nesin Anlatıyor", *Aziz Nesin: İnsanlar Konuşa Konuşa,* Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2012, p. 186-189.

[120] Nesin's suffering directs him to be a 'natural socialist' as he explains in an interview by Alpay Kabacalı. Because his background is a poor family, he reacts against injustice and the dominance of minority in a society. He evaluates all the things in terms of their utility for the society. However, he does not have the chance of reading on socialism as there is scarcity of books on it and has no time to read such books as he has had to work hard to look after his family. He is able to have the chance to read theoretical books in prison in which he has become a socialist consciously. He has always fought against capitalism which works much closer to human nature as it offers gimcrack trickeries behind hidden exploitation and imperialism - which is the God of era. However, when capitalism has managed, he expresses, then the people will appreciate the value of socialism. Besides, socialism, Nesin states can never be wiped off the face of the earth as long as exploitation prevails throughout the world. See. Kabacalı, 2007, p. 83-87.

observed, he presents the chain of events from a socialist's perspective.[121] As a socialist writer who feels responsible for the whole world, in particular his nation, he has two main goals. Firstly, to depict the social conditions and topography of Turkish society. Secondly, to call for change through his motto: "That's how it was, but not how it's going to be."[122]

Touching on social topography, he deals with the "most humanitarian situations in daily life, [...] ridiculousness of world of rules, the stupidity of [...] "hegemony", the weird [...] state of "intellectual" in society, [and] [...] "society" partly with their pure attitude, and partly with their "pragmatist" attitude [...]" under the frame of a particular social ground.[123] Handling these situations in his plays, he discovers human beings in his works because:

> finding a person in a novel or play means finding the reasons for human behaviour [...] [which are] to discover and reveal when, where, and the circumstances and factors under which the utterances, actions and behaviours take shape.[124]

By this token, it could be contended that his plays highlight the public enemies who pose a societal disadvantage and obstacles hindering social welfare and improvement. In addition, Zehra İpşiroğlu defines these public enemies as people with restricted perspectives who think superficially, work and behave hypocritically for their interest at the cost of making a fool out of others.[125]

With the social topography deduced from his plays, it is possible to gain insights into the social and economic weaknesses - the underlying reason for both is the political management - and individuals' inertia to have an active part in changing the unfair or illogical conditions in the presence of injustice, which creates an additional obstacle to achieving progress.[126] However, his plays help people realise and be aware of what is going on in their communities:

[121] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 187.
[122] Nesin, 2016, p. 271-272.
[123] Tahir Abacı, "Başucumuzdaki Aziz Nesin", *Sözcük: 100. Doğum Yılında Aziz Nesin Özel Sayısı*, Jan-Feb 2015, p. 47.
[124] Aziz Nesin, *Mum Hala I,* Nesin Publications, 2009, p. 76-77.
[125] İpşiroğlu, 1998, p. 106-107.
[126] Aziz Nesin, *Yazarlık, Edebiyat ve Dil Üstüne,* Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2014, p. 106.

> The society we live in and social structure are unfair, and the conditions we experience are not pleasant. To eliminate unfairness and atrociousness, [his aim is] to create the desire and passion to change ourselves, in the first place, our surroundings, society and our world.[127]

He also asserts that these shortcomings such as education, relationships, communication, and other issues are all sub-problems stemming from the larger social structure. Thus, it may not be feasible to tackle a minor problem without addressing the larger underlying issue.[128] Unless a total radical populist upheaval within society is managed, minor struggles are doomed to be corrupted and spoiled. In other words, any attempts to address individual issues without making changes to the underlying social structure will likely prove futile.

Marty Branagan emphasises that for lasting structural change, it is crucial to focus on popular or critical education. The process involves striving towards a grassroots transformation of both individuals and communities. The goal is to effect behavioural, and consciousness changes while promoting a profound form of emancipatory learning.[129] By advancing critical education, the awareness of responsibility can arise in people. Socially conscious people will be more eager for a change in social structure to manage a total upheaval. In this respect, social change is only possible if they are made by productive powers feeling a kind of responsibility.

In a 1974 investigation conducted by Varlık journal, Nesin stated that once the productive powers took control from exploiter powers, they would seize the chance to transform the social structure.[130] Yet, it is evident that a sudden shift in social structure is not feasible. It is a gradual process that takes time and effort. He believes that helping the transformation process is the ultimate aim of art.[131] Nesin and intelligentsia can be considered as a bridge or stage in social advancement, striving to guide people towards a better and more authentic way of life. This advancement can be managed through

[127] Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 50.
[128] Instead of leaving parts - problems regarding education, children, women etc. - of the biggest problem which is social order, unsettled, even the smallest parts are to be struggled to be solved; however, without an order, either capitalist or socialist, it is not possible to overcome the problems. See. Alaattin Bahçekapı, "Aziz Nesin'le Söyleşi", *Varlık Journal,* June 1982, Vol. 897, pp. 17-20, p. 20-21.
[129] Marty Branagan, "The Last Laugh: Humour in Community Activism", *Community Development Journal,* Vol. 42, No. 4, pp. 470-481, p. 473.
[130] Ibid.*,* p. 114-115.
[131] Baydar, "Aziz Nesin Anlatıyor", p. 186-189.

the gradual transformation of social structure by attacking sub-problems, which will together target the superstructure. This is the process for all countries, including Türkiye. For total improvement or change, the primary challenge lies in its social structure. To improve the civilisation, any nation must modify its social structure in favour of the working class making up of the majority of society. Therefore, without healing social structure for the working class, all of the struggles - imitating the superstructure institutions of developed countries will be ineffective or mostly abortive.

To Nesin, it is not reasonably possible to alter by just transforming the superstructure without changing the substructure. Thus, although all forms of art can be considered as superstructure elements, theatre, cinema, or painting alone cannot support society to change the social structure and advance civilisation. Additionally, he argues that all societal groups must take accountability to achieve an advanced society, and work towards this goal. The working class, in particular, should actively strive for this change with awareness. It can only then, art and the superstructure can play a role in facilitating this process of transformation.[132]

For transforming the social structure, achieving the core of pluralist democracy is crucial. In order to safeguard the rights of minorities and promote diverse perspectives, opinions, languages, and religions, pluralist democracy is necessary. However, simply voting for a political party is not sufficient for a truly democratic society; This is similar to what is depicted in the poem *Twilight*, where democracy takes on a *democratish* form that ultimately leads to deceit and manipulation in various aspects of society such as religion, economics, foreign and domestic politics, education, and healthcare.[133] Sixty per cent of the society believes in this democratish democracy as they are stupid, have been stupefied[134] and left stupid;[135] whereas capital owners seem to support it despite being aware of its flaws and underlying truths. Some of the rest, keeping silent, take part in the lies as they are afraid, and the remaining few

[132] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 30-33.
[133] Nesin, *Bir Tutam Aydınlık*, Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2013, p. 94-95.
[134] Nesin believes that stupidity is a need for the society; when people cannot solve their social and mostly economic problems, they head towards religion, beliefs or kinds of addiction. See. Ahmet Yıldız - Gürsel Korat, "Aziz Nesin'le Söyleşi", *Edebiyat ve Eleştiri*, 1994, Vol. 15-16, pp. 7-21, p. 11-12.
[135] Nesin, *Bir Tutam Aydınlık*, p. 94-95.

are the resisting brave enlightened people. Therefore, these enlightened people are responsible to trigger the change in structure protecting democracy.

Nesin argues that it is essential to ensure proper democracy and empower the Turkish people to participate in decision-making process by improving their economic and cultural status, which will contribute to the change of social structure. Thus, it is crucial for all individuals, regardless of their privileges, to have access to both material and spiritual wealth as well as a sense of national belonging. Attaining financial independence is the key to progress in social, political and cultural spheres.[136] Thus, the essence of democracy lies in the concept of democratisation. This implies that every individual should have access to the benefits and disadvantages, wealth and scarcity, positive and negative circumstances of a country in a socially equal way based on people's efforts and merits.

Nesin's struggles are driven not only by the goal of improving social structures and people's rights but also by the desire to achieve immortality. According to Plato, art is created in pursuit of achieving immortality.[137] Once people seek to attain earthly immortality, they may choose to have children whereas if they desire immaterial immortality, they head towards the good and beautiful to cultivate virtue through education. As a creator, the artist strives to nurture their desire to produce excellence and bring forth positivity through their art.[138] In parallel with Plato, he also believes that writers should strive for immortality through their works, which will make their lives meaningful. For atheist writers, this concept holds great importance as it provides them with a compelling rationale for pursuing strong goals for a more meaningful immortal life. Moreover, he associates immortality with the fear of death;[139] believing in God, and the afterlife, people can better overcome their fear of death. However,

[136] Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 14-15.
[137] Qtd. in. Sevda Şener, *Dünden Bugüne Tiyatro Düşünceleri,* Dost Publications, Ankara, 2006, p. 23.
[138] Ibid, p. 23.
[139] In an interview made by Emin Çölaşan, Nesin reveals that although he is a former hafiz, memorizing the Koran before primary school, he is an atheist and non-believer who has limitless respect for all believers but not against the religion. See. Emin Çölaşan, "72 Yaşındaki Aziz Nesin", *İnsanlar Konuşa Konuşa,* Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2012, p. 195. Moreover, he states that he respects the beliefs of the people, thus, likewise, he expects people respect for his freedom of unbelief because it has to be between God and individual only. See. Aziz Nesin, "Bu Kaçıncı Öldürülüşüm Hain", *Sözcük: 100. Doğum Yılında Aziz Nesin Özel Sayısı*, Jan-Feb 2015, p. 11.

atheists must find other ways to cope with it[140], which can only be attained by reaching the third dimension of life.

To Nesin, life consists of three dimensions, the first two being common to all living beings, while the third dimension is unique to humans. All dimensions can be regarded as a fight and rise against death. The first dimension is lengthwise living which refers to the actions of all living creatures to sustain their lives, such as eating, breathing, protecting from nature, etc. The second dimension is breadthwise living, the desire and natural instinct of living creatures to continue their lineage. Finally, the third dimension is in-depth living; the mark people leave on the world through their material being.[141] Many individuals acknowledge the significance of the third dimension, whether they are aware of it or not. For instance, some may crave their names onto trees, while others create works of art to nurture their spirituality.

People desire to deepen their spiritual existence by maintaining a connection with a craft, which is regarded as the most sacred endeavour of human beings. The concept of a life beyond the physical realm gives individuals the perception of a more profound existence, which ultimately imbues them with strength and lessens their apprehension towards death.[142] Fear of death urges him to be a "good, right, beautiful and virtuous" person without necessarily being scared of hell or being thrilled by heaven[143], as can be seen in his works.

In his quest to reach a higher level of spirituality, attain the third dimension and deserve to die, he has dedicated himself to writing literary works and articles besides tirelessly fighting for the betterment of others throughout his life. He has lived "the life of ten people in forty-four years"[144] yet has not been able to finish all his plans and works. He has always wished to do much more to *deserve to die*.[145]

[140] Nesin, 2009, p. 157.
[141] Qtd. in. Yasemen Kiriş Yatağan – Ömer Şekerci, "Beyond Humour: Revolutionary Theatre of a Socialist Playwright, Aziz Nesin", *Turkish Studies – Language and Literature*, June 2020, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 775-786, p. 778.
[142] Ibid., p. 202-203.
[143] Ali Nesin, *Gömüyü Arayan Adam: Fotoğraflarla Aziz Nesin'in Yaşamöyküsü,* Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2013, p.31-32.
[144] Nesin, 2009, p. 71.
[145] Ibid, p. 71.

He argues that people are not aware of the fact that they are supposed to deserve their lives. Therefore, he deems society in binary oppositions just like light/dark, blindness/seeing, deafness/hearing, etc... to show people who "are not aware of the light and enlightenment as they live in the dark"[146] or who do not know about their blindness as they do not know how to see. This is the underlying reason for the fact that his plays exist in a state where the characters do or do not deserve life or death. By making them see the dark, he aims to make the audience realise the light. Through his actions, he hopes to inspire the audience and the reader to be aware of their responsibility for their own lives and society. Additionally, he believes this consciousness will encourage them to change the social structure by eliminating the prevalent deficiencies in society.

To contribute to the change in social structure, he has written an impressive body of work, spanning articles for newspapers and journals, novels, plays, stories, memoirs, children's books, poems, letters, and travel memoir books. However, he holds theatre in high regard compared to other art genres[147], evident from the larger volume of collected papers and published articles dedicated to theatre and plays compared to other genres.[148]

He took the profession of playwriting from the early years of his career. His first encounter with the theatre – a tent theatre - was at the age of eight. The play, narrating the life of a family, is a criticism of dictatorship. During the play, the father assumes a new persona when he puts on an old fur coat. He becomes a bully and a tyrant and starts ordering the other members around, demanding them to fulfil his orders. The family members follow his orders dreadfully. However, once he takes off his fur coat, he transforms back into an obedient character. One day, the servant of the house named İbiş dons the fur coat and notices that everyone in the house becomes afraid of him. With the fur coat on, he maintains oppressing and tyrannising over the family.[149] As the pastiche of this play, he authored his very first play at the age of

[146] Ayşegül Yüksel, *Çağdaş Türk Tiyatrosundan On Yazar,* Mitos Boyut Press, 1997, İstanbul, p. 34.
[147] Nesin quite often utters his displeasure and discontent in writing newspaper articles however as his plays do not earn enough, he has had to spend some of his time preparing newspaper articles instead of writing ten-fifteen plays in a year with the abundance of subject matters he has collected and saved. See. Aziz Nesin, "Ben Mehmet Nusret", *Kafa*, July 2018, Vol. 47, p. 29.
[148] Yüksel, *1997*, p. 30-31.
[149] Ibid., p. 213.

seven or eight.[150] The subject matter greatly influenced his literary life, as evidenced by the profound reflections in his writing. For instance, in 1971, he wrote *Zat-ı Devletleri İbiş Hazretleri* in Maltepe Military Prison.[151] Moreover, tyrannising and oppressing people are quite common themes in his writings. He has produced works to fight against oppression.

Playwriting is a long-running and continuous process that should not be interrupted. For a play consisting of 50-70 pages, he states, playwrights have 600-700 pages of that play's comments in their mind that a play contains within itself a more profound meaning between the lines and in the background.[152] As it is not easy to compose a play; he mentions rewriting some plays more than fifteen times, making editions in each print.[153] He explains the playwriting process as follows: "If what I write is a play, the preparation for it begins a few years ago. The notes fill a file gradually progressing."[154] Whenever something inspires him, he channels it into crafting a play.

He did not have any difficulty in finding a theme and subject matter for writing a play, because, during the peak of his writing career, Türkiye underwent numerous significant transformations. By this token, Sevda Şener cites the impact of media, the advertising industry, new technology, computers, and multicultural capitalist systems on our value system, culture, and art in the 1950s and 1960s. These factors led to discussions around the state of individuals within this world, their confusion and lack of awareness regarding the reasons and unknown outcomes explored in some plays.[155] During this transitional period, the playwrights touched upon the dramatic situations of individuals in society, their struggle to recognise their true selves, the limited perspective hindering them from seeing beyond superficial reality that led to suffering, and their inability to control their actions, as they desired.[156]

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[150] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 180-181.
[151] Nesin, 2016, p. 213- 214.
[152] Ali Z. Oraloğlu, "Tiyatroda Aziz Nesin Sezonu", *Aziz Nesin: Sora Sora Cennet Bulunur*, Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2012, p. 209.
[153] Yüksel, 1997, p. 30-31.
[154] Nesin, 2009, p. 99.
[155] Şener, 2011, p. 78.
[156] Ibid., p. 78.

During the transition towards a consumerist society, individuals found themselves existing within a world that advanced beyond their awareness. This led to a conflict between their established norms and the new rules of the evolving world, resulting in feelings of weakness, mortality and ignorance. These emotions often manifest as fear and anxiety. [157] People felt frightened by this insecurity and became helpless to take precautions against a system running beyond their will handled by the playwrights, including Nesin.

Throughout his life, he witnessed military coups, various political and social changes, and experiences living among all members of society, from ordinary citizens to elites. This helped him to gain a wide perspective. He had the ability to identify the parts of society not functioning properly and specified the root causes. He was always in close contact with the people, as he felt responsible for the whole world with a strong focus on his fellow citizens. He maximised every moment of his life by utilising his strong observation skills in his creative processes and composing his works. Additionally, people confided their recollections and personal revelations with him, leading to an abundance of human interaction and experiences.[158] He preserved his memories by jotting down notes. Thus, he always lived as if the whole world were his notepad in his pocket.[159]

One of his goals in writing drama lay in his desire to contribute positively to the audiences' lives and actions,[160] which he formulates as follows: Each audience is a different receiver, and each is affected by the play according to their competencies. The total spiritual values of the audiences are represented by the variable X. When the audience departs the saloon, if they are still X, it means that the play fails to make an impact on them. If the score is X-1 when they leave, it indicates that the play has a negative impact on them. However, if the audience leaves the saloon as X + 1,2,3..., it signifies that the play has managed to create the demanded positive impact. As art forms aim to positively impact and enrich their audience (X+1...) - from elites or illiterate stratum, regardless of their social status or education level - there must be

[157] Ibid., p. 79.
[158] Kabacalı, 2007, p. 33.
[159] Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 52.
[160] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 163.

realism in theatre for a playwright, and the realism in theatre begins with respect to reality.[161]

By adding realism to his plays, he plans to contribute to enriching the perspective of his audience and reader so they can realise the conditions they are living in. Nevertheless, he is aware that realism should not be given solely; so, he livens up the plays with a humorous tone to make them more charming.

According to İpşiroğlu, his humour is grounded in realism enabling people to recognise societal issues and shortcomings.[162] In an environment where a pack of lies, misdeeds, and faults are normalised and appreciated, it can be incredibly difficult for individuals to recognise the truth about malfunctioning in the system. Additionally, some may choose to ignore the truth if it does not align with their personal agenda. These can lead to blindness. Nesin draws a correlation between the condition of blindness and feelings of fear and oppression. The easiest way to handle fear and oppression is to acknowledge the current state because when someone fits into the dominant powers, the fear disappears. Emphasising faith over critical thinking, the motto of such powers is *believing instead of thinking*. So, fear causes acceptance; and acceptance brings blindness, which he calls stupefaction. He aims to make people regain consciousness of reality with his sense of dark humour, satire and wit presented in his plays. İpşiroğlu argues that humour serves as an antidote for society's tendency towards acceptance and blindness.[163]

Nesin employs a method that aims to empower individuals to become more aware of their lives, circumstances, and the unfairness of societal systems. This approach seeks to eliminate the fear of death blindness and acceptance as well as to promote happiness by challenging societal norms and beliefs. His approach entails creating a sense of shock and confusion initially, with the ultimate goal of rectifying and enhancing the world.[164] He believes that a writer has to strive to comprehend not only the naked truth but also the spiritual reality of people within their reciprocal

[161]Ibid, p. 14-18.
[162] Zehra İpşiroğlu, "Mizahla Direnme: Aziz Nesin'in Tiyatro Uyarlamaları", *TEB OYUN*, Winter 2016, İstanbul, No:28, p. 20-26, p. 21.
[163] Ibid., p. 21.
[164] Kabacalı, 2007, p. 33.

conflicts. Thus, in his plays, he attempts to portray an individual's conflicts with himself, others, and society but not directly; instead, he struggles to transmit the conflicts making people realise the spiritual structure of people by skilfully highlighting minor details.[165] To be able to have full sight of the inner thoughts and emotions, the core, the conscious and subconscious mind on a deeper level, he utilises various techniques and tools like "abstractions, assumptions, symbols, images and imageries, analysis and irregularities."[166] He makes use of them as a tool, not as a purpose. For instance, he prefers to use abstraction as a technique to convey core reality. Abstraction resembles zero. Although zero does not exist in nature, the human mind creates it as a valuable tool to comprehend the reality of nature and objects. Likewise, abstraction is required to explain the realities.[167] Regarding the abstractions, Nesin states that "I do not write abstract plays, I use abstractions as a tool to reflect the core of the concrete" and "I do not write anti-theatre or absurd plays"[168]; but in order the core of reality to be relieved, he makes use of anti-theatrical and absurd elements.

Parallel with this notion, his plays are not abstract plays, as he himself explains if a play "takes its source from life, real life, it is concrete, not abstract," and the important thing is if the play deals with concrete facts, the abstract words do not determine the concreteness or abstractions of a work. Abstractions may be given to reflect concrete facts more accurately. If a play is not provided with natural not artificial language and with current subject matters; if it does not contribute to a person's perception, does not present the consciousness to change himself by changing the social structure, that play is an abstract play, and otherwise it is concrete.[169] Moreover, when a play is said to narrate the dark comedy of people, then it becomes abstract. Nevertheless, if the following questions are asked and answered, then the play becomes concrete: where the people are; when they live; and in what conditions they

[165] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 161.
[166] Ibid., p. 161.
[167] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 14-18.
[168] Enver Töre expresses that there is a similarity between the dialogues of absurd theatre and traditional Turkish theatre; in both, sometimes, the dialogues becomes nonsense; nevertheless, they bear a social and philosophical background in those dialogues which seems to be meaningless. See. Enver Töre, "Türk Tiyatrosunun Kaynakları", *Turkish Studies,* Winter 2009, Vol. 4. No. 1-II, p. 2182-2348. Likewise, at the abstractions of Nesin'a plays, there are various ideas, especially propaganda and criticim.
[169] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 164.

are; in short, people in the plays are to be analysed by such questions as where, when, under which circumstances in order to realise the concreteness of the plays.[170]

He strived to bring attention to the unjust conditions and situations caused by economic policies contradicting democratic principles. In an investigation by Mülkiyeliler Birliği Journal, he states that the dominant stratum, despite their minority, keeps the rest of the strata down under their hegemony and exploits them. One possible explanation is that specific laws and regulations are not adequately enforced or are selectively enforced to favour a particular ruling class, disregarding the principles of democracy and the wishes of the people. In a nation where both domestic and foreign exploitation are legally permitted, discussions on democratic rights and social justice are not prioritised. As discussed by Nesin, the social structure, including both the sub-structure and superstructure, is severely damaged, and repairing is not feasible. It requires complete reconstruction. However, the dominant stratum prevents any significant change from taking place. As a result, social accumulation remains the only viable option for a modern democratic structure to thrive.[171] Nesin believes that individuals in positions of political power are unlikely to criticise the functioning of any organisation as they are primarily concerned with their own interests. However, he relies on society to initiate change and restructure power and organisations.

For him, society's definition is closely linked to the economy, and the critical aspect of this connection is exploitation. Together with all the people who are exploited and people whose rate of being exploited is much higher than the rate of their act of exploiting are called society. Some people are exploiting while being exploited at the same time. Similarly, people who are exploited much more than they exploit also constitute society. In other words, labour and semi-labour - exploiting and being exploited simultaneously- constitute society.[172]-[173]

Although the dominance of one class over the other is forbidden by the law, in Türkiye, a minority dominates because this minority has organisational power - the government - which is the reason for the incapacity of the laws. Therefore, all strata

[170] Ibid, p. 172.
[171] Ibid, p. 29-30.
[172] Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 24
[173] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 35.

except for this minority are consciously or unconsciously exploited inevitably.[174] Throughout the years, the dominant classes have conditioned society to prioritise their own interests. As a result, society has normalised the conditions that are actually disadvantageous for them. This obstructs their awareness of realising and tackling the unequal and unjust conditions they have already inured.[175] For this reason, making people recognise the failing parts of their lives is a challenging task. Here, revolutionary theatre becomes prominent with its primary objective to assist people in breaking free from their ingrained negative backgrounds and instil revolutionary and inquisitive thinking[176] in society to achieve the life they deserve.

In accordance with his goals in writing plays, he does not draw his characters fully with their physical appearances or reflect their immaterial world totally; instead, he shows the world in which that character lives and lets the audience deduce and comprehend the details of the characters from their actions and conflicts with themselves or the society.[177] He portrays the conflicts of negativities for people to deduce reality automatically. By this, it could be noted that almost all heroes in his plays are negative characters or portrayed with negative and positive sides with a dominant emphasis on the negative features. Yet, nearly all of the characters are cute but pathetic individuals.[178]

Like the plainly portrayed characters in his plays, the chain of events is not presented in complex structures. Instead of striving to comprehend what is written, the reader should endeavour to think, contemplate, and comment on his works after reading and understanding his works without any struggle.[179] This is the reason why he avoids drawing complex plots without allowing many different places or various time transitions in his works.[180] Moreover, Charles Dickens emphasises, "But if a man wishes to write for all, he must know how to use the speech of all, and he will come

[174] Aziz Nesin, *Çuvala Doldurulmuş Kediler*, Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2011, p. 178-179.
[175] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 36.
[176] Ibid., p. 37.
[177] Emin Özdemir, "Aziz Nesin'in Yazınsal Eylemi", *Sözcükler*, Ocak-Şubat 2015, Vol. 53, p. 28.
[178] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 163.
[179] Nesin, 2014, p. 107.
[180] Güneş Sütçü, "Nikolay Vasilyeviç Gogol'un 'Müfettiş' (Revizor) ve Aziz Nesin'in 'Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz' Adlı Eserlerinde 'Bürokrasi ve İnsan Manzaraları' Teması", *International Multidiscipliner Conference,* 2016, p. 513-518, p.517.

nearest all hearts with words that are familiar in every home […]"[181] In that vein, Nesin avoids the abstruse usage of language since his target is the whole strata of society.

His plays capture the enduring conflicts of the post-World War II era up to the present day. His plays challenge the reader's minds, dealing with the ever current and universal de factos so vividly that their relevance can be observed in everyday life. His persuasive and sincere narration style allows one to easily monitor and comprehend language, civilisation, behavioural codes, and norms. This is further enhanced by the clever use of humour and deep satire in the language.

Pointing him as "the best satirist ever", Talat Sait Halman praises his satiric wit as follows:

> In scores of books, Nesin provides a strong indictment of the oppression and brutalisation of the commoner. His hero is the man in the street, beleaguered by the inimical forces of modern life. He lambastes bureaucracy and exposes economic inequities in stories that effectively combine local colour and universal verities.[182]

Talat Sait Halman's review for *Do Something Met* delves into the factors that have made him one of the most accomplished satirists of Modern Türkiye, as well as the prevalent themes in his plays:

> His fiction derives its popularity from deft and sound narrative structure, character depictions ranging from the subtlest intimations to the most ribald caricaturization, and crisp colloquial hilarious dialogue. Although his heroes, non-heroes and anti-heroes are steeped in local traits, the vast majority of them are universal types beset by such worldwide problems as bureaucracy, generation gap, social injustice, economic exploitation, et cetera as well as by such human foibles as greed, vanity, hypocrisy, pride and countless other cardinal afflictions.[183]

His plays are grouped into three categories; dramatic plays: *Will You Come Here, Please?* (1950), *Do Something Met* (1959), *Çiçu* (1970), *Hold My Hand Rovni* (1970); Dark humour plays: *The Monster of Toros* (1963), *Come on and Kill Me My Dear* (1970); Musical plays: *The War Between the Whistlemakers and Brushmakers*

[181] W. F. Bolton – D. Crystal, *The English Language Volume 9: Essays by Linguists and Men of Letters, 1858-1964*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1969, p. 2.
[182] Talat Sait Halman, "Introduction: Turkish Literature: An Overview", *The Turkish Muse: Views & Reviews, 1960s-1990s,* Syracuse University Press Crescent Hill Publications, New York, 2006, p. 12.
[183] Talat Sait Halman, "*Bir Şey Yap Met* by Aziz Nesin", *Books Abroad,* 1974, Vol. 48, No. 4, p. 841-842.

(1968), *Three Karagoz Plays* (1969)*, Give Me My Rights Hakkı* (1992)*, Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* (1992), etc.[184]

In his dramatic plays, he explores the individual's position in life, utilising abstraction as a powerful tool. He concludes that when individuals struggle for society's best, their acts gain meaning. As a result, they deserve to live and die, transcending into a higher realm of existence, which is the third dimension. On the other hand, plays of dark humour highlight the flaws in the corrupt system, leading individuals to distance themselves from society more definitely. Besides, musical plays offer a unique form of entertainment by inducing laughter and providing a sense of relaxation. Nevertheless, his musical plays combine laughter with a powerful core without frankly intending to give lessons. The aim of these performances is to impact the audience on a deeper level to contribute to their non-material being for long-lasting impression by criticising each individual, society, and institution.

Despite the categorisation of his plays, the stability and integrity of all his works are worth examining.[185] Each of his plays is a single part of a whole and interrelated. Their internal consistency promotes the greater good, democracy, and improvement. Therefore, each play's message serves his aim; when combined, these plays form a cohesive picture, much like completing a crossword puzzle. His intention in writing these plays is then fully realised.

[184] Nesin's plays have not found many opportunities to be staged and thus, it has prevented them to achieve wide circulation. This is because, his plays are quite hard to be staged in terms of their dramaturgy, stage and light designs, characterization. See. Yüksel, 1997, p. 32. Many of Nesin's plays have been staged in foreign countries before in Türkiye, For instance, *Do Something Met* was not staged in Türkiye but staged in California at the Pasadena Playhouse. *Do Something Met* and *Will You Come Here, Please?* have been staged in numerous theatres across Europe. See. *The Reader's Encyclopedia of World Drama*, Dover Publications, Canada, 1969, p. 600. State theatres were not interested in Nesin's plays. See. Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 253. However, as his plays are challenging in terms of acting and staging that National Theatres and City Theatres are to stage them not private theatres because of their apprehension about the staging expenditure besides box-office return.[184] Nevertheless, some of his plays -*Barbaros'un Torunu, Düdükçülerle Fırçacıların Savaşı, Hadi Öldürsene Canikom, Toros Canavarı, Çiçu, Biraz Gelir Misiniz?, Üç Minyatür Oyun, Karagözün Berberliği* - was staged in Türkiye, while some of his plays - *Biraz Gelir Misiniz?, Bir Şey Yap Met* - was performed in Germany, Romania, Russia and America. See. Oraloğlu, "Tiyatroda Aziz Nesin Sezonu", p. 208. *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* was staged in Mülheim Ruhr Theatre for about two years. See. Nesin, *Çuvala Doldurulmuş Kediler*, p 131.

[185] Kabacalı, 2007, p. 212.

In his plays, logic, satire, events, and characters are so interwoven that no single element forges ahead. His works can be read multiple times and viewed through movie adaptations or plays without causing boredom, which helps to ensure widespread acceptance and recognition across all social classes. Another reason for his popularity is his memorable characters. Depicting different features of individuals, he draws real living characters.[186] For instance, Zübük is a dodgy person who uses deceitful tactics to achieve his goals. At the end of the novel *Zübük* (1961), while informing his friend about the affairs of Zübükzade İbrahim, a German teacher's words are worth mentioning: "Now, I do understand very clearly that Zübük is not unique; we are each zübüks. [...] If we were not all zübüks, such zübüks would not grow up among us. [...] In fact, zübük is us, me, you..."[187] Likewise, Mateh in *Biraz Gelir Misiniz?* and Met in *Do Something Met* are the real figures within the society. Mateh and Met struggle to gain immortality and reach the third dimension by being beneficial to society; by doing so, they believe in deserving to live and die. In the play, Mateh reveals his struggle by saying he resists death; however, people who buy and sell territory, water or weather are doomed to disappear.[188]

His literary works have gained global recognition and they have been translated into over twenty-four languages. Furthermore, his plays have been staged in more than seven foreign countries. He has received several prestigious awards throughout his career at various international humour competitions, including the Golden Palm in Italy (1956-1957), the Golden Hedgehog in Bulgaria (1966), and in Moscow (1969). In 1968, he was honoured with the Karacan Award for his Three Karagöz Plays and received the Turkish Language Society Award for Çiçu in 1969.[189] In addition, in 1974, he was awarded Lotus Prize in the Philippines; received Hitar Petar Prize in 1976 and Madaralı Novel Prize for his novel entitled *Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz* in 1978, and Tolstoy Gold Medal by Soviet Children's Fund in 1989.

[186] Özdemir, "Aziz Nesin'in Yazınsal Eylemi", p. 31.
[187] Aziz Nesin, *Zübük: Kağnı Gölgesindeki İt,* Nesin Publication House, İstanbul, 2012, p. 268.
[188] Aziz Nesin, *Bütün Oyunları I*, Nesin Publication House, İstanbul, 2011, p. 78.
[189] Ibid., p. 371.

1.2. Nesin's Humour as A Form of Satire

With the surname act of 1934, Mehmet Nusret notes that some people select their surnames based on the qualities they lack. For instance, a mean person prefers a surname meaning generous. Being aware of this absurdity, he has chosen *Nesin* - 'What are you?' - as his surname to regain his consciousness by questioning who he is and what he is in reality when people call his surname.[190] Based on this anecdote, it is evident that satire and humour hold a considerably significant part in his life, so he utilises them to develop an infotainment format.

With his popularity spreading beyond borders, he had a sharp tongue and pen captivating a wide audience.[191] He enjoyed delivering his messages through witty and satirical humour demanding constant mental effort to understand the message embedded in it. This satirical humour hinders the smile on the humour writer's face, shelters his anger and deep thought without any violence, and causes the audience to laugh with revolt until they burst into tears.[192] This dark humour is, among others, one of the reasons that make him popular among all classes of society.

Blending laughter and criticism in his writing, he shed light on the circumstances and events from the daily life of society with his heroes from the folk with national details.[193] He depicts individuals from all countries, focusing on their contradictions, emotional states, weaknesses, motives, and values – particularly those who belong to oppressed classes. He uses a humorous approach, akin to that of Nasreddin Hodja, to highlight societal change and government oppression in a realistic manner.[194] Once he stated that "Nasreddin Hodja is not a historical identity [but] a social identity [...] a period [or] the identity of the society" who "is the collective consciousness [and] reaction of the society, reflecting social pain and joy with

[190] Mehmet Güler, "Çağdaş Nasrettin Hoca: Aziz Nesin", *Bir Dokun Bin Dinle*, Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2010, p. 112.
[191] Yalman Onaran, "Gözlerim Görmeden Yazıyorum!: 107 Kitaba İmza Atmış Yazı Fabrikası: Aziz Nesin", *Nokta,* 18-24 Eylül 1994, Vol. 39, İstanbul, p. 34.
[192] Nuray Çiftçi, "Anısına", *Güzel Yazılar,* July-August 2004, İstanbul, p. 13.
[193] Cemile A. Ercan, "Aziz Nesin'in "Fil Hamdi"siyle Kurt Kusenberg'in "Ters Bir Bakış" Adlı Öykülerinin Karşılaştırılması", *A. Ü. Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, 2007, Vol. 35, No. 35, pp. 191-200
[194] Kabacalı, 2007, p. 112.

humour"[195]; thus, his humour is social just like himself. Hence, he is regarded as Nasreddin Hodja of our age.[196]

In an interview with Mirjana Teodosijeviç from Belgrade University, he emphasised that Hodja's popularity and effectiveness stemmed from his humorous stories that offered practical solutions for various common and current problems people encounter every day. In addition, Hodja was a humanitarian upholding universal values while drawing inspiration from local sources for his stories. Similar to Hodja, he offered practical solutions to current issues faced by people worldwide, drawing inspiration from local sources.[197] In addition, just like Hodja's stories are for all people within the society, his humour does not cause a kind of alienation[198] in any class of the society; instead, his works engage and integrate all people from all strata. It is undeniable that the humour of Nasreddin Hodja or Nesin is utilitarian folk humour which can be reused whenever needed.

A humour writer has the ability to direct their frustration and anger towards a deserving target and turn it into something beneficial for the greater good. This positive demolition can be a powerful tool in writing. Instead of taking up arms, to overthrow despotic authority, he utilises the satirical power of his writing. His strength lies in his ability to use humour, which possesses a unique class identity compared to other forms of art. Humour serves as a powerful tool for those who are defenceless, and it can often succeed where wisdom falls short.[199] Humour writers often have a specific target for their writing, directing their wit and sarcasm towards a particular subject. As Hardy M. Griffin points out, the pen becomes the most potent revolver, as sharp as a sword:

[195] Mehmet Güler, "Aziz Nesin'le Söyleşi", *Bir Dokun Bin Dinle*, Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2010, p. 185.
[196] Ertop, "Ölümsüzleşen Gülmece Ustası için Aziz Nesin'lik...", p. 35.
[197] Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 48-49.
[198] İpşiroğlu, 1998*,* p. 103.
[199] Tazeen Gul – Tabassum Javed, "Humour and Satire in Urdu Literature", *The Dialogue,* Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 178-185, p. 178.

> Before the man of letters, there should be a target at which they will get angry. [...] They get mad at someone, some people, a stratum, a tradition, a law, a statute, a class, or an institution under whose pressure they remain. They cannot reveal their anger directly, physically or with a reaction equal to the impact of anger; they cannot fight explicitly because they cannot cope with it alone. Then, they exalt themselves by relieving their feelings, overwhelmed by oppression, into a work of literature. They say, for them, the pen is stronger than the sword.[200]

Humour is more influential for people in terms of effectiveness and prevalence, which gives them the opportunity to raise awareness more than other genres. Moreover, it is contagious, and if humour is to leave a mark on people, it is to contain subject matter and essence; and if it is to have a long-lasting impression on individuals, it has to be folk humour - humour aiming good results for the society - with a revolutionary essence.[201] Furthermore, folk humour is a necessity for societies to detect malfunctioning within the systems, and develop their conditions.

He aimed to attract people's attention to the religious fundamentalism, exploitation, democracy based on the illiterate society and weaknesses of capitalism and capitalist management incompatible with common sense. To him, the root cause of these issues was political in nature.

Nesin stated that "humour, folk humour and populist humour [...] is a weapon of the beaten" [202] to diminish tyranny and especially the maladministration[203] of dominant and authoritarian powers in a peaceful way.[204] Similar to Althusser, he believes that art can be the power of the oppressed people. When people cannot stage a war or struggle against the oppressive rulers or the dominant power, humour serves as a substitute weapon, providing people hope, strength and vigour to move on. This recalled humour becomes functional and helps people reflect their reactions in a nonviolent way.

Social conditions recall humour at certain times.[205] In other words, functional humour - social and political – goes up at some times. For example, having experienced a golden age in their lives, people may rise up against oppressive regimes

[200] Qtd. in. Özdemir, "Aziz Nesin'in Yazınsal Eylemi", p. 26.
[201] Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 63-64.
[202] Baydar, "Aziz Nesin Anlatıyor", p. 190-191.
[203] Nesin, *Sanat Yazıları,* 2011, p. 311-12.
[204] Ibid, p. 325-6.
[205] Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 90.

by taking up arms in pressure periods. On the other hand, to reduce the dictatorial power of the government, they may take advantage of humour. For instance, following World War II, Türkiye did not participate in the war, but significantly suffered from poverty and oppression. The society, except for black market riches, was in a state of mourning. Those were the times, when social conditions called a tool of reaction. The *Markopaşa* journal[206] was the result of that oppressive power and political crisis.[207] It was the product of functional humour of the society against oppression.

It was the one-party period in Türkiye, as was a prolific writer; he produced most of his works. Adnan Binyazar calls it a *fear period* when ordinary people, writers, and philosophers were under great oppression. In such a period, finding an opportunity to go after one's rights was almost impossible. As people felt the constraint, a kind of inner criticism increased. This anxiety rose in some quarters and echoed heavily in the works of many writers like Nesin.[208]

The result of constraint and oppression was fear; in other words, it was the emotion arising in response to such limitations and restrictions. According to Nesin, fear is a fundamental aspect of human experience that underlies his works. Some people may handle these restrictions by ridiculing the authorities they have previously tried to resist but eventually, fear to take action or revolt. By ridiculing the dominant force, the oppressed and the frightened people can gain the power to compete with it. Under such conditions, humour can even become a useful tool for a sense of relief that some statesmen allow such humour to prevent rebellions. According to Bülent Ecevit,

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[206] First issue of *Marko Paşa* Journal was published in 25.11.1946. In his letter to Sabahattin Ali, Nesin expresses that *Marko Paşa* Journal has been so popular not because of the other articles in the journal but because it bears Aziz Nesin's name. The journal ends in 1947 with its 23rd volumes. When it has been banned, again, along with Sabahattin Ali, Aziz Nesin issues *Merhumpaşa* Journal in 26.05.1947 and it maintaines for just four volumes. Following, in 08.09.1947, they publish *Ali Baba* just for two volumes. See. Remzi İnanç, "Aziz Nesin'in Sabahattin Ali'ye Mektupları ["Marko Paşa"nın Mutfağından], *Varlık Journal,*July 2011, Vol. 1246, pp. 55-59, p. 56-57. Tarık Dursun Kakınç expresses that they have bought the *Marko Paşa* Journals - which are published with other names many of which ending with Paşa such as "*Malûmpaşa, Merhumpaşa, Bizim Paşa, Yedi-Sekiz Paşa, Hür Markopaşa, Öküz Mehmet Paşa, Ali Baba, Geveze, Medet, Baştan, Yeni Baştan*" See. Tevfik Taş, "Markopaşa: Halk için Siyasi Mizah", http://yenie.net (11.06.2017). - however they have not been able to laugh because of the prohibition by İnönü as the 'National Chief', and by Ahmet Demir as the General Director of Public Security "who wants them neither to read nor to laugh". See. Tarık Dursun Kakınç, "Aziz Nesin ("Aziz"), *Varlık Journal,* 1995, Vol. 1055, p. 33.

[207] Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 93-95

[208] Kabacalı,2007, p. 113.

Ottoman Sultans provided a free zone as they were "clever enough to realise that if they tolerated the people's freedom of speech, the people, in turn, could suffer the regime's despotism more easily."[209] It aligns with Hegel's concept:

> freedom of speech is far less dangerous than silence imposed by force [...] [with which] men have to swallow everything, while if they are permitted to argue, they have an outlet as well as some satisfaction; *and in this way, a thing may be pushed ahead more easily.*[210]

The above-mentioned argument proves the idea that a feeling of satisfaction arises with humour, decreasing the fever of negative energy. However, this relief may become a dangerous feeling when it overdoses. This concerns Nesin about the level of satisfaction experienced by readers or audiences after engaging with humorous content. He strongly emphasised and warned that the relief should be provided at a moderate level, so as not to diminish people's motivation to strive.[211] This directed him to focus on humorous activism[212] because:

> Humorous activism enlivens confronting or weighty topics with accessible humour. It establishes common ground and creates liminal atmospheres conducive to conversion. It is highly inclusive, drawing in crowds and potential adherents, grabbing media attention and making movements grow. It communicates widely and exposes covert processes, subtly but certainly shifting public opinion. Finally, it prevents burnout by bringing balance, inspiration and sustainability to activism.[213]

Mastering humorous activism, he redresses the balance[214] via his witty use of humour to connect with people on a deeper level. This makes his messages more tempting for the spectator and reader without detracting from the significance of his messages.

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[209] Bülent Ecevit, "Prospects and Difficulties of Democratization in the Middle East", *Rules and Rights in the Middle East: Democracy, Law, And Society*, University of Washington Press, London, 1993, p. 159.

[210] Karl Raimund Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies,* Princeton University Press, Oxford, 1994, p. 672.

[211] Baydar, "Aziz Nesin Anlatıyor", p. 190-191.

[212] Activism refers to the practice of energetically campaigning for political or social change. See. www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com (11.10.2016)

[213] Qtd. in. Kiriş Yatağan – Şekerci, "Beyond Humour", p. 778.

[214] For Nesin, balance and peace is interrelated. Peace is the balance redressed between opposite powers. For human beings, it recalls individual peace and harmony with herself/himself -this time, the balance should be redressed among an individual's own oppositions - as well as her/his surrounding and the society. If a person can set the balance among opposite emotions, he/she lives in peace within himself/herself. On the other hand, the peace among social classes is called social peace. Nesin states that he is a supporter of social peace despite his doubts about the social peace. He expresses his uneasiness about that social peace serves some people while becoming disadvantageous for the others; for instance, employers do not stand up for the employee when everything goes well for themselves (employers) despite disadvantages for the employee. Only when people get down to

2. SOME REMARKS ON BOND'S LIFE

This study does not aim to give detailed data on Bond's private life but it's important to provide some background information on his life in order to understand his social and political criticism, his motivations for writing, and his use of violence. However, since he hasn't written a biography, there is very little information available about his life.

He was born in 1934 as the son of farm labourers in the Holloway suburb of North London. Like many other children during World War II, he was evacuated to Cornwall due to the Blitz, German bomb attacks on the United Kingdom. There, he was adopted by a couple. He was aware of the fact that staying behind his parents would be killed. Later, he moved to his grandparents in Shippea Hill for a little bit, then returned to London where he, along with the other people, was avoiding the flying bombs. He regarded the surroundings he was born into as a *thunderstorm* of bombs. He mentioned his first bombardment memory was when he was five. When he was eleven, bombardments were continuing. In one of his poems, he depicts the surrounding as follows:

> [...] the army the army taught me ten ways to kill my enemy
> And the community taught me a hundred ways to kill my neighbour
> I saw there was no justice between the one part of the community and another
> An injustice is like a pebble dropped in the centre of the ocean
> When the ripples reach the shores they have turned into tidal waves that drown cities[215]

This was a traumatic and dreadful experience that resulted in extreme sensitivity and awareness towards his surroundings from the pure perspective of a child to the mature vision of a talented playwright.[216] These circumstances established a ground for his political and social criticism and made him an activist playwright. Moreover, his childhood experiences clarify his use of violence in handling unjust social structure.

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redress balance between the employer and the employee, then there will be hope for the social peace. See. Nesin, *Soruşturmada,* 2013, p. 34.

[215] Edward Bond, *The Hidden Plot: Notes on Theatre and the State*, Methuen, London, 2000, p.2.

[216] Tony Coult, *The Plays of Edward Bond*, Methuen Theatrefile, London, 1979, p. 11-12.

In 1946, he continued at Crouch End Secondary Modern School, where he discovered his interest and passion for composition, which shed light on his creativity. A school taking the students to Bedford Theatre to see Donald Wolfit's Macbeth[217] provided him with a remarkable and inspiring adventure which pictured very familiar surroundings:

> For the first time in my life - I remember this quite distinctly - I met somebody who was actually talking about my problems, about the life I'd been living, the political society around me. Nobody else had said anything about my life to me at all, ever... I *knew* all these people, they were there in the street or in the newspapers - this in fact was my world.[218]

That play arose theatre affection in him that with this impression has never been lost. He was deeply interested in politics because he had been surrounded by it from birth to adulthood. Everything in his world was viewed and explained through a political lens, and he was introduced to politics at a very young age. His consciousness was shaped by both his social class and structure, as well as his childhood memories. Observing Macbeth proved to be a driving force for his career in theatre as it revealed similarities between his own life and that of Macbeth. He became convinced that a play should establish a connection with the audience in order to have a greater impact on them and achieve the desired effect.

During the city bombardment in the Second World War, he was sent to Cornwall and later returned to his grandparents' home in Ely.[219] Due to a lack of career prospects, he laboured in factories and offices until he joined the military in 1953. He served as a clerk for the Allied Army of Occupation in Austria. He likened his military experiences to being in prison and described the army as an unjust and outrageous

[217] For Bond, this was an inspiring experience of Shakespeare staged where he came to realize the power of Shakespeare which impressed Bond to interpret him as a motivating mechanism. As he had the ability to convey the problems and life of the society to people in an efficient way, Bond used his play as a point of origin to trigger ideological change in the modern society, in other words, to make difference in people's vision of themselves and the world surrounding them, and replace it with the new one creating a new status quo. See. Lynne Bradley, *Adapting King Lear for the Stage*, Ashgate Publishing, Surrey, 2010, p. 152-153.

[218] Qtd. in. Leslie Smith, "Edward Bond's "Lear", *Comparative Drama,* Spring 1979, Vol. 13, No. 1, pp. 65-85, p. 66-67.

[219] Stephan Watt, "Edward Bond", *The Oxford Encyclopedia of British Literature,* Oxford University Press, 2006, Vol. 1.

institution. Tony Coult stated that the combination of "sentimentality, brutality, and routine" in English culture ultimately led to Bond's politicization.[220]

Following his military service, he began to write his plays at the age of 20. The echoes were reflected in *Early Morning, Narrow Road to the Deep North, Lear, We Come to the River and Saved.*[221] Two years later, returning to London, he contacted the English Stage Company, which made a legal agreement with the Royal Court Theatre.[222]

He is married to Elisabeth. David Tuaillon depicts the place where he lives with his wife as a peaceful place and draws attention to the "paradoxical discrepancy between his drive to write about the world and his physical retirement from it deep inside a house sheltered beneath a magnificent, remote, ageless countryside."[223] Nevertheless, he has never broken his bonds with the working class and continues to write social criticism that aims to create a just country for them.

2.1. Bond as a Playwright

A philosopher or a propagandist?
A theatre technician or a literary artist?
The truth is, of course, that he is a playwright,
like Brecht, who combines all these skills.[224]

Edward Bond appeared as a playwright when political theatre became popular to utilise theatre as a powerful tool in encouraging individuals' consciousness, challenging already accepted norms. Besides its popularity, his background was quite effective in adopting political theatre. He was a member of the working-class family. He went through evacuation, military service, upheavals, and poverty. This made him advocate for humane sensitivity and critical awareness in living a class-conscious life while still maintaining the innocence and fairness of a child. With a good bit of vivid visual memory, he noted every little point to recall them whenever needed.

[220] Coult, 1979, p. 12.
[221] Ibid., p. 12-13.
[222] George Stade & Karen Karbiener & Alan Hager (Eds.), "Bond, Edward (Thomas Edward Bond)", *Encyclopedia of British Writers, 1800 to the Present, Volume 2*, New York, 2009, p. 61-62.
[223] David Tuaillon, *Edward Bond: The Playwright Speaks*, Bloomsbury, London, 2013, p. 1-2.
[224] Coult, 1979, p. 25.

Remembering the photograph of the cruel actions of Nazis at the end of the Second World War when he was eleven, Bond regards that moment as the end of humanity. He characterised that era as a time of wickedness that led to a sense of purposelessness:

> At that moment, the world became old and mankind unfathomable. It was the ground zero of the human soul, the ice at the bottom of Dante's hell... Really, we all died in Auschwitz. I sometimes think humanity itself died there. It didn't make any sense. Instead of the devil lurking somewhere around ready to catch you, suddenly we were confronted with the totality of evil. It was there as a fact even though you had survived.[225]

The choice of words he uses provides insight into how Auschwitz has impacted him. He is of the opinion that it is the responsibility of both himself and the public to ensure that comparable catastrophes do not occur again. The world has suffered enough brutality, and it is time for action to ensure its safety. So, every individual worldwide is responsible for providing a healthy future.

He is a humanist and an atheist writer who opposes God as a fear mechanism. Furthermore, he criticises the notion of placing all control and responsibility on God. He condemns religious beliefs that restrict the freedom of individuals in areas such as politics, social interactions, and psychological well-being.[226] Therefore, handling religion as a superstitious belief in his plays, he has presented his characters as shaped by the social processes and their actions resulting from their social relations. By this Marxist formation, he adopted a human-centred vision, encouraging free will, which increases man's value before God by making human beings take responsibility for their own lives and actions.[227] Since humans are the root cause of all the evil in the world, they should take responsibility for ensuring the continuation of life and creating a better future.

He believes that every individual is born radically innocent with a desire to feel at home in the world physically and emotionally. They need a combination of peace and justice for a healthy life. [228] Although they are structural imperatives for a healthy life, it is evident that the world people live in is unjust, which endangers the peace.

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[225] Qtd. in. David Allen and Agata Handley, ""Being Human": Edward Bond's Theories of Drama", *Text Matters,* 2017, Vol. 7, No. 7, pp. 307-329, p. 308.
[226] Coult, 1979, p. 26-27.
[227] Ibid., 34-35.
[228] Allen and Handley, ""Being Human": Edward Bond's Theories of Drama", p. 309-310.

Under such circumstances, innocence has been lost, yet he argues that radical innocence is still inside somewhere. He believes that it can be brought to light through drama by discussing what it is to be human. To make people discover that the evil in the world is the result of their deeds and it is in their power to change the world into a peaceful place where they can live under just conditions, he reminds them of their responsibility in his plays.

Every writer writes in other men's blood."[229]

Bond signifies two types of responsibilities: the responsibility of writers and people. As rational members of society, writers and playwrights have a crucial responsibility to depict the conditions and circumstances under which people live and suffer. It is essential to show that these conditions result from their choices and actions. Thus, his drama's responsibility is to recreate human consciousness and humanness.[230] Besides analysing the underlying reasons regarding "how societies became what they are," they should also offer methods to direct people towards gaining better conditions.[231] Therefore, the playwright's responsibility is to blend the audience with their problems and make them realise the system's dysfunction that causes their suffering.

Bond utters the permanent impact of theatre and the duty of drama when people are silenced in "Le Théâtre de La Cité" as follows:

> And in our time playwrights and others who work in theatres have been shot imprisoned exiled and silenced
> But what was first said on their stages is still said in our homes and public places
> The stage is a footprint made by history
> […]
> Theatre is the house of hostages: we go there to fight for our lives – never doubt it
> […]
> On its stages say what you are forbidden to say when the times are dark[232]

[229] Smith, "Edward Bond's "Lear"", p. 68.
[230] Edward Bond and Peter Billingham, "Drama and Human: Reflections at the Start of a Millennium", *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art,* Sep. 2007, Vol. 29, No. 3, pp. 1-14, p. 5.
[231] James C. Bulman, "Bond, Shakespeare, and the Absurd", *Modern Drama*, March 1986, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 60-70, p. 60.
[232] Bond, 2000, p. 26.

He emphasises the lasting impact of theatre when plays are prohibited or prevented from being performed. He asserts that theatre has a liberating role in providing hope for the future and empowering individuals to combat injustice and political repression.

Bond's plays are complementary to each other. Together, they serve his responsibility in creating plays: to make the members of the society aware of what lies behind the events they inure and to have the power to take responsibility to change the unjust practices within the operation of the system in political, economic, cultural and social running.

Bond quite often stresses the need to change the structure of society. Biologically, human beings are normal, and there is nothing wrong with them biologically; in that vein, people are not violent biologically, neither do they require being violent biologically; they act violently under some conditions. Therefore, ignoring concentrating on people's weaknesses, Bond highlights the urgent need for a society where people can function and act according to what is natural. This kind of society is only possible when individuals take responsibility and initiative in their own lives and actions, which is impossible under present power structures. Fully attained democracy is a must for this society to emerge, and in a fully achieved democratic society, individuals are autonomous to make decisions and take responsibility for their actions, and an autonomous individual feels no urge to be violent. Moreover, individuals must feel responsible for their own lives and what is happening around them; as Bond states: "if you work in a factory, you must be responsible for the running of that factory. If you live in a street, you must be responsible for what goes on in the street. If you live in a town, you must be responsible for the organisation of that town."[233] Therefore, the responsibility of all rational human beings is to struggle for a just society, being aware of the dangers and corruption resulting from the irrationality of the members of the society. For this reason, instead of reassuring the community about their circumstances, a play has to give them confidence in their power to change society, and it has to give disturbance and discomfort about the present conditions when the audience leaves the theatre hall not to allow the desire of altering the social

[233] Karl -Heinz Stoll, "Interviews with Edward Bond and Arnold Wesker", *Twentieth Century Literature,* Dec. 1976, Vol. 22, No. 4, pp. 411-432, p. 416.

structure get lost.[234] So, to save the world, people should realise the unjust circumstances they acknowledged, take responsibility and take action to change them, becoming revolutionary.

To fulfil his responsibilities, Bond aims his plays to make people aware of the flaws of the system. Bond attracts attention to the industrial state that obliges people to live technologically, not biologically. This forces people to be part of the commercially competitive cycle; therefore, they are evaluated regarding the value of goods and services, not concerning their morality, mentality and spiritual health. This dehumanising system forces people to work under conditions against their psychological and physiological nature. What is more desperate is that it is the policy of government to manufacture consumerist citizens; Bond states that in a technological and consumerist society, a government manufactures people who are "stupid - or stupefied."[235] Moreover, the people and the government are ignorant about society's circumstances. The government does not comprehend the conditions of the society, while the people are not aware of how a government should work. These circumstances guarantee the continuity of an unfair system that dehumanises society. However, he sees hope in the future to be made and declares himself as "a citizen of the just world still to be made."[236] Thus, he provides cause-and-use plays to achieve awareness in the audience about how justice can be restored.[237]

Bond realises that society has been obliged to sacrifice justice as they are oppressed and cornered by capitalism, which results in violence in people. Therefore, to overcome the disadvantages of the capitalist system, he highlights the function of theatre - rational theatre - in helping the audience to head towards the better. Once rational theatre is insistent on its creation purposes, theatre "demonstrates order in the chaos, the ideal in the ordinary, history in the present, the rational in the seemingly irrational."[238] So, it attempts to kill pessimism and raise awareness and action in the audience. It aims to dispute commonly held beliefs that suggest violence is inherent in

[234] Ibid., 419-420.
[235] Richard Scharine, *The Plays of Edward Bond*, Associated University Press, New Jersey, 1976, p. 256-257.
[236] Bond, 2000, p.2.
[237] Ibid., p.2.
[238] Qtd. in. Daniel R. Jones, "EdwardBond's "Rational Theatre"", *Theatre Journal,* Dec. 1980, Vol. 32, No. 4, pp. 505-517, p. 506.

human nature, the issues regarding man's life will be overcome by technological and scientific improvements, and the free market is the superior system due to humans' natural tendency towards aggression. He rejects the notion that the current system is optimal for the populace and believes that no actionable steps can be taken to address their issues.

Bond's theatre, reaching the masses, encourages society to kill their acceptance and take action to change their circumstances and the working of the social system, which, in turn, brings about social change and improvement. By social change, he calls a radical change or revolution, which is to trigger a socialist structure overcoming capitalist structure. He clearly states that modern art must be socialist.[239] He regards socialism as the fundamental solution to injustice, inequality and corruption. In other words, justice is the key to a liveable future, and it cannot be reduced to a simple wish; it is an "ontological and existential imperative."[240] The purpose of his plays is to aid in finding a solution by identifying the problems in the world simply and logically and proposing actions that individuals can take to rectify them. [241]

Bond defines society in terms of Marx's dialectical materialism and believes that the solution of inequality and injustice can be overcome by changing class or, in general, socio-economic relations, which would, in turn, influence socio-politic order. Thus, people create the circumstances, and only they have the power to change the circumstances. According to Bond, societal issues such as class discrimination, moral corruption, and dehumanization are not solely caused by political, religious, or social factors. These issues are also a result of the rationalization of Western society, as described by Max Weber. This transformation involves the growth of impersonal social institutions, the rise of semi-independent bureaucracies, and the replacement of myth and religion with science and technology.[242] The reason is that the perpetual and colossal growth of the structures of modern society has brought about an autonomous

[239] Seda Örmegül, "The Individual up against an Irretional and Cruel Social System in Edward Bond's Plays: *Saved, Lear, Red, Black and Ignorant* and *The Tin Can People*", *Middle East Technical University, The Graduate School of Social Sciences*, (Unpublished Master Thesis), Ankara 2008, p. 2.
[240] Bond - Billingham, "Drama and Human: Reflections at the Start of a Millennium", p. 7.
[241] John Hall, "Edward Bond", *The Guardian*, 29 September 1971.
[242] Hubert Zapf, "Two Concepts of Society in Drama: Bertolt Brecht's *The Good Woman of Setzuan* and Edward Bond's *Lear*", *Modern Drama,* September 1988, Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 352-364, p. 356.

and overwhelming structure independent of individuals. This has given them the power to impose impersonal rules on individuals, causing the structures to work against them. However, the structures were initially shaped by the individuals to arrange their lives. These structures have deviated from their original purposes and are now shaping the reality of modern society. As a result, people are unable to exercise their rights to feel, think, act, or live in a self-determined manner. Such a complex structure has created a half-real super-reality, causing the alienation and aggression of man.[243]

Under such circumstances, Bond's perception of theatre concentrates upon social utility and decision-making as a reaction to the previous system and a promise to the future.[244] With his plays, Bond always speaks the vitality in comprehending and interpreting the past rationally as the experiences gained from the past lead to a better future by preventing the same mistakes. All his plays and prefaces or commentaries contribute to Bond's urgent call for reacting against "social injustice, individual alienation, violence, and corruption, caused by a class-structured, technological society" to transform the world into a better place where everyone will reach prosperity.[245] Thus, he uses his art as a propaganda tool to make people obtain a culture that urges them to change.

Bond has repeatedly expressed the urgency of the need for change and the significance of directing people to a culture that will internalise the stimulation of change in the audience through theatre. Believing that progress for humanity is impossible without change or revolution, he has struggled to raise consciousness that the capitalist system and the authority it exerts are the sources of injustice, political repression, and people's disadvantaged circumstances and suffering. For the change or revolution, he emphasises, socialist thought, socialist man and socialist society are needed[246] because "a democratic, rational society must be socialist."[247] Nevertheless, he was aware that he could not appeal to the good nature of all the people. The reason was that, when he appealed to Adolf Hitler's good nature, he would be triggered to kill

[243] Ibid., p. 356.
[244] Lou Lappin, *The Art and Politics of Edward Bond,* Peter Lang Publishing, New York, 1987, p. 120-121.
[245] Hilde Klein, "Edward Bond: An Interview", *Modern Drama*, September 1995, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 408-415, p. 409.
[246] Coult, 1979, p. 58-63.
[247] Stoll, "Interviews with Edward Bond and Arnold Wesker", p. 417.

more people according to his good nature. This is because Hitler killed numerous people, which he believed was good since he killed them for the good of his fatherland. Moreover, trying to transform him into a socialist was absurd. Therefore, what Bond does is to appeal to reason with his rational theatre, forcing the audience either "to be more reactionary or [...] to be more progressive"[248] and to arise "morally desirable effects."[249]

Rational theatre enables people to question the current state of the individuals and social system as well as conditions, ignoring the interiorised perceptions such that people are desperate in the face of the present problems and there is no possibility to change the current system, which is said to be the best system arranged for the good of the people, besides the idea that violence and aggressiveness are hereditary in man. Moreover, people shape society, and also society shapes people, which means that a good society creates good people, and good people create a good society. Therefore, if man becomes aware of the corruption and attempts to change it, he can feel the responsibility and power to take action. Furthermore, his decision towards change will affect other people's acts, causing good people to shape a good society and, in turn, causing this good society to raise good people.[250] With his rational theatre, he aims to make people feel the necessity to change the corruption to make the future pleasurable, believing that "the future *is* choosable, and it's malleable."[251] Therefore, people have the power to form the future.

Placing the stage as a mirror to show the truth, the purpose of Bond's theatre is to make the audience and the reader notice the deformed parts and injustices as well as the cruel treatment they are exposed to. In his plays, he has directed his criticism towards upper-class representatives such as legal or medical people, which can also be comprehended by the sociolects. The reason is to lay bare the fact that "the leading classes are the definers of guilt by establishing their laws, laws they themselves break,"[252] although they claim the citizens are to be punished due to their social

[248] Klein, "Edward Bond: An Interview", p. 411.
[249] Ian Stuart (Ed.), *Selections From The Notebooks of Edward Bond, Volume One: 1959 to 1980*, Methuen Publishing House, London, 2000, p. 90-91.
[250] Jones, "EdwardBond's "Rational Theatre"", p. 517.
[251] Coult, 1979, p. 47.
[252] Hilde Klein, "Edward Bond's use of Sociolects in his Dramatic Work", Atlantis, Nov. 1991, Vol. 13, No, 1/2, pp. 93-101, p. 100.

deviations. In other words, there is a hidden and unfair injustice disguised as legitimate legislation. Under these circumstances, he advocates rational theatre for pragmatic reasons as a tool to utter his political opinions to enable an immediate and radical change in modern society. Similar to the Brechtian epic theatre, his political subject matters shelter social and moral questioning and teaching in the background. In his view, epic drama is a type of drama that serves as a philosophical tool for objectively examining the conditions of society "from the viewpoint of a radical humanism" and it functions as "an artistic instrument" that deconstructs the "dominating myths and ideologies" surrounding society.[253]

Epic theatre is the most appropriate form for people to observe their own problems and hope to change the situation. With the structure of epic theatre, the issues regarding human beings and their relationship with society can be handled clearly; that is why many playwrights have sheltered epic structures in their plays. Even Shakespeare benefitted from pure epic structure; thus, Bond states that epic structure is not an invention of Brecht.[254] Nevertheless, Gülşen Sayın addresses Bond's *Lear* as his first remarkable sample of Brecht's Epic drama as it brings political and social attitudes to the stage. In epic theatre, a character can realise his faults, learn from them, change himself and trigger social change.[255]

Bond benefits from the alienation effect of epic theatre, writing detailed stage directions to obstruct the audience and the reader from emotionally getting involved in the scene. By doing so, he makes the audience perceive the events rationally and raises the impressiveness of his messages. In addition to the alienation effect, he uses epic theatre's episodic structure. Each act has a beginning and ending in itself. Each act bears a message, and the end of each act gives the audience and the reader pause to think, comment, criticise, and change.

Despite the similarities between Bond and Brecht in terms of style and theatre, they differ in how they regard a man. Bond defines a man in his social environment

[253] Zapf, "Two Concepts of Society in Drama", p. 353.
[254] Stoll, "Interviews with Edward Bond and Arnold Wesker", p. 419.
[255] Gülşen Sayın, "The Effects of a Violent Culture on Human Beings In Four of Esward Bond's Plays: Saved, Early Morning, Narrow Road To the Deep North and Lear", *Hacettepe University, Institute of Social Sciences*, (Unpublished Master's Thesis), Ankara 1989, s. 97.

and individual existence as a *homo duplex*. In contrast, Brecht describes a man within his social environment, disregarding his interior world as a *homo sociologicus.* Therefore, Bond heads toward the social phenomena and conflicts within the plays in order to be able to make deductions about the experiences and awareness of the individuals. Handling historical or classical subject matters or works with a modern anti-classical perspective ironically, Bond relates the individuals' lives with society to bring the roles and interests of individuals and society to light within the contemporary world.[256]

Other than Brecht, Bond was inspired by Artaud's *theatre of cruelty*. He has presented his subject matters benefitting from and addressing the psychological and emotional tensions. Therefore, by handling violence to show how individuals suffer, Bond has enabled a kind of stunning experience as a part of shock therapy called "aggro-effect" by Bond.[257] Unlike Brecht's alienation effect, which allows the audience to be aware of the fictitiousness of the characters to comfort relief and put the audience in the role of a critical observer position, Bond has mentioned the need to involve the audience with the shocking elements, making them a part of the plays. The reason is that "sometimes it is necessary to emotionally commit the audience,"[258] in other words, it is essential to tie the audience physically and emotionally.

He directs his drama to the conscious and subconscious mind of the audience by ensuring rational-political explanations and addressing their emotions and psychology, which Hubert Zapf found risky. According to him, Bond's sentimental shocks aren't politically significant enough to cause a reasonable impact, and his political analysis is not compelling enough to create a profound impact on society.[259] However, according to Bond, the audience is spiritually dead, so his plays have to cause extreme moral discomfort.[260] His diverse collection of articles, prefaces, plays, and poems captivate audiences and readers alike, encouraging contemplation while acknowledging emotions. He skilfully addresses both the heart and mind through

[256] Zapf, "Two Concepts of Society in Drama", p. 352-353.
[257] Ibid., p. 354.
[258] Qtd. İn. David Ian Rabey, *British and Irish Political Drama in the Twentieth Century: Implicating the Audience,* MacMillan Press, London, 1986, p. 114.
[259] Zapf, "Two Concepts of Society in Drama", p. 354.
[260] Christopher Innes, "The Political Spectrum of Edward Bond: From Rationalism to Rapsody", *Modern Drama*, June 1982, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 189-206, p. 198.

shocking and surprising elements. Individuals react to the everyday situations that exist within a society. During these reaction moments, they decide whether to agree with or oppose the present conditions.

Through his art, Bond depicts the everyday struggles that people face. His works pose thought-provoking questions, encouraging readers and audiences to seek answers and challenge the current state.[261] Nevertheless, he demands from their audiences and readers to consider what lies behind the "actual experience, beneath the everyday normality."[262] Therefore, he challenges the audiences' minds to ensure they confront a deeper perspective beneath the actual portrait.

To actualise his demand, he regards the audience as equal partners to the central characters in his plays that they, together, go through the learning and discovering phases as plays progress: "I think the difference between the artist and the audience is very little. The artist has a technical skill, that's all. But the audience is as 'profound', 'inspired' and what have you."[263] Nonetheless, the audience is subordinate to the problems he has handled in his plays; that is, he writes without the need to think about their judgement. He resembles the audience's involvement to the relationship between a cyclist and the bike in that a cyclist does not bother himself with the thought that he has the knowledge regarding how to ride a bike. Likewise, "one must be aware of how certain things work with an audience, but not let this awareness get too much in the way."[264] Furthermore, as he experiences life, in one way or another, quite the same with the rest of the society, he is aware that the problems he has observed are common problems. For this reason, what he handles in his plays is directly related to their lives although they are subordinary to the problems he depicts. Therefore, the subject matter of his plays is closely tied to their lives, even though they are not his primary idea when creating their plays.

Bond's drama showcases the cause-and-effect relationships and consequences of social and political behaviour through factual representation, emphasising the

[261] Coult, 1979, p. 27-34.
[262] John Worthen, "Endings and Beginnings: Edward Bond and the Shock of Recognition", *Educational Theatre Journal,* Dec. 1975, Vol. 27, No.4, pp. 466-479, p. 474.
[263] Coult, 1979, p. 85.
[264] Qtd. in. Worthen, "Endings and Beginnings" p. 478.

impact of individual choices. Perhaps his revised version of a classic is a work of propaganda, but it also serves as a testament of affirmation. The form of the artwork suggests a flexible relationship between art and society. This relationship may change as our understanding of history evolves.[265] He sees his plays as a means of self-education, enabling the audience to witness the concerns of the typical twentieth-century individual who is apprehensive about society and striving to find a way to live a personal life while ensuring the continued existence of society. These plays reflect on the experience of living in the present time.[266] Nevertheless, it is clear that his plays go beyond time and borders as they are still popular worldwide, and Bond is still regarded as one of the most effective playwrights of the contemporary world. The underlying reason is the broken relationship between the individuals and the social and political system.

His plays are bound up with human values. They show that class and social structure are the essence of his plays. His class and structure awareness are derived from his working-class background and the trauma of the probable death of their parents and bomb attacks that caused him and many others to evacuate. Moreover, as a clerk, he has been attuned to the poverty and malfunction in the system's operation. When the emotions of sentimentality and brutality are intertwined with the experiences of army life and a childhood sense of justice, the writer's identity, characteristics, position, and attitude become apparent.[267]

For Bond, modern thought and modernist aesthetics have begun when the idea that "God creates me" is abandoned and "I create myself" is adopted, as in Nietzsche's thought that says "I've no longer got God to tell me what to do."[268] The main problem of individuals is as follows: "Do I understand what I am doing, and if I can understand what I'm doing, how the hell can I do it? [...] I can see the consequences of what I will do, or do I act and don't take cognisance of the consequences of my action, which I cannot control?"[269] Bond calls this Hamlet problem. Hamlet, who is on the horns of a

[265] Lappin, 1987, p. 113.
[266] Qtd. in. Hall, "Edward Bond".
[267] Marius Narcis Manoliu, "Violence – A Recurrent Theme in Edward Bond's Plays, Imagery and Symbols", *International Journal of Communication Research*, Vol. 4, No. 4, October/December 2014, pp. 363-368.
[268] Bond - Billingham, "Drama and Human: Reflections at the Start of a Millennium", p. 3.
[269] Ibid., p. 4.

dilemma to face the problems or to avoid them, at last, either kills the king as he knows who he is and he knows what he does or as he does not know who he is, he thinks and contemplates between Dionysus and Christ. To him, the source of all such problems begins in childhood because there are innately emotional, physical and intellectual imperatives to be human. A newborn needs to connect with the world and adapt to it biologically, leading to the development of intellection, which is a combination of imagination and rational thinking. This leads the child or an adult version of this inborn to pursue justice in society, which constitutes the origin of drama for him. However, people often find themselves living in societies where laws are historically justified not morally. In such cases, justice lacks a judge while the law has one. This is where the drama comes in as a judge of justice because it is where self and society intersect to create justice.[270] To trigger justice, his plays voice the calamitous outcomes of the capitalist society, which is non-human and non-fair in terms of life standards and contentment of its people. He highlights the lack of recognition by societal institutions towards the fact that they are dealing with human beings. Thus, he deals with the irrationality of the people, the society and the system in managing a fair system, which guarantees the just distribution of wealth and opportunities within a classless society.

To help the audience understand the unfair situations they are experiencing and inspire prompt action, Bond utilizes brief, sometimes incomplete scenes to create a sense of urgency, and vivid, impactful images to evoke strong emotions.[271] Moreover, his exaggerated language is a proper choice to attract their attention to the real circumstances and situations he has narrated for social criticism. It is a tool to demand the audience to interpret the circumstances rationally. For that reason, the language of characters differs according to their social or moral attitudes, presenting "inarticulate speech where the vulgar and the obscene dominate, or [...] highly stylised speech where the rhetorical, pompous or finely poetic prevails"[272] helping the audience deduce a character's social role or class and commit an emotional tie with the figures within the plays.

[270] Ibid., p. 3.
[271] Innes, "The Political Spectrum of Edward Bond", p. 196.
[272] Klein, "Edward Bond's use of Sociolects in his Dramatic Work", p. 95.

In Bond's plays, the plot presents a cause-effect lined story; whereas the meaning can be deduced from what he calls Theatre Events (TEs).[273] TEs are the images "created by Bond's stage pictures, held in gesture and word and situation, that carry meaning and impact, a moment where meaning is gathered like a knot."[274] He benefits from TEs to clarify and intensify the character's meaning; in other words, the play's meaning cannot be reduced to the characters or their dialogues. This also means that the meaning exists even before the dialogue or the characters. Therefore, Bond avoids making a character centralised. Instead, he utilises him as an aspect of the centre. This prevents the character's independence and ensures he and his dialogues serve the problem of the whole play. Similarly, no other element can be independent; they can only be "aspects of the Centre."[275]

TEs make plays "begin with people, not ideas."[276] Without knowing a character, he does not prefer to write his dialogues. Before fully composing the characters' dialogues, Bond fictionalises every scene and character as well as their moves and actions. Words and dialogues cannot be fully arranged without knowing the characters or the situation fully in detail. Theatre resembles sculpture in that it is also three-dimensional art. Its words should not be composed in a literary way as words should only serve as a way to convey gestures and they must generate action or repose. Therefore, what is done gains more importance than what is said. Thus, in plays, "the language has to be metaphorical, physically suggestive and it works on various layers of inference and meaning and irony"[277] because people use those in their everyday speeches. In theatre, words are given in physical form rather than being limited to grammar and literature. This allows the audience to feel the words.

TEs possess an energizing and inspiring effect on the audience, arousing an extreme interest in them and triggering the desired meaning, directing them to the

[273] Klein, "Edward Bond: An Interview", p. 409.
[274] John Doona, "The Sheet of Glass: a drama project by Tameside schools on an Edward Bond poem", *Edward Bond and the Dramatic Child: Edward Bond's Plays for Young People,* (Ed. David Davis), Trentham Books, Staffordshire, 2005, pp. 93-110, p. 100.
[275] Ian Stuart, "Interview with Edward Bond", *Journal of Dramatic Theory and Criticism,* Spring 1994, Vol. VIII, No. 2, pp. 129-146, p. 129.
[276] Stoll, "Interviews with Edward Bond and Arnold Wesker", p. 412.
[277] Stoll, "Interviews with Edward Bond and Arnold Wesker", p. 414.

desired aim of the playwright. Bond explains that TE provides the audience freedom over structure:

> You can TE anything on the stage but the structure will always be throwing up the major confrontations, the structure will always be dealing with the Centre of the play. The really basic structures, the plays that deal with really central problems, probably cannot resolve those problems. But to understand them creatively is what makes people human.[278]

This freedom helps the audience get involved in the meaning-creation process more smoothly, becoming a part of the play's imaginative world by simply blending their watching experience and feelings. Moreover, with the help of TEs, artificial and unnecessary effects that lead to pessimism can be eliminated. They provide an aesthetic tie between drama and life, invalidating "the received and ideological meanings" and instead "establishing new meanings."[279]

According to Bond, a play should focus on cause and effect rather than meaning. TEs are responsible for analysing "social processes in relation to the story", following Bond's concept of Rational Theatre, which he refers to as "epic."[280] Thus, the play abstains from providing the social truth. It is the audience's responsibility to be involved in the imaginary creation of a play to reach the overall argument central to the play.

With his responsibilities towards society in mind, he has written numerous plays, handling his social criticism and the interaction between the individual and social system from a political perspective. His works were not regarded as big symphonies at first by critics because of the shocking elements surrounding his plays. Therefore, his talent was underestimated by various critics at that time. He wrote plays during his National Service with the Allied Army of Occupation in 1955, and after his military service, he sent them to the Royal Court. In 1958, he attended the Royal Court Theatre. Working at the Writer's Group at the Royal Court, he practised the theatre at the heart of its centre, studying and discussing things theatrically. Along with this experience, for a two-year period, he saw every play put on theatre in London,

[278] Stuart, "Interview with Edward Bond", p. 135.
[279] Edward Bond, "Drama Devices", *Edward Bond and the Dramatic Child*, David Davis (Ed.), Institute of Education Press, London, 2005, p. 84-85.
[280] Klein, "Edward Bond: An Interview", p. 409.

including Moral Rearmament[281] plays.[282] Keith Johnstone, a director at the Royal Court and an influential person in the Royal Court Writer's Group, discovered Bond's talent. Bond's two plays, *Klaxon in Atreus' Place* and *The Fiery Tree,* the former regarded as pretty psychotic, were not staged, but his plays measured up to prove his talent to Johnstone and Bill Gaskill, two of the Royal Court directors. He was invited to the Royal Court Writer's Group to improve his art.[283] In 1962, he managed to be a part of the Royal Court as a member of the Writer's Group as a play-reader. For Johnstone, he was the best play-reader in the history of the Group. During this period, he experienced the "theatre of action and images rather than words."[284] With the support of the directors and other playwrights, he maintained his perspective regarding human life and values in his plays.

Johnstone directed *The Pope's Wedding* (1962) - the first staged play by Bond - without any prop to avoid economic risks. It was criticised as "too long, too portentous, too elliptical."[285] Later, in 1965, some parts of his play *Saved* (1964) were met with sharp, severe criticism primarily due to "the most horrid scene in contemporary theatre," by the words of J. C. Trewin of *The Illustrated.*[286] It was censored and changed by Lord Chamberlain. Nevertheless, Gaskill disregarded censorship and staged the play as a club performance for the English Stage Society, believing the play was of perfect taste. This sparked a considerable debate. Except for some laudatory critics, hateful comments of the press brought about the debates on censorship by the State.[287] As his plays were met with unfriendly criticism, he earned his life by writing film scripts. At the same time, he kept on defending his play *Saved.* He emphasised that the critics should react reasonably and normally when a playwright depicts a murder scene as "vicarious beastliness" in his plays; English drama can only

[281] Moral Re-armament is a modern, nondenominantional revivalistic movement initiated in the United States between 1940 and 1964 aiming to encourage the spiritual life of individuals with numerous plays, movies and tv programs. It's message is that God's Word would heal all kinds of social ill. See. Richard H. Palmer, "Moral Re-Armament Drama: Right Wing Theatre in America", *Theatre Journal*, 1979, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp. 172-185.
[282] Edward Bond - Giles Gordon, "Edward Bond: An Interview by Giles Gordon", *The Transatlantic Review*, 1966, No. 22, pp.7-15, p. 12.
[283] Stuart, 2000, p. vii-viii.
[284] Coult, 1979, p. 13-14.
[285] Scharine, 1976, p. 20.
[286] Ibid., p. 20.
[287] Coult, 1979, p. 14-15.

be improved when "a) censorship goes, and b) criticism becomes more informed, competent and objective."[288]

Bond was also praised by some critics, directors and playwrights such as Lawrence Oliver, Martin Esslin, Ronald Bryden and William Gaskill. In September 1968, the appraisal of Edward Bond theatre underwent a significant change when Parliament invalidated the censorship authority of Lord Chamberlain, resulting in a more diverse range of viewpoints being allowed to be expressed. Even in 1969, Gaskill organised a Bond season with *Saved*, *Narrow Road to the Deep North* (1968) and *Early Morning* (1968), which raised praise and support of more critics for Bond theatre.[289]

With these first-period plays beginning from *The Pope's Wedding* to *The Sea*, he adopted a perspective that believes the plays should depict social issues without necessarily suggesting solutions. From *Bingo* (1973) onwards, he propounded that it is an author's duty to propound solutions to the flaws in the social and political structures. The third-period plays begin with the *Olly's Prison* (1993) and emphasise the idea that a playwright should direct his attention to both presenting the system dysfunctions and offering solutions to them.[290]

From The Bundle onwards, Bond brought a new breath to the theatre, answer plays: "We mustn't write only problem plays, we must write answer plays - or at least plays which make answers clearer and more practical" because "When I wrote my first plays I was naturally conscious of the weight of the problem. Now I've become more conscious of the strength of human beings to provide answers. The answers aren't always light, easy or even straightforward, but the purpose - a socialist society - is clear."[291]

Other than his major plays, Bond has improved himself in and contributed to the art world with his translations, screenplays, adaptations and short plays he has written about certain subject matters. His adaptation of *Three Sisters* by Chekhov was staged at the Royal court. When he began improving himself in playwriting, the detailed analysis of Thee Sisters contributed greatly to his career. Upon Bond's Three

[288] Ibid., p. 15.
[289] Scharine, 1976, p. 20.
[290] A. Gökhan Biçer, "Edward Bond's Dialectical Theatre", *Journal of the Institute of Social Sciences*, 2008, Vol. 2, pp. 59-72.
[291] Coult, 1979, p. 25.

Sisters being staged, critics commented on the play as the revival of the modern version of Chekhov. They said the play was "a living-again production of a marvellous aimless play" as it staged "a society without faith" yet they called the play "one of the best…"[292] Nevertheless, it was not the structure; they reflected life experiences similarly. Their plays do not handle moral subject matters yet, as Scharine states, "they *are* moral statements."[293] Following this, to enable a deeper comprehension of Bertolt Brecht, he worked on the adaptation of his *The Roundheads and the Peakheads* in 1960s.[294] Likewise, he adapted Thomas Middleton's *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* and John Webster's *The White Devil*. He translated Frank Wedekind's *Spring Awakening* and *Lulu*.[295] Bond wrote one-act play, *Black Mass* for the Anti-Apartheid Movement to commemorate the incident of Sharpeville Massacre; and *Passion* to contribute to the Nuclear Disarmament Campaign in England. Besides, he has written some screenplays to live; however, they were, as Richard Scharine states, not original pieces by Bond yet his contribution is quite noticeable. The scenarios and plays have several characteristics in common. *Blow-up*, for instance, is inspired by a short story by Julio Cortazar[296]; likewise, *Walkabout* is based on James Vance Marshall's novel bearing the same title.[297] Each adaptation or translation was a step for him in his way to form his own style. As Spencer mentions, there are two basic principles of Bond's adaptations; one is that they restore a social function, and the other is that they become a new narrative with a strict relation to the contemporary world.[298]

It is evident that Bond has fulfilled his responsibility of raising awareness about the inherent disadvantages and injustices of the capitalist system, particularly with regard to the unequal distribution of wealth and opportunities by those in positions of authority. In each of his plays, the author aims to highlight the pressing need for change. While exposing the corrupt nature of morality and using violent elements, he also offers an alternative solution through a heroic character who recognizes and fights

[292] Qtd. in. Scharine, 1976, p. 164.
[293] Ibid., p. 165.
[294] Ibid.,, p. 162.
[295] Michael Mangan, *Edward Bond,* Northcote House Publishers Ltd., UK, 1998, p.43.
[296] Scharine, 1976, p. 159-160.
[297] Susan Barber, "*Walkabout*: A Timeless Cross-Cultural Journey", Quarterly Review of Film and Video, 2020, Vol: 37, No:7, pp. 658-672.
[298] Jenny S. Spencer, *Dramatic Strategies in the Plays of Edward Bond,* Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 81.

against evil. Due to the significant impact of violence in capturing the audience's attention through shock, it is essential to discuss this topic separately.

2.2. Aggression and Violence as a Form of Satire

I write about violence as naturally
as Jane Austen wrote about manners[299]

According to Bond's preface to Lear, violence is the stark reality of our current time. It shapes modern society and poses a grave threat to the future if it continues to maintain its position and role within the system: "Violence shapes and obsesses our society, and if we do not stop being violent, we have no future."[300] In a similar vein, prioritising its relevance to current times, Surgeon General C. Everett Koop regards violence as an epidemic, which is "every bit as much a public health issue for me and my successors in this century as smallpox, tuberculosis, and syphilis were for my predecessors in the last century"[301] Although there are people who aim to hinder writers from addressing the issue of this current time epidemic, Bond takes a firm stand on including violence in his plays as "it would be immoral not to write about violence."[302] Therefore, like a branch of science, art deals with violence in pieces to analyse and point up the underlying causes and effects of violence as well as the ways to diminish it.[303]

As the current time threat, violence is a complex issue with multiple definitions. American Psychological Association identifies violence as "an extreme form of aggression, such as assault, rape or murder,"[304] yet this definition lacks the intention factor, and it causes ambiguity about the level of extremity. DeWall and his colleagues, in terms of social psychology, make another definition of it as violence is "any aggressive act that has its goal extreme physical harm, such as injury or death;" likewise, they define aggression as "any behaviour intended to harm another person

[299] Edward Bond, *Plays: 2: Lear, The Sea, Narrow Road to the Deep North, Black Mass, Passion*, Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, Great Britain, 1978, p. 13.
[300] Ibid., p. 3.
[301] Violence, www.encyclopedia.com
[302] Bond, 2007, p. 3.
[303] Stuart, 2000, p. 91.
[304] Michael B. Greene, "Violence", www.apa.org, (12.08.2021).

who does not want to be harmed."[305] Their definition does not include unintended injuries. Regarding public health, World Health Organization makes another definition of it in World Report on Violence and Health, providing more details: "The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against a group or community, that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation."[306] WHO's definition includes self-abusive acts, physical and psychological harm, as well as threats and intimidation that endanger the well-being of individuals and societies. According to this definition, regardless of the results of an action, intention is the determining factor; thus, unintentional damaging actions are excluded from the scope of violence. WHO characterises violence in three categories in terms of the perpetrator. While the first type is self-directed violence which includes self-abuse and suicides, the second type is interpersonal violence which is committed by either a family member or intimate partner or community. The last type is collective. There are also three types of collective violence: social violence, political violence, and economic violence. Social violence is carried out by organised groups for social reasons, including hate crimes, terrorist acts, and mob violence. Political violence involves larger groups engaged in war, violent conflicts, state violence, and similar activities. Economic violence is committed by large groups seeking economic gain. This refers to harmful actions aimed at disrupting economic operations, blocking access to vital services, or causing economic segregation and disunity.[307] All of these definitions focus on the harm and injury, whether physical or psychological, caused unintentionally.

For the classification of violence, Bond mentions four characteristics as follows: "One, it is used either to maintain injustice or, two, to react to injustice; and three, its users are either conscious of its cause and significance or, four, unconscious of them."[308] The mixture of the four reasons may be the cause of violence. The ruling class has a rationale for their violence: the continuity of social structure, law and order;

[305] Cecelia Klingele, "Labeling Violence", *Marquette Law Review*, 2020, Vol. 103, No.3, pp. 847-875, p. 852.
[306] World Health Organization, "World Report on Violence and Health", Geneva, p.3.
[307] Etienne G. Krug, et al., (Ed.), *World Report on Violence and Health*, Geneva, World Health Organization, 2002, p. 6.
[308] Edward Bond, Plays: 1, Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, London, 1997, p.15.

while the disadvantaged group of society may act violently to demand more just circumstances. Alternatively, individuals may exhibit violent tendencies because of a conscious or unconscious motive, stemming from an unidentifiable sense of dissatisfaction. All types of violence are inescapable in capitalism. Bond makes it clear that "capitalism [is] destructive in war *and* peace" and "it is *as* destructive in peace as in war."[309] Yet, in Bond's words, "capitalism is inimical to reason;"[310] and the reason is the solution for preventing violence. Therefore, violence is inevitable in capitalism. So, violence can only be prevented by changing the conditions that trigger it. In order to address it effectively, understanding the root cause of violence is crucial. This involves identifying whether it originates from internal or external factors.

Some researchers have been discussing it whether violence is innate or caused by external factors. Some sociologists and psychologists believe that it is an innate feeling to be satisfied; while others believe it is acquired because of the interactions and relations with the rest of the members of society. James T. Tedeschi, a social psychologist, puts forward the idea that deprivation of love, care and intimacy causes loneliness, depression and dissatisfaction in people, which increases the tendency to be violent. Thus, once family and sub-culture lack peace and intimacy, violent actions may be appreciated or acknowledged, which causes the child to acquire similar regular practices. In addition to this, emotional, economic and social frustration also increase the likelihood of violence. Furthermore, using force or fighting is also a kind of challenge to gain superiority. Socio-economic depression is also counted among the causes of violence. Besides, mass media affects the behaviour types of people; especially gang movies in which fighting and murder are common, increasing the tendency towards violent behaviours. There are some theories mentioning that the violence shown in movies both increases the violent acts in the audience and, what is more important, results in accustomedness, causing a decrease in the emotional reaction of the viewers to murder and fight as well as the damage it stirs up. This, in turn, results in the reinforced behaviour pattern of violence.[311] Furthermore, violence and power are interrelated, and political violence -including revolutions, strikes,

[309] Ibid., p. 17.
[310] Ibid., p. 17.
[311] Sayın, "The Effects of a Violent Culture on Human Beings", p. 3-5.

rebellions etc. - is one of the most destructive forms of violence. As political institutions are the materialisations of power, it is inevitable that people commit political violence to gain and hold power. Political mechanisms often promote the notion that "human beings are necessarily violent"[312] in order to maintain the current social structure and encourage compliance. When people turn violent, a stronger authority steps in to control violence by violence to sustain order and continuity. The authority signifies to the ruling class. Other people are to follow their politics. Therefore, by controlling and monopolising "education, information, art, money, living space and medicine for themselves"[313], ruling class members seem as if they worked for the public welfare. This has caused ignorance and intellectual corruption.

Bond offers a different perspective on the innateness of violence. He believes animals that are biologically lower position than human beings, had violent behaviours. When animals are threatened with their lives, for the continuation of their lives, they defend themselves by attacking violently.[314] However, this is not valid for human beings. He believes that violence is not inherent, but rather a product of flawed societal interactions.[315] Violence is not a need or an innate behaviour pattern; rather it occurs as the result of negative interactions, physical threats or any threats to human dignity within societies.

Bond firmly connects violence with aggression. To him, aggression is not a need, unlike sexual or nutritional requirements. However, when human beings face the deprivation of natural and emotional needs, they develop an aggressive attitude. Today, people live and work or have to live and work against their nature, so, their emotional and physical needs cannot be fulfilled. This causes them to be aggressive, worried and anxious, which are accompanied by belligerence and provocativeness. The resultant alienated self becomes "a threat to other people"[316] with aggression as his natural response.

[312] Bond, 1997, p.10.
[313] Ibid., p.11.
[314] However, hunting is not a violent act because "searching for food can't be connected with hating it." See. Bond, 1997, p.9.
[315] Ibid., p.11.
[316] Bond, 1978, p. 3-4.

In time, people, their relations with each other and the environment have changed, which has created the need for the formation of social structure and leaders as anticipated. People, working for their leaders will inevitably lose their capacity to be autonomous individuals. Then,

> the natural feeling of opposition becomes moralised and work to perpetuate the very organisation they basically oppose. The whole structure becomes held together by the negative biological response to deprivation and treat – it is an organisation held together by the aggression it creates. Aggression has become moralised, and morality has become a form of violence.[317]

The requirement of the continuity of social structure is the reason for violence and aggression. The leaders or the organising groups, though may be needed in times of leadership, are expanded, and even sometimes, their acquaintances are included in these privileged group. As the control of justice is in their power, the system becomes self-justifying for them. Once the problems of society are degraded as personal issues, people seem to be acting for their own sake, which is regarded as social subversiveness. An unjust society hereby causes crime, and an unjust aggressive social structure causes aggressive social disruption, which is subjected to moral sanction. In short, Bond shows how injustice is guaranteed by law and order.[318] Furthermore, social morality plays a crucial role in ensuring the sustained privileges of the organizing group. Moreover, it ensures the submissiveness of the sufferers of an unjust structure. The underlying reason for this resultant *innocence* is fear. Fear has been coded in the childhood period. they are not born with the concept of freedom. Instead, they are exposed to the influence of those in power who exercise control over them. This shapes their perception and causes them to adopt the beliefs and decisions of the privileged individuals in charge. It prevents aggression or revolutionary thought, fearing that the organising group or the people in power have the strength to punish them.[319] As these children mature, their fear also increases, hindering them from taking action towards progress. This perpetuates their disadvantaged status, while also upholding the privileges of the elites. This "form of corrupted innocence" is wicked social morality,[320] posing a threat to people's quality of life. The social morality people

[317] Ibid., p. 5.
[318] Ibid., p. 5.
[319] Ibid., p. 5.
[320] Ibid.,p. 7.

inured decreases the degree of aggression, yet escalates the tension. These protectors of it may either be extremely happy or furious and catastrophic.[321] Thus, Bond argues that "social morality is a form of suicide"[322] as it creates a conflict in people which increases their rage, as they fear, but inside they feel their requirement for justice.

Just like children do not have control over their lives, human beings also lack control over neither their economic nor political or social lives. They are not living a life biologically designed for them; they are working for the production of things and made to buy them even when they do not need them due to propaganda or advertisements. This raises tension and aggression.[323] Moreover, according to Bond, it is concerning that culture, education, industrial, and legal systems seem to focus on psychologically and emotionally harming individuals.[324] Given the current situation, Bond believes that violence has become a widespread problem in society, so writing about society without violence is immoral and nonsense because society is violent.[325]

As Bond evaluates human beings in their social environment and individual existence, his plays reflect the existing violence and convince the audience to realise what is happening around them. However, with the violent scenes, he has fuelled the discussion of the use of violence on stage. The critics at the beginning lampooned this, so *Saved* could not reach the desired number of audiences. As Scharine notices "the biggest barrier to understanding his work is still that the world Bond writes of is the world we live in."[326] Yet, in time, his reasons become known, and his social and literary wit begin to be appreciated. Today, he is welcomed as a bright playwright who handles violence by explicitly disapproving of all kinds of violence.[327]

Despite disapproving, he justifies the reason why human beings become violent under certain circumstances:

[321] Ibid., p. 7.
[322] Ibid., p. 7.
[323] Ibid., p. 8.
[324] Innes, "The Political Spectrum of Edward Bond", p. 195.
[325] Hall, "Edward Bond".
[326] Scharine, 1976, p. 27.
[327] Bond - Gordon, "Edward Bond: An Interview by Giles Gordon", p. 8.

> If people cannot achieve the results they want, the freedom they need in order to function properly, if they can't do that in a natural way, and that means for human beings, a rational way, then they will, not because they choose to do it, but because that is the biological truth of the human situation, then they will become violent.[328]

Under such circumstances, human beings will have no right to condemn violence as a morally wrong act until they strive to lessen the injustice and pain the society and the world exposed to. Human beings will deserve the right to speak of violence when they take the responsibility and initiative for not only their own lives and decisions but also the other human beings, society and the world.

In order the audience to(re)gain consciousness, he adorns his plays with moments of shock using violence as a tool in his plays; however, they are not "shock of horror;" rather, they are "shock of recognition."[329] To attract the attention of people and make them take responsibility and action, Bernard Shaw states that the messages must be disturbing; otherwise, presenting significant truths smoothly is akin to the speech of a preacher: "In this world, if you do not say a thing in an irritating way, you may just as well not sat it at all, since nobody will trouble themselves about anything that does not trouble them."[330] Similarly, Bond has preferred to irritate as the running of the world has irritated him. He has been aware that, to raise the attention of people, he should irritate, prod and prick the audience and the reader to make them think and question the underlying idea behind his plays. Nonetheless, he has been aware that it would be a great mistake to serve every single part with such irritating violence; that is why he has worked his magic - the art of knowing when to touch lightly or poke strongly.

Bond separates "the play *about* violence" and "the play about the situation in which violence occurs"; and specifies his plays as a part of the latter category as in his plays, violence "happens in the way that it happens to an audience"[331]; that is, all kinds of violence, including torture, cannibalism, and murder are not his subject matter; rather, it is included as much as it is recognisable in the real world in which an

[328] Stoll, "Interviews with Edward Bond and Arnold Wesker", p. 417.
[329] Worthen, "Endings and Beginnings", p. 479.
[330] William Mackintire Salter, "Mr. Bernard Shaw as a Social Critic", *International Journal of Ethics*, Jul. 1908, Vol. 18, No. 4, pp. 446-458, p. 448.
[331] Worthen, "Endings and Beginnings", p. 466.

audience, in a way, exposed to it. Thus, he makes use of violence as a tool or style to raise the attention and awareness of the audience by causing a feeling of shock with violent narration elements.

He does not write violent plays; rather, he creates real-life-like situations where violence can take place; that is, from the beginning of a play, he forms the chain of events so consciously that the going of that story paves the way for the violent action to occur. Moreover, violence is presented not as a solution as it is not in real life; rather, it is a fact. His real-life-like stories tend to be accepted as normal by society at the beginning; nevertheless, Bond works on them to show the horror and what is abnormal and what they cause - the resultant violent action. In his plays, the audience faces the violence with shock, and regards them as normal or abnormal; however, what Bond desires is for the audience to see beyond. *Saved*, for instance, is the play harshly criticised for the stoning of a baby by a group of young people. However, it is not the violent act itself that holds the utmost importance but it is rather the context that paves the way for violence to occur, its outcomes and the type of society that the violence reflects.[332] This is also valid for his other plays. His reasons for including violent scenes in his plays are beyond what is generally acknowledged at first sight. If one feels horror just in the scene of the stoning of a baby to death, then she/he misses Bond's point; likewise, when one feels Fred, Pete, Colin, Barry, and Mike are to be imprisoned - which is a natural reaction - or treated at the hospital, then, again, she/he misses Bond's point. What he attempts to manage by adding violent scenes into his plays is to make the audience question their assessment of violence and behaviour; and to remind them to be responsible members of their acts, behaviours and feelings as well as thoughts as parts of the institutions from the smallest units to the governing units. In his article, John Worthen clarifies Bond's approach as follows: "Our reaction of horror lets us off too lightly, and isolates us in a secure sense of what is proper. And Bond is always challenging our sense of what is proper: proper as hope, proper as tragedy, proper as ourselves."[333] He wages war against the inured social morality that kills equality and reason. His purpose is to inform the audience about an incident they

[332] Qtd. in. Tanya Mander, "Edward Bond's Rational Theatre and Violence of Saved", *International Journal of English Literature and Social Sciences*, 2018, Vol. 3, No. 6, pp. 1202-1207, p. 1202.
[333] Worthen, "Endings and Beginnings", p. 467-468.

may even get involved in but still are not aware of the significance or cannot get a full comprehension of. By so doing, he believes he can provide them with a bigger perspective to be able to show the oppression they are exposed to, which encourages them to make a judgement and eventually take action.[334]

The playwright's intentions, thus, are not sensational; rather, his serious tone intentionally aims to urge the viewers towards finding a solution. He asks people not to be grateful for the life they lead upon seeing the people who experience violence in the plays; rather, he calls for a recognition that there are people in the society who leads a life like that, and they are, in a way, related with those situations directly or indirectly. Adding violence into his plays, he demands the audience to challenge the people's established mindscapes. By transcending violence, his goal is to raise awareness in the audience and encourage them to see things more deeply than everyday routines allow. This, in turn, enables a better understanding of the circumstances of life and the true needs.

He acknowledges that in some situations, people can lose their temper and act violently; yet, serious and constant violence is proof of major social injustice. The solution to a violent society is a just society in which all members are equal at all significant points;[335] that is, their freedom to maintain their lives as to their biological requirements is to be ensured. Because society enjoying such morality under the influence of technology defrauds people's right to live. To handle this, "equality, freedom and fraternity must be interpreted […] otherwise real revolutionary change is impossible."[336] People have basic needs for aesthetics, intellect, love, creativity, protection, and joy. Individuals should have the opportunity to delve into their own existence and maintain autonomy over their lives. Unfortunately, such privileges are not easily acquired, as power has the ability to undermine justice, perpetuating violence. This can only be possible with contemporary socialism.[337] Therefore, for a just social structure, individuals ought to take responsibility for their behaviours, thoughts, and actions, and work towards the betterment of society to ensure a

[334] Janelle Reinelt, *After Brecht: British Epic Theater*, University of Michigan Press, 1996, p. 58.
[335] Bond, 1997, p.14.
[336] Bond, 1978, p. 10.
[337] Ibid., p. 11.

promising future. In the face of unjust and violent circumstances, such a future is simply not possible.

CHAPTER IV

YAŞAR NEITHER LIVES NOR DIES & *LEAR*

1. *YAŞAR NEITHER LIVES NOR DIES*

Nesin, as a socialist writer, advocated for societal reform by identifying its issues and pushing for revolutionary changes in social structures, socio-political and economic systems, and the improvement of individuals' quality of life. He wrote numerous articles, theatre plays, novels, and poems to inform and captivate people's attention to cause change in society. Through the use of parody, black humour, farce, irony, satire, and pun, he reveals aspects of society's daily life.[338]

The majority of his works, particularly his plays, exhibit a satirical tone and intention. Among many other plays of him, as a musical play, *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* is a well-received example of Horatian satire. The play has been performed numerous times by both professional and amateur theatre groups in both private and public theatres. The play's characters are portrayed in a purposeful and humorous manner, highlighting their ridiculous personalities, actions, ideas, and attitudes. It amusingly satirises social deviance and its representatives in an amusing way to be recalled on several occasions.

In his satirical and musical play, he uses everyday language to shock, amuse, and make the audience realise and think about the misadventures of the main character. It presents commonplace events that the audience can relate to in their daily lives. Due to this familiarity, the audience tend to adore the protagonist, Yaşar.

In the introduction to *Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz*, Meral Çelen shares the underlying reality of the plot and how Yaşar's story transforms into a play, novel and movie: Mr Aygermen, the head of the entertainment department of the Radio of Ankara, asked for Nesin to write a radio play containing twelve acts. Upon this request, he united his twelve stories dealing with bureaucracy and gathered them around the skeleton of one of his memories during his imprisonment in Harbiye Military Prison.

[338] İprişoğlu, 1998, p. 102.

In his memoir, he mentions one of his worker friends in prison, Osman Kuzeyli. This individual and their children are unable to obtain identity cards due to an error made by the birth registration office. This imprisonment memory in his notepad made him write a radio play with the combination of the twelve stories.[339]

During compiling these stories, he worked in his friend's house in Sapanca. There, he met a gipsy boy, named Yaşar, who asked for money from him to buy bread. He seemed to be feeling down as he realised that he was at the same age as his son, so he devised the major character as *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies*. Following the radio play, many people urged him to adapt it into various formats such as TV Series, theatre play, then a movie and comic strips. Eventually, he reconstructed it into a novel.[340]

The play's plot circles around the imprisonment. Nesin splits the places and time within the subparts of the acts; therefore, it does not possess a conventional time structure. Instead, the plot begins from the end of Yaşar's story at the prison. Afterwards, Yaşar shares his experiences led him through the prison. He talks about different situations at various places, and the other prisoners respond to what he says. He explains that there has been an administrative error in official registers, leading to the false assumption that he is dead. Finally, it ends at the prison, where the reader and the audience encounter his experiences of his before and after imprisonment period, so the audience and reader gain comprehension of Yaşar's transformational journey.

The play consists of two main acts, one introductory and one concluding parts. The introductory part familiarises the characters and their crucial roles in both the narration and the commentary of the course of events. The first act is subdivided into twelve sections based on the location of the events. These include the ward of the prison, the office of the primary school's director, the civil registry office, the yard of the house in his village, a gendarmerie station, military barracks, a coffee house in the town, tax office, courtroom, a state office and again the ward of the prison. The first act begins and ends in the prison ward, at the end of which the prisoners introduce Mr Karakaplı Nizami to Yaşar.

[339] Nesin, "Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz"*, Bütün Oyunları 3*, Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2011 (20th Edition), p. 9-10.
[340] Ibid., p. 5-9.

The second act includes eleven sections: a state office, the stadium, before İstanbul silhouette, a romantic place in the countryside, a greengrocer's shop in the bazaar, a ceremony area, a crowded street, a hospital ward, a civil registry office and the prison ward again. There is also a brief concluding part of two pages where a prisoner reveals the present condition of Yaşar.

1.1. Analysis of the Play

Just before the introductory play, *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* begins with the rhythmically recited chants used as rhetoric.[341] The play's solo or choral responses are given to satirise and expose the situation assessment. These chants, especially at the beginning of the play, are presented just like an *exordium*, an introduction, which is the beginning of a speech which "in an epideictic speech [...] resembles the musical prelude, and is connected with the body of the speech by the key-note; [and] [...] is derived from topics of praise or blame."[342] Besides, exordium is used to stir the audience's minds to rise, persuading and questioning emotion. The art of persuading or finding ways to persuade the audience at a specific time is rhetoric. People are influenced more quickly when they are demonstrated.[343] For this reason, Nesin opens the play with rhythmical ballads that give clues about the play, mentioning the existence and insignificance of the individuals. Another purpose of these ballads is to persuade the audience that something is wrong with the system's operation. To strengthen the persuasion, he adorns the ballads with an allusion to Sheikh Zübeyir's[344] [William Shakespeare] famous soliloquy "To be or not to be" (16) ['Tu bi or nat tu bi']. (16) This philosophical allusion compels people to think about their existence and

[341] As this part is the detailed summary of the play, the citations are given in round brackets. The full citation is as follows: Nesin, "Yaşar Ne Yaşar Ne Yaşamaz", *Bütün Oyunları 3*, Nesin Publications, İstanbul, 2011.

[342] John Henry Freese, *The "Art" Of Rhetoric*, Harvard University Press, 1926, p. Xliv.

[343] Ibid., p. 9-11.

[344] In the beginning of the play, *Yasar Netiher Lives Not Dies*, the playwright mentions the opening phrase of the famous soliloquy by Hamlet. The life and origin of Shakespeare have been questioned and various probabilities are dwelled on. One of those probabilities was that Shakespeare was an Arabian from the Persian Gulf who lived in Britain. His physical appearence an unpleasant perspective on Turks, Jews and Britons were regarded as proof by some people. (See. Ceren Kenar, "Shakespeare nasıl Şeyh Zubeyr oldu?", www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr (17/10/2013)

question life and death, whether it is worth living, and challenging the injustices as in Hamlet.

These chants are often repeated throughout the play to keep the impression alive and guarantee laughter and entertainment - the primary target of theatre - for the audience and not to drive them to total desperation. One of the most effective chants uttering the insignificance of individuals for the state is spoken by Yaşar:

Yaşar: What matters if we live
What happens if we die
It will do without Yaşar
Just let the nation survive (16)

In the introductory part, three prisoners, one imam and Yaşar exist. Prisoners explain the transformation of Yaşar following his prison life of ten years. The first prisoner, depicted as a man who speaks in a kind old gentle language, asks "Is not everyone, even the one who regards himself/herself as the freest, both the guardian and the prisoner of his/her own prison?" (17) Speaking in "a ruffian language," the second prisoner draws attention to the importance of laughing and having fun. (17) Third prisoner, speaking in the language of "an ordinary small person of a big city", points out that "Either you or us... The lives of each of us are a separate novel, a separate play. As the subject matter of this play, we choose what has passed through Yaşar, our friend. Why? Because Yaşar is you, us, all of us." (17-18)

In prison, three prisoners become prominent. These three prisoners represent the three social classes: upper, middle, and lower. The prisoners are introduced at the beginning of the play, and each has different backgrounds and separate roles for the desired outcome of the play: to prove that people with diverse backgrounds feel, think, experience and act similarly. The first prisoner, speaking gently, points out the captivity of all and every individual in life, questioning that all the people live an imprisoned life, the guardian and the prisoner of which are themselves. In a delinquent way, the second prisoner emphasises the need and importance of having fun and laughing. On the other hand, the third prisoner, a regular individual from a big city, calls attention to the fact that everyone in society suffers from similar practices, even if they are unaware of the situation. That is, what Yaşar experiences in life is, in one way or another, similar to what other people go through.

The three prisoners begin to tell Yaşar's story through the last days of his imprisonment.

The introductory play portrays Yaşar's ending up as a grown trained man that flushes in cash illegally due to the conditions he has enjoyed. It handles Yaşar's transformation from a pure, non-existent, weak, meek, timid, and often-ignored person to a devious, dishonest man managing his affairs well but illegally. This transformation is an incident narrated by the prisoners in the ward that he has abandoned himself to religious duties through the end of his conviction. He has cleaned the mosque in prison and performed prayers right behind the imam, which has provided the imam's sympathy, trust, and prayers. Day by day, he has made money. Upon the imam's running after Yaşar, the prisoners learn that he has made that money off heroin, which he gets in with the help of a former prisoner with whom he has made a deal before. That former prisoner pins a package of heroin inside the robe of the imam, and Yaşar takes it during the performance of ritual prayers, where he positions himself right behind the imam. One day, Yaşar, examining the robe for the heroin packet, accidentally touches the imam, hoping to find the package. When the imam wakes up to his trick, he attempts to catch Yaşar to punish him. However, the imam cannot complain, most probably because he, however unbeknown, has carried the heroin or is ashamed of being touched by Yaşar. (17-22) What Yaşar has done is his defiance against the fact that the State ignores him. Therefore, although he keeps his purity throughout the play, through the end of his story - which is given at the beginning - he obtains new features by which he plays the game by the rules and responds to the corrupt and defective system in his way.[345]

The third act takes place in prison. It is about Yaşar's arrival as a timid orphan and non-owner of anything. His name, Yaşar Yaşamaz[346], causes laughter in the ward. Moreover, he is seen as insane since he pretends, he is non-existent. Yaşar begins to tell who he is and the story of his existential struggle. His struggle begins in the office of the state school director, where he -at 12 years old – has gone with his father, one

[345] Dilek Tunalı, "Türk Sinemasında Aziz Nesin Uyarlamaları Aracılığıyla; Tarihsel, Toplumsal ve Kültürel Yapılanmaların Araştırılması", *Dokuz Eylül University, Graduate School of Social Sciences, (Unpublished Master's Thesis)*, İzmir 1998, p. 108.

[346] Name may be roughly translated as Lives and surname as Does Not Live or Will Leave-Does not Live.

of the notable people of the town, to enrol in the state school. Upon learning the need for an identity card for Yaşar, they head towards the directorate of civil registration, where the civil servant in the office is lost among the piles of files, notebooks, and papers. Yaşar's father remarks that "a big officer of the State" (31) can know everything. Just like a societal tradition, Yaşar also believes in the absolute knowledge of the state. However, the registrar indicates that Yaşar was martyrised in Çanakkale during the First World War according to the "huge thick hardcover record books" (30), each page of which is covered with dust. By portraying the civil servants in the state offices lost among the piles of files, books, notebooks, and papers. Here, Nesin refers to the wrong and outdated operation of the system, in other words, dysfunctional government system of that time. The official record book is considered to be the source of absolute truth for civil servants and the biggest part of society. It indicates when he first faces the gridlocks of the system and when he is assumed dead in the play. (35)

Upon the objections of Yaşar's father, the registrar, with his director, begins to make up scenarios to verify the registry in the book. Then, Yaşar starts to cry out "I have been dead, father, why have not you told me?" (33) His father gets angry at him and begins to question the book and the contradiction of the absolute righteousness: "Quiet, son; how can he know that you are alive or dead..." Yaşar opposes this time: "You have told me that he can know everything... The big officer of the State, is it more than impossible for him not to know?" (32) Reşit flabbergastingly bursts out " that means you, cooperating and agreeing on all hands, will adapt us to your book by force, is that so?" (36) Reşit tries to point towards the impossibility of the situation because the birth year of Hacer is 1904 whereas Yaşar seems to be born in 1896. Nevertheless, the registrar and the director continue their scenarios to rationalise the matter "Hacer was married to another man before you. The man she was married had a son named Yaşar from the woman whom he was married and then divorced." (37) The director continues it as "the first husband of Hacer has died. Hacer's stepson, Yaşar, was eight years older than her then. Once her husband has died, Hacer cannot throw Yaşar in the street... She takes Yaşar in, and then has married to Reşit." (37) Thereby, Reşit seems as Yaşar's father and "in this way, Yaşar is eight years older than his stepmother and one year older than you [Reşit]." The registrar and the director

emphasise the infallibility of the registries as "the book never lies" (33) and "there cannot be any mistake in the book" (35); Thus, the mistake is Yaşar's and his father's. Among the waves of laughter of the other people at the office who hear the dialogues closely, Reşit leaves the office with his hopes drained away as he realises there is no way to persuade the officials who believe the superiority and unconditional accurateness of the book.

The course of events proves that, in Türkiye, from bureaucrats to the single unit of society, the sanctity of the state is supported above all. In all cases, the state and state officials are respected. Therefore, neither politicians, bureaucrats and state staff nor the society demand or believe in the possibility of a change in the system.

Therefore, no attempts are made to transform the system because state agents are far from realising defects within the bureaucratic functioning. Thus, an attempt to change is regarded as hostility towards the state and quashed as a self-defence reflex of the state.[347] Therefore, bureaucrats and civil servants have often uttered the *sacred* belief that one cannot know better than the state and the book.

Over time, Yaşar has grown up and has engaged to Ayşe. At the middle of the engagement ceremony, gendarmes come to take him to the gendarmerie station. There, despite the lack of documents, he is enlisted with a note saying that Yaşar's identity documents will be issued later. However, at the end of his military service, he cannot be discharged as he does not have an identity document, so the commander writes to the registry office, and the answer is given in a *bundle of papers* similar to the one given to Yaşar's father. Those papers also state that he has been martyrised again, but this time at the Dersim operation in 1935. (45) He is eventually discharged with a note saying he has served as a soldier.

After his discharge from the military service, he returns to his village. He is told by the townspeople that his father has passed away, and once he pays the taxes and the credit debt, he can get the heritage. To pay his father's tax debts, he visits the tax office, a State agency just like the civil registry office and other State agencies where many citizens speak "from table to table and from officer to officer," and which are full of "spilt files, rolls of paper" and "papers flying in the air."(50) In the tax

[347] Küçükkalay - Özmen, "Aziz Nesin ve Nikolai V. Gogol'da Bürokratik Devlet Mekanizması", p. 16.

office, which is just like a 'funfair', there are "women officers in miniskirts who shuttle from table to table," and officers who are "reading newspapers, drinking coffee slurpingly, sleeping" or women officers who are "knitting, applying nail polish, putting on makeup" as well as citizens who are "discussing, fighting, gossiping, complaining."(50) After paying all the taxes, he is directed from one table to another to be able to get the heritage. The documents are stamped, punched, or given a number each time. While shuttling among the tables, he faints, and the officers cover him with files and papers just like "covering someone's corpse who dies in an accident, with a fabric." (51) It confirms his third time death.

To get the heritage, he takes legal action with the help of an attorney against a representative treasury solicitor of the State who "ostensibly protects the rights of the State that the State keeps [his] father's heritage." (53) Treasury solicitor states that as he is 'officially and legally' and it cannot be proved that he is alive. Moreover, he claims that there is no heir to the heritage to claim, so it must be transferred to the State treasury. His lawyer argues that he has paid his father's taxes and debts and questions that "while Yaşar was paying his defunct father's debts and the taxes were being collected from him, it was not propounded that Yaşar was dead. [...] Is that Yaşar is alive while he is paying taxes to the state but dead while he is inheriting the legacy of his father?" (55) Furthermore, he also questions the impossibility and irrationality of Yaşar's being martyred twice in different wars. Although his lawyer demands an identity document given legally for which they can disclaim their right of succession, the case - which has been maintained for about four years - is postponed for the documents concerning Reşit's registry extract and Yaşar's certificate of discharge besides all other documents, to be submitted to the court. (56-57) At the end of the case, Yaşar leaned back against the wall on which it writes "Justice is the basis of property." (58) Ayşe's father comes by and expresses his anger:

> **Ayşe's Father:** Hey, my simpleton son, Yaşar, do you know yourself better than the State? Can one go against the State? Is it your business to belie the State, my foolish son Yaşar? If the State tells you that you are not alive, it is that you are not alive. Is that right, my son, Yaşar?" (59)

The above-given utterances of Ayşe's father reveal the commonly held idea of the ordinary people, the society. With this idea, it is understood that people

acknowledge that the state, the bureaucrats, and the book are the sources of absolute truth that cannot be questioned or opposed. Moreover, the people who tend to challenge the practices of the state are doomed to be branded as insane. This time, it is someone who knows Yaşar from his childhood and witnesses his existence, agrees with the registry books, and assumes him dead. Moreover, Yaşar also concedes that he is not alive, yet, Ayşe knows that he is alive, which triggers him to move on and continue his struggle.

Yaşar even cannot prove that he is alive to his father-in-law-to-be, although Ayşe still believes in him, thus, he keeps his hopes and goes to Ankara to prove that he is alive not dead. In Ankara, he, with a dozen of papers, visits another State office where he faces the same bureaucratic red tape with inactive civil servants making a wool ball from a hank of wool and gossiping rather than doing jobs. They even do not hear his timid and shy calls. He sways from side to side because of the complex ludicrous procedures. When he shouts at the women officers for help, they angrily warn him that he is in a state office. (62) The women officers refer him to Mr. İbrahim, who is reading his newspaper and, again, ignores his cry. Later he answers him behind the newspaper in an angry voice "[İbrahim] is me. What's the matter? What happened? What do you want? Who are you?" (65). Explaining his problem, he gives the documents for a number to be provided by Mr İbrahim. However, Mr İbrahim is the wrong person to number the document; he speaks behind the newspaper again, and he gets angry.

Numerator İbrahim: Give it to me... Hmm... It is not here... It is wrong...

Yaşar: Where, then?

Numerator İbrahim: How do I know where it is? Leave me alone...

Yaşar: Mister, I... I have been traipsing in this department for six months...

Numerator İbrahim: You, for six months, what can I do? I have been here for twenty-six years.

Yaşar: Uncover your face from that newspaper and tell me something... Where is here? What government office is it? (65)

he holds and pulls the newspaper aside harshly, causing the newspaper to tear, which resulted in the exclamations of numerator İbrahim:

Numerator İbrahim: Gosh... You huh? To the officer of the State... An insult, huh... You have seen, my friends... You have all seen. You are all witnesses... He tore it, tore it. (*shouting, he is tearing the collar of his shirt*) He both tore the collar and plucked out the button of the government official while on duty... Here is the button! You have all seen, you are witnesses... (66)

All the people inside are in cahoots over Yaşar's assaulting the officer. They say:

Altogether: To be fair, you are witnesses
Or else, defendants

1st. Police Officer: While our self-sacrificing officer is doing his job
He has plucked the button of the state official (67)

One of the most prominent reasons why Nesin criticises public officials, civil servants and lower-rank bureaucrats is that they exploit the society in a way; however, he mentions that they are also exploited. Police officers are also exploiting and being exploited; thus, they are among the people integrated into the corrupt system. They lack a sense of mission and responsibility for the security of the society. Police institution is shown to be a part of the malfunctioning bureaucracy. However, police officers voice the main reason for their behaviour as economic distress in the corrupt system as follows:

2nd. Police Officer: Unable to make the two ends meet
He has plucked the collar of the state official (67)

It is worth noting that Nesin largely mentions the police officers in the play to criticise the operation of the police department, not the individual police officers. Instead of attacking the people - the police, soldier or lawyer personally, he "questions the system exploiting the citizens in line with its favour through individuals from various social stratum and occupations."[348]

Yaşar has been found guilty one more time, which caused him cry:

Yaşar: They are not insane for sure
Strong or guilty is obscure
In the pocket of the citizen
Whose hand is obscure
Right or wrong is obscure (67)

[348] İpşiroğlu, "Mizahla Direnme: Aziz Nesin'in Tiyatro Uyarlamaları", p. 26.

At the end of the first act, the setting is again the prison. Yaşar tells other prisoners that he has been sentenced for insulting an officer while he is on duty. Nevertheless, along with other prisoners, he is unable to comprehend the State's attitude towards him:

> **Yaşar:** I will go to school, but they say you are dead. They will enrol me into military service; they say you are alive. I will inherit my legacy; they say you are dead. They will collect my father's debts; they say you are alive. I demand my identity card; they say you are dead. They will put me in jail; they say you are alive. I cannot understand when I am dead or alive. (69)

This dialogue is repeated at specific intervals to emphasise and create a comic effect, and keep the experiences of Yaşar alive in the minds of the reader and the spectator. This directs them to question and establish a connection between his experiences and theirs and realise that what they are watching with laughter is, in fact, what they are, in a way, exposed to in their daily lives. This motivates people to take action to change something to overcome the injustices and absurd practices they live through.

Upon his cry that he has been arrested for insulting the servant of the State despite his non-existence, the prisoners speak him of the world-famous Mr Karakaplı Nizami as a powerful mechanism who outclasses and is superior to the advocates, parliamentarians, ministers and every kind of office bearer. (69-71) Mr Karakaplı Nizami can make the impossible possible, "get the dead off the hook" and "vanquish even Azrael" (70) but not illegally. He conveniently finds a way to make legal solutions, always abiding by the laws. This is the reason why he is called Mr Karakaplı Nizami. (71)

Prisoners tell Yaşar that Mr Karakaplı Nizami can arrange an identity card for him with every kind of information, including age, family name, etc. Furthermore, upon his question asking session, voices of laughter rise from the ward. They point out that Mr Karakaplı Nizami is just like a spirit or a soul that can always be found "everywhere in the country; it exists behind bars, outside, inside, everywhere" as long as someone "has a way with him". (72-73)

The second act begins with Yaşar's song telling how valueless he feels:

Yaşar: I am neither gold nor silver
Have died before birth
Absent in this world
Buried in the hearts. (75)

Fellow prisoners warn Yaşar that his belief in destiny is not the reason for his imprisonment. He and people alike contribute to the perpetuation of the belief that everything is predetermined. So, nothing will possibly change unless these people rearrange their behaviours and procedures; and urge the state to change the ill practices.

Not the ordinary members of society but the state, bureaucracy and bureaucrats are treated as the saviours of the system; thus, they are worshipped. In such an environment, society abandons the idea that the state is responsible for the welfare and benefit of society;[349] as a result, the bureaucrats struggle to maintain the system's structure without any change to keep their position. Cemil Oktay notes that in such traditional societies, "the social order is perceived as a divine volition," and "whatever, regarding the politics and the society, all are "created"; thus, they are identified as the facts that are not supposed to change because "traditionalism is grounded in continuity in every respect."[350] This continuity is the continuity of the State and the insignificance of an individual against the state. Therefore, Yaşar is obstinate in his thoughts, aggrandising the state and acknowledging and inuring his being insignificant. In the stanzas both at the beginning of the play and before the second act, what people utter altogether is remarkable:

What matters if we live
What happens if we die
It will do without Yaşar
Just let the nation live (16, 76, 132)

Following the musical poem, the stage opens in a state office that is disordered and very crowded with the citizens following their proceedings, officers, and janitors. The absurdity of the dialogue between the staff and the citizens supports the humorous satire of the bureaucracy and the helplessness of the citizens, which manifests the chaos, disorder and impossibility of managing their jobs:

[349] Ibid., p. 7-23.
[350] Cemil Oktay, "Liberal Siyasi Düzenler Hakkında Notlar", *Doğu Batı,* 2011, Vol. 57, p. 229-230.

- Does anybody know who the chief assessment officer is?
- I do not know. Do you know where the personnel department is?
- Visit the information desk, and ask the advisory officer.
- Where is the information desk?
- I am also looking for the information desk.
- I am looking for Mr Selim... Where is he?
- Ask the secretary...
- Where is the secretary?
- Do you know where the accounting unit is?
- Is the second section downstairs?
- I do not know... My job is in the third section, but I cannot find it. (77)

The qualification and abilities of high-ranking bureaucrats, besides required qualities for lower staff positions, are attention-grabbing. From top to bottom, bureaucrats and public sector staff are employed according to political perspectives, not the field of specialisation. For instance, to work as a watchman requires a diploma, whereas superior positions need individual contacts. The bureaucracy is occupied by these inflexible bureaucrats and staff who, without questioning, stringently adhere to the rules even when they are unreasonable and inadequate to solve individuals' problems.

Yaşar is almost sure that he has finished all procedures, all documents - "the signature of the director, [...] stamp, [...] the initials of the department director, [...] the ministerial approval, [...] the fee, [...] passport photograph, [...] a certificate of residence" (78) - the stamps and the seals except for one sequence number which the officer will give just after he gets the approval of the director. Otherwise, the heritage will pass to the State, which is almost impossible to take back. The rush restarts for him. To find the director, he shuttles around the rooms to see the director's secretary; however, the janitor stops him and reminds the critical position of himself as a janitor who is the man to be the point of contact. To be a janitor is Yaşar's dream to be counted as an essential person because a janitor is a kingpin in a government office, where everybody comes and asks critical questions. The following dialogue between them supports the vital role of the janitor:

Janitor: [...] You had better ask and consult...

Yaşar: All right, what should I ask?

Janitor: Ask, "May I see Mr Director?"

Yaşar: May I see Mr. Director?

Janitor: There you are... You cannot see Mr. Director.

Yaşar: Why?

Janitor: Because Mr. Director is absent.

Yaşar: To whom has Mr Director gone?

Janitor: You are unaware of what is going on around...

Yaşar: What happened to the world?

[...]

Janitor: Mr Director is at the match, at the match.

Yaşar: But, today is not a holiday...

Janitor: Fine... Whenever the Tozkoparan team has a match, Mr Director falls sick and goes to the match that day. (83)

After finding out where the director is, football stadium, he goes to the stadium and asks the police officer for Mr Director. The police officer takes him to the director of the stadium. As the director cannot understand what Yaşar explains, he gives the police a sign to tell that he is insane, which causes him to be taken to the mental hospital. Again, he and his utterances are disregarded by the other people, and once more, he is exposed to psychological torture, which at last drives him mad.

At the hospital, he talks with the chief physician about the madness. But, unfortunately, the chief physician's utterances also support the idea that the bureaucracy of the government is incomprehensible:

Chief Physician : My son, have you ever seen an insane who says s/he is mad? The insane do not announce that they are mad... They even do not know that they are mad... No insane in the world is insane enough to say he is mad.

Yaşar: Then?..

Chief Physician: What, then?

Yaşar: Everyone who does not claim s/he is mad, is insane...

Chief Physician: Sure...

Yaşar: What about you?

Chief Physician: Am I not also living in this country, my son. Is it possible to both live in this country and not go mad?

Yaşar: So, I am now insane...

Chief Physician: Like all of us...

Yaşar: Don't mention it... What about our elders?

Chief Physician: Elders are great madmen; little ones are little madmen...

Yaşar: So, it is because of the weather and water of the country...

Chief Physician: Come on... On the contrary, it is because of the country's lack of weather and water.

[...]

Yaşar: [...] Official authorities claim that I have been martyred in two places; I take their words.

Chief Physician: The age of the beardless, the camel's going, and the government's business are impenetrable, my son. (87-88)

The statement that elders are more insane and little people are little insane reminds Nesin that the enormous responsibility and who is to blame rest with the people in power, namely *the elders*; nevertheless, the ordinary people also share their guilt that they do not act to change the status quo.

The chief physician believes that Yaşar's insanity is not more than anyone else's insanity; thus, as he cannot discharge his from the hospital legally due to the lack of an identity card, he advises him to escape from the mental hospital and find a way to obtain an identity card. Here, the chief physician proves that he also bears some characteristics of Mr Karakaplı Nizami that he tells him to escape secretly unbeknown to them; by then, they will prepare a legal document regarding his escape. Moreover, he, in a way, directs him to find another Mr Karakaplı Nizami to get an identity card. However, he still stands up for the legal struggle to make the government confirm his existence.

Escaping from the mental hospital, he is pouring out his problems before İstanbul silhouette when Karanlık Kazım - a ruffian - offers him a business partnership to start a greengrocer together. According to their agreement, the official documents will be in the name of Karanlık Kazım. Yaşar will collect the money then it will be divided equally between them. Karanlık Kazım explains that with the cash Yaşar will earn, he can quickly get many identity cards. They prepare an article of partnership which is notarised legally. However, after a while, Karanlık Kazım swindles him by taking all the money they have saved to expand their business; and he steals the stocks in the greengrocery. This time, he is abused by an ordinary person from the society. Yaşar sues Karanlık Kazım for presenting the notarised partnership document as evidence. The court accepts it only if he can certify his existence. Nevertheless, he is obliged to pay the taxes of the greengrocer just like he has paid his father's taxes without managing to get his inheritance. Once more, he gets his hopes up, thinking

that he will at least have the chance to prove his existence with the tax bill he took from the tax office. This time, he feels more compelled to get an identity card because he has a son now, and he cannot get married to Ayşe. Nevertheless, he has to keep working to support his family materially and nonmaterially with his name.

A man tells Yaşar that the political party pays five thousand liras to the ones who attend the welcoming ceremony of their leader. The party's provincial head gives his word that they will provide money and sacrifice an animal, the meat of which will be distributed to the followers. The people shout against saying that they have given neither cash nor meat at the previous meeting. The provincial head has made up an excuse that as they have realised the meat has been radiant, they have not wished to give it to society and sold the meat to the butchers to obtain a financial return to the party. Following his explanations, the masses thank him for considering the best for them. It demonstrates how Nesin attracts our attention to the insignificance of the people for the bureaucrats, that is, the people in power, and focuses on the apathy of the people who do not seek their rights and accept everything without questioning. Moreover, he lampoons the demagogue politicians, party administrators, and corrupt political system. They are drawn as demagogues who are opportunist people caring for their interests and can exploit society. He also criticises the people who, without questioning, appreciate the provincial head for his good intention.

The crowd is divided into two groups; the clappers and the carriers, who deserve more money as it is more challenging. Although the head chooses Yaşar for the clapping group because of his skinny appearance, he attends the carrier group. He heads to the area where speeches are to be made with a very fat man on his shoulders to win the politicians' favour hoping they can find a job for him and help him to get an identity card. There, he is crushed under the overweight man, and the party has not paid his money as he has caused the man to fall. Moreover, the documents he has collected to prove his existence are stolen, so he has lost his hopes once more.

When the crowd breaks up, a man sits beside Yaşar and tells him how he has suffered in life and attempted suicide many times but failed as a "poor person can neither live nor die; s/he languishes just like you." (116) The man makes Yaşar tell how he manages to earn his life taking the easy way out afterwards, "you will suddenly

throw yourself in front of a very luxurious private car" (116) in a controlled way not to get hurt. As the wealthy owner of the car cannot stand getting involved in such an unpleasant troublesome accident, s/he will pay back whatever is desired to evade the legal penalty. The man adds that with such an occupation, he has owned "a winter house, a summer house, a car, two children, a wife, and a paramour" (117), moreover, he mentions that he has made the pilgrimage two times. This advice sounds plausible to Yaşar, "I can handle this job, brother; as it does not require an identity card." (117)

Yaşar throws himself in front of a car in a crowded street and gets hurt. People cover his body with newspapers. A man runs to the police station and asks for help; however, all police officers reject it by citing the following excuses:

1st. Man:	(*to a policeman*) Excuse me, please. A man was crushed there...
Policeman:	A man was crushed? I do not get involved in such events... I work for the passport department.
1st. Man:	Who will get involved?
Policeman:	Well... Is the second department responsible? If it is homicide...
1st. Man:	(*running towards another police officer*) Mr Policeman, excuse me, I wonder if you are from the second department?
Policeman:	Yes, why?
1st. Man:	A man is dying there...
Policeman:	On natural causes or homicide?
1st. Man:	A car has crushed...
Policeman:	Traffic police will deal with it. I work for the homicide department.
A Man:	(*running towards the police at the right*) Mr., a man is crushed. Will you please come and see?
Policeman:	I cannot...
A Man	Are not you traffic police?
Policeman:	Yes, but I am on leave today, my brother.
A Man:	(*runs towards another policeman*) A man was crushed there...
Policeman:	Really, alas/what a pity...
1st. Man:	Will you please deal with it?
Policeman:	I cannot get into it.
1st. Man:	Why?

Policeman: The accident area is not included in my area of responsibility. I am interested in the upper part of this road.

1st. Man: Who is responsible for that area?

Policeman: The police of that area... (118-119)

His plans do not go well again. As he is losing blood, an experienced older man appears among the crowd as an enlightening figure guiding him on his way through Mr Karakaplı Nizami. He utters him to chastise, yelling, "What kind of a system is it? What kind of governance is it?" (120) When he screams out what the old man has told him, four undercover police officers take him pell-mell and precipitately.

After a while, Yaşar has been treated in the hospital, and one of his legs has been cut. When he recovers, the doctor asks for the payment, which is reasonably priced as it is State Hospital. The nurse warns him that he has to pay not to be taken hostage. He accepts to be taken hostage, saying that "it is better to be taken hostage here rather than being unemployed outside. You will put me to work; I do not ask for money, I will work for my board." (121) Even though he objects to paying as he has been legally acknowledged to be martyred for two times, the doctor instructs him to sign a certificate of debt with a notarial document that is organised for Ayşe as Yaşar lacks an identity card.

Ayşe and Yaşar have a son, Hayati, which means *concerning life, vital, extremely crucial*. To take an identity card for Hayati, they take him to the civil registry office where Yaşar's father has taken him before for the same reason. The environment, the officers, the citizens, and the dusty registration books are the same. The registration books still write that he was martyred at the Battle of Gallipoli; thus, they cannot concede him as the child's father. He reacts against that kind of life, death, officer, director, and governance out loud pretending he does not want such a system and order. He adds his desire for a new order and system. The same four undercover police officers ask him to repeat his wish. This time, the police officers agree with him in his desire but not out loud; instead, whispering silently in each other's ears. All other citizens share the same passion with him: "Me, too; me, too; me, too..." (127)

In the last scene of the last act, the play turns back to where it begins; the prison. In this way, he is committed to prison with the witnesses' reports and statements. Prisoners utter that prison means "two or three faculties" according to the person, and

it is a process of becoming Mr Karakaplı Nizami. However, in the end, despite all his struggles and collapsing efforts, Yaşar gets the State above everything, including himself, which is greeted with astonishment that they explain the fundamental idea regarding the whole play "Bub, if we do not exist, do you think the homeland as you call it, hometown as you name it, will exist? Both the homeland and the hometown are us..." (131)

The concluding play narrates the day when he is released from prison. One of the prisoners portrays the current position: "He is not that former Yaşar Yaşamaz." (134). He is now a well-dressed and well-endowed man whose suitcases are carried by three poor fellows to whom he has amply tipped. Closing the play, the prisoner verbalises the training Yaşar received in prison along with his experiences in his struggles that he no more needs Mr Karakaplı Nizami as "he has become a past master at being Mr Karakaplı Nizami." (134) Furthermore, "many Mr Karakaplı Nizamis will grow up here if that is how it is and how it is going to be." (134)

2. LEAR

Lear was standing in my path and I had to get him out of the way.[351]

Written in the form of a tragedy, Bond's *Lear* is the adaptation of Shakespeare's *King Lear*. It was first staged at the Royal Court Theatre in London within the same year it was written, and more than forty theatres asked for a European premiere.[352] With the reputation gained by *Saved*, *Lear* was guaranteed to be seen by the masses. Nevertheless, the play received a lacklustre response from the critics, who seemed hesitant to provide a definitive opinion. Although they didn't want to be too critical like they had been with *Saved*, it was clear that they were not fans of the play; so, they opted for a more neutral approach in their reviews.[353]

Over time, the play has become much more appreciated. Though its origin is a Shakespearean play, Tony Coult qualifies it as an "entirely free […] autonomous work

[351] Qtd. in. Wagdi Zeid, *Misreading Shakespeare: Modern Playwrights and the Quest for Originality*, iUniverse, Bloomington, 2012, p. Xii.
[352] Scharine, 1976, p. 21.
[353] Qtd. in. Scharine, 1976, p. 184.

of art."[354] Kenneth Hurren from *The Spectator* also praises *Lear* as the standout play of the year. According to him, the play is flawless, and its greatness can be compared to the most monumental works of Shakespeare.[355] Likewise, Jeremy Kingston of *Punch* mentions the play as the year's quality with a note of appreciation of German playhouses.[356] Lyn Gardner, a theatre critic, appreciates Bond's adaptation of *Lear*, emphasising its timeless quality that does not appear outdated.[357] In his critique, Benedict Nightingale characterises the play as an "untidy moral melodrama" that blends "the idiomatic and the rhetorical" elements from both *Saved* and *The White Devil;* and it also features "Shakespearean ghosts, Brechtian soldiery, and scurvily Bondish politicians."[358]

The critics highly praised it, yet, *Lear* divided the spectators into two; one group was displeased because of the violence presented, while the others felt it necessary to support the playwright's intentions.[359] There is ongoing debate surrounding the level of violence depicted in the play. However, the opinions of contemporary reviewers demonstrate that *Lear* is more highly regarded now than ever before. This suggests that the intentions of the playwright have been recognised better. The current productions capture the audience's attention with its "appalling cruelty and […] terrible beauty" and freshen Bond's place among the post-war British playwrights as the greatest.[360]

Bond's revisiting of Shakespeare's tragedy, *King Lear*, has been another reason for garnering attention. The motive for rewriting the play is not the dramatic failure of Shakespeare. He respects *King Lear* as the greatest play ever,[361] but, criticises it for the mythic world it dramatises. Following quote describes one of the reasons he revisited it:

[354] Coult, 1979, p. 21.
[355] Scharine, 1976, p. 22.
[356] Ibid., p. 17-19.
[357] Lyn Gardner, "Lear", *The Guardian,* 17 Mar 2005, www.theguardian.com (27.12.2019)
[358] Qtd. in. Scharine, 1976, p. 185.
[359] Peter Billingham, *Edward Bond: A Critical Study,* Palgrave Macmillan, Hampshire, 2013, p. 40-41.
[360] Gardner, "Lear", 2005.
[361] Billingham, 2013, p. 40.

> The reason I took Lear is that as a myth it seems central to people's experience. Lear is the family tragedy, magnified to the dimensions of political tragedy, state tragedy, and it seems to deal with very fundamental desires and fears that people have. It's a fascinating play […] and I felt that somehow, I wasn't living in the real world until I dealt with that myth on my own terms […] I think it's the greatest play written, and it's the play I get the most out of. Nevertheless, it doesn't work for me, and in a sense, I have to criticise it.[362]

King Lear covers the tragedy of family, state, politics, and desires and fears, yet it seems unreal to Bond. He believes that rational theatre makes a powerful impact, resulting in significant consequences for society and life. No character in Shakespeare's history plays can be seamlessly integrated into the society "of the good government he had spent so long in describing and praising."[363] According to Bond, there is a notable disconnection between Shakespeare's fictional world and reality. Shakespeare's portrayal of King Lear's neglect of his duties reflects similar negligence on his part. Bulman argues that Shakespeare fails to fulfil his moral responsibilities as a writer by focusing solely on man's reaction to mistreatment.[364] Additionally, the notion of idolising theatrical productions in an academic sense is a misguided belief. It is fallacious to assume that his works accurately reflect modern-day society. This erroneous belief can lead to intellectual complacency and discourage individuals from questioning themselves and their surroundings, hindering any potential for meaningful societal change.[365]

Shakespeare's plays contained numerous open-ended questions that were historically unanswerable because theatre, like all art forms, was politically determined. Nevertheless, Shakespeare skilfully instilled a sense of curiosity in his audience, encouraging them to ponder questions and seek rational answers "till they have created the rational order which will give them peace."[366] Thus, he regards *King Lear* as the dead hand of the past for the solutions to the always current problems. As he is captivated by Shakespeare's portrayal of the king, who eloquently and passionately verbalises crucial issues,[367] he has revitalised this archetypal cultural

[362] Ibid., p. 40.
[363] Manoliu, "Violence – A Recurrent Theme in Edward Bond's Plays", p. 363.
[364] Bulman, "Bond, Shakespeare, and the Absurd", p. 63.
[365] Lappin, 1987, p. 117.
[366] Manoliu, "Violence – A Recurrent Theme in Edward Bond's Plays", p. 364.
[367] Qtd. in. Stoll, "Interviews with Edward Bond and Arnold Wesker", p. 412.

figure on a more politically and morally appropriate level[368] from a politicised and radical humanist perspective.[369] He revised the play to ensure that the events were relatable to the audience. This was necessary to prompt the audience to question and possibly change themselves.

Shakespearean Lear's moral is to "endure till in time the world will be made right", yet, Bond warns people that it is dangerous as "time is running out."[370] So, another reason for adapting *King Lear* is to stop people from believing the unchangeable human condition and regards it as a part of an urgent call for a need for change.

Admiring Shakespeare's Lear as "the most radical social critic ever created,"[371] he believes that King Lear has passion, yet he lacks revolutionary ideas. Like his Lear, Shakespeare also lacks to reflect revolutionary opinions and is unwilling to act on the system's dysfunction to change society. Bulman supports Bond's idea of Shakespeare expressing that despite being aware of the ills of the social structure, they "chose to tolerate them by either remaining silent or turning inward to lament his own failure."[372] Hilde Klein also underlines that Bond's *Lear* is one step ahead. Shakespeare's *King Lear* acknowledges his mistakes and suffers. Bond relates this acceptance to the Auschwitz bombardment:

> Acceptance is not enough. Anybody can accept. You can go quietly into your gas chamber at Auschwitz, you can sit quietly at home and have an H-bomb dropped on you. Shakespeare had time. He must have thought that in time certain changes would be made. But time has speeded up enormously, and for us, time is running out.[373]

Bond definitely protests against acceptance. Therefore, his *Lear* does more than that; he becomes aware of his errors and responsibilities in the country's current situation, commits himself further to action, and starts a revolutionary change, making him a more purposeful and beneficial hero. He emphasises the necessity to replace King Lear with a more viable Lear for society since King Lear's solution to the problems is total resignation and acceptance, which is not applicable to current societies.

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[368] Scharine, 1976, p. 167.
[369] Bond - Billingham, "Drama and Human: Reflections at the Start of a Millennium", p. 1.
[370] Qtd. in. Spencer, *Dramatic Strategies in the Plays of Edward Bond,* p. 81.
[371] Bulman, "Bond, Shakespeare, and the Absurd", p. 66.
[372] Ibid., p. 63.
[373] Qtd. in. Jones, "EdwardBond's "Rational Theatre"", p. 505.

To update such a powerful but lacking King Lear, Bond circles his plot around Lear's transformation process, which is resembled to pilgrimage. He narrates this process in three acts with subparts. The play possesses a conventional time structure from when he was an authoritative king until he became a self-aware responsible individual. The play's setting varies, yet generally, the events occur around the castle, the wall, the war ground, the Gravedigger Boy's house or in prison.

The audience and the reader witness Lear's spiritual journey, which provides with the chance to view life from two distinct perspectives: from the eyes of a brutal authoritative man who is ruling the country and of a working-class man who is exposed to the brutality of the people in power. As soon as he loses his authority, he begins to see the flaws in the system. This provides the viewers with a chance to acknowledge the unfair social norms they have accepted and upheld with the compelling effect of the oppressive elite class that enjoys the privileges.

A number of studies attribute *Lear*'s political statement to Bond's power of Shakespearean parody, however, it is evident that the preface contributes enormously to the political context and effectiveness of the play.[374] The preface to the play handles violence, aggression, social morality and how people are affected in a socially moralised, unjust society. It also directs readers on how they should perceive the events in three acts, explaining the phases of the play as follows: "Act one shows a world dominated by myth. Act two shows the clash between myth and reality, between superstitious men and the autonomous world. Act three shows a resolution of this, in the world, we prove real by dying in it."[375] The myth portrays the codes and values of the old, which is to be changed. He starts presenting the injustices of society in the myth part. They are to be changed. To manage the change, the play must morally include political reform. Therefore, in the second act, the mythical world crashes into the real world, paving the way to fully awakening to the realities. In the last act, reality rises totally with Lear's death.

[374] Perry Nodelman, "Beyond Politics in Bond's *Lear*", *Modern Drama,* 1980, Vol. 23, No. 3, pp.269-276.
[375] Bond, 1978, p. 12.

2.1. Analysis of the Play

At the beginning of the play, Bond introduces Lear as a king lived in 3100 approximately, reigning for sixty years during which he constructed Leicester.[376] He provides some information about his family, as well: "His father was killed while trying to fly over London. His youngest daughter killed herself when she fell from power." (13) It is clear that Lear is an authoritarian king holding the power for long years. Nevertheless, enough data is not provided to evaluate if his father fled from his brutality or comprehend the reason why her daughter committed suicide.

The play begins near the wall that is being constructed to surround the land to protect it from Lear's enemies, the Duke of Cornwall and the Duke of North. Bond begins and covers the play with a dominant power structure of wall representing the encountered oppression, institutionalised violence and authority. As the construction is built to protect society, it becomes a tool of the state that destroys, enslaves and endangers society. He unites all events around this dominant image.

The offstage shouts of workers and soldiers reveal that an accident has caused a worker's death. Two workers carry his dead body and cover him up as Lear enters with Lord Warrington, an old councillor, an officer, an engineer, and his daughters, Bodice and Fontanelle. He asks why the workers are staying at dry huts. Although Lear's approach to the workers seems a humane way of dealing with them, it is soon understood that all he worries about is how quickly the construction of the wall can be completed. His discontent with the disruption leads him to make a quick decision for the execution of the responsible worker despite the opposition of his daughters:

> **Lear:** Court martial him. Fetch a firing squad. A drumhead trial for sabotage. (17)

Lear accuses the farmer worker of being a traitor that digs up the wall, working for his enemies. Without attempting to take the case to court, he sentences him to death by a firing squad. Lear's fascist manner proves the absence of the justice system.

[376] As this part is the detailed summary of the play, the citations are given in round brackets. The full citation is as follows: Edward Bond, *Plays: 2: Lear, The Sea, Narrow Road to the Deep North, Black Mass, Passion*, Methuen Drama, 1978, Great Britain.

The reason why the wall is quite vital is that it will enable to live freely within the borders of it. When he dies, Lear struggles to guarantee his people live in peace even under the rule of unskilled governors. He believes that only after the wall is built Bodice and Fontanelle will govern the land as they wish since the fortress will give them a secure area to live freely:

> **Lear:** I started this wall when I was young. I stopped my enemies in the field, but there were always more of them. How could we ever be free? So I built this wall to keep my enemies out. My people will live behind this wall when I'm dead. […] My wall will make you free. That's why the enemies on our borders – the Duke of Cornwall and the Duke of North – try to stop us building it. […]

Lear justifies his torture and oppression in constructing the wall by presenting it as a key to peace, security and freedom. Yet, the irony within the above dialogue is so remarkable that the wall captivates his people inside instead of keeping the enemies out. He declares his people as his enemies.[377] Scharine highlights the image of the wall as "the great crime of Lear's moral immaturity."[378] In fact, he is the primary enemy of his own people, keeping them inside under tremendous pressure and making them work under harsh conditions.

Bodice and Fontanelle argue against Lear's quick decision believing that it is an injustice to kill that worker because of an accidental incident. However, his privileged position in power provides him with a self-centred position that allows him to act viciously. Thus, he comments on the necessity of the construction:

> **Lear:** […] Bodice, you're right to be kind and merciful, and when I'm dead you *can* be – because you will have my wall. You'll live inside a fortress. Only I'm not free to be kind or merciful. I must build the fortress. (18-19)

Lear's strong belief in keeping the world orderly is, in fact, the source of his suffering.[379] His words justify his violence and inhuman treatment of his people, soldiers, and daughters, as he makes people think that he is behaving so for the maintenance of social order and the government, and ostensibly for the good of the people. As he is the one who has absolute power in the country, it is clear that he is

[377] Nodelman, "Beyond Politics in Bond's *Lear*", p. 270.
[378] Scharine, 1976, p. 192.
[379] Nodelman, "Beyond Politics in Bond's *Lear*", p. 271.

doing so for the persistence of his authority. However, over time, it is revealed that only the people are responsible for the government, and the reverse is invalid. He believes his land would be open to attacks if he were merciful and kind. He firmly believes that the wall will give the latter kings and queens an opportunity to be merciful and kind because it will make the land an unassailable fortress. This is the reason, he strongly believes, why he is strict, insensitive and merciless.

Lear explains that as he has killed the Dukes' fathers and vowed to kill their sons, too, yet as he does not have the power of a young king, he has to finish the wall and prevent them from taking revenge by invading his country and digging his bones up when he is dead. From the first scene of the first act, it is clearly seen that his primary motivation is fear. He is afraid of being killed by his enemies.

His daughters reveal their plans to marry Lear's enemies, the dukes, to end the hostility, which will also stop people from living under ill conditions:

> **Bodice:** […] We've brought them into your family and you can pull this absurd wall down. There! (Slight laugh) You don't have to make your people slaves to protect you from your sons-in-law. (19)

Sisters believe they will be able to end the hostility between their father and his enemies, the Duke of North and the Duke of Cornwall, by marrying them. Lamont regards the daughters as "basically fairy tale creatures, able to bridge the fantastic and the so-called real."[380] In the first scene of the first act, the sisters seem humanitarian by opposing their father's cruel treatment of people. Especially, Bodice's word choice in saying "people slaves" shows that she is aware of the people's suffering. It seems that she shows sympathy and empathy for people.

Sisters insist the wall must be destroyed and the hostility must end with their future marriages. Bodice urges to prevent the execution of the worker for an uncertain claim that they're spies working for the Dukes. They believe that Lear is acting insane, and Bodice says that they have to argue his insanity as the representatives of sound minds of the kingdom: "If the king will not act reasonably, it's your legal duty to disobey him." (20) Actually, this utterance is the critical point to the play. It is a part

[380] Rosette Clémentine Lamont, "Edward Bond's DE-LEAR-IUM", *The Massachusetts Review*, Vol. 44, No. 1/2, Spring-Summer 2003, pp. 308-313, p. 310.

of Bond's message. A governor should act reasonably; if not, people should take responsibility and change the system. On such an occasion, the sisters seem to behave more humanely than their father. The portraits of the sisters are the products of the myth, as Bond utters in the preface that the first act is a product of myth.

Following his daughters' opposition, Lear yields how he sacrifices for the people of his land and stresses how much he cares for his people:

> **Lear:** […] I gave my life to these people. I've seen armies on their hands and knees in blood, insane women feeding dead children at their empty breasts, dying men spitting blood at me with their last breath, our brave young men in tears -. But I could bear all this! When I'm dead my people will live in freedom and peace and remember my name, no – venerate it! … They are my sheep and if one of them is lost I'd take fire to hell to bring him out. […] (21)

Although he emphasises how much he sacrifices for his people, he seems to sacrifice his people to maintain his absolute power. In the guise of nationalism, Lear highlights that his administration is beyond his identity as an individual. As the leader of his restrictive authority, he kills his and the state's institutions' human instincts to serve society better within the borders of his own ideals. Thus, as a so-called nationalist, he can quickly kill that worker to maintain his national objectives.

He kills the worker to prove his power and browbeats his workers, soldiers and the rest into obeying him without questioning. Since, in his authoritative world, he cannot stand any objection, he declares his daughters as malicious and addresses them as enemies to be kept out of the wall. Bond uncovers that the underlying reason for Lear's aggression toward his daughters is the desire for political power, which is engraved in him by the way he has been educated and brought up.[381]

At the end of the first scene of the first act, Bodice and Fontanelle share their plans to flee to their husbands and attack Lear before they finish the wall. Bond explains why they attack Lear: "for all he's taken from them, all he's deprived them of."[382] Lear raised his daughters with the seeds of hostility, brutality and unlovingness. Especially, experiencing his daughters' cruelty from the time he killed that worker creates a mirror effect reflecting his influence of him on his daughters.

[381] Stuart, 2000, p. 97.
[382] Ibid., p. 102.

The second scene of the first act describes the war ground. Lear greets and salutes his soldiers. Although Warrington warns that he should refuse the war and ask his daughters to live peacefully in the country as an old king, Lear is determined. He wonders about the source of their vileness, yet, he is still unaware that the origin of vileness is himself.

Warrington informs Lear about each of his daughter's letters proposing him to betray Lear, lead their armies and marry them.

At the daughter's War Council, Bodice reveals Lear's war tactic. She adds that "he always has and he's set in his ways." (24) Bodice's words prove how rigid Lear is in his decisions. From the beginning of the play, Bond emphasises that Lear is a hard-liner. Likewise, throughout the play, he also stresses that he is old and change is not an alternative for Lear as he is too old.

In asides, both Bodice and Fontanelle confess their disappointments with their husbands and their plans to pay soldiers to kill their husbands and marry Warrington. The sisters also betray each other by telling Warrington to beat her sister's army. In this way, one sister can govern the country of her father, husband and brother-in-law.

The fourth scene reveals that the daughters' armies are victorious. Lear is not caught, yet Warrington is sent to the cage. Their plans to kill their husbands have failed. To keep her letter and betrayal to her husband and sister secret, Bodice cuts Warrington's tongue out. Yet, they keep on torturing him physically:

Fontanelle: Use the Boot! (*Soldier A kicks him*.) Jump on him! (*She pushes Soldier A*.) Jump on his head!

Soldier A: Lay off, lady, Lay off! 'Oo's killin' 'im, me or you?

Bodice: (*knits*). One plain, two pearl, one plain.

Fontanelle: Throw him up and drop him. I want to hear him drop.

Soldier A: Thass a bit 'eavy, yer need proper gear t' drop 'em –

Fontanelle: Do something! Don't let him get away with it. O Christ, why did I cut his tongue out? I want to hear him scream!

[…]

Fontanelle: […] Smash his hands!

SOLDIER A *and* FONTANELLE *jump on* WARRINGTON's hands!

Kill his hands! Kill his feet! Jump on it – all of it! […] Kill all of it! Kill him inside! Make him dear! Father! Father! I Want to sit on his lungs! (28)

Bodice: (knits.) Plain, pearl, plain. She was just the same at school.

Fontanelle: I've always wanted to sit on a man's lungs. Let me. Give me his lungs. (29)

Besides, with the needle of her knitting, Bodice deafens Warrington:

Bodice: […] We must shut him up inside himself. (*She pokes the needles into WARRINGTON's ears.)* I'll just jog these in and out a little. Doodee, doodee, doodee, doo. (29)

To disturb the audience's comfort to kill their inured way of thinking, Bond adds farcical comedy to the scenes portraying human suffering as violent images. He moves from graphic realism to farcical violence at times to "find [continually new] ways of making people notice, of making those things effective."[383] This is how he uses the aggro-effect and violence to involve the audience emotionally:

> […] I think it's necessary to disturb an audience emotionally, to involve them emotionally in my plays, so I've had to find ways of making that "aggro-effect" more complete, which is in a sense to surprise them […]. The shock is justified by the desperation of the situation or as a way of forcing the audience to search for reasons in the rest of the play.[384]

With this juxtaposition of farcical comedy with human suffering, the stage becomes a part of heightened realism to cause a shock in the audience to make them question the affairs of the play.

[383] Innes, "The Political Spectrum of Edward Bond", p. 199.

[384] Qtd. in. Scott Fraser, *A Politic Theatre: The Drama of David Hare*, Editions Rodopi B.V., 1996, Netherlands, p.33.

The humane image in the first scene of the first act changes. When Bodice and Fontanelle come to power, their sadistic cruelty and evil inside appear. They appear as more violent rulers compared to their father. Although the sisters seem willing to run the land in peace with justice at the first scene, it is not possible. They are grown up seeing Lear rule the land with relentless treatment lacking justice. So, when they come to power, they govern the land as they have learnt from their father, severe and without justice. Therefore, to keep their secrets, they cut Warrington's tongue out. They keep on physical torture as revenge and outpouring of their aggression. The exclamations uttered by Bodice show that, just like a child playing a game, she is having fun deafening Warrington.

Finishing their corporal punishment, they release Warrington to be set as an example for the people supporting their father.

Scene five opens with Lear and the Councillor escaping to the woods. They are burned out and horrified. Councillor leaves Lear on the pretext of finding food. Warrington is also hiding in the woods. As he approaches Lear from his back, Lear speaks about the damage his daughters give to him:

> **Lear:** […] My daughters have taken the bread from my stomach. They grind it with my tears and the cries of famished children – and eat. […] I am a famished dog that sits on the earth and howls. I open my mouth and they place an old coin on my tongue. They lock the door of my coffin and tell me to die. My blood seeps out and they write in it with a finger. I'm old and too weak to climb out of this grave again. (31)

Loneliness makes him acknowledge his weaknesses like a starved dog locked in a coffin to die. Here, it is clearly seen that despite his pain, he cannot find the power to pity or do something for others. As an old and weak former king, he desires to die.

When Lear loses his rank as a king, he becomes an older man, which is a new situation he has to deal with. Overthrown by the armies of his daughters, Lear loses power and feels helpless, defenceless and destitute. His old age frustrates him as it prevents him from tackling these crises. From this part on, he is born into the society he has formed and will begin to experience the social order he has created. He has to look for protection as an aged child.

Klein expresses the "duality of aggressor/victim united in one person" in Lear, that "the aggressor becomes a victim of the oppressive system he has perpetuated or in which he happened to be born."[385] While explaining the difference between the violence of animals and the human race in the preface, Bond states that "violence is dangerous to the prey but not to the predator."[386] Lear is both the creator of the virus of violence and the patient infected by that virus. He is victimised as a result of cruelty he has a great responsibility in the formation of it. Even the unjust judicial system he has founded persecutes him.

Warrington leaves when Gravedigger's Boy comes and offers Lear the bread intended for Warrington. Boy takes Lear to his farm.

Hubert Zaph regards Gravedigger's Boy as the "personification of" Bond's "Rousseauesque-Marxist belief in an original goodness of human nature, distorted in the hostile environment of an aggressive society."[387] Goodness is symbolised in the characterisation of the Boy with his unconditional, spontaneous and natural generosity and benevolence that the social reality has not corrupted with its aggression.

At the house of Gravedigger's Boy, Lear learns the details of the Boy's life. He has not maintained his father's job of digging graves and escaped from the men of the king, who has rounded up men to work at the wall building. Having two fields, he catches things while his wife Cordelia is herding the pigs. When he first meets the Boy, Lear is unaware that he has destroyed the golden age of his kingdom, the living standards and circumstances of the people, which are represented here by the Boy "through his centralisation policies."[388]

[385] Hilde Klein, "Edward Bond: "Lear was Standing in my Path…" – Lear's Progressive Journey From Blindness to Moral Insight and Action", *Atlantis,* 1989, Vol. IX, No. 1-2 (Jun.-Nov.), pp. 71-78, p. 74.
[386] Bond, 1978, p. 3.
[387] Zapf, "Two Concepts of Society in Drama", p. 358.
[388] Scharine, 1976, p. 201.

As Lear is sleeping outside the house near the Boy and Cordelia, the Boy argues with his wife:

> **Boy:** What else can I do? He can't look after himself. He's a poor old man – how can I throw him out? Who'd look after him then? I won't do it!
>
> **Wife:** O you're a fool! Can anyone come who likes? Don't you have any sense of responsibility?
>
> **Boy:** Responsibility! (35)

This dialogue reveals one of the key ideals highlighted by Bond, to be morally healthy individual. He introduces Gravedigger's Boy as a responsible, morally healthy person who "talks sense to the poor old king."[389]

Warrington attacks Lear with a knife while he is sleeping. When the Boy runs to Lear, the wild man, Warrington, flees. Lear assumes it has been a ghost that comes to take his life:

> **Lear:** I'll die! I've seen a ghost. I'm going to die. That's why he came back. I'll die. (36)

Warrington has proved that he is extremely loyal to Lear; so it is pretty clear that the reason for Warrington's attack is not revenge; rather, it is the basic need of human beings to eat a piece of bread. Although Lear's fear and remorse are evident in this case, they are not more than self-pity. Still, he is unable to comprehend the real causes of his pain.

Worried about where to go, Lear, with the egocentricity of a baby who needs protection and shelter, accepts the Boy's offer to stay and work with them with the hope to start a new life:

> **Lear:** I could have a new life here. I could forget all the things that frighten me – the years I've wasted, my enemies, my anger, my mistakes. I've been too trusting, too lenient! I'm tormented by regrets – I must forget it all, throw it away! Yes! – let me live here and work for you. (39)

The Boy assures Lear that he need not worry about the soldiers, as they are currently occupied with demolishing the wall. He explains that the king took men from the village to make them work on the wall construction; and informs him about the conditions as well:

[389] Bulman, "Bond, Shakespeare, and the Absurd", p. 63.

Boy: […] They'd worked with their hands all their lives but when they started on the wall their hands bled for a week. […] You died of work or they shot you for not working. There was a disease – […] 'Wall Death'. Their feet used to swell with the mud. The stink of it even when you are asleep! Living in a grave! (39)

The Boy underlines their physical pain level by saying that they live in the grave. As psychologists explain, ill physical health soon causes mental health to exacerbate.[390] To lead a healthier life, the Boy confesses that he and some fellow villagers have been digging a wall to prevent the construction from taking place. In the previous parts, Lear shared his suspicion that the individuals responsible for excavating the wall may be spies working for either the Duke of North or the Duke of Cornwall. He realizes that the individuals attempting to tear down the wall are likely farmers or villagers from his land who are protesting the conditions.

The Boy also mentions that Cordelia, his wife, is afraid that their life, conditions, and his love for her will change. Thus, she desires to "put a fence round us and shut everyone else out." (40)

Having adopted her father's values, Cordelia is a socially moralised individual. She sees each man as a threat to their peace. Thus, similar to Lear, fearing change, she relies on the necessity of a wall around themselves to keep them safe. This foreshadows her future attitude toward Lear's wall. When she comes to power with the Carpenter, she will insist on completing the wall building. However, the Boy does not believe that isolation brings contentment.

Warrington hides in the well. When the Boy enters the well to take him up, soldiers come for Lear. They arrest him, rape Cordelia, kill the Boy and slaughter the pigs.

Bond narrates innocence being killed in his plays by narrating an unborn child being killed. Likewise, he depicts adults, symbolising moral innocence, being killed. Just like the baby being killed in Saved, Grave Digger's Boy and the baby in Cordelia's womb is killed in *Lear*. The murder of them - of innocence - represents the spiritual slaughter of humanity in the rest of society.[391] This is the result of the aggressive

[390] Scharine, 1976, p. 192.
[391] Ibid., p. 264.

society in the formation of which Lear has the greatest responsibility. As written in Bond's notebooks, he planned and portrayed these scenes in the house of the Gravedigger's Boy in detail to make it the symbol of cultural malaise.[392]

Lear rises against the soldiers' savagery:

> **Lear:** 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! You're soldiers – you must do your duty! My daughters expect it! O burn the house! Burn the house! Burn the house! (44-45)

He realises the brutality of the system he created. However, as a powerless old king, he cannot do anything to save people from violent treatment, which now disturbs him.

At the end of the first act, Lear is arrested as a prisoner, and the Carpenter comes and kills the soldiers.

The second act handles "the clash between myth and reality, between superstitious men and the autonomous world." (12) This act shows the crisis when Bodice and Fontanelle enjoy their brutal power. It occurs in a real court environment with the judge, usher, clerk and other officials, the witnesses and Lear as a defendant. Before the court, the judge receives instructions from Bodice and Fontanelle in person. Although a legal court is held, Bodice's instructions tell that it is not a normal case; rather, it is "a political trial: politics is the higher form of justice." (46) Behind the deceptive first sight of the court, it is revealed that Lear's daughters have made up their decisions to kill Lear. Their decision is the product of Lear's own manners of justice. Thus, he keeps on suffering without grasping the real reason for it. Keeping his daughters inside the wall of his kingdom, he gives them no chance to gain the ability to discriminate between evil and good but only to observe and imitate himself as a role model. This is the reason behind their inured and acknowledged evilness and administrative mentality.

Bodice instructs the judge on the court decision: "The old king's mad and it's dangerous to let him live." (46) It is seen that he begins to suffer deeply, and the incidents in act two lead him to reality rather than myth.

[392] Stuart, 2000, p. 101.

In Lear's, later Fontanelle's and Bodice's, and Cordelia's ideology of the regime, the absolute authority has pushed justice into the background and brought the power forward. Regarding this situation, Bond explains in his preface that "when this happens power takes on the dynamics and dialectics of aggression…" (11) Cordelia and Fontanelle's expressions before seizing power prove his utterance. Prior to power, they speak of peace, justice, freedom and protection, but ascending the throne, they maintain the ideology of Lear. Cordelia does the same. They are nothing but the counterparts of Lear sharing the same purpose.

In court, refuting that Bodice and Fontanelle are his daughters, he is accredited mad with the help of the witness statements by Fontanelle, an Old Sailor and the Old Councillor, who has adapted himself to the new regime; thus, he is one of the people who cause oppression but never experiences it. Old Councillor, in Bond's own words, is a man who "fits in with everyone," believing "whoever is in power is the best;" so, among his notes regarding Lear, he plans to kill him with a slate falling on his head, yet does not mention what happens to Old Councillor in the play.[393]

Bodice makes him see his face in a mirror, thinking that "madmen are frightened of themselves!" (48) With the mirror, Bodice is struggling to make him see his responsibility as the king of the country for the corrupt social institutions and social order; yet what he sees is just an injured animal inside a cage, not a king:

Lear: […] There's a poor animal with blood on its head and tears running down its face. […] Is it a bird or a horse? It's lying in the dust and its are broken. Who broke its wings? Who cut off its hands so that it can't shake the bars? […] O god, there's 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! (He takes the mirror and shows it around.) Look! Look! Have pity. Look at its claws trying to open the cage. Its dragging its broken body over the floor. You're cruel! Cruel! […] (*Usher again takes the mirror from Lear*.) […] What will they do to it? O God, give it to me! Let me hold it and stroke it and wipe its blood! (*Bodice takes the mirror from the Usher*.) No!

Bodice: I'll polish it every day and see it's not cracked.

Lear: Then kill it. Kill it. Kill it. Don't let her torment it. I can't live with that suffering in the world. (49)

[393] Stuart, 2000, p. 101.

The animal behind the bars in the mirror is Lear himself. He turns it to other people to make them realise that they are also enslaved and repressed behind bars by social institutions. However, none of them realises the bars. As Scharine utters, they "feel a natural urge to struggle against its restrictions", yet "an acceptance of morality of society makes resistance impossible."[394] Bond supports this idea by expressing the reasons in the preface that socially moralised people acknowledge the circumstances and act with them in harmony, fearing that it is that system which provides their living.

Lear's insane behaviours in the court, just like the ones in the house of Gravedigger's Boy, make him realise the conditions of the people he has created and utter how it is to live under those conditions. This is one of the steps he has taken to reach moral maturity. Beginning to gain a little insight, he tries to free the bird; however, Bodice, determined to maintain social morality, takes the mirror back. This proves she has inherited the *merits* of her father. Lear, unsuccessful in his attempt to free the bird from the cage, believed it is better for it to die. Likewise, if social morality is the merit a man is to possess to live in a society, death will be an honour.

The court is adjourned, and he is sent to his cell. The sisters inform each other about a revolt led by Cordelia, which will probably cause civil war. The slaughter of her pigs, the murder of her husband, and her being raped have made her the victim of the wars waged by Lear and, later, his daughters, motivating her to take revenge.

Lear is brought to a frivolous trial organised by his daughters along with the judges of no effect. As the trial's purpose has been revenge, not to make a rational judgement, it ends in the imprisonment of Lear. Captured within the wall ruled by his daughters, he sees himself as an animal inside a cage. It is the first incident that makes him comprehend that what the wall helps to preserve is imprisonment, not freedom; this expectation of freedom to be provided with the wall or prison causes him to suffer.

It seems that Lear is deeply committed to his national ideals, to the point that he may be willing to make sacrifices, such as his daughters or the well-being of society, in order to uphold them. Thus, his daughters follow their father's path to destroy him. However, they do not realise that they have sacrificed their humanity. Only Lear is

[394] Scharine, 1976, p. 204.

enlightened when he becomes one of the working-class members he once sacrificed for a meaningless wall.[395]

In Lear's cell, the Ghost of the Gravedigger Boy appears to Lear. This Ghost is not an angry one, Bond suggests, because people "seem to have to live through part of the act of losing"[396] without the sense of guilt. He has drawn the Ghost to guide Lear and has set his plans for Lear to kill it violently.[397] He tells the Ghost that he must let that animal out of the cage, or else he explains:

> **Lear:** […] There'll be great fires and the water will dry up. All the people will be burned and the wind will blow their ashes into huge columns of dust and they'll go round and round the earth for ever!" (51)

Lear is struggling to let himself out of the cage. If he cannot cease savagery in the world or his land, the earth will be destroyed. However, to free himself from suffering caused by the results of his actions, he recalls the Ghost of Gravedigger's Boy as a representation of "his memories of the 'Golden Age' -as a powerful king."[398]

The Ghost brings the ghosts of Bodice and Fontanelle upon Lear's request. Lear insists Fontanelle take off her mother's dress yet cannot convince her. In Bondian terms, Scharine explains, it recalls the Oedipal conflict. It means to replace her with the mother, yet, in Bond's plays, it means to "die" as her mother is dead.[399] The young spirits of his daughters sit beside him putting their heads on Lear's knees. The appearance of the ghosts presents Lear's duality between his golden age and the new circumstances. As ghosts soothe him and provide consolation for his suffering, they impede Lear move towards his enlightenment. He struggles to protect the Gravedigger's Boy and insists his daughters stay, showing his attempt to escape from the corrupted system and need for a healthy morality. His daughters leave, but Ghost dwells with Lear, and the soldiers darken the amicable mood in prison.

Lear asks the ghosts not to be afraid of staying in the cell because:

> **Lear:** I know it will end. Everything passes, even the waste. The fools will be silent. We won't chain ourselves to the dead, or

[395] Scharine, 1976, p. 265.
[396] Bond, 1978, p. 12.
[397] Stuart, 2000, p. 106.
[398] Klein, "Edward Bond: "Lear was Standing in my Path…" p. 75.
[399] Scharine, 1976, p. 198.

> send our children to school in the graveyard. The torturers and ministers and priests will lose their office. And we'll pass each other in the street without shuddering at what we've done to each other. (54)

Lear conveys the message that with time, all things, including positions and ranks, will inevitably come to an end. When individuals fail to speak out, acknowledge and take-action against the unjust and violent actions of those in positions of power, it becomes clear how they have contributed to causing harm towards one another.

The third scene of the second act portrays the rebel field where Cordelia's men capture some twenty men from the sisters' army. Cordelia does not let one rebel soldier attend their forces as he does not hate the sisters enough, revealing that hate is the driving source of the riot. She makes him shot, and a wounded soldier from her forces dies silently.

Cordelia acts with the weaknesses of her self-righteous militarism. As a priest's daughter, Cordelia keeps using the words good and justice. Nevertheless, Bond says she is "an absolute disaster for any society", by which he has portrayed a figure "that the people who have manipulated and taken over the language of ethics in our society are, in fact, very violent and destructive people."[400] Moreover, he suggests she is "an absolute menace – a very dangerous type of person"[401] because she commits violence to preserve the right order to reinstitute patriarchy. Klein addresses Cordelia as a "guerrilla woman, defensive, a victim of the war …"[402] Although Cordelia is not the natural daughter of Lear, she may be evaluated as Lear's spiritual daughter as she keeps making the same mistakes Lear and his real daughters have made and continues the tradition of ill-treatment, a violent and oppressive regime.

The fourth scene of the second act portrays the plans of Bodice and Fontanelle. They keep their husbands in cell as they command their armies. However, the army is pessimistic about the result of the war against Cordelia's forces, made up of farmers. Despite the domestic disturbance of a civil war, the sisters concentrate on their father and sign the warrant that affirms the decision to kill their father.

[400] Qtd. in. Hall, "Edward Bond".
[401] Qtd. in. Bulman, "Bond, Shakespeare, and the Absurd", p. 62.
[402] Klein, "Edward Bond: "Lear was Standing in my Path…", p. 72.

Bodice has begun to demolish the wall, yet she needs those men at the war ground. As she is making plans for the war strategy, she sighs about her discontentment and disappointment:

> **Bodice:** […] I hated being a girl, but at least I was happy sometimes. And it was better when I grew up, I could be myself – they didn't humiliate me then. I was almost free! I made so many plans, one day I'd be my own master! Now I have all the power… and I'm a slave. Worse!

She has been damaged as a result of her father's abusive power. She thinks she will be free when she seizes that power. However, power enslaves. In her reign, ruling limits freedom more than being ruled.

As they make plans for war against the soldiers of Cordelia, she is getting stronger. Her three soldiers lead four prisoners and Lear. They are lost on their way to the land. Prisoners are blindfolded and chained together by their necks. Moreover, Lear is gagged. He can only manage to speak as he is drinking water. He is searching for the Boy who has relieved his pain, believing it is his turn to help him. Since he has met the Boy, he has developed a sense of responsibility towards him. He may have realised that the responsible person for the suffering of the Boy, Cordelia, and the farmers in his former land is himself as a former king. Trying to help him provides a kind of relief to atone for his past mistakes.

Carpenter arrives with other rebel soldiers, but he does not recognise Lear. One of the prisoners asks to be freed by changing his side for his interests:

> **Fourth Prisoner:** You can undo me. I'm a political prisoner. On your side. I shall have influence when things are changed. I'll put in a word for you soldiers. You've saved my life. (66)

The words of the fourth prisoner who is a former politician, proves the corruption of people in power.

The sixth scene of the second act takes place in a cell where Lear is kept with other prisoners and Fontanelle. Although he does not recognize Fontanelle, she begs him to negotiate with Cordelia to be put on trial. She, once in power, has abused justice in Lear's case. However, when she is in the same prisoner position, she demands justice on trial. She looks for justice which she has lacked during her reign.

Shot by a soldier, Fontanelle is lied on a trestle table for an autopsy to be carried out by the fourth prisoner, a former prison medical doctor. He aims to satisfy the authorities and prove that he has been "in good standing with the government", which may save him from prison providing new opportunities with the current management. As he examines the visceral organs, he reminds Lear that the girl under autopsy is his daughter Fontanelle. Lear looks for the beast inside her body:

> **Lear:** But where is the … She was cruel and angry and hard …
>
> […]
>
> Where is the beast? The blood in as still as a lake.
>
> Where …?
> Where …? (73)

The clash between his humane side fostered and personified by the Boy's pure humanity, and his inhuman side that is made more aggressive due to his destructive power politics, causes him to experience ambivalence till he can find out his responsibility towards himself and people and his power to encourage him to act.

As he comes to realize that there is no beast inside, he is fascinated with the beauty and innocence of the core:

> **Lear:** She sleeps inside like a lion and a lamb and a child. The things are so beautiful. I am astonished. I have never seen anything so beautiful. If I have known she was so beautiful … Her body was made by the hand of a child, so sure and nothing unclean … If I had known this beauty and patience and care, how I would have loved her. Did I make this – and destroy it? (73)

Lear presents the common fallacy that children have an innate tendency to evil. He notices Fontanelle's purity during her autopsy and acknowledges his responsibility for their cruel treatment. Then, he comprehends that depravity, violence and evilness are not innate; instead, he is the one whose acts result in the evilness of his daughters. Actually, it is his regime that creates them. Disregarding humanity, absolute oppressive regimes result in violence; besides, violence triggers violence. Lear's violent regime has triggered violence in his daughters' and Cordelia's regimes. Therefore, he is the real reason and source of his suffering and the pain society feels.

Soldiers bring Bodice to Lear's cell. Lear reminds Bodice and lets her know that the girl lying dead on the table is her sister. Lear's words show that the beauty of

Fontanelle's body has awakened him to his responsibility in their current circumstances:

> **Lear:** Look! I killed her! Her blood is on my hands! Destroyer! Murderer! And now I must begin again. I must walk through my life, step after step, I must walk in weariness and bitterness, I must become a child, hungry and stripped and shivering in blood, I must open my eyes and see!

Lear states that seeing the events from a distance is necessary to interrelate their relation with oneself.[403] The beauty and innocence of Fontanelle glamorize Lear, which helps him raise awareness of his guilt. The above dialogue points to the beginning of Lear's change. As Bond highlights, he starts his new life as an old-born child "growing up and learning to live …"[404] Until here, Lear has repeated how late it is to learn anything and change. Yet, the innocence of Fontanelle's dead body gives him the power to see, learn and change. Here, he decides to continue living with the open mind of a child.

Similar to Fontanelle, she is told to be sentenced to death, yet she expects justice and a term of imprisonment:

> **Bodice:** […] I have a right to justice in court! O you are cruel when you get a little power – when you have the power I had you beg people to accept your mercy so that god will not judge you! […]

Bond emphasises that there is no justice in each government. All people in power treat unfairly, ignoring the superiority of the law. However, when they are in a disadvantaged position, they first demand justice.

Under the new government of Cordelia, Bodice is killed with three bayonet strokes. Like Fontanelle, she has been the victim of the social morality she has inherited from her father. Their morality is shaped by their surroundings, in particular, their father. However, as the third kindresless daughter of Lear, Cordelia does not let Lear be killed. Carpenter commands the fourth prisoner to make him politically ineffective. He regards this as a chance to be noticed by the authorities. While Lear is kept still in a straight jacket with his legs strapped, the fourth prisoner, a former prison

[403] Smith, "Edward Bond's "Lear"", p. 65.
[404] Klein, "Edward Bond: "Lear was Standing in my Path…", p. 72.

medical doctor, removes his eyes with a scientific device. Lear yells out in pain. His blinding is another example of violence.

The Ghost expresses that people will behave gentler as he has suffered enough. Together with Ghost, Lear leaves prison. However, Bond does not believe Lear has suffered enough until the end. Bond does not let him overcome his problems by only suffering their consequences or ignoring or surrendering. Instead, he has to "live through the consequences and struggle with them."[405]

A scientist blinds Lear using a device that belongs to modern technology. As Bond indicates in the preface, "Lear is blind till they take his eyes away, and by then he has begun to see, to understand. Blindness is a dramatic metaphor for insight, that is why Gloucester, Oedipus and Tiresias are blind".[406] Bond takes advantage of the anachronism technique in this scene "to stress the frightful efficiency of modern technology" and "efficiency of modern armaments".[407] Furthermore, by making the scientist use technological devices that apparently do not belong to the age of the play, he highlights the validity of the play's themes in the current period.

The last scene of the second act takes place near the wall, where Lear begs a family working on constructing the wall. Their son is about to be enlisted as a soldier. Farmer says that the construction has been halted just after the old king is declared to get mad, yet the new government has decided to continue the construction. Therefore, soldiers have taken their lands and urged everyone, including women, to move to the work camps for the wall.

Lear is annoyed with the idea that the Boy and the children will be killed as a soldier. The sane people should look for a safe place instead of being killed at war:

> **Lear:** […] Men destroy themselves and say it's their duty? It's not possible! How can they be so abused? Cordelia doesn't know what she's doing! I must tell her – write to her! (81)
>
> **[…]**
>
> **Lear:** I can't be silent! […] I must stop her before I die! (81)

[405] Scharine, 1976, p. 219.
[406] Bond, 1978, p. 11.
[407] Klein, "Edward Bond: "Lear was Standing in my Path…", p. 76.

Lear is now aware that constructing the wall is a great mistake and he has to warn Cordelia about her error because keeping silent is not the solution. As a former king who had the same mistake of building the wall ignoring the pain it caused in society, he hopes to stop her.

Defeating the forces of Lear's daughters, Cordelia continues the construction of the wall. She becomes a guerilla leader who believes that the security of *her* borders can only be guaranteed by the wall. Through the end of the second act, Spencer points out, "Lear has perhaps learned the lessons of compassion, humility, and personal culpability"; yet she continues, "such wisdom, and the resolve that accompanies it, is neither sufficient nor redemptive – nor does it lead automatically to moral action."[408] At the end of the last scene of the second act, Lear sees the urgent necessity of involvement. He decides to attempt to stop the immoral corruption of the system. Comprehending that it only causes people to suffer, he warns Cordelia but cannot stop it. At that moment, he decided with determination: "I must stop her before I die!" Lear is now aware that when he is involved and takes action, human suffering can be stopped. He reaches moral maturity, leading Lear to react against the entire system. Here he recognises his true nature and identity, as well as the accurate way of the circumstances, which indicates the moment of anagnorisis and the resolution.

The first scene of the third act takes place in the house of Gravedigger's Boy. Thomas, Susan, John and Lear are living there. He is taken care of by the family. It is understood that he has written many times to Cordelia, yet gets no answer. A small man, McFearson, introduces him as a former soldier of Lear's army, yet, later, a worker at wall construction. He takes shelter in the Boy's house, disregarding the family's objections and the Ghost. Through the end, the Ghost's appearance weakens as Lear gets closer to moral maturity.

The small man has mentioned the rumour in the wall camp about Lear's plans to dismiss the army, destroy the wall and send prisoners back to their homes. When soldiers come for the small man, he hides in the woods. As the soldiers leave, Ben, the man who looks after Lear in the cage, comes. He lets him stay with them, declaring that he cannot turn away anyone in need because once the Gravedigger's Boy let him

[408] Spencer, *Dramatic Strategies in the Plays of Edward Bond,* p. 88.

stay with them when he has been in need. Just like corruption is infectious, responsibility and good manners are contagious. Lear has inherited the feeling of responsibility from the Ghost and, like a prophet, struggles to promulgate that awareness.

Months later, Lear can make himself heard. He addresses to a number of strangers with his prophetic, philosophical and allegorical stories. Klein describes this as Lear's move from "moral blindness and inhumanity to moral insight and humanity," just like a pilgrimage.[409] Although Lear's journey is full of suffering, in the end, it becomes meaningful. Moreover, he resembles himself to Christ, knowing that his suffering has been redemptive, saving society from suffering. Making a reference to the resurrection, Bond portrays Lear's resurrection "first, by arousing in Lear compassion for his fellow man; second, by coinciding with Lear's attainment of political and moral maturity."[410]

Lear has become known by the parables he tells around. In one of them, a bird has stolen a man's voice. Once he finds that bird which sings beautifully, he plans to make money and fame using the bird's talent. He put the bird into a cage. He visits the king to show it, yet as he opens his mouth, the bird starts to cry and groan since it is in a cage. Punished by the king and deserted by his family due to the bird's cries, the man releases the bird. Believing to be subjected to the king's injustice, he has repeated to himself, "The king's a fool," which is learnt and repeated by the birds in the woods. Heard by the king, the bird is punished by pulling out its feathers, breaking its legs and nailing to a branch as a warning to other birds. Now the man has the bird's pain and feels caged for the rest of his life.

As understood from his stories, Bond has donated Lear's speech with "rhetorical power and poetic ambivalence" in the form of "elaborate metaphors and thematic parables." Here, the bird is the man, while the cage is the society. It proclaims that each living creature should also be responsible and respectful for the other's life.

[409] Klein, "Edward Bond: "Lear was Standing in my Path…", p. 72.
[410] Scharine, 1976, p. 268.

Who represses others, becomes repressed in the end. Thus, the one who locks the cage is as much enslaved as the bird inside.[411]

Thomas warns Lear that without support, they cannot manage more. They must let the worker camps hear his voice; otherwise, the government will easily stop them. Moreover, he adds that telling the truth is not enough; without action, words are not enough to help people stop suffering. Thomas utters the necessity as follows:

> **Thomas:** We talk to people but we don't really help them. We shouldn't let them come here if that's all we can do. It's dangerous to tell the truth, truth without power is always dangerous. And we *should* fight! Freedom's not an idea, it's a passion! If you haven't got it you fight like a fish out of water fighting for air! (90)

Thomas utters Bond's idea that knowing or voicing the truth is not enough; what is more important is to act. He knows that change in society cannot be conducted immediately; any kind of change needs time. Nevertheless, when awareness is managed, action is to follow it, which results in the snowball effect towards social change. Thus, in his plays, Bond draws some characters who, realising the irrationality in the system's operation, struggle to substitute it with the rational.[412] Just like Lear, Thomas is one of such characters who desire change by making people first realise and then struggle for transformation.

The Old Councillor, an officer and soldiers come to arrest deserters. Lear tries to save them, but they arrest the small man to be hanged. The Councillor informs Lear that he is no more permitted to address the public, and the government will control his visitors. For the rest of his life, he will be accompanied by the carers appointed by the government.

As he insists the small man be released, the Councillor ignores him. He reacts that his decisions that are called law are crimes:

[411] Scharine, 1976, p. 220.
[412] Jones, "EdwardBond's "Rational Theatre"", p. 506.

Lear: […] Whatever's trite and vulgar and hard and shallow and cruel, with no mercy or sympathy – that's what you think, and you're proud of it! You good, decent, honest, upright, lawful men who believe in order – when the last man dies, you will have killed him! I have lived with murderers and thugs, there are limits to their greed and violence, but you decent, honest men devour the earth! (93)

His words reveal that the words, thoughts, and behaviours of the ruling class people are claimed to be honest, beneficial and lawful. Yet, they are, in fact, representations of the corrupt, dishonest, harmful governments who make society live in a socially moralised style. Despite being aware of the fact that the commoners suffer under this social morality they impose, people in power are not reluctant to perpetrate violence to maintain this way of privileged life.

Though Lear keeps on his struggle, he still has the idea that change is not possible. He desires his suffering and pain to become a lesson for the rest of society; however, something prevents it. He protests that he is still in a cage despite his struggles:

Lear: […] what can I do? I left my prison, pulled it down, broke the key, and still I'm a prisoner. I hit my head against a wall all the time. There's a wall everywhere. I'm buried alive in a wall. Does this suffering and misery last for ever? Do we work to build ruins, waste all these lives to make a desert no one could live in? There's no one to explain it to me, no one I can go to for justice. I'm old, I should know how to live by now, but I know nothing, I can do nothing, I am nothing. (94)

Although he abandons himself to despair sometimes, Bond does not let him relax or die as he has not suffered enough. When he yells desperately, the Ghost appears again in a thinner and shrunk appearance. As Lear gets closer to the action, the Ghost becomes thinner and thinner as it is close to completing his mission in the illumination of Lear. He asks Lear to poison the well for people to leave there, insisting he let people "learn to bear their own sufferings." (94) Simon Trussler points out that Ghost of Gravedigger's Boy tempts Lear "towards an easeful rather than a useful death."[413] Nevertheless, Lear cannot bear people worn out by the unjust structure. He is quite aware of his responsibilities to reform society into something more humane. He is to overcome the Ghost to reach a level of uncorrupted healthy maturity.

[413] Qtd. in. Bulman, "Bond, Shakespeare, and the Absurd", p. 63.

John departs in the final moments of the second scene in the third act. Following, in the third scene of the third act, the Ghost is worse than before: “its flesh has dried up, its hair is matted, its face is like a seashell, the eyes full of terror.” (96) He is afraid of death although he is not alive. This proves that Lear is about to take action by overcoming the Ghost.

Lear struggles to convince Cordelia to destroy the wall. She delivers the cabinet’s decision to kill him. She indicates that they are working for a new life and society he dreams of. It is seen that in the play, whoever comes to power, raises with the same intention ostensibly; to provide a better way of life. However, they are unaware of what they transform into when they come to power as they become insensitive to the people’s suffering. She also believes she will govern a new Golden Age; therefore, she does not let any protest against her idea.

Lear insists Cordelia stop building the wall because “a revolution must at least reform” (98), but she stands for the construction against her enemies just like the former leaders. Mentioning how much he has suffered, he explains the idea he is trying to plant in the minds of the people:

> **Lear:** […] I’ve suffered so much, I made all the mistakes in the world and I pay for each of them. I cannot be forgotten. I am in their minds. To kill me you must kill them all.

Lear is now more potent than the leader of the state, Cordelia because he is at last mature enough to tell the truth. Disembodied from his material being, Lear takes the form of an idea imprinted on people’s minds. The play’s optimism lies behind these utterances. Even if he is not alive in flesh and bones, he will maintain his life mentally and spiritually.

People who listen to him have one discriminating character: humanity. They have a passion for living. However, socially moralised institutions and the men of Cordelia lack humanity, as they have the compassion to kill to eternalise their power. Thus, they maintain their power by threatening people with death.

For the future, he preaches to her:

Lear: […] You have two enemies, lies *and* the truth. You sacrifice truth to destroy lies, and you sacrifice life to destroy death. It isn't sane. […] You must learn it or you'll die. Listen, Cordelia. If a god had made the world, might would always be right, that would be so wise, we'd be spared so much suffering. But we made the world – out of our smallness and weakness. Our lives are awkward and fragile and we have only one thing to keep us sane: pity, and the man without pity is mad. (98)

It seems that Lear utters these words to himself when he was the king. As she is like a daughter to him without any blood tie, he is struggling to awaken her to the pointless attempt of maintaining the wall's construction ignoring the agony of the people; because the wall brings forth death, an annihilation, instead of protecting life.

Before leaving, Cordelia reminds him of the trial the following day; and Lear reminds her that the law she has mentioned provides not justice but atrocity:

Lear: […] Your law always does more harm than crime, and your morality is a form of violence. (99)

He emphasises that the social morality enforced by the country's governing elites is corrupt. And their law has one goal which is to protect their privileges. Thus, to uphold their desired order and structure, and secure their advantages, they resort to violent actions.

From the moment Lear talks to Cordelia for the last time, he directs his conflict from concrete people to the Wall with its abstract symbol of the socio-political system. So, he has planned his last striking move towards the wall.

He asks Susan to lead him the following day on a journey, speaking his wish to live longer to learn to be as cunning as a fox and teach them how to live. In fact, he simply wants to leave Thomas, Susan and their unborn baby with their innocence. As Joseph E. Duncan points out, "he perhaps shall help bequeath them a juster society as he goes up and digs up the wall and meets his death."[414]

At the end of the third scene of the last act, the Ghost is torn by the pigs and killed. Lear utters his appreciation of the Ghost:

Lear: […] You must die! I love you, I'll always remember you, but I can't help you. Die, for your own sake die! (100)

[414] Joseph E. Duncan, "The Child and the Old Man in the Plays of Edward Bond", *Modern Drama*, March 1976, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 1-10, p. 8.

Bond intentionally makes the Ghost appear more desperate and clinging each time through his death. He resembles it to "a cold little starving child from Dickens or Blake […]."[415] As it is the symbol of innocence in the play, he states, "innocence must be killed twice."[416] Ghost has been with Lear when he has gone wrong, yet in terms of problem-solving, it has not changed anything in his life. Nevertheless, it is seen that it is the Ghost who has prevented Lear gone totally mad. As the mission of the Ghost is over, Lear has to overcome it to fulfil his own mission.

With the death of the Ghost, he has looked over his life from the beginning to the end:

> **Lear:** 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. And my tears fall down on me. (100)

These utterances prove how he has learned from his suffering and how his tears brighten his path, providing insight. Now, he is at last all aware of his responsibilities and ready to take action for all his faults and all his people. Because as Reich states, "men must struggle against the social order, not because there is hope of winning but because acceptance is death."[417] Therefore, as Lear has transformed into a responsible and healthfully moralised person, he comprehends that taking action is the only way to stop the violence.

At the end of the play, he climbs the wall, digs shovels in, and throws them earth down to make his mark. Workers come and see what he is doing. The farmer's son, now a soldier, comes and shoots him. Lear falls from the wall, but "the shovel stays upright in the earth".(102) Farmer's son sends away the workers, yet one looks back.

At the end of the play, Lear is killed physically. While his body falls down from the wall, the shovel he digs into the earth stays upright in the earth. Though demolishing the wall is impossible for Lear to manage himself, his action is the play's most powerful gesture. His tragic death has increased its effectiveness. It is a lesson for the rest of society, chiefly for the youth; thus, it shelters hope for the future to

[415] Stuart, 2000, p. 108.
[416] Ibid., p. 108.
[417] Scharine, 1976, p. 213.

change the system. Because, with the snowball effect, when even one person attempts to pull down the wall, it is impossible to speak of the impossibility. The worker who "looks back" is, as Hilde Klein states, proves that Lear's move is understood and is not in vain, demonstrating hope.[418]

In the end, he wins his freedom through the knowledge and consciousness he has gained through the end of the play, recovering from his ignorance. Thus, he reaches the peacefulness of a happy or relatively satisfactory happy death. Furthermore, as he has obtained a free conscious mind, the audience is also freed from the ignorance they had at the beginning of the play, achieving to look from a different frame through the play, from the eyes of changing Lear.

[418] Klein, "Edward Bond: "Lear was Standing in my Path…", p. 77.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Following the Second World War, human rights, trust, responsibility and respectability, as well as the concepts of good and evil, have begun to be questioned, which has caused concepts like aim, hope and belief to lose meaning. This has resulted in the reluctance of humanity to act, react, question and realise himself. Furthermore, due to the economic, social and cultural changes, people have had difficulty adapting to the new circumstances. This has caused a lack of communication and understanding, motiveless distress and desperation. In the resultant chaotic environment around the world, the individuals have remained in a consumerist society, which has been improved beyond their consciousness. Thus, between their own rules and the new rules of the world, they have felt and realised their weakness, lack of knowledge and mortality, which has resulted in fear and anxiety. People have been frightened of this insecurity and become helpless to take precautions against the system, which runs beyond their will. To handle the fear, people have acknowledged the current state and oppression, which have brought blindness with it. With this blindness, people have inured the oppression in various countries such as Türkiye and United Kingdom. These circumstances have caused the rise of an elite dominating class that has enjoyed privileges, taking control of the religious, cultural, social, economic, political and judicial systems. Over time, the State or the governing mechanism, which has been founded to arrange social structure and organise the social system for the welfare of each and every member of society equally, has become a corrupt organism, losing its original function. It has gained a totally different role, ensuring *more just* practices and *more equal* distribution of wealth and opportunities for the dominating group within the society. In this way, their privileges have been institutionalised socially. These circumstances can be deduced from various plays of Bond and Nesin. As they were born in the first half of twentieth century, they experienced the above-mentioned circumstances and witnessed the transformation processes of their societies. In their plays, they draw attention to the state and circumstances of people under such conditions, effect of the chaotic environment on individuals and the controlling behaviour of the dominant class on the rest of the society. Analysing the society just

like sociologists do, they write their comments and critiques in their plays within the scope of social criticism.

The sociologists analyse the relationship among the social groups, social system, institutions and structure, the permanence of which is ensured by the violence and oppression of the ruling class in terms of justice and human dignity within the scope of social criticism. They examine how social structures can lead to the establishment of power dynamics between different social groups. Highlighting the flaws of the social system and the problems in the system's running, sociologists may offer direct or indirect guidance on how society should become organised to obtain a healthy social morality that directs them towards progressive social change. The role of humanist sociologists, then, is to enhance and structure social systems, creating effective institutions and relations that improve living conditions and meet people's needs in a better and more appropriate manner. Just like sociologists, writers appear as social critics. They are not mere recipients of uncontrollable or incomprehensible forces; they approach society, social groups, social life, social structure, and social systems from a unique perspective. They possess a comprehensive understanding of these concepts and are capable of resisting and criticising aspects they wish to modify. Occasionally, they also devise alternative or radical solutions to address the issues. The writers do not participate in the hegemonic practices of the dominant class, who have the ability to use education, religion, and media to enforce a false social morality on society to preserve their advantages. They struggle to reach the conscious minds of the individuals, who, often unconsciously, adopt the societal norms established by hegemonic powers and do their best to remind them of their ability to make a revolutionary change in social structure and the running of the social system. Regardless of their background or location, writers often use their literary works as a means of propaganda to inspire individuals and societies toward change for better living conditions. They believe that their art should serve as a tool to motivate and direct people toward a better future. Additionally, when the assertion is propounded that art can enable change in people in its historical flow by allowing the change in social structure, it becomes revolutionary. An artwork should challenge the status quo to stimulate the formation of a totally new structure. When art aims for no change, then it stands up for bigotry. Therefore, as a means of propaganda, a revolutionary artwork

should show the unseen reality, accuse and attack the reasons for inequality, and empower people to make radical changes or revolutions.

Aziz Nesin and Edward Bonds share the role of a sociologist. As outstanding playwrights, they employthe assumptions of Louis Althusser in their plays to change society and challenge the ruling class. They write functional plays as a part of superstructure to challenge the base to inspire revolution. Thus, they use their theatre as a propagandist instrument for a revolutionary transformation from a capitalist to a socialist structure. Presenting a broader perspective to understand and evaluate the behaviours and tendencies of people and social groups, they utilise their theatre skills to develop a model of social progress. In other words, they have united their artistic pen and sociological perspectives to reach the masses and trigger a transformation period. Nesin purposefully utilises his writing as a means of propaganda to raise awareness and bring attention to society's disadvantaged, unfair and unequal circumstances, instil a sense of responsibility, and inspire action towards a desired shift from a capitalist system to a socialist one. Similarly, Bond also employs his theatre as a tool of propaganda to raise awareness among people about the violent, unjust and unequal practices practised by the authorities. Like Nesin, he encourages individuals to take responsibility for creating a just and socialist state serving the welfare of all people. He aims to bring about a revolutionary change by taking action to transform the capitalist system into a socialist one. As the two playwrights' prime objective is to change the system totally, and as they write their plays accordingly. As a result, their plays are considered revolutionary, making their theatre one of the prime examples of revolutionary theatre.

Their plays present the contradictions within the social system and highlight the urgency of the need for social change. As samples of revolutionary theatre, they attack the social structure, demanding a fundamental change in the social structure from capitalist to socialist. Therefore, for Bond and Nesin, revolutionary theatre must bear socialist purposes to provide insight into people. Their revolutionary theatre challenges the interplay between social groups, institutions, and structures, maintained through violence and oppression by the ruling class, undermining justice and human dignity. Their approach serves as a form of social criticism.

As a black humour example of the twentieth century, *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* portrays complex government mechanisms and democracy experience, disorder and chaos at the work share at the governmental departments; the labyrinthine nature of Turkish bureaucracy; how bureaucracy destroys an individual, and how the government exploits an individual for its very own interest. For this reason, he drew public officials from highest-ranking state officials (members of the parliament, local authorities, judges, general directors, gendarme commanders, bureaucrats, etc.) to lowest-ranking state officials (registrars, guardians, police officers, janitors, etc.) Around such characters, the play narrates the political and bureaucratic corruption that causes a malfunction in the system and the resultant undesirable practices such as bribery, nepotism, anti-rational practices, partisanship, dehumanised practices, disadvantaged masses and rising privileged class.

As an example of the tragedy of the Twentieth Century, *Lear* portrays a complex and dehumanised governmental mechanism with highly authoritative dictators. The play addresses the issue of unjust bureaucracy, which tends to subordinate and ignore the lives of others, all in an effort to maintain its own power and control in order to demonstrate that the cause of the system's deadlock is not solely attributed to one leader, Bond introduces four different ones: Lear, Bodice, Fontanelle, and Cordelia. Through their actions, it becomes evident that a flawed system leads to corrupt behaviour among its people. Therefore, fixing the system requires addressing its foundation. Corruption creates imperfections in the system, leading to the emergence of a privileged upper class, dehumanising practices, and a disadvantaged majority.

When a selected group of elites controls a state, the system of government known as bureaucracy gives state officials the power to make decisions. The ruling class can use this to maintain control over other societal groups. Under such circumstances, bureaucracy becomes the source of power for the bureaucrats, the source of privileges for the elites and the source of oppression for the masses. In such a system, bureaucrats alienate the majority of the people, disregarding their responsibility on them. Likewise, most people are alienated from the system, bypassing their responsibility to ask for an equal and just structure. The oppression of the masses raised an awareness and responsibility in Bond and Nesin about the existing

circumstances as well as the ideal circumstances. Thus, feeling responsible for the future of their societies, they write to encourage people to endeavour for better conditions. Therefore, they have questioned and criticised the mechanism of bureaucracy at first and, subsequently, the people's perception of the government as well as the government's perception of its own role and responsibilities towards its people. Their plays portray how those in power, such as bureaucrats and rulers, view the state's legal entity as a means to free themselves from control and pressure. This mindset puts the state in opposition to society. In such a state, bureaucrats and politicians work for their own welfare and continuity, not for society's benefit. Thus, it is neither fair and innovative nor helpful for the solution of social problems. The resultant impotence of the state transforms it into an organisation that is confined to politicians and bureaucrats who develop self-defence mechanisms for its continuity as a reflex. Therefore, although the government as an institution is the result of the societies living together, in time, it becomes an institution *against* and generally *above* the society, which causes the government's failure in arranging social relations and economic order. In such a state, the authorisation of the government is conducted and maintained by the real people and results in the fascistic manners of the government. In order to emphasise his criticism of state's representatives and the members of the society, Nesin addresses the circumstances of the oppressed, highlighting the disadvantaged and unbearable living conditions. The play concentrates on how the operation of the state victimises Yaşar and other citizens. He demonstrates how the bureaucrats and bureaucracy oppress him and the society by exhibiting the events Yaşar experiences in the cumbersome of bureaucracy grinding its citizens. On the other hand, Bond presents the oppression from the perspectives of both the oppressor and the oppressed; thus, he offers a clearer picture, raising the play's effect. He shows Lear as a brutal king at the beginning. However, losing his power, he appears as an oppressed individual and starts to understand how he oppressed society and how the new rulers oppress him like the other individuals.

Nesin and Bond deal with the social morality provided by the elites by the help of the system that paves the way for unequal treatment. It ensures to maintain the system and the advantages they possess, the leader, the bureaucrats and the dominant class guarantee people obey the rules of the society. With the effect of a chaotic

environment caused by the wars and helplessness of the masses who get stuck between their own way of life and the new capitalist order of the world, they already tend to accept, acknowledge and obey the rules. This reinforces the thought that people in power are the owners of the system and the state cannot be criticised. Therefore, any interference in the system's operation is stigmatised as system hostility. Not to be addressed as hostile, the people acknowledge the dominance of the elites, consciously or unconsciously. They become socially moralised; in other words, their morality is determined and controlled by the dominant class, which becomes more rigid and strict in their management to maintain their regime. Nesin handles this unquestionable truth of the bureaucracy and the system in his play by narrating the relationship of the characters with the state officials. Each time Yaşar meets a state official he is more stuck into the deadlock of the system. For instance, when he is assumed dead by the hardcover record books, he cannot prove that he is alive even to the father of his fiancée. The father's words that supports this unquestionability of the state are quite striking: "do you know yourself better than the state?" (59). On the other hand, Bond handles this by presenting the absolute power of the person in power. For instance, he narrates the unquestionable power of Lear as a king who proves this by being the single decision-making mechanism in the state. Moreover, he supports this idea, by also depicting other people in power such as Bodice, Fontanelle and Cordelia as the unquestionable decision makers who do not benefit from justice system.

Nesin and Bond criticise the capitalist system for dividing people within a nation into classes, which leads to those in power being unquestionably superior while the rest of society is degraded. The privilege of the dominating group causes unfair treatment to the disadvantaged groups in society. This results in the unfair distribution of wealth and unequal access to opportunities such as health or education. Moreover, they criticise the corrupt social morality imposed on society to guarantee the predominance and supremacy of their priorities. They criticise the psychological and physical abuse carried out by those in power for these specific reasons.In his criticism, Nesin puts much blame on the State and its authorities. He contends that the state should function as an entity promoting a fair and equitable allocation of both positive and negative resources and advantages as well as disadvantages among all individuals in society based on their efforts and merits. Likewise, Bond also blames the state and

its representatives for ignoring the society to maintain their privileges and the status quo. Moreover, he harshly criticises that those who come into power often engage in brutal practices towards individuals. He lampoons the system that grants power and privilege to those in charge rather than blaming individuals directly by listing their names.

Besides the privileged people or people in power, both playwrights criticise the members of the disadvantaged class because of their passivity. Nesin criticises people for their lack of awareness of their disadvantaged situations and reluctance to question and make changes actively. Likewise, Bond accuses people of being passive against such a system torturing and differentiating them. They blame the masses as they acknowledge and inure the unjust, unequal system that makes them disadvantaged. Many playwrights know that people's inactivity stems from their fear of punishment for opposing the system. However, they also understand that members of society have a responsibility to improve society and take charge of their own lives. It is their duty to challenge the system and struggle to set the balance among the classes of society.

In order to emphasise his criticism of state's representatives and the members of the society, Nesin addresses the circumstances of the oppressed, highlighting the disadvantaged and unbearable living conditions. The play concentrates on how the operation of the state victimises Yaşar and other citizens. He demonstrates how the bureaucrats and bureaucracy oppress him and the society by exhibiting the events Yaşar experiences in the cumbersome of bureaucracy grinding its citizens. On the other hand, Bond presents the oppression from the perspectives of both the oppressor and the oppressed; thus, he offers a clearer picture, raising the play's effect. He shows Lear as a brutal king at the beginning. However, losing his power, he appears as an oppressed individual and starts to understand how he oppressed society and how the new rulers oppress him like the other individuals.

The two plays aim to involve the audience in different forms of violence and humour on stage. They showcase the government's unjust, unequal, and cruel treatment of people, hoping to raise awareness among the audience and encourage them to take action against these issues in real life. Both plays address the issue of witnessing on two levels: firstly, through the portrayal of characters who either

witness, suffer or inflict violence, becoming part of the ongoing cycles of brutality depicted on stage, and secondly, through the audience's direct and sometimes silent witnessing of the plays and their depictions of cruelty. As spectators, they are called to react against the horrors they have experienced within the fictional world of the theatre. They aim to inform them about their inactive participation in the brutality by remaining silent in real life. Engaging the spectators in the roots of violence and malfunction, the playwrights prove that they are also responsible for the violence as passive witnesses or active participants in the brutality. Nevertheless, they attribute the most significant crime to the governing unit of the corrupt system. Nesin draws attention to the corrupt system with his humorous narration while Bond with use of violence.

In his plays, Nesin incorporates humour densely to enhance the impact of his social critique, making it more memorable and influential. His message stays with the audience after the performance. People come to understand how the themes of his plays relate to their own lives, revealing the flaws, malfunctions, and violence they encounter in their daily routines. For these flaws, they say "it just exactly suits to Nesin" (tam Nesinlik olay)." His success in communicating his messages, capturing the attention of his audience towards injustice and inequality, and emphasising the need for change in the system for a better life is evident. His play portrays a humorous series of events that unfold as the protagonist attempts to obtain an identity card but encounters various obstacles. The play displays black humour by eliciting laughter from the audience in response to the unfortunate circumstances presented. His communication with the state officials, the janitor, the doctor, and his rush from one governmental office to another, from one table to the other and even his pretended death are exhibited tragicomically. In Lear, Bond includes some humorous dialogues in some violent scenes. For instance, the scene where Bodice, Fontanelle, and a soldier torture Warrington, presents a blend of comedy and tragedy. Humorous actions involving the use of a knitting needle and humorous dialogue are present. Nevertheless, the blood-chilling violence dominates the scene and suppresses humour.

Violence, psychological or physical, is a quite common theme in both plays. However, violence in Bond's *Lear* is more striking because of the brutal staging of violence. Both playwrights criticise violence both the dominant class and the rest of

the society engage in violence. The ruling class may resort to violence to sustain the existing social structure, the durability of their power, privileges, and the law and order that ensures their wealth and strength. On the other hand, the disadvantaged group may exhibit violent tendencies to demand more just circumstances regarding the distribution of wealth, opportunity and privileges. It is important to note that violent behaviour can sometimes be motivated by an unidentified sense of depression or dissatisfaction. Bond and Nesin relate violence to the capitalist social structure. The capitalist structure has resulted in the transition to a consumerist society. In the new world, individuals have found themselves existing within a world that advanced beyond their awareness. This leads to a conflict between their established norms and the new rules of the evolving world, resulting in feelings of weakness, mortality and ignorance. These emotions often manifest as fear and anxiety. People have felt frightened by this insecurity and have become helpless to take precautions against such a system. As they could not respond to the rise of the privileged class, they have inured the new system and advantaged positions of the elites, which has caused an increase in violence. So, violence is an inescapable reality in the capitalist system. Nesin presents psychological violence in his plays. In *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies*, Yaşar's pretended death scenes signify the psychological violence. Moreover, the bureaucratic system of the State disregards him and other citizens. It is shown in almost every scene when people get contact with a state official. State officials, as the state representatives and the state documents ignore Yaşar, the protagonist, pretending that he is dead, despite his existence in flesh and bone. On the other hand, violence, both psychological and physical, is one of the major themes in *Lear* by Bond. From beginning to end, the play examines psychological and physical violence inflicted by the representatives of the State, starting with Lear, the King, and extending even to the lowest-rank members of the armies. The play begins, continues and ends with the murder of some characters. It mentions torture and rape as well as the slaughter of the pigs. Moreover, citizens are forced to work at the wall construction under poor conditions. Even the daughters, soldiers, and Lear as well as other people in the play, from the King to the labourers, are exposed to violence throughout the play.

Nesin and Bond handle the transformation processes of their protagonists in their plays. The protagonist in *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies*, Yaşar, aims to show

people their unjust, unfair, discriminatory social circumstances and how the State ignores them. Many individuals go through comparable bittersweet occurrences in their actual existence, causing them to feel sympathetic and empathetic. His full name, Yaşar Yaşamaz - roughly meaning 'lives' 'does not live' - suggests the duality of his existence. The play portrays the protagonist's journey from being a vulnerable and powerless individual to becoming a rich, influential and capable person while fighting against the ineffective, insufficient and unyielding workings of the social system. His transformation both starts and ends at the prison, where prisoners introduce Karakaplı Nizami to him. Like a school, he graduates from prison with a degree of being Mr Karakaplı Nizami Yaşar to overcome his absurd existence struggle. The person Yaşar has transformed into does not make people angry with him because, in a society where people are not allowed to keep their purity, they obtain the right to live by wangling every detail to succeed. As bureaucratic procedures preclude the possibility of society from managing their operations or transactions, ordinary people search for their own expedience to obtain or protect their interests. In the play, these complicated procedures seem to surround the bureaucracy so densely that ordinary people call for a mechanism that will be able to ease the functioning for them. This mechanism is called Karakaplı Nizami. In fact, Karakaplı is used for the black-covered law book; besides, 'Nizam' in the name 'Nizami' already means order and rule. Thus, Karakaplı Nizami, referring to the statute books in which all the regulatory law articles are written, means to rationalise and wangle the things that are not easily accessible or impossible to manage in an ordinary bureaucratic system by the book and law. Mr Karakaplı Nizami is just like a spirit or a soul that can always be found everywhere as long as someone has a way with him because he is the key to the solution for the malfunctioning system, making things hard for ordinary people. Moreover, he is superior to lawyers, parliamentarians and even ministers in that he overcomes the obstacles smoothly. When Yaşar suffers disillusionment of discovering that events are sharply different from what he has expected, his perspective begins to change. He comprehends and internalises the spirit of Mr. Karakaplı Nizami. He challenges the State with the authority of his new identity, Mr Karakaplı Nizami Yaşar. From that time on, his need for the State authority, which abandons and dissatisfies its society, disappears.

There is a parallelism between Yaşar and Mr. Karakaplı Nizami. Yaşar neither lives nor dies; he is like a ghost or spirit within the society. Likewise, Mr Karakaplı Nizami is also a spirit within the society. Both of them are absent; however, at the same time, they exist. The myth of Mr Karakaplı Nizami (may be roughly translated as Book Statutory) desperately freshens his hopes towards life. In Yaşar's transformation and enlightenment, prisoners have great impact. There are three prominent prisoners in the play. Each represents different social classes: lower, middle and upper. They offer the idea that people with diverse backgrounds experience, feel, think and act similarly; that is, what Yaşar experiences in life is, one way or another, similar to what other people experience. Prisoners highlight that every person is trapped in their own lives, suggesting that they are both the captor and the captive. They criticise that as captives, people do not react and accept social morality and the superiority of the State, which makes them the guardians of their captivity, in other words, captors. They comment on Yaşar's experiences and conversations in each act to increase his awareness. By viewing events from a different perspective, Yaşar gains a deeper understanding of how they are interconnected. This allows him to recognise the absurdities, injustices, and inequalities prevailing in the society. Thus, as they lead him through a new perspective, they are the propulsive characters who trigger his metamorphosis.

Bond's protagonist, Lear, on the other hand, is a tragic hero designed to demonstrate how the State oppresses and neglects society, and how society is simultaneously oppressed by the State. It suggests that a more liveable system must be established to overcome this oppression. At the beginning of the play, Lear is the King. However, as the story progresses, he loses his power and title and becomes an older man, demonstrating his realisation of his connection to the rest of society. Losing his throne, he starts his journey deep into his creativity, exploring the humanness he may have repressed. Throughout the play to the end, Lear suffers. However, similar to Lear, his suffering also has transformed. In the beginning, he has been suffering because of his thoughts that capture him regarding the safety of his country. In the middle of the play, he suffers because he feels powerless and alone, losing the throne, and his life is in danger. Moreover, he has seen the people suffer because of the oppression. The suffering he feels, and witnesses among the people he once oppressed triggers a sense

of awareness and wisdom within him. Therefore, through the end, he realises that the system is the real source of his and the people's pain. As he understands the only way to stop the suffering is to change the system, his pain has transformed into a struggle to change the system. This suffering helps him discover his life purpose and responsibilities towards his home, country, and society. The process of his enlightenment begins and ends in the wall. In the beginning, he regards the wall as the symbol of protection and is torturing people to continue the construction of his wall. However, in the end, he goes there to end the State's torture and cease the construction of the wall, which he regards as a representation of imprisonment. His transformation helps people see both sides of oppression: the ones who oppress and the people who are oppressed. Thus, his transformation inspires the audience to become aware of their circumstances and take action by taking responsibility for a better future. For Lear's transformation or enlightenment process, the ghost of the Gravedigger's Boy has great effect. The ghost of the Gravedigger's Boy appears to Lear in the prison. It takes him on a journey into the light of his own psyche. It is drawn to remind him of the Golden Age of his governance when his egocentric concerns were absent. The Ghost presents the ghosts of his daughters to him, to make him realise his responsibility for their corruption and the State's corruption. Until the end, the Ghost aids Lear in totally going mad; however, in terms of problem-solving, the Ghost's assistance proves ineffective. Nevertheless, he has needed it to face reality and create himself. Therefore, it has a propulsive effect to trigger Lear's transformation. In the end, however, it tempts him towards an easy death. Thus, he has to overcome it to reach a level of incorrupt, healthy maturity that will lead him toward a useful death. Lear takes action to trigger change.

Bond and Nesin suggest that the only way to address the unfair practices of the social system, perpetuated by corrupt social morality upheld by those in power, is through a revolutionary change towards socialism from capitalism. They suggest a four-step model towards change – *awareness-responsibility-action-change* - which helps people gain these rights and simultaneously directs the audience to the desired solution to possess a new proper system.

The first step is *awareness.* The playwrights use their revolutionary theatre to highlight the system's lack of order, justice, and equality for people. The aim is to help people observe their circumstances from an external perspective. This is achieved by

involving characters who either commit, experience, or witness violence, injustice, and inequality and allowing the audience to empathise with them. The second step is *responsibility.* By raising awareness, they aim to encourage the audience to recognise their responsibilities in the existing circumstances. For people to take responsibility on their lives and the society's circumstances, both playwrights favour the idea of *gaining the right to live or die* throughout their lives and in their works. The idea of deserving to live/die surrounds Nesin's life. He argues if the characters in his works deserve to live or die. In *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies*, Yaşar struggles to be identified by the State, challenging its outdated, rotten and corrupt staff and documents until the end. However, in the end, as he cannot get an identity card, he becomes the wise person created by the system's faults to maintain his life. Until the end, with his stubborn effort, he deserves to live or die. However, in the end, he becomes Kara Kaplı Nizami. Therefore, it can be said that his criticism of the system proves him right; however, it can be questioned if he deserves to live/die. Nevertheless, there is a justification. The faulty procedures of the system do not promise a life to people. In a system in which reality is ignored, every action is performed according to the black-covered book, and no change or flexibility is possible, corruption becomes unavoidable. The continuity of this kind of ineffective and sluggish system is provided by the additional system, which is established on a platform of flexible and plural practices, which is carried on by Karakaplı Nizamis. Therefore, Karakaplı Nizami Yaşar deserves to live because he has done all he can and fought to obtain his rights. However, the system is too corrupt, and he is alone to ask for his rights. Moreover, as he has to keep on with his life because of his wife and child, he does not have more options left. He becomes Kara Kaplı Nizami, who finds a way to make everything legal by utilising the system's faults. Similarly, deserving to live/die is also the dominant idea in Bond's life and works. In *Lear*, Lear, the King, deserves neither to live nor to die at the beginning; yet, through the course of events, as he struggles to change the system and trigger people to take action for the change, his life has gained meaning. By challenging the system from its very core and achieving a healthy social morality at the end, he definitely proves that he deserves to die, leaving a lasting impact behind and knowing that his death or sacrifice is not in vain.

Nesin and Bond convince their audience about the urgent requirement of change for better living conditions. When they understand that they are involved in the formation of the current circumstances, they are reinforced to take responsibility for rearranging the system for a better future. This responsibility paves the way for taking *action*, which is the third step. When the responsibilities are realised, playwrights use their artistic power to make them take action, reacting to the root of the problem, which is the capitalist system. Action leads to *change*, which is the last desired step. As they stimulate awareness and responsibility and encourage people to take action, change begins. With a snowball effect, the transformation and improvement process start attempting to the society's fundamental body. Change is a cyclical process; if one person changes, the system changes, and if the system changes, the people change.

For the change, Nesin and Bond are not pessimists; they are somewhat hopeful for a better, liveable future. Their plays, *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* and *Lear*, present hope and struggle with these four steps leading to the desired effect. Moreover, these productions are beyond time and place; they remain as vibrant today as they were when they were initially created and performed. The plays still inspire the audience to become active participants in fighting against inequality and injustice in society instead of just being passive observers. It is a shared responsibility to speak out and put an end to the perpetuation of these issues.

It is not possible to measure how effective Bond and Nesin are in raising awareness and responsibility or directing their audience to take action; however, it is pretty clear that they have successfully managed to use their plays as a means of communication channel with the audience to show the malfunctioning in social structure. The methods employed by them enable individuals to recognise their own problems, make informed decisions, take action, and play a role in determining their outcomes. Whether Bond's *Lear* or Nesin's *Yaşar Neither Lives Nor Dies* can become triggering for fundamental social change is a question that does not have a certain answer.

Further studies can be done to highlight social criticism in Nesin's and Bond's other works since they are critical of social structure in almost all their works. Their social criticism can also be analysed in a comparative study with the works of other

writers. Moreover, the revolutionary literature can be interpreted in detail to determine its characteristics since not many studies handle it.

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