

## **The Plays of Edward Bond: A Case Study**

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### **Abstract**

*A case study is a qualitative research method used as a process or record of research to study the development of a particular person, group or a situation over a period of time. It is also used as a particular instance of something used or analyzed in order to illustrate a thesis or principle. In this paper the concept of human aggression and violence is dealt with in general terms, and the ideas of Edward Bond on the problem of aggression and violence in particular. Bond finds that the present-day society is more aggressive and cruel. He says that there is disintegration in the present way of living. He believes that aggression and violence is the insidious workings of an unjust society that restrain and threaten natural human responses. His plays expose the system responsible for the degenerate behavior of man. He wants to create awareness and understanding and a sense of right and wrong in the minds of the people.*

**Key words:** case study, Aggression, Human Aggression, violence

### **2.1. Introduction**

Thomas Edward Bond (1934 - ) is a British playwright, theatre director, poet, theorist, and screen writer. He is the author of about fifty plays. He is broadly considered one among the major living dramatists. He has always been and remains highly controversial because of the aggression and violence shown in his plays, the radicalism of his statement about modern theatre and society, and his theories on drama.

He was born on 18 July 1934 into a lower-working-class family in Holloway, North London. He was educated at a secondary modern school. As a child during World War II he was evacuated to the countryside but was present during the bombings on London between 1940 and 1944. This early exposure to the violence and terror of war probably shaped themes in his work. His experience of the evacuation gave him an awareness of social alienation and this would characterize his writing.

### **2.2 The Pope's Wedding (1962)**

The first play of Bond is *Pope's Wedding*. It gives a striking picture of listless and stultifying rural life. Though the play did not achieve the notoriety of Bond's subsequent plays, it simmers with a hopelessness and resentment that turn inevitably to aggression and violence.

After National Service in the army and a series of dead-end jobs, he wrote '*The Pope's Wedding*'. It is a portrait of a frustrated, inarticulate, and finally murderous country labourer. This is a falsely naturalistic drama (the title refers to 'an impossible ceremony') set in contemporary Essex which shows, through a set of tragic circumstances, the death of rural society brought about by modern post-war urban living standards.

### **2.3 Saved (1965)**

Set in London in the sixties, the action of *Saved* is set in amidst the cultural poverty and frustration of a generation of young people on the dole and living on council estates. The play opens on Len and Pam preparing to have sex and asking each other their names. Pam's parents are deadlocked in a stultified, silent marriage. Len stays with the family as a lodger despite being rejected by Pam, in order to keep an eye on her neglected baby. Pam leaves the baby with Frank, whom she claims is its father, leading to one of modern theatre's most shocking scenes.

The atmosphere of domestic bleakness of the play *Saved* ultimately cracks to reveal an underlying animalistic brutality, then settles back again, with an alarming glimpse of how little human life seems to be worth of.

With only a few exceptions, the play's aggression and violence and language met with widespread outrage from reviewers. It became notorious from its first (private) production in 1965. Bond's refusal to alter its scenes in response to the censor's demands meant it played a fundamental role in the successful campaign to repeal the laws governing censorship of plays.

Edward Bond stirred the hornet's nest in London when he staged his play '*Saved*'. This play delves into the lives of a selection of South London working class youths suppressed – as Bond would see it – by a brutal economic system and unable to give their lives meaning. The youths who drift eventually into barbarous mutual violence. Among them, one character, Len, persistently (and successfully) tries to maintain links among people violently tearing one another to pieces. The play shows the social causes of violence and opposes them with individual freedom. This would remain the major theme throughout Bond's work.

*Saved* is a tale of alienation, aggression and violence. This time the play caused great controversy and produced a lot of heat and dust among the urban young audience that there were verbal interruption and abuse in the course of the play, and even physical punch-up in the entrance hall during interval and after the show. The cause of disagreement was a scene in the play, where a gang of youngsters stoned a drugged baby in a push chair to death in a park.

Edward Bond became responsible for exciting a furore not only in the theatre but also in the press and court of law for a few months to follow. The play was banned by the censor, presented under club conditions by the Royal Court, and attacked by many critics, mainly because of a scene in which hooligans stoned to death a baby in its pram.

### **2.2.1 Reaction of Edward Bond**

The play also accelerated the movement to relieve the Chamberlain of his control over the theatre. Bond was compelled to write a preface to his printed edition of the play to dispel the cloud of misunderstanding and establish his stance clearly as his use of aggression and violence in his plays. Bond stoutly defends this in his preface to the play entitled LEAR.

“I wrote about violence as naturally as Jane Austen wrote about manners. Violence shapes and obsesses our society, and if we do not stop being violent we have no future. People who do not want writers to write about violence want to stop them writing about our time and us. It would be immoral not to write about violence”.<sup>1</sup>

## **2.3 Other Provocative plays**

### **2.3.1 Narrow Road to the Deep North (1968)**

This play is about local tyranny and British imperialism in nineteenth-century Japan. A comic and elegant parable of morality and politics, Bond uses the takeover of feudal Japan by Western imperialists to explore the structures of colonialism and religious control. In the introductory scene of *Narrow Road to the Deep North*, Basho the seventeenth-century Japanese poet finds a baby lying on the ground, abandoned by its parents. He concludes that since the baby has not earned its suffering, it must be caused by heaven and is therefore heaven's responsibility. He leaves the baby on the ground. Satirically and ironically, the play continues to examine themes of religious dogmatism and tyranny, as the baby grows up and becomes a totalitarian ruler. To overthrow him Basho enlists the assistance of a British commodore and his sister, who accompanies her Christian exhortations with a tambourine.

### **2.3.2 Early Morning (1968)**

It is a surreal comedy set in Victorian high places. It portrays a lesbian relationship between Queen Victoria and Florence Nightingale. At the beginning of the savage and satirical *Early Morning*, Bond asserts that, ‘The events of this play are true.’ The events of the play are starkly at odds with history as we know it: they show a world, in which Queen Victoria is a lesbian, her sons Prince George and Prince Arthur are conjoined twins. Prince Albert and Disraeli is plotting her death. A man is put on trial for eating someone who pushed in front of him in a queue; Victoria arranges for Florence Nightingale to be married to George and then rapes her; Heaven turns out to be an eternity of cannibalism.

Bond's iconoclastic rewriting of the Victorian monarchy peels apart the cruelty of humanity's cruelty and consumption in a play that is by turns comic, shocking and macabre.

*Early Morning* was first performed privately in 1968. Banned by the Lord Chamberlain until the abolition of theatre censorship in 1968, it was revived as a full production at the Royal Court in 1969.

### **2.3.3 *Lear* (1971)**

Bond recasts the story of King Lear into a socio-political epic, which reveals the violence endemic in all unjust societies. He exposes corrupted innocence as the core of social morality, and this false morality as a source of the aggressive tension which must ultimately destroy that society.

The play follows the decay of an aging and tyrannical king. Lear is building a vast wall to keep his enemies out of his kingdom, but the betrayed by his two cynical daughters and hounded as a political risk following military defeat; pursued by the ghost of a man whose life he has destroyed and whose death he has caused; imprisoned and tortured until enucleated; after a life of violence he finally finds wisdom and peace in a radical opposition to power. The end of the play shows him as a forced labourer in a camp setting an example for future rebellion by sabotaging the wall he once built, which subsequent regimes keep perpetuating. Bond takes names and structures from Shakespeare's play, but twists them into a brutal new shape that also takes influences from Chekov's *Three Sisters*.

### **2.3.4 *The Sea* (1973)**

Set in the high Edwardian world of 1907, *The Sea* is a black comedy set in a coastal community on England's East Coast a few years ago before World War I, dominated by an imperious lady-of-the-manor; and overwhelmed by the drowning of one of its young citizens. Nurtured by his experience as a child evacuee to the seaside, the play is (rightly) subtitled "a comedy" and was intended as optimistic after the gloomy mood of his previous plays. This is encapsulated by the successful escape of a young and promising couple from this narrow and oppressive society. The play draws on some of the themes of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. It is a fascinating blend of wild farce, high comedy, biting social satire and poetic tragedy.

A wild storm shakes a small East Anglian seaside village, and Willy is unable to save his friend from drowning. The raving coastguard is too drunk to do anything; Hatch the draper is passing by but he believes that hovering alien spaceships are slowly replacing people's brains, and he refuses to help. While the grande dame Mrs Rafi, bastion of respectability, amateur theatricals and velvet curtains from Birmingham, sets her face against the chaos.

This collection of furious eccentricity, the bitter collision of class, and the fierce burning of grief sways between light-hearted comedy and desolate poetry, an examination of rural manners and humanity's unqualified potential.

### **2.3.5 *Bingo* (1973)**

*Bingo*, subtitled 'Scenes of Money and Death' in this play a meeting between Shakespeare and Ben Jonson is imagined. It uses the last days of a brooding and unheroic William Shakespeare to accuse art and capitalism of vile inhumanity.

Historical evidence suggests that not long before his death Shakespeare agreed to the enclosure of common land near Stratford, which was beneficial to landowners such as Shakespeare, but disastrous for small tenants and the parish's poor. For Bond this incident is laced with damning echoes of King Lear's injustices, and motivates his portrayal of the writer as a bourgeois and apolitical capitalist, more occupied with his profits and rents than with the distress of those who depended on the land.

The Shakespeare of *Bingo* is no national treasure; fretful, impassive and guilty, he is moved to splintered eloquence by the plight of a baited bear and a hanged vagrant woman, but is too slow to see the inhumanity and cruelty of his own position.

*Bingo* is a thorny cry against exploitation and passivity, and an original and coldly compelling portrait of the revered writer.

### **2.3.6 *The Fool* (1975)**

With an account of the life of the poet John Clare, *The Fool* is set against rural dissent and industrialisation, an interrogation of the relationships of capitalism, class and art that burns with pain and anger.

*The Fool* sees Clare taking part in the Little port riots of 1816, when England was steeped in unemployment, high prices and low pay, and the labourers of Little port in Cambridgeshire attacked the shops and wealthier residents of the town. Bond's play shows the parson being looted, stripped and clawed by the workers who accuse him of starving their children. Living with hardship and unrest, Clare's life is torn into pieces as the woman he loves disappears, the countryside is eaten up by the advance of industrialisation, his fashionable and condescending patrons refuse to print what they call radicalism, and illness and literary fervour mean he cannot provide for his family.

*The Fool* charts the life and destruction of the English working-class poet John Clare. In Bond's view, it illustrates the fate of the principled artist in an unjust society.

### **2.3.7 *The Woman* (1978)**

*The Woman* is set in the aftermath of the Trojan War, recasting Hecuba (the wife of King Priam of Troy) as the main character, and reshaping the epic narrative into what Bond calls a 'socialist rhapsody'.

Bond's play deviates from the orthodox narrative of the siege, emphasising instead its significance as a dissertation on morality and historical truth, and a celebration of individuals who can change society. It begins with Priam's death, showing the savage struggle over a

statue of a goddess, a relic which Troy has stolen from Greece. Later, the half-blind Hecuba and half-mad Ismene are living on a remote island, where they meet an escaped miner searching for sanctuary, and the Greeks arrive still searching for their statue. *The Woman* refuses resolution, offering instead a complex definition of social conflict.

### **2.3.8 The *Bundle*' (1978)**

The *Bundle* or New Narrow Road to the Deep North is a compelling and forceful story exploring the origins and mechanisms of moral concepts through cruel ethical dilemmas.

Like Bond's *Narrow Road to Deep North*, the play begins with the discovery of an abandoned child on a riverbank. The poet Basho who is searching for enlightenment protests that he cannot take it with him, so reluctantly the ferryman adopts the child though he can barely afford to feed another person. The play first describes the boy's upbringing within the social values of his community, before turning to revolution to dissect and rework accepted attitudes and ideologies. The *Bundle* weaves together lives beset with social injustices and torn by agonizing choices, with the moral force of parable and the scope and depth of epic.

This play is a tale of oppression and resistance, again set in nineteenth-century Japan; Bond assigned the same political concern to his next play, *The Woman*, set in a fantasy Trojan War and based on Euripides' *Trojan Women*. Comparable to *Lear*, it shows the fight of the decayed Trojan queen, Hecuba, against the Athenian empire, succeeding only when she abandons the aristocracy and the interests of the state to physically meet the proletariat and join the people's cause.

The *Bundle* set in an imaginary medieval Japan and based on an anecdote from the classical Japanese poet Basho the play shows an eventually successful revolution whose leader nevertheless constantly faces the human cost of political change and experiences as futile an ideology of compassion, being (in Bond's view) politically counterproductive and supportive of *The Bundle*: or *New Narrow Road to the Deep North*.

### **2.3.9 *The Worlds* (1979)**

*The Worlds* is an apologia for working-class terrorism, this time it is set in contemporary Britain. It offers a clipped and lucid examination of the violent machinery of capitalism, the politics of industrial action and the use of terrorism.

After a difficult week trying to deal with a strike by his organisation's employees, Trench goes away for the weekend to a smart country hotel, to dispense wisdom to his boardroom protégés. He is then suddenly kidnapped, his captors holding him hostage until the demands of the strikers are met. Meanwhile, his workers shiver on the picket line, trying to figure out why some men get to follow different rules. But while Trench is absent, his protégés find they appreciate being in charge, and the ruthlessness of the corporation turns in



on itself. Bond has written a set of texts entitled *The Activist Papers* as a commentary on the play.

### **2.3.10 Restoration (1981)**

Restoration contains some of Bond's most brilliant writing and perhaps his most memorable character, the monstrous Lord Are, who marries and then kills for money. It is a forceful, darkly comic story of cruelty, injustice and iron privilege. Bond appropriates and parodies the conventions of Restoration theatre with barbed accuracy and style, underwriting his epigrams and double plots with a fierce discourse on class and inequality.

The play is set in eighteenth-century England: the foppish and cold-blooded Lord Are is forced by poverty into an unwanted marriage with the daughter of a wealthy mine owner, and they proceed to duly detest one another. The second plot sees the guileless footman Bob Hedges bring home a new wife, Rose, who is the daughter of a freed slave.

Bond's sympathies clearly lie with the servant classes. But he invests the aristocratic characters with such savage comic invention that they are horribly, hilariously watchable. What Bond's Restoration does is to show the underclass that slaved and struggled to support this tiny majority of vain aristocrats and landowners. Bond's play is aimed at exposing the shallowness and superficiality of those Restoration comedies by playwrights like Sheridan, Goldsmith and Vanbrugh.

### **2.3.11 The War Plays: A Trilogy(1986)**

The play is about about power politics, militarism, and the likely effect of the H-bomb; in the mid-1980s, Bond's work had a new beginning with the trilogy of *The War Plays*. Edward Bond's trilogy of plays portrays a brutal world struggling in the aftermath of nuclear holocaust.

Part I: Red Black and Ignorant introduces Monster, an inhuman being who presents the life that he did not get to live. Killed within his mother's womb, the play reveals the world which would have awaited the unborn child: a post-apocalyptic society of destruction and war.

In The Tin Can People, a community of survivors are living on tinned food, years after the nuclear explosion. When a stranger appears, he is welcomed into the group, but suspicions mount when one of the other survivors dies. Convinced that the newcomer is contaminated, the group resolve to destroy this new threat to their existence.

A woman descends into madness in *Great Peace* after her baby is murdered by her son on military orders. She is adopted by a new community who offer to care for her but rather than accept their welcome, she ultimately chooses to stay in the wilderness.

The plays are accompanied by Bond's commentary on the processes of improvisation and experimentation that shaped this trilogy, providing a comprehensive discussion of the playwright's theoretical approach to his work.

### **2.3.12 The Crime of the Twenty-First Century**

Elemental, stark and with a ruthless logic, *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* is a play about a devastated, desperate world. A woman lives in a desert of white rubble, sustained by the only working tap in a flattened and deserted landscape. A tiny group of people come to her seeking water – an old man, a young escaped prisoner, and a furious young woman. Searching for somewhere to hide, instead they are exposed to the deepest questions of human drama. *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* is a stunning play about the possibility of society and the inevitable momentum of violence. The dialogue is angular and tortured; the play is heavy with the great pain of a destructive world.

### **2.4 Art and society**

Many may be disgusted and outraged to watch scenes of violence on the stage. It should be remembered that contemporary society is violent and brutal and the artist has a duty to portray it.

In the past art helped to create the image of Pharaoh, Caesar, kings and nobles, the aristocrats, and the merchants. In the present age, the artist is engaged in creating the image and consciousness of the working class. Men of letters believe that creative artist should play a vital role to awaken the moral conscience of the society making necessary relationship between art and society.

It should not be presumed that the creative artist has only vulgarized the medium by compromise. He is aware of the fact that society cannot be changed if his address is directed only to the average person. His works are not written exclusively about and for the working class. They are meant to influence the views of a wider cross section of the public. He should bring about a full awareness of the inhumanity and violence of modern life. Theatre is the most social of art forms as Gamini Salgado expresses in his book “English Drama”. It has a peculiarly intimate relation to the society within which it flowers or fades. G.B.Shaw firmly believed in this theory and wanted the Londoner’s to take with them their conscience and their brains to the theatre instead of leaving them at home with their prayer book.

Gamini Salgado further explains that drama lives by effective conflict of ideas, characters, situations or combinations of these and which inevitably generates passion including the passion for the truth. Play writing unquestionably moral activity according to Edward Bond whose aim simply is “to tell the truth”.<sup>2</sup>

### **2.5 Main interest of Edward Bond**

The main interest of Edward Bond is to create a sane and socialist society. He, from the beginning, is committed to using the theatre as a weapon in the struggle for a better society. His theatre is an expansion of, and contribution towards, the means of living rationally, the means of making a sane world. He calls his theatre “a rational theatre”.



His approach is undoubtedly sociological. All his plays reflect a continual process of analyzing the nature of modern problems as clearly as possible. Malcolm Hay and Philip Roberts quote in their book, "Bond" what he himself states, "my theatre is based on trying to define ideas, critical ideas about society and about human activity, trying to define those as precisely as possible, not necessarily in verbal terms but in pictures".

## **2.6 Human Aggression and violence**

Historically abounds with a series of constellation of notions about human aggression. It has been a subject of perennial interest in various forums. The worldwide escalation of violence and destructiveness in the present age has drawn the attention of scholars from various spheres and attempts are being made to offer an explanation as to the cause of different forms of different aggression.

Social scientists and psychoanalysts have turned their eyes towards "man" who has become the aggressor as well as victim. Systematic research is being done to define and describe "Man". He is called a rational being, many a time a social animal. He is referred to as an animal that can make tools, Homo Faber or a symbol making animal. These traditional views have begun to be challenged and re-assessed in the recent times.

G.G Simpson, one of the eminent contemporary investigators, agrees that man is an animal but the essence of his unique nature lies precisely in those characteristics that are not shared with any other animal. According to him, place of man in nature and his supreme significance are not defined by his animalism but by his humanity. Though man can be provoked to behave badly with frightening ease and rapidity, his awareness of human values does not simply vanish.

Man may have his own faults and weaknesses, but the intrinsic human values are always implicit in him. They are the most enduring things he possesses. This brings us to the often-debated theory that aggressiveness of man is inborn. A comprehensive study on the subject has defined man as the primate that has emerged at the point of evolution intrinsic determination has reached a minimum and the development of the brain maximum.<sup>3</sup>

The cultural anthropologists have been led to believe that man is born as a blank sheet on which culture writes its text. The present century has transformed man to a highly sophisticated "hyperspace".

## **2.7 Organic and relative appetite drives**

There are two kinds of drives or appetites seen in man. One is the constant or fixed ones like hunger or sexual instincts. These can be also called organic drives. The other kind is as Karl Marx and F. Engels put it, "the relative appetite" which owes their origin to certain social structure.

Edward Bond is preoccupied with one form of the relative drives, namely, human aggression. Aggression is a word with its roots from "ad gradi". "Gradus" means steps and

“ad” means towards. It conveys the idea of moving or going or stepping forward. Ad gradi often used in battles, casts the idea “to attack”.

Aggression, thus, is understood as moving forward towards a goal without undue hesitation or doubts or fear. The simple meaning of the word aggression could be all those acts that cause or are intended to cause certain effect on another person, animate or inanimate objects. There may be benign aggression as could be seen in a salesperson or malignant aggression as found in men in power. Fundamentally, different approaches are being made to understand and pin down the causes of human aggression. Sociologists like Emile Durkheim have declared that crime is normal because a society without it is utterly impossible.

The swollen cities could be seen as centres of criminal infection and imitation. Science and technology have come to play a far-reaching part in the present modern world of ours.

## **2.8 Social conflict**

It has been widely accepted that the economic and ecological conditions brought in by these factors account for the incidents and developments of social conflict. Human values hitherto held sacred are shown scant respect. Many social scientists have attempted to diagnose the causes for the tangles and tensions rampant in us and suggest the possible remedy to the various social ailments.

We cannot fully comprehend the various approaches witnessed today without reference to the cultural and social conditions that brought them to bed in the past. Though historical situations are each unique and attempt for historical transposition will be false, they tempt a large section of the people to see aspects of our own behavior and through in them. For instance, the violence of the world of Lear cannot be equated with that of our world. Nevertheless, Hamlet’s discontent with the world is as cosmic as the irresponsibility of Lear. Tragedies of Shakespeare are essentially symbolic entities despite the social and historical elements in them. It should be admitted that it is an impossible task to formulate a global hypothesis on the causes of aggression in human beings. Being conscious of immensity of the subject, Bond explores and investigates in his own way the nature of human behavior in society that inhibits and subverts natural human responses. Bond does not agree that original sin or aggression is the root cause for the violence and unhappiness in the world. His firm belief is that it is of the insidious workings of an unjust society that produces violence and destruction.

## **2.9 Nature of aggression and violence**

All his plays are preoccupied with the analysis of the nature of violence, both public and private. Violence is an instinctive reaction that is part of life as Prof. J. Chari contends. This is indeed very of animal world. However, it is certainly different with human beings. Bond in his Author’s preface to the play Lear makes a clear analysis of the intricacies of aggression in human beings. Animals become aggressive only on two occasions; firstly

when their lives, territory or status in their lives, territory or status in their group are threatened, secondly when they mate or preparing to mate. However, there has been always a pattern, almost a controlled and ritualistic response in them. When it comes to human beings, there is no evidence of an aggressive need as there is of sexual and feeding needs. Man's response becomes aggressive when he is constantly deprived of his physical and emotional needs. Even the threat of this pushes him to a constant state of aggression. When a threat hangs above his head, the need and right to protect himself and his family arises. A reason for aggression is readily born now. Bond argues at one point that fear is a lack of understanding and hatred shoots from fear and aggression – beginning being the passion for justice. Shylock asked for his enemy's flesh because his own had been spat on.

### **2.10 Human Aggression versus animal aggression**

Human aggression becomes more destructive because it is animal aggression, begotten in the human minds. As animals, human beings react to threat in a biological way. However, they must also react in more complicated ways as human beings do – mentally, emotionally, and morally. Our ability to do this successfully deprives us of the functions of the species. Human beings to behave in a way he is not expected to. He becomes a threat to other people as well as responsible for creating things that intimidate the whole of humanity. In his Author's Preface to *Lear*, Bond states that we have created all the things that threaten us: our military gigantism, moral hysteria, industrial servitude and all the ugly aggressiveness of a commercial culture.<sup>4</sup> When environmental and social balance is disturbed, a state of constant disequilibrium is caused. Man is at a loss to understand him as to what he can and should require of life. He is forced to distort his natural self and reasonable needs to fit in unnatural irrational set up. He finds himself alienated from his natural self with physical and emotional effects on him. It is the corruption of natural man into alienated man. When the pressure becomes unendurable, he turns violent in his anger. Bond makes it clear in *The World*, "if the social environment isn't one that helps us live humanly (socialism) but helps us in exploitation (capitalism) or makes us beasts or machines (fascism) then our emotions tend to deteriorate into fear, tension and racial and religious paranoia which leads to aggression, vandalism, child battering and other forms of violence."<sup>5</sup>

Bond's social background offers an "apt *raison d'etre*" to his obsession of this subject. Bond hailed from a working class family that had seen and known a good deal of upheaval and poverty. Right from his childhood, there has been awareness of himself as a part of a particular class and social structure. In 1940, when he was evacuated alone without his parents from London to Cornwall, his childhood mind was quite keen to observe the implications. Tony Coult in his book, 'The plays of Edward Bond' quotes the words of Bond, "I know that I was being sent away so that I would not be killed by bombs. Not unreasonably, I thought that the fact that my parents were behind meant that they would be killed." Many city children of his generation joined him in sharing that traumatic break that seemed to

strengthen and consolidate an acute sensitivity to his surroundings. His childhood memories of war indicate the sharpening of his critical faculty. He recalls with Allen Brien in an interview of his childhood occasion when he saw two airplanes collide with each other. He was excited terribly to see these great toys smash in the air. While at school, he had been to Bedford to see Macbeth. He felt that he had met somebody who was actually talking about his problems, about the life he had been living, the political around him. After leaving school, he did various jobs, including that of a paint mixer, an insurance clerk and a checker in an aircraft factory. Then he entered military services and was stationed in Vienna with the Allied Army of Occupation. Army appeared to him a sort of parodied version of civil society. He found it as one of the most outrageous institutions he had ever encountered. Army had its contribution to make his outlook political. In the Theatre papers, we can find an account of his confessions. He lived his early years in a political context. He grew up in a society in which one did not know if one were going to last the day. He had seen people running for their lives. During the 1945 General Election, it dawned on him that the class structure was dangerous and vicious.

It is to be mentioned that Bond whose dramatic methods are often compared to that of Brecht. Bond, as Brecht indeed wants the audience to react analytically to the incidents he enacts on the stage indeed wants the audience to react analytically to the incidents he enacts on the stage. Nevertheless, contrary to the cardinal principle of Brecht, Bond does not seek to alienate audience from the events by interrupting the action. He stresses on the need of the involvement of audience by surprising and shocking them with images that are part of the continuing action. The cause of disagreement now is as to whether his stage is spectacular transcription intended simply to shock as in the case of Antonin Artaud, the French playwright and originator of the vague but catchy tag “the theatre of cruelty”, or does it show clear insight into the violence it portrays.

### **2.11 Dissection and discussion of aggression**

Fourteen plays of Bond are chosen for this study in order to evaluate the extent of human aggression and violence and this examination is never going to be complete. Each play is a part of a process rather than a conclusion: the analysis of the biology and sociology of aggression and violence leading to the understanding of the potential goodness of human nature and of the possibility of transcending his environment. This is achieved through a dissection and discussion of aggression at various levels and in different quarters.

Theatre to Bond, must articulate the causes of the human misery and the sources of human strength. Such a theatre is epic precisely because it transcends from individual psychological issues to social and political truths. Bond has realized the grain of truth in the wise words of Heraclitus that unless one expects the unexpected one will never find truth, for it is hard to discover and hard to attain. It will be clearly seen from the plays that the intension of Bond is wide. He challenges the conventional liberal attitudes to violence. In his

new author's note to "Plays: one", Bond states that if one decides never to use violence one has still done nothing to make the world less violent. That can only be by making it more just.

## **2.12 Conclusion**

His works at first indirectly, then more directly, and recently bluntly and crudely, have continued to offer fierce indictments of a capitalist system and a ruling class he believes to be unalterably corrupt and corrupting. Indeed, he has come to believe that almost any means of overturning what he sees as institutionalized injustice must itself be just. His rational theatre would not only understand the problems of the society and present the truth clearly but also inform the audience how to effect change. Bond portrays individuals not as creatures of instinct but of culture. Social, economic, and political conditions should be conducive to produce a healthy culture. His plays show the social and political structures responsible for the resultant aggression and violence. There is a continuous and growing optimism in him as we witness the development of his political philosophy and dramatic skill. Accordingly, he has described himself as a revolutionary socialist and his dramas as 'rational theatre', dividing it into 'question plays' and 'answer plays'. His earlier, more questioning efforts were notable for the aggressive and violent effects with which he illustrated his antiestablishment thinking; his later one have tended to be less terrible, but also less energetic and more inflexible. In each case, he has often set the action in relatively remote times and places, thus creating vivid and unusual effects, but not always making his work more credible as a comment on the contemporary world. At his best, however, he combines incisiveness of characterization, lucidity of dialogue, a powerful immediacy of event, and imaginative size and scope. Bond is also a notable essayist, and has written prefaces to several of his plays which explore the implications of his socialist views with an eloquence and passion which can become assertive.

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