

**The Later Edward Bond: Subjectivity,  
Dramaturgy, and Performance**

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## **Declaration of Authorship**

I Chien-Cheng Chen hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Abstract

The aim of this thesis is to examine Edward Bond's plays, theoretical writings, and productions from the 1990s to the present. Since the early 1990s, Bond has been theorizing a new theory of subjectivity as a response to the 'post-Auschwitz' world as well as to the logic of neoliberalism. I will critically examine how Bond develops his theory and place this theory in a broader philosophical context of post-Auschwitz ethics defined by Adorno and Levinas. As the Bondian subject is a self-dramatizing subject, this conception of subjectivity also influences how Bond conceives his dramaturgy. Instead of treating characters as self-contained autonomous individuals, Bond's new dramaturgy substantiates an examination of different possibilities of subjective configurations and their ethical significance. By examining Bond's plays, I argue that Bond's dramaturgy, instead of expressing his theory in dramatic form, further complicates his conception of subjectivity. Moreover, over the past thirty years, while distancing himself from mainstream British theatre, Bond has developed a sustained and creative collaboration with Big Brum, a Birmingham-based TIE company, and Alain Françon, one of the most prestigious contemporary French directors. Bond has written more than ten plays for Big Brum and dedicated five plays, *The Paris Pentad*, to Françon and these works clearly mark a dynamic new phase within Bond's playwriting career. Along with these collaborations, Bond has also developed a post-Brechtian theory of theatre and performance. Therefore, I will also analyze how Bond reconceives the role of theatre and performance and how his ideas can be concretized and enacted on stage.

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## Introduction

Before I came to London to conduct my research on Edward Bond, I studied playwriting in Taipei and wrote several plays. When I studied playwriting in graduate school, I started to study contemporary British drama, which was renowned worldwide for its quality and diversity. Among the plays I read, Bond's *The War Plays* overwhelmed me by its versatile use of dramatic forms and its profound exploration of modern human conditions. Since then, I started to read Bond's other plays and his theory although I was more often than not baffled by the obscurity and complexity of his dramatic and theoretical writings. Intriguingly, I also sensed that he might have created a new approach to playwriting and a new way to understand theatre. This thesis is thus prompted by my intention to understand Bond's dramaturgy, theory, and how his plays have been performed.

In the article 'Whatever Happened to Edward Bond?' in *The Independent* on 2 November 2010, Mark Ravenhill writes:

I'd assumed that Bond's major work was behind him, accepting the view widely held in English theatre circles that he was now a cantankerous man producing ever more erratic and irrelevant plays.

So it was a huge shock for me to see a production of Bond's 2005 play *The Under Room* in the basement of that same pub, the Cock Tavern in Kilburn, a couple of weeks ago as part of a six-play retrospective of the writer's work.<sup>1</sup> Written originally for a tour of Birmingham schools, it is as good as anything as Bond has ever written. By the end of the performance I was shaken and tearful, not only because the play had asked such troubling questions about the way we live our lives, but because of an overwhelming sadness that such a significant play can be so marginalised.

It is interesting to observe that, although Ravenhill shared the view that

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<sup>1</sup> The plays featured include: *The Pope's Wedding* (1962), *The Fool* (1976), *Red, Black and Ignorant* (1985), *Olly's Prison* (1993), *The Under Room* (2005), and *There Will Be More* (2010). The season, presented by Adam Spreadbury-Maher and Berislav Juraic, ran from 14 September to 13 November 2010. Bond later incorporated *There Will Be More* as the first act of *Dea*, produced at Sutton Theatre in 2016.



Bond's later work may be irrelevant to contemporary English theatre audiences, he discovered in fact how relevant *The Under Room* could be because of its effectiveness in addressing 'troubling questions about the way we live our lives'. *The Under Room* is set in a dystopian future in 2077, and by centering the play on an illegal immigrant who wants to escape from a totalitarian regime to seek asylum, Bond interrogates the possibility of accepting the other in a state permeated by xenophobic ideology. Bond's use of a Muslim headscarf, though it is only used at the very end of the play, clearly exhibits his intention to engage with ethics in the age of the 'War on Terror'.

However, Ravenhill's impression that Bond has become irrelevant is not surprising. From the late 1980s, Bond was becoming more and more alienated from mainstream British theatre, as indicated in the beginning of his letter to Katharine Worth on 4 December 1985: 'I think Im [*sic*] coming to the end of my time in the theatre' (Stuart 1996a: 57). His disappointment with the National Theatre, the Royal Court, and the Royal Shakespeare Company was evident in his letters of this period.<sup>2</sup> As a consequence, he started to build a long-term relationship with Big Brum, a TIE company based in Birmingham that has commissioned Bond to write ten plays for teenagers, and Alain Françon, who has directed nine of Bond's plays from 1992 to the present.

It is important to note that the period of the late 1980s to the early 1990s also marks a watershed in Bond's theoretical and dramaturgical development: until then, Bond had fully elaborated his Marxist criticism of modern society and ideology; at the same time, Bond was also writing 'Commentary on *The War Plays*' (1991), in which he conceived the concept of 'radical innocence' as the foundation for his later understanding of human nature and moral psychology. In other words, Bond's concern

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<sup>2</sup> Though Bond was not satisfied with British mainstream theatre, his works have still been produced on stage. Main productions after 1985 include *Restoration* by the RSC in 1988, *The Sea* at the National Theatre in 1991, *Bingo* by the RSC in 1995, *In the Company of Men* by the RSC in 1996, *The Sea* at the Theatre Royal Haymarket in 2008, *Bingo* at the Young Vic, and *Saved* and *The Chair Plays* at the Lyric Hammersmith in 2012. It should also be noted that, except *The Chair Plays*, these were productions of Bond's early plays. Bond's new plays have usually been premiered by Big Brum or by French theatres since the 1990s.

shifted from the interplay between drama and society to that between drama and human subjectivity – or, more accurately, Bond aimed to incorporate the role of human subjectivity into the interplay between drama and society.

Bond's dramaturgical transitions from the 1980s to the 1990s can be best illustrated by comparing two excerpts, one of which is from 'The Activists Papers' (1978-80):

Instead of history being filtered through an individual, reduced to him (as in *King Lear*), the play's figures and incidents would embody and demonstrate the total historical movement. History wouldn't be shown as immanent in an individual, individuality would be transcended by the historical pattern which it represented. [...] The characters wouldn't be moved by personal motives but by the forces of history. (Bond 1992: 129)

The other is from a letter to Michael Fuller in 1988:

I try to establish a scheme for theatre practice based on an understanding of the way the mind works, knows, experiences and creates anything. Theatre is concerned in a special way with the functioning of consciousness. [...] [T]heatre work must be based on an analytical understanding of the mind's working before it can be about anything else. (Stuart 1994a: 20)

In 'The Activists Papers', Bond's emphasis on 'the forces of history', suggestive of Brecht's emphasis on historicization, explains the intentions of his plays during the late 1970s and early 1980s to present a grand picture of society in order to demonstrate a rational understanding of the human condition through class analysis. Through rational dramatization, Bond believes that spectators are able to gain a better understanding of how society and ideology work. In the second excerpt quoted above, Bond turns his attention to the interplay between drama and human mind – while this is not totally contradictory with 'The Activists Papers', it indicates that, in addition to rational understanding, Bond intends to enlarge dramatic power to penetrate into the more complex and delicate workings of human consciousness. Although this does not mean that Bond decided to renounce

social realism, it is observable that, since the 1990s, Bond's dramaturgical focus has veered from the display of social panorama to the exploration of extreme situations that challenge spectators with ethical paradoxes.

In analyzing the dramaturgical shift from the state-of-the-nation play to the play of globalization in contemporary British playwriting, Dan Rebellato argues that, partly because agitprop failed to coordinate our understanding of the world with direct experience and partly because realism failed to frame individualized characters within a broader historical background, the task of the state-of-the-nation play was to construct socialized realism that situates characters against the backdrop of social and historical dynamics (2008b: 248). Rebellato contends that, since the nation-of-the-state play presupposes that the state as a unit of political organization coincides with the nation as a community of shared values, in the era of globalization and devolution, when the coincidence of the state and the nation collapses, the state-of-the-nation play is inadequate to reflect the feelings of dissonance generated by the process of deterritorialization (248-57). Rebellato concludes by stating that globalization has created new conditions that demand new experimental dramatic form as an effective response to a world of globalized market and consumer culture (259).

Rebellato's analysis acutely captures how the politics of theatre derives from its aesthetic form as a response to the structure of political reality. It is not difficult to decipher from the above two excerpts that Bond's dramaturgy in the 1980s also underwent a shift from the objectivity of socialized realism to a dramaturgy centered around the working of subjectivity. Based on the logic of Rebellato's argument, in the following section I will recontextualize Bond in the scenario of contemporary British theatre by arguing that Bond's later theory and dramaturgy should also be considered as his response to the new socio-economic-political conditions that have shaped the world order since the 1990s: mainly the globalization of neoliberalism and the permanent 'War on Terror'.

### **Contextualizing Bond in Contemporary British Theatre**

Bond's playwriting career started with his joining the Royal Court's Writers' Group in 1958; and the staging of *The Pope's Wedding* in 1962 marked the beginning of his first cycle of plays, which 'started with *The Pope's Wedding* and ended with *The Sea*' (Bond and Loney 44). *Saved* (1965) was the most infamous among the first cycle of plays for the violence of its baby-stoning scene, and it also became the point of contestation over theatre censorship since its staging was not licensed by the Lord Chamberlain's office. Despite the controversy of censorship, William Gaskill, the then Artistic Director at the Royal Court, supported Bond's plays and staged *Saved* in 1965 and *Early Morning*, on which a total ban was imposed, in 1968. During the same year, the Theatres Act of 1968 was passed, and *Early Morning* became the last play banned by the Lord Chamberlain's office.<sup>3</sup> The controversy caused by Bond's plays partly derives from his audacious use of violence in his plays – violence also abounds in other plays in the first cycle: *Narrow Road to the Deep North* (1968), *Lear* (1971), and *The Sea* (1973). Regarding violence, Bond states: 'I write about violence simply because it's the defining characteristic of a modern, technological society. It creates violence' (Bond and Loney 39). Bond also states that '[v]iolence is the problem that has to be dealt with' (Stoll 415). Therefore, Bond's use of violence is never for the sake of violence, but it is because violence accurately reflects the problems of society that in any play about society violence cannot be avoided.

According to Bond, in the first cycle, the plays became more and more articulate: while, in *The Pope's Wedding*, there is no communication between Scopey and Alen, *The Sea* ends with Evens talking to Willy about the meaning of being human (Bond and Loney 45). However, Bond was not satisfied with only presenting the symptoms of social problems through violence, but he intended to dramatize and interrogate these problems in a more dramaturgically effective way. Therefore, Bond's second cycle of plays consists of three 'problem plays' – *Bingo* (1973), *The Fool* (1975),

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<sup>3</sup> For detailed discussions on the controversy of censorship caused by *Saved* and *Early Morning*, see Terry W. Browne's *Playwrights' Theatre: The English Stage Company and the Royal Court Theatre* (1975): 62-71, and Philip Roberts's *The Royal Court Theatre and the Modern Stage* (1999): 108-128.

and *The Woman* (1978). Through these plays, Bond intends to deal with ‘the problem of the burden of the past which makes a change so difficult’ (qtd. in Hay and Roberts 266). In *Bingo*, Bond uses Shakespeare as an iconic artist to foreground the impotence of art, or, the artist’s complicity, in relation to the early seventeenth-century movement of enclosures, which epitomizes the nascence of capitalism. In *The Fool*, through the character of the poet John Clare, Bond engages with the social changes during early industrial expansion in Britain and its impact on the dispossessed agricultural workers. In *The Woman*, through rewriting a range of classical Greek tragedies and myths, Bond intends to deal with the problems of power from women’s point of view.

Following the second series of problem plays is Bond’s third cycle of ‘answer plays’, through which Bond aims to find ‘what answers are applicable’ (qtd. in Hay and Roberts 266) to the problems that are already specified. *The Bundle* (1978) suggests that social justice can be obtained by revolution, while *The Worlds* (1979), in a more cautious manner, implies that the answers to social injustice reside in the conditions that produce revolutionaries and terrorists who claim to fight for social justice. *Restoration* (1981), the final play of the ‘answer plays’, indicates that social justice can be made possible only through the awakening of class-consciousness among the oppressed. After the cycle of ‘answer plays’, Bond started to feel alienated from mainstream British theatre – *Summer* (1982) was his last play staged at the National Theatre, and his dissatisfaction with the production of *The War Plays* (1985) by the RSC marked the end of his collaboration with mainstream British theatre, with only a few exceptions.<sup>4</sup> However, Bond’s ‘Commentary on *The War Plays*’ signals a new phase of his theory and dramaturgy, and, during the 1990s, he began new collaborations with French directors, especially Alain Françon, and British TIE theatre practitioners, especially Big Brum. The research of my thesis starts with this period, and in the following I aim to situate the

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<sup>4</sup> For example, he directed the RSC production of *In the Company of Men* in 1996, and *Coffee* was presented at the Royal Court by a Welsh community theatre company, Rational Theatre, in 1997.

later Bond in the context of contemporary British theatre.

Since Bond started to distance himself from mainstream British theatre during the late 1980s, his plays gradually fell off the radar of scholars.<sup>5</sup> However, contrary to the view that Bond's plays are erratic and irrelevant, Bond shares similar sentiments with other contemporary playwrights regarding the aggravating crises such as wars, globalization, and terrorism faced by the West from the 1990s. On 28 January 1995, Bond published an article in *The Guardian* to defend Sarah Kane's *Blasted* (1995), and the opening of the article is exemplary of Bond's worldview in a post-Cold War era:

I was a child of dark times. The new capital cities of history were Hiroshima, Nagasaki, Auschwitz, Dresden, Babi Yar... Surely no time could be darker? But the debris of those places are now spread thinly over the whole world. In war we hope for peace. What do we hope in now?

Communism is defeated. The West is triumphant. We do not need to ask how are we to be human. We only have to solve the problems of the economy and all will be well. (1995: par. 1-2)

Bond's diagnosis of the conditions of the West is reminiscent of political scientist Francis Fukuyama's 'The End of History?' (1989), in which Fukuyama claims that the ideological death of Marxism-Leninism implies that the 'common marketization' of international relations would produce a new world wherein the ideological conflict would be replaced by 'economic calculation [...] and the satisfaction of sophisticated consumer demands' (18). Twenty years after Fukuyama's announcement of the end of history and the start of global marketization, cultural theorist Mark Fisher proposed

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<sup>5</sup> Amelia Howe Kritzer's *Political Theatre in Post-Thatcher Britain: New Writing: 1995-2005* (2008) completely bypasses Bond's work in this period although this book tackles issues that pervade Bond's later plays such as wars and terrorism. Julia Boll's *The New War Plays from Kane to Harris* (2013) only mentions in passing Bond's *Chair Plays* when she discusses the plays that deal with the camp. However, *The Paris Pentad* is ignored although it constitutes a much more complex response to the same crisis of the political-judicial structure of the modern state.

‘capitalist realism’ to designate ‘the widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but also that it is now impossible even to *imagine* a coherent alternative to it’ (2; original emphasis). For Fisher, Thatcher’s dictum that ‘there is no alternative’ turns out to be a self-fulfilling prophecy that establishes neoliberalism as the boundary of the thinkable order of the world (7). The naturalization of neoliberalism as an established fact instead of being one of many alternative values is the reason why Fisher regards it as ‘realistic’ (15). Fisher also contends that the appearance of the hegemonic order of neoliberalism secures the disengagement of politics since it seems impossible to envision an ideological alternative in a post-political era (Fisher and Gilbert 90).

Fisher’s ‘capitalist realism’ encapsulates the *Zeitgeist* experienced by the so-called ‘Thatcher’s children’, the term theatre critic Aleks Sierz uses to designate the ‘in-yer-face’ playwrights. Sierz points out that Thatcherite market economics is one of the targets attacked by in-yer-face theatre in the 1990s (237). Nevertheless, as Rebellato argues, people had already reacted against Thatcher in the 1980s (Aragay *et al.* 163). For example, although Bond’s apocalyptic *The War Plays* might seem irrelevant to domestic politics, his critique of the logic of late capitalism that reduces human beings into calculable entities and fails to create alternative values could be read as his response to Thatcherism. Another play that recognizably exemplifies Bond’s reaction to the social conditions that sustained the Conservative government is *The Worlds*, which incorporates discernable situations such as strikes and terrorist activities that contributed to Thatcher’s ascent to power (Spencer 185). In his notes on *The Worlds*, Bond states: ‘An unjust society, protected by law and order, will increase violence and antisocial behaviour within the community. It will also increase political violence against it, in the form of terrorism’ (Stuart 2001b: 117).

While Bond in *The Worlds* uses terrorism in order to expose the structural injustice of society governed by strong law and order, ten years later, in ‘Notes on Post-Modernism’ (1989), Bond analyzes the enduring ideological impacts of Thatcherism, especially market-oriented consumerism, within British society. He defines post-modern society as ‘a

society of wants' (1996: 24), and declares: 'It destroyed utopian vision and put consumption in its place. [...] What we have now are wants and markets. Utopia would be more wants' (29). In response to the exhaustion of utopian visions by consumerist ideology, Bond started to articulate the relationship between the subject's subjection to authority and the subject's capacity to interrogate the boundary defined by authority. By defining authority as the organizing force of society and the boundary as 'the source of meaning and value', Bond states that while 'authority claims to speak to and for the boundary', people still can use their capacity to 'interrogate the nature of the boundary' (1). While Bond tries to formulate a mechanism between authority and people in which the boundary of the thinkable can be interrogated and transformed, he continues to sketch a more complex picture of the system:

It is important that in its relation to the boundary authority uses the boundary to legitimize people's needs. Ultimately the legitimization depends on the need of the mind's over-capacity to interrogate. Authority's story tells why people are entitled to their needs, how having them is evidence of their humanness. People relate to their needs in accordance with the boundary's approval or condemnation of their needs. [...] Legitimizing authority cannot act arbitrarily; its story is defined by people's needs and the possibilities of technology and organisation. (3)

According to Bond, although authority defines and legitimizes the boundary of people's needs, this act is not by means an enforcement. On the contrary, the ideological narrative that authority uses to legitimize its legitimacy must comply with people's needs – however, what people seemingly need might have been determined by the boundary approved by authority. In the reciprocal interaction between authority and people, it is more and more difficult to point out who defines the boundary and how it is defined. Therefore, the mind's over-capacity should not be romanticized as what the mind desires might have been regulated by authority; also, authority should not be demonized as it might legitimize what people feel they really need.

Although Bond does not clarify concretely what 'authority' refers to,



his analysis of ideology can be seen as his response to Thatcherism. In ‘The Toad in the Garden: Thatcherism among Theorists’ (1988), cultural theorist Stuart Hall defines Thatcherism as a combination of neoliberal free-market ideology and traditional values of Toryism that transforms the former Keynesian ideologies (39). For Hall, the significance of Thatcherism resides in the way it filters through every level of society:

Where previously social need had begun to establish its own imperatives against the laws of market forces, now questions of “value for money,” the private right to dispose of one's own wealth, the equation between freedom and the free market, have become the terms of trade, not just of political debate in parliament, the press, the journals’, and policy circles, but *in the thought and language of everyday calculation*. (40; my emphasis)

As Hall maintains, the ideological power of Thatcherism was manifest in the way it transformed preceding ‘social need’ into the need defined by ‘the laws of market forces’. When this new ideology pervaded people’s thought and language, in Bond’s words, it delimited the boundary of the thinkable. Confronted with Thatcherism, Hall found that the traditional Marxist concept of false consciousness fails to account for the fact that the unemployed, even though they had awakened to the inconvenient consequences of Thatcher’s policies, did not turn to laborism or socialism (43). In order to account for the operation of Thatcherism, Hall proposes that it is necessary to combine the analysis of ideology and the production of the subject. Drawing on Louis Althusser’s theory of ideological interpellation, Hall states: ‘Thatcherism has been able to constitute new subject positions from which its discourses about the world make sense, or to appropriate to itself existing, already formed interpellations’ (49). In other words, the traditional Marxist category of the subject in terms of class consciousness is insufficient to account for the subject instituted by Thatcherism, which entails a more complex network of values by which the world is defined.

The affinity between Bond’s argument and Hall’s is obvious:

Thatcherism, as authority, operates legitimately either by producing subjects to whom the worldview defined by it is taken for granted or by reproducing existent values to continue to maintain its authority. It is in this context that we should understand Bond's concept of 'radical innocence', an idea that Bond proposes in order to account for the subject's potential to imagine an alternative world different from the one defined by existing authority. In a note entry dated 29 April 1987, Bond writes: 'Radical innocence is presumably [...] creativity? [...] So art recreates the neonate's confrontations – impulsed [*sic*] by radical innocence, now – but within the carapace of the economic-manipulating world' (Stuart 2001b: 270). It is important to note that, from the stage of its inception, the concept of 'radical innocence' has already been defined as creativity that confronts with the 'economic-manipulating world' – that is, Bond intends to react against the totalizing ideological network of neoliberalism by conceiving the mind's over-capacity as radical innocence, which can by no means be compromised with ideologized reality. Moreover, radical innocence is not merely a concept of subjectivity, but it is also a counter-hegemonic aesthetic sensibility.

In a revealing text, 'The Mark of Kane' (2010), Bond demonstrates the relationship between dramatic form and radical innocence through discussing Kane's *Blasted*. Bond regards *Blasted* as composed of two parts: the first part is 'sanitised, institutionalized, fictionalized and made normal,' while the second part discloses 'society's reality unsanitised' (2010: 216). Accordingly, for Bond, the structure demonstrates that *Blasted* 'is radical innocence talking directly to its corrupt society' (ibid). In Bond's theory, radical innocence is defined as the existential imperative to seek justice, and it is the most fundamental logic of the human psyche structured like drama. Therefore, in Bond's idiosyncratic interpretation, the structural rupture of *Blasted* is regarded as the psychic working of Kane's quest for justice: the first part, as the 'sanitised' and ideologized representation of corrupted society, is affronted by radical innocence and results in the 'unsanitised' second part that reveals the truth of how violence is permeated in contemporary society. The structural meaning of *Blasted* resides not only in

its revelatory power of social criticism but also in its expression of how the human psyche responds to outer reality dramatically. Only by situating dramatic form (aesthetics) in a mimetic relationship with the human psyche (subjectivity) can Bond's interpretation of *Blasted*, based on radical innocence, be understood.<sup>6</sup>

In Bond's later work, one of the sources for him to test the limits of humanity is the dystopian 'technomachia', an imagined systematically totalized world controlled by consumerist ideology and technological reason:

The Technomachia is faceless. Communities will be divided. People will live in rich ghettos or prisons, both as big as cities. They will be administered efficiently. The violence needed will pass as normal. [...] Fighting will be formalized into execution. The consumer economy has no structural need of justice and as long as it can administer crime efficiently society has no need of humanness. (2000b: 160)

Such a description of the world dominated by a severe system of administration is not only dystopian, but it is also a critique of contemporary consumer society, whose logic of administration, once radicalized, will turn out to be totalitarian. In the dystopia, the unequal power structure of politics and economics is so omnipotent that the individual has been completely incorporated into the structure of the market and any hope of revolution has been dissipated.

Another source of Bond's dystopian imagination in his later work originates from his experience during the Second World War and his understanding of the totalitarian state. By forcing his characters to face extreme situations and ethical dilemmas, Bond enters into a dialogue with nightmarish twentieth-century European history in the twilight of the Enlightenment. As I will argue in Chapter Three, in Bond's later work, the term 'Auschwitz' refers to a political-juridical structure defined by the state

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<sup>6</sup> I analyze the dramaturgical and theoretical affinities between Bond and Kane in more detail in 'The Hidden Dialogue between Sarah Kane and Edward Bond: The Dramaturgy of Accident Time and Ethical Subjectivities', which is collected in *After In-Yer-Face: Remnants of a Theatrical Revolution* (forthcoming), edited by William Boles.

of exception, wherein human beings are stripped of their political status and can be murdered as ‘bare life’.

It is not difficult to see why the dramaturgical logic of Bond’s later work has been dominated by the totalization of neoliberalism and the permanent state of the exception – these dystopian worldviews correspond to the two events that have determined the contemporary world order: the end of the Cold War and the beginning of the ‘War on Terror’. Bond’s sentiments regarding the new global order is consonant with what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri declare in *Empire* (2000): ‘Empire is materializing before our very eyes. [...] Along with the global market and global circuits of production has emerged a global order, a new logic and structure of rule – in short, a new form of sovereignty’ (2000: ix). According to Hardt and Negri, the new imperial sovereignty is composed of nations and supranational institutions (xii) – this new sovereignty realizes a capitalist project through which the process of globalization is not only an economic fact but a source of juridical order that endows empire with political power (9). One of the symptoms of the new imperial order, Hardt and Negri argue, is the emergence of the concept of ‘just war’ [*bellum justum*], which was invoked in the Gulf War to legitimize the conflict – the source of legitimacy originated from the ethical appeal and the effectiveness of the military force (12-13). In other words, the sovereign power of the new global order derives both from the reproduction of the neoliberal economic order and from its incessant arbitration of military conflicts. In *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (2004), Hardt and Negri clearly state that ‘[t]he world is at war again. [...] War is becoming a general phenomenon, global and interminable’ (2004: 3). For them, the September 11 attacks were not anomalous in the new global order (4) – the announcement of the ‘War on Terror’ only made explicit the general condition of the imperial order that has already been maintaining its power by exercising global police action and violence.

It is against this historical and theoretical backdrop that I want to reconsider two remarks in Bond’s article on Kane published in 1995: first, ‘In war we hope for peace. What do we hope in now?’ Bond’s question

betrays the ambivalence of contemporary warfare that not only transcends the territories of traditional political sovereign entities but also blurs the distinction between war and peace. Second, 'Communism is defeated. The West is triumphant. We do not need to ask how are we to be human.' For Bond, the ethical nature of the new global order can never be self-justified, although the imperial power keeps distributing and reproducing the values that could sustain the operation of the global Empire. Therefore, despite the fact that his later work remains underestimated, Bond is indeed our contemporary, who keeps reacting to contemporary crises through his dramaturgy and theory.

### **Literature Review**

Before Bond started to exile himself from British mainstream theatre in the mid 1980s, his plays attracted enormous scholarly attention. Since my thesis focuses on Bond's later work, I will selectively review four monographs that represent Bondian scholarship up to the 1990s: Malcolm Hay and Philip Roberts's *Edward Bond: A Study of His Plays* (1980), David L. Hirst's *Edward Bond* (1985), Jenny S. Spencer's *Dramatic Strategies in the Plays of Edward Bond* (1992), and Ian Stuart's *Politics in Performance: the Production Work of Edward Bond, 1978-1990* (1996).

In *Edward Bond: A Study of His Plays*, Hay and Roberts analyze chronologically Bond's plays from *The Pope's Wedding* (1962) to *The Bundle* (1979). They state that Bond's plays 'reflect a continual process of analyzing the nature of modern problems' (22), and they contextualize and analyze each of Bond's plays in great detail. Although their analysis is still pertinent in understanding Bond's early plays, they neither analyze how these plays were performed nor do they provide any critical framework to define the nature of Bond's plays. In comparison, Hirst's *Edward Bond* demonstrates a more critically engaged attempt to approach Bond. He argues that, through the use of paradox and exploration of various dramatic forms, Bond succeeds in developing his own epic theatre that can dramatize his analysis of ethical issues within broader social and political contexts.

Hirst also discusses how Bond's theatrical practices were influenced by Brecht and William Gaskill, the Artistic Director of the Royal Court from 1965-1972, who was renowned for his Brechtian approach to directing and directed the premieres of Bond's early plays. According to Hirst, Bond aimed to achieve the kind of acting that surpasses the limits of the psychology of the individual in order to address the problems of certain social and political circumstances. Hirst's two strands of research – Bond's engagement with dramaturgy and theatre – were later elaborated respectively by Spencer and Stuart.

In *Dramatic Strategies in the Plays of Edward Bond*, Spencer states that Bond's drama is post-Brechtian. She claims that using Brechtian strategies to understand Bond is insufficient since the diversity of Bond's devices requires a more sophisticated treatment. Therefore, she divides her book according to different dramatic strategies adopted by Bond (9-11). In comparison to Hay and Roberts's chronological study and Hirst's Brechtian reading, Spencer's critical calibre lies in her ability to deploy a variety of critical frames to demonstrate the complexity of dramatic form and the breadth of thematic concerns in Bond's plays. However, since Spencer's book was published in 1992, at the time when Bond just started to theorize his idea of radical innocence, her study does not provide an adequate analysis of Bond's later theory of subjectivity; neither does her study deal with how Bond's plays were performed.

The first book that focuses on Bond's theatrical practice is Ian Stuart's *Politics in Performance: the Production Work of Edward Bond, 1978-1990*, in which Stuart examines Bond's directorial involvement in six productions – *The Woman* (National Theatre, 1978), *The Worlds* (Newcastle and Royal Court, 1979), *Restoration* (Royal Court, 1981), *Summer* (National Theatre, 1982), *The War Plays* (RSC, 1985), and *Jackets* (Lancaster and Bush Theatre, 1989/90).<sup>7</sup> Stuart concludes that, according to Bond's theory of

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<sup>7</sup> Bond's first directorial debut was in 1973, when he directed *Lear* at the Burgtheatre in Vienna, but he did not regard it as a positive experience (Stuart 1996b: 9). His first British directorial debut was in 1978, when he directed *The Woman* on the Olivier stage at the National Theatre. From then on, Bond continued to direct his own plays, including *The Worlds* at the Royal Court in 1979, *Restoration* at the Royal Court in 1981, *Summer* at the National Theatre in 1982, and the RSC production of *In the Company of Men* at the Pit in

acting, '[t]he actor must apply his concept or interpretation of the dramatic situation to the emotion. It is this concept or interpretation which must be acted out and not the emotion of the character' (1996b: 171). Although Stuart's study provides invaluable reconstruction of Bond's early productions, he seems to take Bond's criticism of Stanislavsky and Brecht for granted and appropriates Bond's own vocabulary without critical engagement. In addition, Bond's recent development of his theory of subjectivity and dramaturgy also complicates his theory of acting. In Chapter Six, I will address Bond's theory of acting both in a broader context of modern theatre and in the context of his theoretical and dramaturgical development.

Peter Billingham's *Edward Bond: A Critical Study* (2013) is the only monograph in the new millennium dedicated to Bond's recent work. According to Billingham, the aim of the study is to investigate and interrogate Bond's new political drama that centers around the problem of defining humanness (17). Billingham observes that, from the 1970s to the mid 1980s, Bond's dramaturgy embodied Marxist understandings of social and economic structures, whereas, from the 1990s, Bond started to explore the role of imagination partly through Immanuel Kant's philosophy. He states that it is through the paradoxical tension between Marxist materialism and Kant's transcendentalism that Bond is able to outline his theory and dramaturgy as that which constructs a space for the interrogation of radical innocence and material reality (34). Although Billingham intends to focus on Bond's later dramaturgical and theoretical development, the first half of the book is devoted to analyzing Bond's early plays. In the rest of the book, Billingham analyzes Bond's later plays more descriptively than analytically. In addition, in spite of the fact that Billingham spasmodically incorporates Bond's theoretical terms into his analysis, it remains obscure how Bond has developed his new theory and how Bond's theory has influenced his dramaturgy.

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1996. It should be noted that he assisted directing the RSC production of *The War Plays* in 1985. In the new millennium, he has directed *The Fool* at the Cock Tavern in 2010; *Chair* and *The Under Room* at the Lyric Hammersmith in 2012; and, in 2016, he directed *Dea* at Sutton Theatre.

In *The Politics and Poetics of Contemporary English Tragedy* (2013), Sean Carney includes Bond's plays in his broader project of analyzing the idea of the tragic in contemporary English political plays. Like Billingham, Carney observes that Bond's dramaturgy underwent a decisive shift that sets apart his early and later plays, and he locates this shift in the context of the election of Thatcher in 1979. He argues that, from then, Bond started complex theorization, initiated self-exile from British mainstream theatre, and abandoned realism in favor of poetic formalism (145).<sup>8</sup> Compared to Billingham, Carney's use of tragedy as a critical lens to examine Bond's plays, especially his later ones, yields more insights. Drawing on Bond's theory of subjectivity, Carney states that Bond's tragedy 'replicates the childhood encounter with nothingness and dramatizes the radical innocent's tragic interrogation of the boundary' (158). He further observes that Bond's socialist tragedy is 'an assertion of the contours of the core self, the tragic human, within late capitalist postmodernity' (174). These statements accurately capture the relationship between Bond's tragedy and his theory of radical innocence. However, Carney also tends to directly apply Bond's own vocabulary to examine his plays without problematizing Bond's theoretical idiom.

A more critical engagement with Bond can be found in Karoline Gritzner's *Adorno and Modern Theatre: The Drama of the Damaged Self in Bond, Rudkin, Barker and Kane* (2015), in which she scrutinizes Bond's drama through Theodor W. Adorno's philosophy of subjectivity and aesthetics. Gritzner begins her analysis by stating that, while Bond's dramaturgy of presenting liberated subjectivity resonates with Adorno's

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<sup>8</sup> I have reservations about Carney's observation. Although Thatcherism exerted a great impact on Bond's dramaturgy and theory, it may be a simplification to attribute Bond's dramaturgical and theoretical shift only to the election of Thatcher. First, while Bond's 'Note on Post-Modernism' (1989) is one of his major theoretical writings on late capitalist consumerism, 'Commentary on *The War Plays*' is a reflection on human nature and the role of theatre based on Bond's experience of the Second World War and the Cold War. Second, regarding Bond's relationship with British mainstream theatre, he almost parted company with the Royal Court after 1975 (Mangan 32), and he left the RSC's rehearsal of *The War Plays* in 1985 mainly because of his disagreement with the nature of the company's acting and his frustration with the management of the actors' workload (Stuart 1996b: 138). Third, 'poetic formalism' is a rather obscure, if not inaccurate, term in defining Bond's later plays, especially when we take into account some of his TIE plays that resemble his early realist dramaturgy such as *A Window*, *Edge*, and *Tune*.



conception of art as a medium to express the autonomy of the subject, Bond's theatre ultimately relies on the reason of the Enlightenment, which is critiqued by Adorno (2015: 46). However, Gritzner also notes that Bond's recent work reveals 'a sense of openness to the unpredictable', which challenges Bond's emphasis on rational understanding in his previous work (82). Gritzner relates this feature of openness to the metaphor of Auschwitz in Bond's later plays in which the individual's struggle against the oppressive totality is articulated through formal innovations, and she states that Bond's presentation of non-totalizable radical innocence is his response to the problem of representation after Auschwitz (83-85). Overall, Gritzner's argument remains ambiguous as to whether Bond's dramaturgy reflects his Marxist humanism that upholds the power of reason or Adorno's aesthetics of negativity that is critical of rationality. As Gritzner indicates, the dramaturgical shift in Bond's recent plays makes it difficult to see these plays as propelled by a rational Marxist-humanist vision although Bond never discards his Marxist-humanist sentiments. Contrary to Gritzner's statement that this recent shift 'weakens' Bond's insistence on the power of rationality, I will argue that this dramaturgical shift demonstrates a necessary continuation of Bond's theoretical exploration that posits the role of reason in a more complex structure of subjectivity. Considering Bond's new conception of subjectivity based on his reflections on the Holocaust, the way he incorporates his theory of subjectivity into his dramaturgy, and his conscious dismissal of Beckett, I agree with Gritzner that Adorno's theory can be fruitful in evaluating the significance of Bond's recent work and theory.

Another study that examines the relationship between dramaturgy and Auschwitz is Élisabeth Angel-Perez's *Voyages au Bout du Possible: Les Théâtres du Traumatisme de Samuel Beckett à Sarah Kane* (2006). Angel-Perez bases her analysis of British contemporary 'post-Auschwitz' drama on the idea of Auschwitz as traumatism instead of a historical event, and she states clearly that what interests her is 'the decontextualization of Auschwitz' that endows the works with 'transgression, constraint and novelty' (2006: 16). For her, the task of post-Auschwitz drama is both to

find a new dramatic language that exposes the dehumanizing horror and to use Auschwitz as a parable to remember the atrocities in our recent history (20). Angel-Perez's research covers Bond's *The War Plays* and *At the Inland Sea*. Although both Gritzner and Angel-Perez point out that the chronotope of 'after Auschwitz' is indispensable in understanding Bond's later work, how this chronotope operates requires further examination.

In addition to Auschwitz, the prominence of the war as a dramatic trope in Bond's work also aroused the attention of scholars. In David Lescot's *Dramaturgies de la Guerre* (2001), he analyzes Bond's *The War Plays* and *Coffee* as exemplary of plays that, instead of representing 'the action of war' on stage, engage with 'the state of war' to critically reflect and scrutinize broader social and political circumstances entailed in war. Lescot's study keenly captures the configuration of the state of war as the essential driving force of Bond's later dramaturgy. According to Lescot, Bond's dramaturgy of war exemplifies his critique of liberalism, in which economic activity and the process of production are intrinsically dominated by the principle of war (230). However, since his study was published in 2001, the same year as the September 11 attacks, Lescot does not examine how Bond's later plays respond to the 'War on Terror'. In Julia Boll's *The New War Plays from Kane to Harris* (2013), despite the fact that she only mentions briefly that Bond's *The Chair Plays* (*Chair*, *Have I None*, and *The Under Room*) illustrate a dystopian future when the camp becomes the political space in which the state of exception is already normalized (76), her inclusion of Bond's later plays within the post-Cold War ideological contexts represented by the New World Order and the 'War on Terror' deserves further inquiry.<sup>9</sup>

## **Methodology**

Considering that Bond's early plays have been thoroughly discussed by

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<sup>9</sup> For my analysis of Bond's *The Chair Plays*, see 'Edward Bond's Dramaturgy of Crisis in *The Chair Plays*: The Dystopian Imagination and the Imagination in Dystopia' (2016) in *Platform* 10:2: 32-50.

scholars, I focus my research on the theory, dramaturgy, and theatre practice of the later Bond, the area that has been comparatively neglected. As Jenny Spencer points out, to theorize Bond's dramatic practice requires a method that neither bypasses Bond's theory nor takes it for granted, and she states that Bond's plays themselves are richer than his theory (3). Although Spencer suggests that it is impossible to ignore Bond's theory, instead of providing a detailed account of Bond's theory, she focuses on analyzing Bond's dramatic strategies. Since Bond only began to articulate his theory of subjectivity when Spencer made her observation in the early 1990s, Spencer could not foresee the complexity and significance of Bond's subsequent theoretical writings. Hence, given the fact that Bond's later dramaturgy is deeply permeated by his theory of subjectivity, it is vital to explicate the interdependent relationship of Bond's later theory to his dramaturgy.

However, I need to unravel some intricacies of explicating Bond's theory of subjectivity. First, in his early writings, Bond already articulated his conception of the self, especially how the self is related to violence and society. The particularity of his later theory resides in the fact that he consistently uses self-coined terms such as 'neonate' and 'radical innocence' to construct a comprehensive discourse. Second, while Bond never explicitly states the chronological trajectory of his theoretical development, it is obvious that he is concerned with different aspects of subjectivity in different periods. Therefore, in order to understand the hidden logic of this theory, it is necessary to attend to the chronological order of Bond's theoretical writings. Third, Bond does not reveal his entire theory in any specific writing; therefore, it is usually necessary to draw on several writings written during the same period of time for clarification. Finally, in addition to explicating Bond's theory, I need to point out the contradictions and problems in it. In order to do this, my approach is two-fold: I will reveal the hidden conceptual sources drawn on by Bond and situate Bond's theory within the context of theorizing post-Auschwitz subjectivity. Granted that subjectivity is a highly-contested concept in contemporary European philosophy and may bear different meanings in different philosophers'

theories, there are many possible frameworks to contextualize Bond's theory. Nevertheless, I choose to underscore Bond's theory as his response to the problem of post-Auschwitz subjectivity in relation to the theories of Adorno and Emmanuel Levinas because I will argue that this contextualization can best bring out the intricate relations of the theory of subjectivity to ethics and aesthetics in Bond's later writings.

Instead of analyzing his later plays according to chronology, thematic concerns, or dramatic strategies, I divide my analysis into three parts: Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy, the structure of Bondian trauma-tragedy, and the ethics in Bond's TIE plays. Since Bond articulates his theory of subjectivity as his response to Auschwitz, it is important to evaluate if and how his theory is incorporated with and demonstrated through his dramaturgy. Moreover, since Bond's later plays are not limited to representing Auschwitz but are more concerned with a new contemporary form of tragedy, I will analyze Bond's exploration of contemporary tragedy through the concepts of the Tragic and trauma in his theory of subjectivity.

Regarding Bond's TIE plays, I will analyze the ethical implications of these plays through Bond's theory of subjectivity and his post-Auschwitz dramaturgy. Although I am aware that these plays could also be studied in the context of Theatre in Education in Britain, the approach of applied theatre, which may require completely different methods such as practice-based research, fieldwork and participatory observation in schools, is beyond the purpose and scope of this thesis.<sup>10</sup> It is also notable that,

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<sup>10</sup> I visited Big Brum's office in Birmingham in February 2015. Dan Brown provided me with unpublished documents and allowing me access to their archives. I also conducted an interview with Chris Cooper about Bond's dramaturgy and theory. Although these materials, due to the reason I stated above, cannot be included in the thesis, they give me invaluable insight into how Big Brum uses Bond's TIE plays in their TIE programmes. For research on Bond's TIE plays and theory in the context of Theatre in Education, see the essays collected in *Edward Bond and the Dramatic Child: Edward Bond's Plays for Young People* (2005), edited by David Davis. Davis also discusses Bondian drama as a new form of Drama in Education in *Imaging the Real: Towards a New Theory of Drama in Education* (2014). Roger Wooster situates Big Brum in the context of British TIE history and discusses Bond's latest TIE play, *The Angry Road* (2015), in *Theatre in Education in Britain: Origins, Development and Influence* (2016). Helen Nicholson's *Theatre & Education* (2009) discusses Bond's viewpoints on education and situates his TIE plays in a wider context of Theatre in Education. For book chapters on Bond and TIE, see Chris Cooper's 'The Imagination in Action' (2013a) and 'Performer in TIE' (2013b). *Journal for Drama in Education* Vol. 20, Issue 2 is a special issue dedicated to Bond. For other journal articles, see Helen Nicholson's 'Acting, Creativity and Social Justice in Edward Bond's

although Bond has been writing TIE plays for Big Brum, he does not participate in designing TIE programmes based on his plays. In addition, his TIE plays are not only intended to be used for TIE but can also be staged for public performance in theatre. In other words, since Bond never conceives his TIE plays as solely being part of TIE programmes, it is possible to analyze these plays independently of the practical context of Theatre in Education. However, since Bond conceives these plays for the purpose of education, I will define Bond's TIE plays as new learning plays after Auschwitz that respond to Adorno's ideas on post-Auschwitz education.

In addition to analyzing Bond's theory and dramaturgy, I will also analyze performances of Bond's plays by drawing on archival materials and my live theatrical experiences. Although my research focuses on the later Bond, it is impossible to understand the later Bond without comprehending the early Bond. In addition to relying on existing published materials, I visited archives to familiarize myself with Bond's early theatrical involvements. The English Stage Company/Royal Court Theatre Archive held at the V&A Theatre and Performance Collections in London includes documents, correspondence, and photographs related to the productions of Bond's plays from *The Pope's Wedding* (1962) to *Restoration* (1981) at the Royal Court. William Gaskill's documents archived at the University of Leeds Special Collections in Leeds is informative about Gaskill's early cooperation with Bond and his reception of Brecht. The productions of *The Woman* (1978) and *Summer* (1982), both of which were directed by Bond, are archived at the National Theatre Archive in London and are valuable for assessing Bond's directorial practice. I also consulted archival materials of the RSC productions of *Bingo* (1976), *The Bundle* (1978), *The Fool* (1981), *Lear* (1982), *The War Plays* (1985), *Restoration* (1988), and *In the Company of Men* (1996), held by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon, and the television recordings of *Bingo* (1990) and *Tuesday* (1993), archived at the BFI National Archive in London. While I may not directly refer to these early materials in my thesis, they have

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*The Children*' (2003), and David Allen's "Going to the Centre": Edward Bond's *The Children*' (2007).

consolidated and enriched my understanding of Bond's theatre. In fact, considering that Bond always conceives his plays based on concrete theatrical images and that part of his theory revolves around *mise-en-scène*, performance, and spectatorship in theatre, these archival materials provide invaluable information about Bond's early theatre practice in relation to his dramaturgy and theory.

I also consulted some more recent video recordings that are directly related to my thesis. These include: Françon's *The War Plays* (l'Odéon, 1995), *Coffee* (la Colline, 2000), *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* (la Colline, 2001), and *Have I None* (la Colline, 2003), archived by Ina THEQUE; Françon's *Born* (2006) and *Chair* (2006), archived at the Theatre de la Colline in Paris; the RSC's *The Great Peace* (1985) and *In the Company of Men* (1996), held at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust; Sean Holmes's *Saved* (Lyric Hammersmith, 2011) and Jonathan Kent's *The Sea* (Royal Haymarket, 2008), archived at the V&A's National Video Archive of Performance; and Chris Cooper's *The Under Room* (2005), *The Edge* (2011), and *The Broken Bowl* (2012), archived by Big Brum in Birmingham. Although these recordings are useful for reconstructing the past performances, they can never replace live experiences. My reflections on Bond's theory of theatre will draw on both these recordings and my experiences of attending Big Brum's production of *The Angry Roads* at mac in Birmingham in 2015 and *Dea*, directed by Bond at Sutton Theatre in 2016. Although my performance analysis is primarily based on my experience as a spectator, in order to consolidate my analysis, I will also draw on press reviews, interviews, and other production documentation.

## **Thesis Overview**

One of the premises of this thesis is that 'Commentary on *The War Plays*' marks a watershed in both Bond's theory and dramaturgy. In this commentary, Bond proposes two essential ideas that will define his later theory, dramaturgy, and theatre practice: radical innocence and the Theatre Event. The aim of this thesis is to trace how Bond starts with the ideas

conceived in this commentary to develop his theory of subjectivity, a new form of contemporary tragedy, and a new approach to staging. However, this does not mean that this watershed is a complete break from his early work – rather, in order to fruitfully engage with his later theory and dramaturgy, it is important to point out the continuity and discontinuity between the early Bond and the later Bond.

Therefore, in Chapter One, ‘Towards the Later Bond’, I provide a narrative to bridge these two phases by analyzing Bond’s relationship with Brecht and Bond’s dramaturgy of the Holocaust. Given the fact that Bond is usually considered to be one of the British playwrights influenced by Brecht, it may seem curious that he harshly criticizes Brecht’s alienation effects – which emphasize the role of reason over that of affect – as the ‘Theatre of Auschwitz’ in his later writings.<sup>11</sup> More intriguingly, Bond explicitly bases his later dramaturgy on his reflections on the problem of ‘Auschwitz’ – a chronotope that, instead of referring to any specific historical event, denotes a general political-juridical structure in which the human subject is confronted with extreme ethical difficulties. Moreover, Bond associates the ethos of Auschwitz with that of neoliberal capitalism – a theoretical stipulation characteristic of the Frankfurt School. In other words, Bond’s criticism of Brecht is not arbitrary, but it can be logically deduced from his later theory in which he regards the role of reason as instrumental and ideologically corrupt, a concept that is also reminiscent of the Frankfurt School’s critique of Enlightenment rationality. To balance the role of reason as a human faculty, Bond proposes imagination as another faculty essential for the human subject to create ‘humanity’. Parallel to the shift of Bond’s critical engagement with Brecht is his evolving dramaturgy of the Holocaust – that is, the framework through which the Holocaust is represented is determined by how the relationship between self and society is defined. Bond’s evolving dramaturgy of the Holocaust reflects how he changes his conception of the subject. Therefore, I will bring into focus Bond’s theory

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<sup>11</sup> Both Janelle Reinelt’s *After Brecht: British Epic Theatre* (1996) and Michael Patterson’s *Strategies of Political Theatre: Post-War British Playwrights* (2003) include Bond as an example to demonstrate Brecht’s influence on post-war British playwriting. Hirst’s and Spencer’s monographs also discuss Brecht’s influence on Bond.

of subjectivity and its relation to ethics and dramaturgy by situating the later Bond in the context of post-Auschwitz ethics and aesthetics. I will also foreground the biopolitical implication of Bond's conception of the subject in his later theory and dramaturgy.

Based on the contextualization in Chapter One, in Chapter Two, 'Understanding Humanness: Theorizing and Dramatizing Subjectivity', I will explore Bond's theory of subjectivity in more detail. In fact, Bond's theorization of subjectivity is intertwined with his conception of post-Auschwitz dramaturgy, the subject of the next chapter. In order to facilitate my use of Bond's theoretical terms, first I need to analyze Bond's theory of subjectivity and critically contextualize my deployment of it. My analysis starts with Bond's articulation of radical innocence in 'Commentary on *The War Plays*' and how radical innocence is related to the concept of justice. In Bond's subsequent writings, he complicates his theory of subjectivity by conceiving two models: the developmental model and the structural model. While the developmental model consists of three phases of the development of the subject – the neonate, the core self, and the socialized self – the structural model emphasizes that the subject is determined by the interaction between reason and imagination. Bond's two models are conceived to understand how the subject is formed within a broader social-political-economic structure and the possible agency of the subject within the structure. I will demonstrate that Bond's theory derives from Kant and Sigmund Freud, and then I will examine this model in the context of theorizing post-Auschwitz subjectivity by drawing on Adorno and Levinas to problematize Bond's theory of the subject. Finally, I will analyze *Have I None* (2000) and *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* (2001) to demonstrate how Bond's theory of subjectivity, wherein there may be self-contradiction, is incorporated in his dramaturgy.

Following the explication of Bond's theory of subjectivity, in Chapter Three, 'Aesthetics and Ethics in Bond's Post-Auschwitz Dramaturgy', I will demonstrate that the Palermo improvisation, the improvisation conducive to the concept of radical innocence, is also a dramaturgical unit. I will analyze the significance of the Palermo improvisation as the dramaturgical



prototype of Bond's later work by drawing on Adorno's and Levinas's theories of aesthetics and ethics. By bringing their theories and Bond's drama into a critical dialogue, I will advance a tentative Adornian-Levinasian model to understand Bond's post-Auschwitz representation. Based on this model, I will discuss Bond's *Coffee* and *Born*, both of which represent the Holocaust based on his unique conception of human subjectivity.

Continuing my discussion of Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy, in Chapter Four, 'The Structure of Bondian Trauma-Tragedy: Justice, Truth, and Madness', I aim to explore how his theory of subjectivity is realized in his tragedy through the concept of trauma. Although Bond asserts that drama must start from Auschwitz, in his later plays he by no means addresses the problem of Auschwitz explicitly in every play. Instead, tragedy is a more appropriate term to describe his later plays. Bond's tragedy is based on his concepts of 'the Tragic' and trauma articulated in his theory of subjectivity as well as on his reconfiguration of archetypal characters such as Antigone, Oedipus and Medea. In answering how this dramaturgy responds to the problems of the contemporary world, I will analyze *Chair* (2000), *People* (2005), and *Dea* (2016) to demonstrate how Bond's theory of subjectivity is structurally related to his dramaturgy of trauma-tragedy, which revolves around the problems of justice, truth and madness.

In Chapter Five, 'Approaching Otherness: Storyability, Spectrality, and Hospitality in Bond's TIE Plays', I will investigate how Bond's theory of subjectivity is incorporated within the dramaturgy of his TIE plays. As I mentioned previously, Bond does not dramaturgically differentiate his TIE plays from other plays – in fact, they usually share similar traits in terms of dramaturgy and thematic concerns. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that Bond has in mind his young audiences when he writes his TIE plays. Therefore, in order to address the aspect of education in these plays, and to bring into focus the relationship between Auschwitz and education, I will define Bond's TIE plays as new learning plays after Auschwitz that are responsive to Adorno's ideas on education and autonomy after Auschwitz. In particular,

I will focus on how the ethical concern for the other as a specific mode of teaching and learning operates in Bond's TIE plays by interrogating storyability, spectrality, and hospitality – three interrelated concepts that are conducive to addressing the problem of otherness. This chapter examines the TIE plays that exemplify Bond's dramaturgy of otherness: *At the Inland Sea* (1995), *The Under Room* (2005), *A Window* (2009), *The Hungry Bowl* (2012), *The Edge* (2012), and *The Angry Roads* (2014).

While the preceding chapters revolve around Bond's theory and dramaturgy, in the final chapter, Chapter Six, 'Theatre Event: Performing Subjectivities', I will explicate Bond's concepts of subjectivity and the Theatre Event as concepts applicable to theatrical practice by analyzing how Bond's later plays have been performed. First, I will explicate Bond's theory of theatre by analyzing ideas such as 'Theatre Event' and 'accident time'. Second, I will clarify the ethics of spectatorship in Bond's theatre – based on my spectating experience, I will reflect on how Bond's dramaturgy of paradox invites the spectator to engage with ethical problems without giving definite answers. Moreover, since this ethics of spectatorship is decided not only by Bond's dramaturgy but also by directorial choices and the actor's approach to performance, the third aim of my performance analysis is to examine how concrete performances are involved in the production of the ethical dimensions of Bond's theatre.

## Chapter One

### Towards the Later Bond

In order to understand the continuity and discontinuity between the early Bond and the later Bond, re-examining Bond's engagement and disagreement with Brecht is a suitable point of departure. In fact, in defending Bond's new political aesthetic, Kate Katafiasz bases her argument on differentiating the later Bond from Brecht and argues that the later Bond is not well understood. While Katafiasz acknowledges that parallels between Bond and Brecht exist, and that Bond's criticism of Brecht may be based on misunderstanding, she argues that Bond's radical shift away from Brechtian aesthetics resides in 'understanding our own unconscious impulses in a personal confrontation between experience and consciousness' rather than relying on any existing standards of judgment (250).<sup>12</sup> Although I agree that the later Bond is different from Brecht in terms of theory and dramaturgy, I will argue that it is equally important to clarify Brecht's influences on Bond and Bond's misunderstanding of Brecht. In addition, I also find Katafiasz's description of the later Bond could be nuanced further – it is questionable whether Bond's later theory of subjectivity can be defined by terms such as 'unconscious impulses' and 'personal confrontation'. Although Bond is influenced by Freud's theory, he never explicitly uses the concept of the unconscious; instead, he focuses on the roles of consciousness and self-consciousness in shaping human subjectivity. When he uses the term 'the unconscious', this concept is related to the process of how the unconscious is incorporated into consciousness. Furthermore, since 'personal' implies the concept of 'personhood' or 'the individual', it may not be the most accurate term in describing Bond's post-Auschwitz theory of subjectivity, which emphasizes how the constant confrontation between the inner potential of the self and

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<sup>12</sup> Katafiasz's article, 'Quarrelling with Brecht: Understanding Bond's Post-Structuralist Political Aesthetic' (2008), is mainly a critical response to David Allen's "'Going to the Centre": Edward Bond's *The Children*' (2007) and 'Between Brecht and Bond' (2005). It is apparent that critical attempts to align Bond and Brecht or differentiate them still constitute a major strand of Bondian scholarship.

the ideologized world is a constituting force that keeps transforming the self and the world.

Moreover, whereas Katafiasz regards Bond's relationship with Brecht as a 'quarrel', I will argue that Bond's criticism of Brecht's theatre as the 'Theatre of Auschwitz' is a misjudgment. By 'Theatre of Auschwitz', Bond means that Brecht's theatre is dominated by rationality and therefore duplicates the similar logic of instrumental rationality in operation in the Holocaust. However, this interpretation of Brecht is highly simplified and incorrect. In Brecht's early writings on epic theatre, especially in 'Notes on the Opera *Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*' (1930), in order to make a contrast with dramatic theatre, he adopted a simplified and usually misunderstood dichotomy between feeling and rationality to foreground the distinct features of acting in epic theatre. From the late 1930s, however, Brecht started to revise his theory and treat emotions in a dialectical relation with rationality. For example, in 'Short Description of a New Technique of Acting That Produces a *Verfremdung* Effect' (1940), Brecht states:

[T]he technique producing a V-effect is the exact opposite of that aiming at empathy. The actors applying it are bound not to try to bring about the empathy operation. Yet in their efforts to reproduce particular characters and show their behaviour, the actors need not renounce the means of empathy entirely. (2015: 184)

Also, in a conversation with Friedrich Wolf in 1949, faced with Wolf's question about the role of emotions in theatre, Brecht remarked that epic theatre 'by no means renounces emotions [...]. The "critical attitude" that it tries to awaken in its audience cannot be passionate enough for it' (264). In other words, except some of his early writings, Brecht never excludes the existence of feelings and emotions in his theatre. Instead, what he resists is 'the double identification of spectator with actor and actor with role' (Gordon 231). In Brecht's theatre, the interruption of this 'double identification' does not exclude emotions but places emotions under the critical judgment of the actor and the spectator. In this regard, Bond's theatre that emphasizes the combination of imagination and reason is not

theoretically different from Brecht's.

Moreover, not only theoretically, but also practically it is impossible to regard Brecht's theatre as devoid of emotions – especially when we consider the emotional power aroused by his 1949 production of *Mother Courage and Her Children* that was played before German audiences who had just experienced the atrocities of war.<sup>13</sup> In addition, as John Fuegi's study of Brecht's productions demonstrates, although various techniques of *Verfremdung* may be deployed in rehearsals, they may possibly be invisible once the play is mounted on stage (146). We should therefore be cautious about the gap between Brecht's theory and practice since some of the acting exercises may only be used during rehearsals to help actors to gain objective and critical distance towards a play.

Although I regard Bond's criticism of Brecht as a misjudgment, a clarification of Bond's relationship with Brecht can still be fruitful in delineating how Bond moves towards his later stage of dramaturgy and theory. In fact, the importance of Bond's critical engagement with Brecht resides in the fact that it demonstrates Bond's changing view of human nature and its relation to dramaturgy. In the following, I will first explicate Bond's relationship to Brecht, and then I will analyze Bond's evolving dramaturgy of the Holocaust. Since Bond's disagreement with Brecht originates from his understanding of the Holocaust, instead of relying on Bond's simplified criticism of Brecht, it is more productive to analyze how Bond dramatizes the Holocaust. Based on this analysis, I will proceed to place this dramaturgy in the intersection of post-Auschwitz theories of subjectivity, ethics, and aesthetics by drawing on Adorno and Levinas. I conclude this chapter by incorporating these strands of analysis and proposing that Bond's later theatre is based on his understanding of Auschwitz, rather than as a singular historical event, as an exemplary structure of biopolitics, manifested as the camp and neoliberal capitalist system.

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<sup>13</sup> For a detailed account of this production and its reception, see John Fuegi's *Bertolt Brecht: Chaos, According to Plan* (1987: 110-31).

## 1.1. Bond and Brecht

In order to understand Bond's relationship to Brecht, I will argue that, since this relationship is a dynamically evolving process, it is more appropriate to adopt a genealogical approach that traces the trajectory of this dynamism instead of trying to present a static description. Bond's first detailed account of his Brechtian influence is 'On Brecht: a Letter to Peter Holland' (1972), in which he acknowledges his indebtedness to Brecht. Nevertheless, 38 years later, in 'Letter on Brecht' (2000), he unrelentingly denounces Brecht's theatre as the 'Theatre of Auschwitz' (2000b: 171). To fully understand why Bond changed his attitude towards Brecht in such a drastic manner, I will start with the analysis of his 1972 letter.

This is how Bond ends the letter: 'Brecht's contribution to the creation of a marxist theatre is enormous and lasting, but the work is not yet finished' (1972: 35). Bond indicates that he and Brecht share a common theatrical project of constructing a 'Marxist' theatre, and he considers his drama as the continuation of this project. For Bond, a 'Marxist' theatre approaches and represents reality through the lens of the social instead of the individual. He disagreed with one of the actors in *Saved* who remarked that his character is a nice person who could never commit murder since he thought this remark suggests that 'no nice guys fought for Hitler or helped to run Auschwitz' (ibid.). Bond is aware of the fact that, in order to represent the structural causes of historical events such as Auschwitz, psychological realism is insufficient because this type of theatre tends to focus on the psychology of the individual instead of foregrounding social structures. It is Brecht's epic theatre that Bond regards as the appropriate dramaturgy to account for how the individual is determined and structured socially. Despite his acknowledgment of the strength of epic theatre, Bond questions the effectiveness of *Verfremdung* and proposes 'aggro-effects' as a more efficient device to commit the audience (34).

Regarding aggro-effects, Bond states: 'In contrast to Brecht, I think it is necessary to disturb an audience emotionally [...], so I've had to find ways of making that "aggro-effect" more complete' (Bond and Innes 113).

The use of ‘aggro-effects’, which Bond defines as a dramatic device to disturb audiences emotionally, is a means to dramatize the symptoms of the inherent violence of a suppressing society. In ‘Author’s Note: On Violence’ (1977), Bond proposes that ‘[v]iolence is not a function of human nature but of human societies’ (1977: 17). By ‘function’, Bond refers both to the violence used by the ruling class to maintain the unjust structure of society and to the violence used by the oppressed in resistance to structural inequality. By defining violence sociologically instead of biologically, Bond dismisses the idea that human beings are innately violent, an idea that he regards as the excuse of authorities to construct law and order to perpetuate the status quo. Bond thus defines human nature: ‘Human nature is not fixed at birth, it is created through our relation to the culture of our society’ (12). In this regard, the teenagers stoning a baby to death in *Saved* are not intrinsically aggressive. Their crime is only symptomatic of an indifferent society, and their aggression is the result of their interaction with the culture that imposes structural violence on the oppressed.

Bond’s conception of ‘human nature’ at this early stage is also illustrated in his ‘Author’s Preface’ to *Lear* (1972), in which he relates the concept of justice to that of human nature: ‘Justice is allowing people to live in the way for which they evolve. Human beings have an emotional and physical need to do so, it is their *biological expectation*’ (1978: 10; my emphasis). He also states that ‘[a]ny organization which denies the basic need for *biological justice* must become aggressive’ (9; my emphasis). The connotations of terms such as ‘biological expectation’ and ‘biological justice’ seem at odds with Bond’s suggestion that aggression should be understood sociologically instead of biologically, and this explains why he later coined the term ‘radical innocence’ to evade explicit biological connotations. Furthermore, Bond’s initial conception of human nature, defined as ‘biological expectation’ to seek ‘biological justice’, explains the violence erupting out of ‘an unidentified discontent’ (Bond 1977: 15) in *Saved*. It should be noted, therefore, that Bond’s use of ‘aggro-effects’ is a device to theatricalize his conception of human nature, the biological undertones of which correspond to ‘environmental determinism’ (Lacey 149)

as the underlying dramaturgical logic.

Bond's use of violence was the first of his attempts to construct a theatrical theory different from Brecht's. In opposition to Brecht's analysis demonstrated by the V-effect, Bond argues that his use of 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' (ibid.; my emphasis). As Michael Patterson observes, the disconcerting power of the baby-stoning scene mainly derives from the way the violence is presented as if it is only a game out of control (412). Without making any comments or even condemnation, Bond's dramaturgical strategy is to reveal the violence as a symptom of the indifference permeating society in an objective manner so as to make audiences 'search for reasons' behind the violence. Hubert Zapf also correctly points out that, in contrast to Brecht's depiction of class inequality in the personalized form of the exploiter and the exploited, Bond's symptomatic representation of violence which originates from increasing impersonality and rationalization reflects the phenomenon of alienation in contemporary Western society in a more accurate manner (356).

From the mid-1970s, contrary to the expectation that Bond might develop from the device of aggro-effects a new post-Brechtian theory of theatre, his theory turned out to be more and more influenced by Brecht and Karl Marx. One of the most important pivotal points around which Brecht and Bond think about theatre is the relationship between human nature and society. For Brecht, '[t]he human essence is, as the classics put it, the ensemble of all societal relations of all times' (2014: 92). The 'classics' refers to Marx's 'Theses on Feuerbach' (1845), in which he states that 'the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of the social relations' (172). In *German Ideology* (1846), Marx and Friedrich Engels continue this strand of thinking by declaring that 'men, developing their material production and their material intercourse, alter, along with this their real existence, their thinking and the products of their thinking' (Marx 180-1). Therefore, for Marx and Engels, it is the development of material production that determines human consciousness. If the transformation of consciousness presupposes the



alteration of material conditions, how does theatre facilitate such transformation? This is the principal task of Brecht's construction of a Marxist theatre, the dramaturgical logic of which is that, although theatre can hardly intervene to change material production in a concrete sense, it is capable of demonstrating the possibilities of change. In 'Short Organum' (1949), Brecht states that 'materialist dialectic [...] treats social situations as processes and seeks out their contradictory nature' (2015: 242). Therefore, the V-effect presents an object in a strange way that prevents empathy in order to historicize the driving forces of society and relativize the 'naturalness' of certain behaviours to make them manipulable (241). The expected effect is to stimulate change in reality by shifting interpretations of reality in the analogous theatrical world (Brooker 210).

As Brecht's theory and his aim of theatrical practice are thus understood, it is not difficult to decipher how Bond inherits Brecht's theoretical legacy in 'A Note on Dramatic Method' (1978), in which Bond attempts to connect his Marxist idea of human consciousness with the aim of theatrical art. Bond defines the nature of human consciousness as the consequence of a particular society and assumes that the change of society requires the change of human consciousness (1996: 123). Moreover, he specifies that the new self-consciousness is created by the working class because only through the interaction between workers and established institutions can the accepted values of the ruling class be questioned and confronted (124-5). Regarding how theatre can influence the transformation of human consciousness, Bond argues as follows:

Theatre can validate human standards, ways of living, ethical decisions, understanding, by *demonstrating* the relation of cause and effect in practical human life and not merely in concept or theory. [...] In this way experience is *not merely recorded randomly* but is set in a moral order of reason and judgment. An audience can then see what human beings are and what are the standards, practices and concepts by which they should live. In this way human consciousness is changed. (127-28; my emphasis)

Like Brecht, Bond emphasizes that, instead of duplicating human

experience, the task of theatre is to demonstrate a specific analysis of society in terms of how human beings are defined socially. Successful theatricalization of social analysis can develop self-consciousness ‘into political consciousness, into class consciousness, in working people’ (134). As indicated by Wang’s final remark in *The Bundle* (‘We live in a time of great change. [...] To judge rightly what is good – to choose between good and evil – that is all that is to be human’ (Bond 1996: 218)), at this stage Bond was confident that it is possible to change the audience’s consciousness by demonstrating moral judgment and choice.

In order to facilitate such transformation, Bond was aware of the necessity of creating a new acting method. In contrast to the acting method of representing a character ‘not so much as an individual but as a class function’ (1996: 135), Bond intended to demonstrate his analysis of class consciousness by retaining the complexity of the individual experience. In a notebook entry on 19 March 1976, Bond states: ‘It’s a mistake to show people as entirely embodied in their function. One must also show their irrationality’ (Stuart 2000: 179). In ‘The Rothbury Papers’ (1978-79), while Bond clearly supports Brecht’s idea that human behaviour is determined by their class position, what concerned him is how to avoid reducing an individual to a ‘façade’ and how to make a class-role ‘truly three-dimensional’ (Stuart 2000: 190-91).

In ‘The Activists Papers’ (1978-80), Bond further interrogates the problem of representing class functions in relation to socialist consciousness: how can an individual demonstrate the possibility of transforming consciousness if that individual has always already been conditioned by ‘false consciousness’? In order to resolve the difficulty, Bond started to deploy a new dramatic device: the public soliloquy, the idea of which derives from Bond’s understanding of Shakespearean soliloquies. For Bond, in opposition to theocratic determinism prior to Shakespeare’s age, in a soliloquy a character can start to reflect on the world from his or her subjective self, and this testifies to the birth of a new subjectivity (Bond 1992: 134). In other words, Bond regards the device of the soliloquy as a suitable means to manifest individual autonomy. However, Bond thinks

there is a dilemma:

I wanted to give the characters a means of informed, personal comment in the play. At the same time I wanted to show the force of history, the causes of historical change. This is the dilemma. If the working class character isn't politically conscious his subjectivity is false. (137-38)

In order to resolve the dilemma, Bond states that characters should speak public soliloquies with historical hindsight and political self-awareness. Moreover, he emphasizes that, when characters deliver public soliloquies, they should not become the author's spokesperson but exhibit their potential self (139-40). The transition of the use of aggro-effects to the use of the public soliloquy is exemplary in demonstrating the shift of Bond's dramaturgy from realism to Brechtianism: while the former is more *symptomatic* of the social structure of oppression, the latter is more *demonstrative* of the potential to alter the structure.

Another major shift can be discerned in 'Commentary on *The War Plays*', in which Bond proposes two ideas essential to his later theory: radical innocence and the Theatre Event. Whereas the idea of radical innocence lays the foundation for Bond's later development of his complex theory of subjectivity, the idea of the Theatre Event clearly demonstrates Bond's attempt to formulate a new theory of theatre to replace the Brechtian V-effect. In fact, however, in this commentary Bond relates radical innocence to the Theatre Event only provisionally, and it is not until Bond thoroughly formulated his theory of subjectivity in 'Notes on Imagination' (1994) and 'The Reason for Theatre' (1998) that he can synthesize his theory of subjectivity and that of theatre to fully reveal the significance of the Theatre Event. In other words, it took Bond around twenty years to arrive at the point where his theory can differentiate itself from other theories as distinctively 'Bondian'.

## **1.2. Evolving Dramaturgy of the Holocaust**

Judging from Bond's changing relationship with Brecht, it is obvious that Bond's theory and dramaturgy advance according to how he defines the relationship between human nature and society. This logic is also reflected in Bond's evolving dramaturgy of the Holocaust. Although the conspicuous images of and references to the Holocaust in Bond's later plays testify to how his reflection on Auschwitz is acutely inscribed within his dramaturgy, Bond had already started to explore the possibility of dramatic representation of the Holocaust when he wrote the libretto for *We Come to the River* (1976), an opera he collaborated on with the German composer Hans Werner Henze.

Henze comments that Bond's dramaturgical simultaneous juxtaposition of the dance music, the execution of the deserter, and a woman in search of her husband's body is reminiscent of the image of a camp orchestra in Auschwitz (Hirst 18). At the start of Part Two, the people in the madhouse garden sing monologues, one of which explicitly refers to the Holocaust:

I then walked round the mound and found myself in front of a large grave. People were closely wedged together and lying on top of each other. Only their heads were visible. Nearly all had blood running from their heads over their shoulders. [...] The pit was already two-thirds full. I estimated that it held a thousand people. I looked for the man who did the shooting. He was an SS man [...]. (Bond 1976: 124)

Since this is only one of the six monologues sung by the mad people, it is doubtful whether the details can be conveyed clearly to the audience. As Malcolm Hay and Philip Roberts point out, the details of the words may lose their power when action and music are simultaneously presented (175). In addition, since *We Come to the River* is an opera of political allegory on oppression and revolution without identifying clear historical references, the image of the Holocaust is only one of the many sufferings presented on stage. However, Bond was aware of the particularity of the Holocaust, as he states at the end of his introduction to *The Fool* (also written in 1976): 'What Adorno and Auden said about poetry and Auschwitz misses the point. They would have hit it only if Auschwitz had been the summing up of

history – and of course it wasn't' (1987: 79). Obviously, Bond already knew Adorno's dictum that writing poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric (Adorno 2003: 162), but he disagreed with Adorno's dictum because Auschwitz did not end history. Bond's statement implies that it is precisely because people are still living after Auschwitz that Auschwitz must be written about and represented. After *We Come to the River*, *Summer* (1982) is the first play in which Bond explicitly deals with the representation of the Holocaust.

*Summer* is set in a cliff house facing the sea in Eastern Europe in the 1980s. It begins with Xenia's visit to Marthe, who used to be Xenia's servant during the Second World War and now suffers from reticulosis; the play ends with Marthe's death and Xenia's departure. The play mainly revolves around the characters' recollections of the German invasion of the area during the Second World War and how they interpret the events according to their class and social status. Marthe, especially, is haunted by the traumatic memory, and her impending death aggravates her anxiety about the possibility of reconciling with the past.

Marthe treats death as the most unavoidable thing in human life that makes her last chance of happiness possible. Facing death, she seems to decide to make the most of the rest of her life; however, after Marthe's son David, who is a doctor, explains details of the disease and its treatment in a highly impersonal and specialized medical language, Marthe pleads with David to let her kill herself and accuses him of being cruel. She complains about the ignorance of younger generations:

Your generation will have no memorial. The sound of a whirlwind, the name of a skull: Hiroshima, Nagasaki. People turned into shadows on their doorsteps. Human negatives. The dead living. (Bond 1992: 367)

In invoking historical atrocities such as Hiroshima and Nagasaki, however, Marthe evades what should really be named: Auschwitz. Understandably, since the experience of the Holocaust constitutes the core of her trauma, she can only expose it by surrogating. Moreover, though unnamed, Auschwitz is still evoked through the images of 'human negatives' and 'the dead living'.

In contrast to Marthe, Xenia is from the local upper class family, and her relatives cooperated with the Germans to establish concentration camps on their islands during the war. Marthe was exempted from being sent to the camp because of Xenia's request that she should be saved. The German soldiers consented to spare Marthe's life lest they would be embarrassed by the fact that they had murdered Xenia's servant when they visited Xenia's house. Moreover, Xenia's father obtained the information about the Germans when he dined with them and surreptitiously passed this information through Marthe to local partisans. While Xenia regards her father's involuntary cooperation with the Germans as heroic, Marthe deems Xenia's family as structurally complicit with the enemy. She is tormented by the guilt of becoming an accomplice of the upper class.

Later, when Xenia visits the island where there used to be concentration camps, she meets a German tourist who was a soldier serving on the island during the war. The German tourist also recounts his memory of the Holocaust from the perspective of a perpetrator. He remembers there was 'a girl in white' who used to stand on the terrace and stare at the sea. For him and his fellow soldiers, the girl in white – that is, the young Xenia – was a symbol of civilization they were fighting for. Troubled by her encounter with the German tourist/soldier, Xenia wants to know the exact reason why Marthe despises her. Marthe reveals how she understands her relation with Xenia:

The foundations of your world were crooked and so everything in it was crooked. Your kindness, consideration, consistency were meaningless. [...] The confusion and competition led to such panic and madness that in the end there was war. [...] Your world was a puppet show. [...] They were moved by strings: the factories, banks, governments that control our lives. What we do, what we are, depends on the relationship between us and such things. [...] But when those relations are just we will live justly. Kindness will have its meaning. Justice and mercy will be one. (Bond 1992: 392-93)

Marthe's response functions as the mouthpiece for Bond's political

perspective based on a Marxist analysis of class structure. She attributes the war to the distortion of class structure – therefore, any personal mercy or kindness exercised under the structure is ‘meaningless’ since mercy and kindness must be founded on justice.

As Bond describes, *Summer* is ‘a pattern play [...] where events are plotted so as to be a diagram of history, where the characters represent forces’ and ‘an examination of a real event, where the historical forces can be seen’ (Stuart 2001b: 52-3). Jenny Spencer, however, characterizes the play as ‘Chekhovian’ (205), and points out that ‘the problem of representing the Holocaust in a naturalistic manner has to do with the impossibility [...] from a liberal humanist perspective that focuses so intently on the individual’ (213). However, *Summer* undeniably is also a Brechtian play, and Bond acknowledges that the way he treats ‘the individual as a social subject’ was influenced by Brecht (Stuart 1994a: 86). Instead of ‘focusing intently on the individual’, the dramaturgical tension between Chekhovian individuation and Brechtian abstraction is consciously maintained by Bond in this play. Each character’s perspective mainly stems from their class position concerning the Holocaust (Patraka 32). Although the dramaturgy of representing collectives through individuals may schematically represent the conflicts *between* classes, this dramaturgy may well evade the conflicts *within* classes. Moreover, even if *Summer* succeeds in demonstrating collective forces behind history through individual actions, it is still dubious to restrict the cause of the Holocaust only to class structure.

About ten years later, Bond wrote *Coffee* (1994), which also deals with the Holocaust – specifically, the Babi Yar massacre in 1941. However, in contrast to *Summer*, there is hardly a coherent narrative to be assembled in *Coffee*. Rather, although there are still some historical snippets of the Holocaust, history is destabilized by the workings of imagination and fictionalization. In *Coffee*, the characters are summoned more like human figures who embody the possibilities and limits of subjectivity. The most important distinction between *Coffee* and *Summer* lies in their presupposed epistemological models: while *Summer* is constructed as a message about the structural affinity between the Holocaust and class, *Coffee* consists of a

series of extreme situations and ethical decisions without suggesting any definite answers. Regarding massacres and drama, Bond states:

Massacres are occasional. But they are decisive – they turn place into theatre – and later, from them, distant people learn the lessons of general humanness. And so, in time, people behave more humanely – among other things they do not listen to the orator and so no longer give the leaders power to order soldiers to send children to be killed. (2000b: 80)

For Bond, historical events are like theatrical events, which might serve as lessons of humanity for later generations. Drama, in this regard, is important since it is the means of redramatizing the events and activating the ethical sensibility of the audience. Representing historical events, therefore, is not a question of historical accuracy but a question of urgency and efficiency in implicating the audience into the paradox of extreme situations – there is no difference between reality and imagined history in such urgency once the spectator’s mind is dramatized. As Bond states, ‘[t]he dramatist’s skill is [...] enacting situations which are critical to “being”’ (186).

In ‘Notes on *Coffee* for le Théâtre National de la Colline’ (2000), Bond states that the dramaturgy of *Coffee* is governed by two logics: the logic of imagination and the logic of reality (165). These two logics determine the formal construction of *Coffee*: the normal world of the protagonist, Nold, is interrupted by Gregory, who leads Nold first to the imaginative world of the forest and then to the ravine of the Babi Yar massacre. History in *Coffee* is not to be recounted and worked through as in *Summer* – rather, history itself returns as an extra-ordinary experience that not only questions the self-identity of Nold but fractures the dramatic structure as in Kane’s *Blasted*. Since Bond focuses on how these two logics intervene with each other through dramatization, it is inappropriate to separate these two worlds (168). By subjecting reality to the inversion of imagination, Bond intends for us to ‘see our prison from the outside’ (169). Therefore, the significance of the fracture of dramatic form resides in the fact that it transforms both the epistemological model and ethical relations within representation.



In 'The Third Crisis: The Possibility of a Future Drama' (2013), Bond defends the responsibility of drama to represent Auschwitz in a more sophisticated manner:

Auschwitz can't be remembered but can't be discarded. The psyche of drama can't countenance it, face it, to integrate it into our present reality, to collectively give it a cultural countenance, a human face. Yet it must be given a human face. It is unimaginable and since drama is the imagined, then Auschwitz never happened. This is one of the ambiguities of the psyche of drama, but its ambiguities are what give it its power: if Auschwitz did not happen in the past it must be happening now and is already happening in the future. (2013: 16)

When Bond defines Auschwitz as 'a collective name for all the extermination camps' (18), it implies that he is less concerned with Auschwitz as a historical fact than with the camp as a general phenomenon determined by particular political-judicial structures. This political-judicial structure for Bond is 'happening now and must be happening in the future' – such transhistorical understanding of Auschwitz is comparable with the argument in Giorgio Agamben's 'What is a Camp?' (1994). Agamben, instead of investigating the events that take place in the camp, explores the political-judicial structure of the camp, which he defines as '*the space that opens up when the state of exception starts to become the rule*' (2000: 39; original emphasis). While 'the state of exception' refers to a state in which laws are temporarily suspended, the singularity of the camp resides in the fact that it normalizes the political space that should be instigated only for a short period. In the camp, since the normal law is suspended, the acts of sovereign power are manifest through the acts of the police (42). For Agamben, the camp is embedded in the political matrix of contemporary nation states and may take different forms.

In *The State of Exception* (2005), Agamben extends his analysis of the camp to the 'War on Terror' and points out that the indefinite detention of suspected terrorists authorized by the American government during the 'War on Terror' in fact produces the political space of the camp, in which

the detainees are stripped of the normal political rights protected by the Geneva Convention or American laws (2005: 3). Moreover, Agamben considers Bush's declaration of the 'War on Terror' to be an attempt to construct circumstances wherein 'the emergency becomes the rule' (22). As Agamben defines the state of exception as 'an anomic space in which what is at stake is a force of law without law' (39), the 'War on Terror' has been producing such anomic spaces where imperial sovereignty exercises its power through violence imposed on human beings who have been stripped of their human rights.

While Bond never explicitly theorizes the political nature of the camp, dramaturgically he applies the logic of the state of exception defined by Agamben in his dystopian imagination. His first major play that explores the dystopian future when the camp becomes the norm is *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* (1999), in which the protagonist, Sweden, is repeatedly tortured and dismembered by the soldiers who are absent throughout the play but whose force is abominably felt by Sweden's body tormented by exacerbating abuses. The explicitness of the violence inflicted on the body exceeds any of Bond's previous plays and is reminiscent of Sarah Kane's *Cleansed* (1998), in which a derelict university has been converted into a camp. It is not accidental that both Bond's and Kane's dramaturgy is determined by the conception of the camp as a place in which everything atrocious is possible: Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri point out that torture is the point of contact between war and police action that exemplifies how political power can be exercised outside the norm (2004: 19).

From *We Come to the River*, *Summer*, *Coffee*, and *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century*, it is possible to delineate how Bond's dramaturgy of the Holocaust evolves. In *We Come to the River*, the Holocaust is represented as one example of the catastrophes Europe witnessed from the late nineteenth century. In *Summer*, Bond presents his Marxist analysis of the Holocaust as the inevitable result of expansionist capitalism, in which the upper class is structurally complicit in the act of oppression. In *Coffee*, Bond draws on the history of the Babi Yar massacre and incorporates it with

his theory of subjectivity. Through the protagonist, Nold, Bond investigates how the return of the repressed historical trauma haunts Nold and how he must confront various ethical dilemmas in the extreme situations of the Holocaust. In *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century*, the Holocaust is not represented as a historical fact; instead, the camp as a political-juridical paradigm becomes the logic by which the dramatic world is constructed.

Therefore, when Bond states that drama must give Auschwitz ‘a human face’, it is important to investigate what Auschwitz is. My discussion of Bond’s evolving dramaturgy of the Holocaust above has partly answered this question. But still, there are other questions: what does this face look like? What is human? What is a face? Under what conditions can this face be encountered? All of these questions revolve around how Bond understands human subjectivity, ethics, and aesthetics. In the next section, I will give a preparatory framework through which the problem of ‘giving a human face to Auschwitz’ can be critically addressed.

### **1.3. Subjectivity, Ethics, and Aesthetics**

In a note entry ‘On Dramatic Method’, dated 25 November 1982, Bond distinguishes the subjective self from subjectivity:

[T]he subjective self (that the writer creates and the actor seeks) should not be psychology, motive or even subjectivity. What is being played subjectively is the situation. [...] Subjectivity is given its own value as experience but is made concrete because it is inimitably bound up with the objective [...]. (Stuart 2001b: 140; original underline)

Although in this note Bond sought to define the role of the individual as the agent of history, a view that he kept interrogating in the early 1980s, his definition of subjectivity as mediated by objectivity still operates in his later theory.<sup>14</sup> For Bond, it is inadequate to understand the subject as purely

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<sup>14</sup> In this note, Bond curiously defines ‘the subjective self’ as conditioned by the objective while he regards ‘subjectivity’ as a synonym for psychology. Although Bond’s use of terminology seems ambiguous here, what should be noted here is that Bond is aware of the conceptual difference. In this thesis, my references to Bond’s ‘theory of subjectivity’ refers

subjective – any conception of the self or subjectivity must be coupled with objective conditions that determine the formative process of the subject. While in the early 1980s Bond's theory focused on the subject as the agent of history through his analysis of class structure, his later theory conceives the subject as determined by continuous interaction between the inner structure of the psyche and outer ideological apparatuses. It is in this sense that the Palermo improvisation is pivotal in Bond's later theory since this improvisation throws into relief the relationship between self and society by exploring the possible resistance of the self against the military demand.

In 'Commentary on *The War Plays*', Bond describes that, in a workshop improvisation held at Palermo University in 1983, when the participants who played the role of the soldier were forced to determine whether they should kill their mother's baby or their neighbor's baby, they all decided to kill the same one: their mother's baby (1998: 246). In addition, Bond describes another episode: in a concentration camp in Russia in 1942, a Nazi guard was commanded to kill a communist, who turned out to be his brother, but the Nazi guard refused to kill. As a result, both of them were killed by the commandant (248-49). For Bond, these results reveal that, in extreme situations, decision-making is unpredictable, and the ethical paradox demonstrates how the individual is in conflict with the society (249).

According to Bond, for the neonate (Bond's term for the newborn infant) prior to socialization, radical innocence is manifested through the imperative that one has a right to be in this world; for the socialized self, radical innocence involves the universal imperative to seek justice, which, according to Bond, means that every human being should have the right to live. This intrinsic human faculty to perform the imperative is free from any ideological corruption and remains intact in the deepest level of the human psyche. Bond proposes that '[w]e are born radically innocent, and neither animal nor human; we create our humanness as our minds begin to think our instincts' (2003: 251). Radical innocence as human nature is a process of

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to his theory in which he interrogates the human subject's inner potential in relation to external social conditions and restraints.

self-creation in order to assert one's right to be in the world. It is 'innate' in the sense that it is intrinsically creative rather than biologically determined. Bond's theoretical hesitation between nature and culture has been pointed out by Terry Eagleton (1984: 129) and such hesitation is reminiscent of Kant's philosophical task of reconciling human freedom with determinism. In fact, Bond's conception of radical innocence is highly influenced by Kantian ethics.<sup>15</sup>

The theoretical paradox in Bond's conception of radical innocence is obvious: must one sacrifice the other in order to assert one's right to be? If radical innocence seeks justice, which means that everyone can be at home in the world, how should we resolve the inevitable conflict between free agents, all of whom act in the name of the right to be? Bond is aware of the problems of egoism and altruism – therefore, his developmental model of the human psyche differentiates the neonate from the core self: the 'neonate' lives in a world of egoism while the 'core self' tends to live in accordance with altruism.<sup>16</sup> Bond states that '[e]goism is the only possible origin of altruism' (2000b: 138), which implies that the existential imperative to seek one's right to be is the foundation for the universalization of this right to be. If this is the case, then this theory fails to explain why the Nazi guard refused to kill his brother – that is, if the imperative that one has a right to live can be universalized, the Nazi guard should follow the order and kill his brother. In fact, this theoretical insufficiency turns out to be the dramaturgical driving force in structuring Bond's later drama. The variations of this kind of extreme situation persist from *The War Plays* to *The Paris Pentad*, in each play of which Bond engages with different aspects of the same human dilemma: the conflict between the elemental imperative of radical innocence and the structure of social obligations imposed upon the individual.

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<sup>15</sup> Though Bond mentions Kant only spasmodically, in an entry in his notebook dated 31 March 1961, he directly discusses Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. See Stuart (2000): 68-9.

<sup>16</sup> Theoretically, 'the neonate' cannot be defined as 'egoistic' since the neonate, by definition, cannot differentiate itself from the external world. For another perspective, the neonate can be characterized as 'egoistic' in the sense it disregards the existence of the outside world beyond its grasp.

Therefore, the significance of Bond's 'Commentary on *The War Plays*' and other subsequent writings resides in the fact that, through theorization, Bond interrogates the interconnection between subjectivity, ethics and aesthetics. In its essence, Bond's conception of radical innocence as the core of the subject is his response to the ethical dilemmas exemplified in the Palermo improvisation, through which Bond interrogates the subject's potential in extreme situations – what defines the nature of the subject is always the ethical question: how should I act? As Sean Carney contends, Bond's dramaturgical 'formalism' results from the consummation of his tragic project and the understanding of the self in late capitalism (174); Bond's theoretical development of subjectivity and ethics is acutely incorporated into his later plays, which usually provoke Bond to theorize further. While I will elucidate Bond's theory of subjectivity, ethics, and aesthetics in the following chapters, here I need to anticipate succinctly my arguments in order to situate Bond's theory in a broader philosophical context defined by Adorno and Levinas.

Although Bond is aware of Adorno's dictum: '[t]o write poetry after Auschwitz is barbarous' (2003: 162), in which 'after Auschwitz' operates as a chronotope that conditions writing of the Holocaust, Bond's drama by no means directly translates Adornian philosophy into dramatic form.<sup>17</sup> Instead, since it is Beckettian drama that is Adornian *par excellence*, Bond's relationship with Adorno can be analyzed through his artistic antagonism with Samuel Beckett.<sup>18</sup> As Adorno's dictum reveals his skepticism of the role of post-Auschwitz art and literature, Levinas, another important philosopher whose thinking revolves around the problem of 'after-Auschwitz', articulates a highly ethically-nuanced post-Auschwitz aesthetics as well.

Adorno and Levinas question the validity of traditional artistic representation based on the *cogito* model, that is, the model which is

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<sup>17</sup> See Michael Rothberg's analysis of the meaning of 'after Auschwitz' in 'After Adorno: Culture in the Wake of Catastrophe' (1997).

<sup>18</sup> For a detailed analysis of the antagonism between Bond and Beckett, see Graham Saunders's "A theatre of ruins". *Edward Bond and Samuel Beckett: theatrical antagonists'* (2005).

governed by an autonomous 'I think' consciousness. Adorno and Levinas regard the rationality inherent in this consciousness as complicit with the rationality of Nazism, which embodies the most extreme form of self-preservation and instrumental abstraction. By questioning the complicity of the rational communicating model with Nazism, they present different possibilities of artistic representation in response to Auschwitz. Therefore, by integrating their ideas, it is possible to construct a new framework through which post-Auschwitz art can be estimated.

Adorno's dictum, taken as a prohibition against writing poetry, aroused many disputes and even misunderstanding, which later compelled Adorno to clarify that the dictum should not be taken literally. His point is that writing poetry, as a synecdoche for creating art as cultural activity in general, when not being mediated critically, can only be a hollow replica of the culture that ends up with the Holocaust. Adorno then states provocatively that 'one *must* write poems' (435; original emphasis) and that 'as long as there is an awareness of suffering among human beings there must be art as the objective form of that awareness' (ibid). As Adorno defines the world after Auschwitz as the world in which Auschwitz was and is still possible (428), the awareness that Auschwitz can take place again – if what is presumed to be positive and affirmative is not negotiated through critical self-reflection – permeates both Adorno's philosophy of negative dialectics and his dialectical attitude towards arts in general. 'Awareness of suffering', proposed by Adorno as one precondition for writing poetry, is posited again in *Negative Dialectics* (1966): 'Perennial suffering has as much right to expression as a tortured man has to scream; hence it may be wrong to say that after Auschwitz you could no longer write poems' (1999: 362).

In his seminal essay 'Trying to Understand *Endgame*' (1958), Adorno formulates how post-Auschwitz drama can be possible. He first denounces Sartrean existentialist drama as being traditional in terms of form – while Sartre intends to construct existentialist situations to convey his philosophical ideas, Beckett absorbs absurdity as dramatic form in a way that disrupts any affirmative meaning of existentialism (2003: 259). Adorno also attacks Sartre's conception of the individual: after the catastrophes that

destroy the transient semblance of the empirical world, the category of the individual is revealed to be historical, merely as ‘both the outcome of the capitalist process of alienation and a defiant protest against it’ (267). While the false completeness of a psychological individual is shattered, its replacement is ‘the dissociation of the unity of consciousness into disparate elements, into nonidentity’ (270). In other words, once subjectivity as an independent identity disintegrates, the elements of nonidentity emerge to participate in the reconstruction of a post-psychological subjectivity: these elements are the negative images of an instrumental and psychological reality (271).

The distinction between identity and non-identity is one of the conceptual distinctions that permeate Adorno’s philosophy. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (1944), Adorno and Max Horkheimer equate the logic of the Enlightenment with identity thinking in the sense that, in the Enlightenment project of the disenchantment of nature, scientific objectification reduces heterogeneous nature into calculable entities. As a consequence, every particular object is liquidated into ‘universal interexchangeability’ (Horkheimer and Adorno 10) at the cost of its qualitative singularity. Moreover, the process of identification is not limited to outer nature – human beings are no exception. The phenomenon of human self-domination is exemplified by the division of labor, which ‘requires the self-alienation of the individuals who must model their body and soul according to the technical apparatus’ (29-30). That means that the rationality of the Enlightenment turns out to be ‘mere instrument of the all-inclusive economic apparatus’ (30).

Identity thinking, nevertheless, is not restricted to being the instrument to quantify both nature and human beings. For Adorno, ‘[i]dentity is the primal form of ideology’ (1999: 148). Thus defined, ideology designates identity thinking that subsumes particulars into universal concepts that defy any disparate substrate and qualitative contradiction. For this reason, the irrationality of rationality resides precisely in its disregard of its violence towards unidentifiable particulars (149). The most extreme form of identity logic is demonstrated in Auschwitz, as Adorno states that ‘Auschwitz



confirmed the philosopheme of pure identity as death' (362). What Adorno has in mind is the manufacturing process in the concentration camps that reduces human beings into disposable and purely eliminable entities. Adorno's argument echoes Jean-Luc Nancy's analysis of Nazi ideology that, in the process of exalting 'the Aryan body' as the only legitimate ideologue, the Jews emerge as the forbidden one that has to be annihilated (2005: 40).<sup>19</sup> The complicity between the logic of Auschwitz and that of the Enlightenment shows how human rationality that intends to disenchant nature can end with the total eradication of the human species. Moreover, the danger of identity thinking is not only how it affects the way disparate empirical reality is to be perceived but also how it determines the way human consciousness functions.

Rationality, or *ratio*, however, is not intrinsically instrumental. As Adorno explicates in *Negative Dialectics*, while ratio in Plato still implicates qualitative differentiation, it is from Descartes that ratio works as scientific eradication of qualitative differences, which are converted into quantifiable units (1999: 43). That is to say, '[r]atio is not merely [...] an ascent from the scattered phenomena to the concept of their species, it calls just as much for an ability to discriminate' (ibid). It is in order to defend the discriminating ability against identity thinking that Adorno posits non-identity as opposed to identity and states that '[d]ialectics is the consistent sense of nonidentity' (5). Regarding the relationship between identity and non-identity, Adorno explains that '[t]he nonidentical element in an identifying judgment is clearly intelligible insofar as every single object subsumed under a class has definitions not contained in the definition of the class' (150). In short, non-identical elements are those that resist being abstracted and classified under a higher conceptual definition. Non-identical thinking designates an alternative cognitive process that seeks to understand objects and phenomena in accordance with their singularity instead of grasping them merely by abstraction.

For Adorno, the catastrophe of the Holocaust erases the concept of the

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<sup>19</sup> For a detailed discussion of the Jews as 'the forbidden representation,' see Jean-Luc Nancy's 'Forbidden Representation' in *The Ground of the Image* (2005).

individual as a psychologically autonomous being with freedom to decide and power to act. Accordingly, human beings can no longer be identified with the concept of the individual – what remains are those non-identical elements that fail to compose any preconceived individuality but add up to a post-psychological being. These beings are those Beckett presents in *Endgame* (1957), and it is in this sense that Adorno designates *Endgame* as ‘the epilogue to subjectivity’ (2003: 278). Since human beings are deprived of any psychological depth and the capacity to remember, history is made impossible (265). Emptied consciousness incapacitates personal memory, which is essential to self-identity, leaving the characters entangled in repetitive physical gestures and meaningless verbal exchanges. According to Adorno, as anti-existentialist drama, *Endgame* exemplifies what post-Auschwitz culture is and reveals that the instrumentalization of *ratio* is the source of problems.

Like Adorno, Levinas also started his philosophy from his reflection on the Holocaust. In an interview titled ‘The Philosopher and Death’ (1982), Levinas clarifies his ethics in relation to the Holocaust: ‘[T]he Holocaust is an event of still inexhaustible meaning’ (1999: 161). ‘In speaking of the Holocaust,’ Levinas proceeds to state, ‘I am thinking of the death of the other man. [...] I have asked myself [...] what the face of the other man means’ (162). According to Levinas, humanity is defined by how one can remain open to the death of the other since the death of the other awakens one to the other (157-61). That is, the face of the other in its nakedness and vulnerability requires me to take responsibility – the face of the other puts into question the persistence of the self (163-64). In 1990, Levinas added a prefatory note to ‘Reflections on the Philosophy of Hitlerism’ (1934), in which he states clearly that the source of Hitlerism originates from ‘the essential possibility of *elemental Evil*’ inscribed within the ontology centered on being as ‘gathering together and as domination’ (1990: 63; original emphasis). These remarks clearly illustrate that both Levinas’s critique of ontology and his idea of ethics as ‘first philosophy’ are informed by his reflections on the Holocaust.

In ‘Ethics as First Philosophy’ (1984), Levinas’s criticism of ontology

for presupposing the logic of identity is reminiscent of Adorno's argument: 'Identical and non-identical are identified. The labour of thought wins out over the otherness of things and men' (1989: 78). Levinas regards the logic of identity based on rationality and self-consciousness as being the foundation for the man to 'persist in his being as a sovereign' who exercises the power of transcendental reduction to reduce the world as *neoma* – the object or content of a thought – to be rediscovered in consciousness (78-79). In 'Philosophy and the Idea of Infinity' (1957), Levinas applies the same argument against reason: 'Reason, which reduces the other, is appropriation and power' (1987: 50). For Levinas, philosophical concepts such as reason, freedom, autonomy, and consciousness all entail the logic of identity thinking that reduces the otherness of the other for the ego to subsume.

Instead of defining the man as a sovereign of consciousness, Levinas constructs his ethics based on his phenomenological analysis of subjectivity other than egology. His main task is twofold: one is to deconstruct the ego-centered subjectivity, in which the self commands the other at his or her disposal; the other is to seek an alternative subjectivity that gives precedence to the other even at the expense of the self. In Levinas's analysis of the 'I', he states that '[t]he I is not a being that always remains the same, but is the being whose existing consists in identifying itself' (1969: 36). Levinas argues that the self is not a static being but a constant self-identifying process. This is also what he terms 'the same of the self', by which he means that the self tends to stay the same by self-identification. For Levinas, the structure of the I should also be estimated under the I-world structure: by identifying itself as the same, the 'I' also opposes itself to the world as the other. By affirming the self and opposing the other, egoist subjectivity completes a totality that encloses the same and the other (37-8). Such a self-enclosing structure forecloses the possibility of entering into the relationship with the other as alterity since the possibility for the self to encounter the other lies outside the oppositional subject-object correlation. The other can be the real other only when it appears as the stranger that confronts and disturbs the self instead of appearing as a disposable object (39). Such an asymmetrical self-other relationship is

designated by Levinas as a 'face-to-face' encounter. In a face-to-face encounter, the other appears as the infinity that transcends the self and resists thematization, as Levinas states: 'An absolute transcendence has to be produced as non-integratable' (53).

For Levinas, the face is the expression of a living presence that speaks (66). The gaze on the face transcends subject-object cognition and demands unconditional giving to the other (75). Levinas further defines the gaze of the other as a form of soliciting by 'the stranger, the widow, and the orphan' (78). The face-to-face experience is radically different from the experience of representation defined by Levinas as 'a determination of the other by the same, without the same being determined by the other' (170). Levinas thus distinguishes representation from face:

The assembling of being in the present, its synchronization by retention, memory and history reminiscence, is representation [...]. Representation does not integrate the responsibility for the other inscribed in human fraternity. [...] The order that orders me to the other does not show itself to me, save through the trace of its reclusion, as a face of a neighbor. (1998: 140)

In other words, representation, for Levinas, is the integration of separate entities to form a totality that can be grasped and known; as a mode of temporalization, representation is a process of re-presenting.

From Levinas's ethical perspective, in opposition to the aesthetics dominated by the logic of 're-presenting', the only legitimate art is such that 'breaks or disturbs [...] "drunken-ness": fracturing modernist art' (Eaglestone 262). Suspicious of artworks that are constructed as subject-object correlations, and skeptical of artworks that entice total participation or enjoyment, Levinas advocates artworks that can both disrupt subject-object rationality and resist producing pleasure. In Levinasian aesthetic experience, what matters is the ethical encounter with the alterity of the face revealed in diachrony. Moreover, this encounter destabilizes the self-identical subjectivity of the receiver and further requires the receiver to respond.

To recapitulate: confronted with the crisis of human subjectivity in the Holocaust, Adorno thinks that aesthetics is the realm that can still make metaphysical experience possible, while Levinas revises a radical ethics based on an alternative conception of subjectivity. Aesthetics, for Adorno and Levinas, is not separable from subjectivity and ethics: Adorno's dictum against writing poetry after Auschwitz stems from his insight that the barbarism of the Holocaust is structured within, instead of being excluded from, the culture of identity thinking; Levinas's aversion to aesthetic enjoyment and art as knowledge shows his suspicion of aesthetics complicit with totalitarian ideology. Their negative aesthetics suggest that, only by basing post-Auschwitz aesthetics on the critique of Enlightenment reason that ends with Nazi totalitarianism, can such aesthetics be ethically valid and politically meaningful. In short, for Adorno, only through the preservation of non-identity can artworks retain their autonomy from reified reality; for Levinas, only through remaining open to alterity can the ethical power of artworks be revealed.

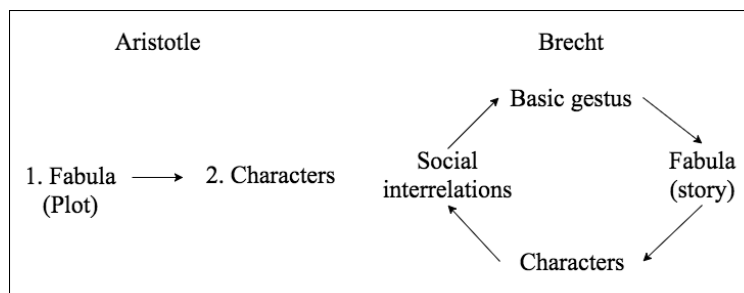
Bond bases the dramaturgy of his later work on the idea of radical innocence, which derives from his reflections on post-Auschwitz subjectivity. This means that the concept of radical innocence demonstrates Bond's intent to reconceive the human subject after Auschwitz, and this new conception of human subjectivity determines how he dramatizes and theatricalizes 'humanity'. In the following chapters I will argue that, conceptually, Bond shares the same ground with Adorno and Levinas, and their theories of subjectivity and aesthetics can serve as a theoretical frame through which Bond's theory and drama can be critically engaged.

#### **1.4. Theorizing the Biopolitics of the Later Bond**

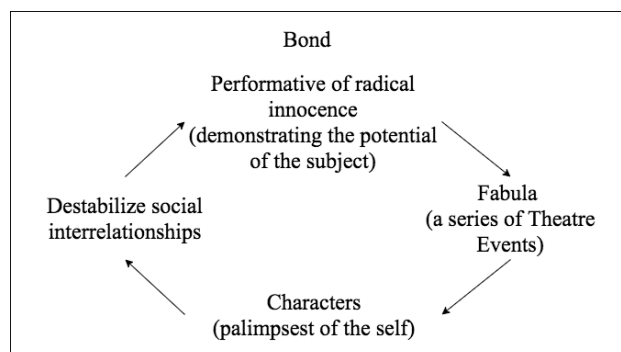
Based on the discussion above, I will attempt to theorize the conceptual features of the later Bond. As I have argued, the difference between Bond and Brecht is not their use of dramatic devices or their stances on the role of reason and emotion in theatre but, rather, with the articulation of their concepts of subjectivity and how the subject should be dramatized and

theatricalized. As my analysis of Bond's evolving dramaturgy of the Holocaust implies, at the heart of Bond's post-Brechtian dramaturgy is his conception of the subject based on the idea of radical innocence.

In order to bring into relief the difference between Brecht and Bond, I will draw on Patrice Pavis's analysis of the difference between Aristotle's plot and Brechtian story [*fabula*]. The following diagram is drawn by Pavis to illustrate the difference between Aristotle and Brecht (1998: 141):



According to Aristotle's *Poetics*, characters are represented for the sake of the construction of plot, which abides by the law of causal probability or necessity and forms a modest, coherent, and complete whole. However, Brecht's story aims to foreground the contradictions within a seemingly coherent plot by analyzing the social interrelations between characters and emphasizing the social gestus that characterizes the relations of power within a specific social and historical context. In opposition to the ideas of plot theorized by Aristotle and Brecht, the Bondian *fabula* can be analyzed as follows:



According to the dramaturgy of Bond's later plays, Theatre Events constitute the most vital parts of a play. A Theatre Event refers to a moment in which characters are forced to confront ethical aporias that unsettle the values conditioned by ideologies. In such moments, the innermost potential of the character, radical innocence, is provoked to face the dilemma and make a decision. Although a character's decision may either conform to the existing rules or break the rules, the character's deliberation over ethical dilemmas and subsequent decisions constitute what I call 'the performative of radical innocence'.<sup>20</sup> Compared to Brecht, Bond in his later theory emphasizes the potential of the subject to question the social interrelations that determine how one is structured by the order of ideology. One of the ideological matrices that Bond explores is what Agamben defines as the political-juridical *nomos* of the modern nation-state – the camp.

Therefore, the significance of Bond's theory of subjectivity that presupposes pre-socialized radical innocence can be reexamined in the context of Agamben's biopolitical distinction between *zoē* as the simple fact of living and *bios* as the political form of living (1998: 1). Whereas *bios* refers to the socialized self that participates in the modern political structure defined by sovereign power, *zoē* implies a pre-politicized or de-politicized form of life. For Agamben, the essence of modern biopolitics resides in how the demarcation line between *bios* and *zoē* is marked – the moment of decision when a human subject endowed with political status can be deprived of his or her rights and turned into the status of *homo sacer*, bare life that can be killed without committing homicide. As Agamben persuasively states, '[w]hen life becomes the supreme political *value*, not only is the problem of life's *nonvalue* thereby posed, as Schmitt suggests but further, it is as if the ultimate ground of sovereign power were at stake in this decision' (142; my emphasis). As implied by Agamben's analysis, the fundamental problem inherent in modern sovereign states is that it is

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<sup>20</sup> I will explore the concept of the performative of radical innocence in Chapter Six. This concept is inspired by Jill Dolan's concept of 'the utopian performative', by which she designates the sensibilities and feelings aroused by the 'experiences of utopia in the flesh of performance that might performatively hint at how a different world could feel' (478). That is, Dolan is more concerned with how utopia can be felt than how it should be organized.

impossible for this political-juridical structure of the camp to conceive an alternative form of life that transcends this separation between political life and bare life.

It is from this political-juridical matrix that I want to consider Bond's idea of radical innocence and the problem of value. Arguably, radical innocence as a pre-politicized state of subjectivity can be related to *zoē* and Agamben's concept of *homo sacer* – however, radical innocence implies the subject's potential to resist both complete politicization and complete de-politicization. While being reduced to the status of bare life is the result of the sovereign's decision to deprive the subject of his or her political value, radical innocence as the source of self-valuation *must* resist the identity logic in operation within the sovereign's decision to politicize or de-politicize the subject. This explains why the exploration of ethical extreme situations is vital in Bond's later plays since these moments open up the terrain where both the politically instrumentalized subject (such as a soldier or police officer as the agent of sovereign power) and the de-politicized subject (such as a prisoner, enemy, or criminal as *homo sacer*) can interrogate the fundamental question of ethics – 'how shall I act?' – and create values different from those decided by the sovereign.

It is notable that Agamben also applies the concept of bare life to 'today's democratico-capitalist project of eliminating the poor classes through development' that excludes certain groups of people and transforms them into bare life (180). Despite Agamben's comment being brief and reductionist, the association of bare life with neoliberal capitalism is another main strand of biopolitical thought elaborated by Hardt and Negri.<sup>21</sup> Their viewpoint on the biopolitical relationship between human life and monetary economy is cogently demonstrated as follows:

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<sup>21</sup> For a critical survey of the concept of biopolitics in contemporary philosophy, see Thomas Lemke's *Biopolitics: An Advanced Introduction* (2011). Lemke points out that Agamben's writings and the works of Hardt and Negri are the most important reformulations of Foucault's idea of biopolitics: while Agamben stresses the structural importance of bare life in understanding Western political history, Hardt and Negri stress the biopolitical nature of contemporary capitalism that annuls the distinction between politics and economy (6).



There is nothing, no “naked life,” no external standpoint, that can be posed outside this field permeated by money; nothing escapes money. Production and reproduction are dressed in monetary clothing. [...] The great industrial and financial powers thus produce not only commodities but also subjectivities. They produce agentic subjectivities within the biopolitical context: they produce needs, social relations, bodies, and minds – which is to say, they produce producers. (2000: 32)

In opposition to Agamben’s concept of ‘bare life’, Hardt and Negri explicate that, within the matrix of the contemporary monetary system, there is ‘no “naked life”’ but subjectivity being produced and reproduced according to monetary logic. However, Agamben’s emphasis on the exclusion of certain groups from the operation of neoliberal capitalist system is in fact complementary with Hardt and Negri’s arguments. That is, if there is no bare life beyond the contemporary capitalist system, it is not because this system successfully incorporates every human subject within it but because it successfully excludes those who fail to be assimilated to such an extent that they can never constitute the ‘outside’ beyond the system.

While Bond explores the biopolitical operation of the camp in his plays set in a dystopian totalitarian state, in most of his later plays set in the contemporary world he interrogates contemporary subjectivity defined by what Hardt and Negri regard as the biopolitical matrix of neoliberal capitalism. For example, like Mother Courage who is split between being a mother and being a businesswoman, Viv in *A Window* is tormented by her incapacity to reconcile her role of mother, prostitute, and drug addict. However, unlike Mother Courage, who negotiates between the two roles, Viv is driven mad because she desperately longs for a different social order in which she is not socially excluded. Bond’s portrait of Viv is no less concrete than Brecht’s portrait of Mother Courage in terms of social and economic conditions, but Bond emphasizes the multilayered operation of her subjectivity: on one level, Viv is exploited by the monetary logic that turns her into a commodity – a prostitute – and she can only seek relief through using drugs, which further exacerbates her physical and psychological deterioration. On another level, Viv longs for a new identity

that is non-identical with her present roles defined and produced by external social and economic conditions. In Bond's terms, this longing is provoked by Viv's radical innocence, a pre-socialized inner potential that produces values different from those coded by the established system. It is this dimension of subjectivity defined by biopolitics instead of class consciousness that differentiates the dramaturgy of the later Bond and that of Brecht.

In other words, what distinguishes the later Bond and Brecht is their analysis of subjectivity: while Brecht's Marxist analysis of class structure captures how the socialized self and class consciousness are determined by different social and economic conditions, Bond's analysis turns the focus to the pre-socialized potential of the subject that enables the subject to question the fissures and possibilities in the process of the formation of subjectivity. This shift of focus by no means suggests that Bond's characters are immediately endowed with autonomy and power to transcend the limitations of the ideologized world. On the contrary, Bond bases his analysis of subjectivity and dramaturgy on the acknowledgment of the totalizing logic of biopolitics exemplified either by the camp or by neoliberal capitalism.

It is in the context of this totalizing biopolitical logic that I want to reconsider how the theories of Adorno and Levinas can be relevant: Adorno's idea of non-identity characterizes how radical innocence remains the subject's potential to resist the identity logic in operation both in the camp, where the execution of a rule is identical with the formation of rule, and in the neoliberal capitalist system, where human value is identical with monetary value. This subjective dimension inaugurated by radical innocence is also an ethical dimension: in opposition to the value system defined by the existing biopolitical matrix, the subject is confronted with an unknown territory in which new values need to be established – these acts of creation are what I have described as performatives of radical innocence. It is in this difficult ethical terrain that Levinas's ethics of alterity can be an exigent standard to measure against the subject's creative acts and the possible violence inherent in these instances of creation. All these questions

must start from examining Bond's theory of subjectivity and the idea of radical innocence – and this is the task of the next chapter. Although Bond's theorization of subjectivity is deeply affected by his reflection on Auschwitz, I will analyze his theory of subjectivity instead of his post-Auschwitz dramaturgy first because theoretically and chronologically Bond's theory of subjectivity precedes his post-Auschwitz dramaturgy.

## Chapter Two

### Understanding Humanness: Theorizing and Dramatizing Subjectivity

At the core of Bond's theoretical writings is his unremitting reconfiguration of the concept of subjectivity, often referred to as the neonate, consciousness, self-consciousness, the psyche, the mind, etc. I use 'subjectivity' to refer to these terms because it can not only encompass these ideas but also contextualize and problematize them in relation to contemporary philosophical interrogations of subjectivity. As Australian philosopher Nick Mansfield suggests, the theories of subjectivity from the 1970s on agree on one thing – the rejection of the idea of the Enlightenment subject that is autonomous and self-contained (13). When Bond began to formulate his later theory of subjectivity in the late 1980s and early 1990s, this was also the period when contemporary European philosophers started to reflect on the status of the subject after decades of the poststructuralist project of deconstructing the concept of subjectivity, as exemplified by two collections of essays: *Who Comes After the Subject?* (1991), and *Deconstructive Subjectivities* (1996). Jean-Luc Nancy, in his introduction to *Who Comes After the Subject?*, reproduces his invitation letter that poses the question:

Who comes after the subject? [...] Everything seems, however, to point to the necessity, not of a "return to the subject" [...], but on the contrary, of a move forward toward someone – *some one* else in its place [...]. Who would it be? How would s/he present him/herself? Can we name her/him? Is the question "who" suitable? (1991: 5; original emphasis)

Nancy answers this question by replacing the idea of existence with that of presence – for him, one's presence 'is presence to presence not to self (not of self)' (8). In opposition to the idea of the self as a self-contained existence, one's presence in the world necessarily entails a community in which everyone's presence is a common phenomenon. Therefore, for Nancy,

the idea of community rather than that of self should be the starting point of rearticulating subjectivity. Ute Guzzoni's 'Do We Still Want To Be Subjects?', the last essay collected in *Deconstructive Subjectivities*, also questions whether the idea of subject as the human capacity for acting in general is still desirable as such capacity has brought about numerous disasters and violent domination (206). Instead, Guzzoni suggests that the subject should be reformulated through what lies outside the autonomous subject – that is, the subject becomes a relational concept defined by the interplay between 'we' and 'whatever arises and occurs around and within us' (216). Therefore, I suggest that the meaning of Bond's theory of subjectivity in relation to drama, instead of being regarded as an isolated or idiosyncratic theoretical endeavor, emerges only when it is contextualized in this wider philosophical context.

Bond has consciously explored the idea of subjectivity over nearly thirty years in his letters, notes, interviews, prefaces, and essays; therefore, in order to trace and calibrate his theoretical development, a chronological reading of his major theoretical writings on subjectivity is methodologically desirable and necessary. Since it is detectable that in every major writing Bond introduces new concepts to clarify, revise, and complicate his previous theorization, by highlighting how the core ideas have been proposed and reworked, a chronological reading can circumvent the difficulties of some of Bond's later writings and shed light on how to approach his neologisms and evolving ideas. Moreover, we should also be aware of the discrepancy between dramatization and theorization, as he maintains: 'I find writing theory demanding, and it never really gives me that satisfaction of achieving specific insights – as opposed to generalizations – which I get from creative writing: but it has to be done' (Stuart 1995: 47). As Bond makes clear that the contrast between theoretical writing and creative writing is that between generalization and particularity, what is more important is the way he defines the nature of this contrast: it is not that the particularity demonstrates the generalization as an example, but that the particularity always exceeds the generalization as a singular event. Therefore, the first half of this chapter will illustrate, examine, and

problematize Bond's theory of subjectivity, and the second half will investigate how his plays further dramatically engage with the theory.

## 2.1. Radical Innocence and Justice

### 2.1.1. The Concept of Radical Innocence and Its Difficulties

In 'Commentary on *The War Plays*', Bond explicates his idea of 'radical innocence' at length for the first time.<sup>22</sup>

In the Palermo improvisation the soldier killed his brother or sister. In the camp the soldier refused to kill his brother. Both decisions came from the same paradox. The paradox is never absent from our mind. It is the crux on which humanness is poised, an expression of the radical innocence. (1998: 251)

However, if both the soldier's decision and the Russian guard's decision express radical innocence, how should we explain the difference? Does radical innocence entail any law intrinsic in humanity that determines our moral actions? Bond proceeds to define radical innocence as 'the psyche's conviction of its right to live, and of its conviction that it is not responsible for the suffering it finds in the world or that such things can be' (ibid.). It is surprising that, after explaining the examples of the soldier and the Russian guard, Bond defines radical innocence as the psyche's impulse for self-preservation without noticing such definition exactly contradicts the examples. If radical innocence is the psyche's conviction of its right to be, then both the soldier and the Russian guard should only follow the military order to execute whomever he is commanded to kill. Logically, there should never exist any ethical paradox in these situations. However, in Bond's theoretical writings, there is no definite definition of radical innocence. In the same commentary, he also regards radical innocence as 'part of history's

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<sup>22</sup> In Bond's earlier writings, he also uses 'radical innocence' – for example, in a note entry on 29 April 1987, he writes: 'Radical innocence is presumably (or is close to) creativity?' (Stuart 2001b: 270). In his letter to Michael Fuller on 13 January 1988, he states that radical innocence is the child's right to live (Stuart 1994a: 8). However, it is not until this commentary that Bond starts to develop radical innocence as a distinct theoretical term.

rational development' embodied by religious martyrs (258). For Bond, martyrdom exemplifies the 'dramatic assertion of radical innocence' (ibid.). Obviously, martyrdom – death or self-sacrifice on account of adherence to a religious cause – is the exact opposition to the psyche's impulse for self-preservation. In other words, in Bond's theory, radical innocence involves self-contradictory definitions. In addition to the two definitions I illustrate above, Bond also characterizes radical innocence as the capacity for moral discrimination, questioning, and judging (254-55). Regarding the persistence of radical innocence, Bond further contends that although radical innocence may be 'corrupted' by society, it can never be 'totally corrupted' (257).

We can observe that, for Bond to solve the theoretical contradictions and to construct a more coherent theory, he needs to answer at least three questions: first, how can radical innocence simultaneously entail self-preservation and self-sacrifice? Second, how can radical innocence become the ground for moral questioning and judging? What is the source of such moral discrimination? Third, if radical innocence can be corrupted but cannot be completely corrupted, what is the significance of the irrepressibility of radical innocence? Bond's developmental and structural models of subjectivity, which I will explain in the following sections, aim to answer these questions. In this section, my focus is on the relationship between radical innocence and justice.

### **2.1.2. Bond and Kant**

In Bond's later writings, he rephrases the psyche's conviction of its right to be as the neonate's 'existential imperative' to be (2000b: 115). Once the neonate becomes aware of the outside world, this imperative becomes the 'imperative for justice' (143) – everyone should have the right to be in the world. Bond's use of the concept of imperatives, his concept of justice, and the idea of the indestructibility of radical innocence demonstrate how Kant influences Bond's theoretical construction. In *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* (1793), when Kant discusses the problem of

radical good and evil, he maintains that the basis of good and evil is founded on moral maxims other than natural impulses; with regard to the adoption of maxims, he argues that ‘the good or the evil in the human being is said to be innate [...] only *in the sense* that it is posited as the ground antecedent to every use of freedom given in experience’ (1998: 47; original emphasis). Disassociating good and evil from determinism, Kant proposes that human predisposition either follows the good maxim, that is, to precede moral law over self-love, or follows the evil maxim, which is the reversal of the good maxim. Thus said, to make moral education or improvement possible, Kant argues that ‘we must presuppose in all this that there is still a germ of goodness left in its entire purity, a germ that cannot be extirpated or corrupted’ (66). Arguably, Kant’s reasoning about the definition of innateness and the indestructible possibility of being good in human beings is incorporated into Bond’s idea of radical innocence.

Furthermore, Bond’s idea of justice as a universal statement of the human right to be also originates in Kant’s theory of unconditional imperatives. In one of his notebook entries in 1996, Bond writes that “[b]e just” means that everyone belongs to Kant’s kingdom of ends’ (Bond 2000b: 76). In *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785), Kant defines ‘a kingdom of ends’ as such:

The concept of every human being as one who must regard himself as giving universal law through all the maxims of his will, so as to appraise himself and his actions from this point of view, leads to a very fruitful concept dependant upon it, namely, that *of a kingdom of ends*. (1997: 41, emphasis in original)

Kant proceeds to state that in the ‘kingdom of ends’, every rational being should treat oneself and others as ends in themselves instead of as mere means (ibid). As maintained by Kant, the maxims that every rational being follows therefore have three features: firstly, they have a form of universality, which means that they should be conceived as a universally applicable law; secondly, they have a matter as an end, which means that the human being as an end in itself should serve as a restriction of other



whimsical ends; thirdly, one's maxims should be in harmony with the kingdom of ends (43-44). These features are commensurate with those of the 'categorical imperative', the principle of practical reason, which Kant defines as a principle that demands every rational being 'act in accordance with maxims that can at the same time have as their object themselves as universal laws of nature' (44).

Obviously, Bond's concepts of justice and radical innocence as the universal imperative or existential imperative have their origins in Kant's moral philosophy as is introduced; nevertheless, in assimilating Kantian ideas, Bond inevitably must face the problems implicated in Kant's theory. In *Problems of Moral Philosophy*, Adorno observes that Kant aims to combine the unconditional adherence to reason and the ultimate happiness of mankind; humanity, consequently, for Kant, is the ultimate realization of practical reason instead of empirical mankind (2000: 140-41). For Adorno, Kant's ideal 'kingdom of ends' can never be realized by human beings empirically since this ideal presupposes that all human beings conduct their actions in accordance with transcendental practical reason. While Kant aspires to bridge the gap between practical reason and the experiential world, the difficulty still arises when any particular action is required in a particular situation since how to conduct a just action can only be deduced from an ideal world of justice, which is still a future task (142). Adorno thus states clearly that the weakness of Kantian ethics is that 'it fails to provide us anything concrete, in other words, it fails to provide us with a casuistic method, one that would enable us to apply a general moral principle to a particular case' (155). When one applies Kantian ethics, the fact that the 'infinite ramifications of social possibilities, an infinite choice' (156) is at one's disposal only makes it impossible to determine the right action.

### **2.1.3. Justice and Its Aporias**

Jacques Derrida, in dissecting the aporias of justice, presents arguments that also address the problem of incommensurability between the particular and the universal. Derrida distinguishes law from justice by defining the former

as a system of calculation and the latter as an incalculable event of singularity: ‘Law is the element of calculation, and it is just that there be law, but justice is incalculable, it requires us to calculate with incalculable’ (1992: 15). In examining the complexities of incalculable justice, Derrida proposes three insolvable aporias of justice when it comes to any determination of justice: the first aporia is ‘épokhè of rule’ (23), by which Derrida means that justice presupposes freedom to decide and thus is incompatible with a set of rules which actuate programmable legal procedures. In other words, what is legal in terms of rule allows no freedom beyond the rule to judge a case in accordance with its singularity and fails to achieve justice as a result. The second aporia is ‘the ghost of the undecidable’ (24), by which Derrida designates the experience in which one is obliged to make the impossible decision even faced with the incalculable foreign to any order and rule. The third aporia is ‘the urgency that obstructs the horizon of knowledge’ (26), by which Derrida points out that a just decision always presupposes unlimited knowledge of information and conditions, which is impossible for a decision that is always required to be made immediately at certain moments. Derrida thus concludes from the analysis of these aporias: ‘Justice as the experience of absolute alterity is unrepresentable, but it is the chance of event and the condition of history’ (27).

Both Adorno, who criticizes Kantian ethics for being practically impossible, and Derrida, who elucidates the aporias of justice, demonstrate that any just decision which must take the singularity of each case into account and furnish itself with infinite information is undecidable, that is, impossible. In addition to Adorno and Derrida, Levinas is also conscious of the limitations of Kantian ethics and proposes an alternative thinking. He criticizes Kant’s concept of ‘the kingdom of ends’ for being ‘a certain limitation of rights and freewill’ (1994: 122) and warns that such limitation risks ‘treating the person as an object by submitting him or her (the unique, the incomparable) to comparison’ (ibid). Arguing against the danger implicated in the concept of justice as calculation, Levinas proposes an ethics based on an asymmetrical face-to-face encounter in which one bears

infinite responsibility to the irreducible other, the absolute unique. Though Levinas understands that it is practically impossible to replace justice of calculation with face-to-face ethics, he believes that ‘it is ethics which is the foundation of justice’ and that ‘within justice, we seek a better justice’ (1988: 175). In his phenomenological description of the face-to-face encounter, it seems that Levinas also identifies the undecidable moments of ethical aporias as analyzed above:

[I]n the Face of the Other always the death of the Other and thus, in some way, an incitement to murder, the temptation to go to the extreme, to completely neglect the other – and at the same time (and this is the paradoxical thing) the Face is also the “Thou shall not kill.” (2000: 104)

Faced with such aporetic moments, Levinas pleads for ‘a doing justice to the difference of the other person [...], an otherness of the unique’ (194). Levinas argues that the asymmetrical relationship between one and the other constitutes the premises of the possibilities of justice. However, as Derrida contends, Levinas’s upholding of ethical singularity and alterity is destined to be problematic and aporetic when this ethics is applied to political or legal matters (1995: 84) – Derrida explicates this aporia clearly when he deconstructs the concept of justice.

Therefore, it logically follows that Bond’s idea of justice influenced by Kant can be problematic, if not aporetic. Bond, in elaborating on the paradoxes faced by Kant and Gandhi, thus remarks on the problem of calculation and the prioritization of moral acts:

Can we talk of sacrificing a moral act? Is a calculus possible? And then, if non-resistance is the moral act, there is no argument: the parents may not shoot the soldiers even if the children are taken to be used in vivisection experiments [...]. (2000b: 82)

Intriguingly, Bond is not only aware of the potential difficulties within Kantian ethics that necessarily entails a calculus of human freedom to maintain the co-existence of human beings, but he is also alert to the

limitations of morality when it comes to extreme atrocities of inhumanity. Therefore, the failure of radical innocence to seek the impossible justice should not simply be regarded as the deficiency of Bondian theory of the human psyche and its dramatization; rather, the enforcement of radical innocence testifies to the human potential of self-lawgiving even in disobeying the universal imperative. Instead of defining justice as a static state and radical innocence as predetermined moral maxims, Bond also defines justice as constituted by creative human actions that change society (2000b: 48).

#### **2.1.4. A Rereading of Radical Innocence and Justice**

Regarding Bond's contradictory accounts of radical innocence and the aporetic nature of the concept of justice, I want to reformulate these problems by foregrounding three concepts simultaneously in operation in Bond's theory: being, being-with and becoming. In different contexts, the idea of radical innocence may refer to the imperative to seek self-preservation ('One has a right to be'), the imperative to seek justice ('Everyone has his or her own right to be'), the imperative of being responsible for others ('Radical innocence is responsibility for other people's lives'), and the imperative to seek justice based on creative acts ('Justice is to be created'). The theoretical difficulties are obvious: first, if one's right to be is the highest imperative, then it logically follows that one's right to be can be obtained even at the expense of depriving others of their right to be. Second, if it is imperative that actions should be taken according to the principle of justice, that is, everyone has his or her right to be, this imperative is always in danger of being violated since, practically, either not everyone is valued equally or someone must be sacrificed in certain circumstances. Thus, the concept of 'being' seems to be opposed to that of 'being-with'. However, this conflict between 'being' and 'being-with' by no means leads to an ethical dead end; instead, for Bond, the impossibility of attaining justice makes it necessary that every ethical decision should be creative to initiate a possible process of 'becoming'.

‘How can one seek justice in an unjust society?’ – This is how Bond encapsulates the aporias inherent in his articulation of subjectivity and ethics, a statement that is also reminiscent of Adorno’s aphorism that wrong life cannot be lived rightly. Contemporary resonances of Adorno’s ethical theory can be found in Judith Butler’s Adorno Prize Lecture, ‘Can One Lead a Good Life in a Bad Life?’ (2012), in which Butler addresses the biopolitical implication of this problem by, instead of first defining what constitutes ‘good’, interrogating what differentiates life from non-life. For Butler, the question of living a good life in a bad life presupposes two meanings of life: a life lived by the individual and a life as a social and economic organization which does not necessarily produce the conditions that make every life equally liveable (2012: 16). Since whether a life is liveable or disposable is determined by a wider network of social, economic, and ideological conditions, a liveable life is thus not a self-evident fact but the product of a social process of inclusion and exclusion. As Butler argues, ‘[i]f there are two such “lives” – my life and the good life, understood as a social form of life – then the life of the one is implicated in the life of the other’ (17). The two meanings within the concept of life correspond to my analysis of ‘being’ and ‘being-with’ inherent in the idea of radical innocence. Intriguingly, Butler also deploys the idea of transformation, a similar idea to that of ‘becoming’, to resolve the tension between the two meanings of life:

If I am to lead a good life, it will be a life lived with others, a live [*sic*] that is no life without those others. *I will not lose this I that I am; whoever I am will be transformed by my connections with others*, since my dependency on another, and my dependability, are necessary in order to live and to live well. (18; my emphasis)

In other words, whereas the concepts of radical innocence and justice inexorably presuppose undecidability, this neither prevents radical innocence as the potential of the subject from being activated nor discards justice as a desirable end of human action. What should be further unravelled is how the subject is necessarily conditioned by external social

factors that subjectivize the subject and how the subjectivized subject can still seek re-subjectivation by interrogating the conditioning factors. Bond explicates the process of subject formation through two models: the developmental model and the structural model. Through the analysis of the two models, I will demonstrate how Bond complicates the concepts of radical innocence and justice in relation to subjectivity.

## **2.2. Bond's Developmental Model of Subjectivity**

### **2.2.1. Neonate – Core Self – Socialized Self**

Bond explains the developmental model of subjectivity mainly in two essays: 'The Reason for Theatre' (1998) and 'Drama and Freedom' (2006). In the following, I will draw on these two essays to illustrate how Bond describes the development of the subject through three stages. But it should first be noted that, according to Bond, the structure of the self is like a palimpsest where different levels of the self are overlapped. Instead of only treating the formation of the self as a linear sequence of developments, Bond maintains that the self is a multilayered structure where different levels of the self are potentially to be activated and reactivated. Therefore, the three stages of the developmental model can also be understood as the three modalities of the subject.

The first stage of the self is called the 'neonate' or the 'monad', which Bond describes as 'a being enclosed within itself, the entirety of everything' (2006: 207). This stage of the self is actually the 'pre-self' – in the world of the neonate-monad, there is no difference between the inside self and the outside world; what the neonate-monad experiences oscillates between pain and pleasure (207-08). At this stage, the imperative of radical innocence to seek the right to be is realized through the seeking of pleasure and avoidance of pain. The form of justice is embodied through 'bodily comfort' (217). Therefore, the neonate's morality is based on 'egoism'. With regard to the role of pain, Bond points out that the experience of pain is the origin of consciousness and the sense of responsibility for the external world (2011:

xiv) or ‘responsibility for the Tragic’ (2000b: 115). Although Bond acknowledges the antagonism between pleasure and pain initiates the neonate into the external world, the sphere of ‘not-I’ as the source of pain, he denies the existence of ‘pleasure in pain’ as exemplified by the phenomenon of masochism (115). Although Bond borrows from Freud the dualism between pleasure and pain, his denial of the existence of masochism shows his divergence from Freud’s theory. While I will analyze how Freud’s psychoanalytic theory influences Bond’s theory in the following section, here I only focus on the idea of pain.

In ‘The Economic Problem of Masochism’ (1924), with the introduction of the death instinct, Freud postulates that, while sadism derives from the portion of the instinct diverted by the libido outwards to serve the sexual function, primary masochism derives from another portion of the instinct that remains libidinally bound within the organism (2001a: 163-64). This primary/erotogenic masochism by no means demonstrates the pure operation of the death instinct, but it evidences the coalescence between the death instinct and the Eros, which manifests itself as ‘pleasure in pain’. Obviously Bond need not completely accept Freud’s formulation, but what problematizes this refusal is Bond’s theory itself. In fact, the logic of the death instinct and pleasure in pain is already intrinsic to Bond’s theory. Contrary to the pleasure principle, Bond proposes that, just like the self seeks its right to be, the self also has the right to commit suicide (Bas and Bond 31). Commenting on the mass suicide in *Have I None*, Bond states:

By committing suicide, the people in the play are acting like those people in prison who deliberately wound themselves – as if their body was the prison and they were destroying it to get out [...]. They only manage to hurt themselves, of course. In the play they commit suicide not because they are fed up with life but because they want to live. But they are not allowed to live as they want and they should. (Tuailon 2015: 161)

We can observe how the ideas of the death instinct and pleasure in pain are

entailed in this comment: firstly, it should be noted that, since the way Bond describes the people in prison is analogous to his description of the neonate as an enclosed entity, it is not without reasons to propose that the neonate, when faced with extreme pain, may possibly seek self-destruction. Secondly, although this example does not directly describe the neonate's behaviour, by following Bond's logic, we can infer that the mass suicide is made possible by the existence of radical innocence, which determines how the neonatal self reacts to pain and pleasure. This suggests that the drive towards death is already included in the logic of radical innocence. Finally, Bond implies that, since the society cannot provide the pleasure desired, self-destruction becomes a desirable and greater pleasure – although it is a pleasure in pain. In short, although Bond's conception of the neonate is structured by radical innocence and the pleasure principle, it cannot exclude the masochistic facets such as pain in pleasure and the death instinct.

Another problem in relation to pain is about otherness. Whereas the neonate is conceived to be an enclosed entity, the neonate's sensations of pain and pleasure originate from the outside world that is yet to be delimited. The feelings of pain in fact point to the existence of otherness beyond the control of the neonate, and this explains why the oscillation between pain and pleasure leads the neonate to distinguish itself from the external world. What is more important is the ethical meaning of otherness. As Levinasian scholar Simon Critchley argues, Freud's concept of trauma as the unpleasurable disruption of psychic equilibrium is akin to Levinas's concept of the subject traumatized by the irreducible other (2005: 71-72). Taking the cue from Critchley's argument that endows psychoanalysis with ethical weight, I propose that, when Bond conceives the neonate's psychic experiences by accentuating the neonate's existential self-assertion, he bypasses the ethical dimension of unpleasurable and painful experiences. That is, the process of the neonate's emergence as self-consciousness necessitates the violence of expelling the other that threatens the existence of the neonate. However, the traces of the other always already constitute the subject, as Levinas defines: 'Subjectivity, prior to or beyond the free and the non-free, obliged with regard to the neighbor, is the breaking point



where essence is exceeded by the infinite' (1998: 12).

The problem of pain in Bond's conception of the neonate again reflects the conceptual ambiguity of radical innocence – it is undecidable whether it is sadistically egoistic or masochistically altruistic. This ambiguity is also present in the later two stages of the subject. The transition from the neonate to the core self is through the first intellectual event – distinguishing the patterns of pleasure and pain and turning such patterns into the ideas of the Comic and the Tragic (2006: 208-09). Notably, Bond introduces the concept of 'the Tragic' as one of the constituents of the human mind and relates this concept with the neonate's painful feelings. For Bond, 'the Tragic' is not necessarily concerned with dramatic form, or with dramatic effects; rather, it is firstly part of the mental activity intrinsic to the human being. Bond thus regards the creation of the self as 'the first drama' and defines the structure of the core self – Tragic, Comic and intellect – as a dramatic and dramatizing structure (209). Although the core self will soon be influenced by the outside world and ideology, it remains the fundamental dramatizing structure upon which the effects of any drama will impose. According to Bond, the functioning of such dramatic structure is as follows: 'The core self of the Tragic, the Comic and reason form the imperative of its right to be. As the right is implicit in thought, the self must express it, and doing so is its radical innocence' (211). While the neonate's imperative is realized through the seeking of pleasure and avoidance of pain, in the core self, this imperative to seek justice is carried out through the balancing of the Comic, the Tragic and reason.

Bond usually uses children's play to illustrate the dramatizing structure of the psyche: 'Children enter the real world through the monad's self-creativity, they anthropomorphize the world, create it in their own image. [...] Trees speak, chairs are tired, storms angry, winds spiteful, plates hungry and demons wait in the dark' (2000b: 119). For Bond, the child's playful anthropomorphizing is their way to utilize their imagination to construct an imagined world of justice. However, it is also possible that this anthropomorphizing only reflects the child's misunderstanding of his or her ability to control the external world. Although children may need to

control their relation with the outside world, it is impossible that the outside world can be constructed according to their imagination. Moreover, the child's act of imagining that the objects other than the self must act according to their will may necessitate not only the use of imagination but also that of violence. Bond is also aware of the problem of the relation of the self to others, as he tries to articulate the moral meaning in the transition from the egoistic neonate to the core self by stating that '[e]gotism is the only possible origin of altruism' (138). However, the problem is that it is unclear in what sense altruism can be said to originate from egotism, and ethical dilemmas often arise in this undecidable zone. In a more corroborative manner, Bond also states: 'The neonate accepts responsibility for the Tragic because no act by it (the sole actor) could remit or eliminate the Tragic' (115). Although Bond acknowledges that the self must take responsibility for the other, how to respond to the other remains undecidable. Bond's theory addresses the problems of otherness and the aggression inherent in the ego, but Bond's positions are uncertain. Despite this, this theoretical uncertainty becomes the driving force of his dramaturgy of subjectivity, as I will illustrate in my analysis of his later plays.

The third stage of self is called 'the socialized self' – the self that is influenced by society and ideology. In this stage, according to Bond, the self is faced with a human paradox: 'Radical innocence cannot be at home *in society* unless it is corrupt. But then the self cannot be at home *in itself*' (2006: 212; original emphasis). Society, according to Bond, is unjust because it is administered and controlled by the unequal system of economics and politics. When the self enters such society, it cannot attain justice as the imperative requires, and this failure either drives the self mad or coerces the self to accept injustice. In most cases, the self becomes accustomed to mainstream ideology while radical innocence, though existent, remains repressed and dormant in the psyche. Therefore, the process of socialization creates a 'gap' between the pre-socialized core self and the socialized self, and the way the core self is socialized is determined by how the gap is filled. Usually, the gap is filled by 'authority', that is, the ideology that 'legitimizes itself through practical utility' (2012: xxxii).

Based on the analysis above, Bond’s developmental model of the subject can be summarized in the following table:

The Neonate	The Core Self	The Socialized Self
From the wholeness of monad to the consciousness of self-other distinction	From the pre-socialized core self to the socialized self	

### 2.2.2. Nothingness

To deepen our understanding of Bond’s idea of gap, the concept of ‘Nothingness’ that Bond elaborates in ‘The Cap’ (2002) is useful here. According to Bond, Nothingness can refer to the neonate’s painful experience of being contradicted in its right of existence (2003: xxii), and this painful experience is later conceptualized as the Tragic. Moreover, the traumatic experience results in a structural gap in the subject and how the subject functions is determined by how the gap is filled. The structural gap can be understood in terms of Nothingness as a site that can be occupied by imagination or ideology. It is important to note that Nothingness not only refers to the gap in the self determined by the interaction between the ideologized reason and imagination, but it also refers to the possibility of changes society can undergo according to specific material conditions and ideology. In other words, the idea of Nothingness is the point of intersection to articulate how the self is structured within society and how society may be changed:

The Neonate	The Core Self	The Socialized Self
Nothingness causes pain	Nothingness occupied by the anthropomorphizing imagination	Nothingness occupied by the ideologized interplay between imagination and reason

To address how the self is socially conditioned, we need to analyze the

role of ideology in Bond's theory. For Bond, ideology acts as the source of authority, which refers to the operation of legitimation through which social reality is constructed and legitimized. In fact, Bond's idea is similar to Paul Ricoeur's – Ricoeur defines ideology as the 'integration between legitimacy claim and belief [...] by justifying the existing system of authority as it is' (1986: 14); this connects 'the concept of ideology as distortion' and 'the integrative concept of ideology' (ibid.). Ricoeur's definition clarifies that ideology as the legitimization of authority necessarily entails distortion in the process of integrating existing systems. Moreover, the process of legitimization inherently implicates violence because there is no guarantee that legitimizes this operation prior to legitimization. Walter Benjamin also analyzes this founding violence of authority in 'Critique of Violence' (1921): 'All violence as a means is either lawmaking or law-preserving. [...] It follows, however, that all violence as a means, even in the most favorable case, is implicated in the problematic nature of law itself' (287). For Benjamin, violence is inherent in the nature of law itself: any act of lawmaking itself is founded on violence and the act of preserving the law requires another form of violence.

More specifically, for Bond, just like the source of legitimization of society resides within 'Nothingness', a gap that can be filled with ideology, the process of socialization experienced by the self is conditioned by how the gap of the subject is filled with ideology, which constitutes the subjective reason. However, Nothingness as the subjective gap can also be occupied by imagination, through which ideology can be problematized in the subjective interaction between reason and imagination. The power of imagination resides in its capacity to posit another source of legitimacy to question the established law and to contest the meaning of justice. In Benjaminian terms, it is the moment when the violence of the law-giving imagination conflicts with the violence of the law-preserving ideology.

While ideology as the source of legitimizing authority is based on violence, ideology as the source of the signifying order is based on 'transcendentalism' (Bond 2003: x), by which social authority operates as the source of meaning. Imagination not only seeks justice, but it also needs

truth. As Bond states, ‘[t]he child’s map was a truthful lie, ideology reverses this to a lying truth’ (104). The process of a child’s mapping of the world begins with the neonate’s experience and continues as the core self constructs the world. Although the child’s anthropomorphized world is true for the child, it is not true from the adult’s perspective. This is why Bond states that ‘[i]n the beginning was the lie and it is the source of all value’ (98) – the process of constructing a fictional world is also a process of value attribution. For Bond, the possibility of attributing different values to reality from the ones attributed by ideology resides in the fact that the self is a gap that resists the totalization of value attribution and the closure of signification. It is in this sense that Bond states that ‘truth can be spoken only in falsehoods. [...] The human truth is always in the process of becoming. Reality is always emergent’ (2012: xxxviii).

Therefore, for Bond, the process of socialization in general is the process in which ideology structures the self. Ideology refers to the source of the legitimation of authority as well as the signifying process that distinguishes truth from falsehood. In other words, ideology determines what is right and what is true, and this is the main function of reason in opposition to imagination, which is the ability to ask why what is right is right and why what is true is true. The interaction between reason and imagination in the subject constitutes Bond’s structural model of the subject. Before I turn to the structural model, I need to analyze how Freud’s theory influences Bond’s developmental model as this clarifies the conceptual origins of Bond’s theory.

### **2.2.3. Bond and Freud**

As I analyze how Kant’s idea of categorical imperatives influences Bond’s conception of radical innocence as the existential imperative, here I want to point out how Bond’s developmental model derives from Freud’s psychoanalytic theory. Regarding his relation to Freud, Bond states: ‘My relation to Freud is that he identified aspects of the human self but interpreted them through ideological distortions. I accept the potency of

Freudian phenomena but not his interpretation of their meaning' (Amoiropoulos 2013: 9). One of Bond's divergences from Freud lies in the concept of the death instinct. This also can be seen in Bond's developmental model – although this theory is apparently influenced by Freud's conception of the development of 'ego-feeling', it still evades Freud's idea of the id as the reservoir of instincts. In *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930), Freud states that, whereas an infant at the beginning cannot distinguish himself or herself from the external world as the source of sensations, he or she will gradually realize that some sources of excitation are beyond his or her control – that is, a 'pleasure-ego' is confronted with an outside world as the source of unpleasure. It is at the moment when the self becomes aware of the outside world that the reality principle begins to intervene in the ego development. Despite this, the feeling of wholeness of the ego will not be completely annulled but will be preserved within the realm of mind (2001c: 66-68). It is obvious that Bond borrows from Freud the concepts such as the distinction between pleasure and pain, the formation of the ego at the advent of the intervention of the outside world, and the palimpsest structure of the psyche.

However, for Freud, the appearance of the autonomous entity of the ego is deceptive since the ego only serves as a façade for the id (2001c: 66). In Freud's second theory of the psychical apparatus, the id as a psychical reservoir of two instincts – Eros and the destructive instinct (the death instinct) – is the oldest area of the psyche. Both the ego, the functioning of which is determined by the pleasure principle and the reality principle, and the super-ego are later diversifications of the id (Freud 2001e: 145-48). If we compare Freud's psychic apparatuses and Bond's model of the subject, the concept of the neonate is analogous to Freud's idea of the undifferentiated 'id-ego' (a concept close to the 'pleasure-ego' previously mentioned), in which the energy of Eros is present and abides by the pleasure principle while the destructive instinct is neutralized by it (Freud 2001e: 149-50). Nevertheless, what differentiates Bond from Freud is that he renounces the existence of the destructive instinct (death instinct), which abides by a pleasure 'beyond the pleasure principle', and only accepts the

idea of the pleasure principle.

Bond's attempt to avoid the concept of the death instinct even leads him to make a questionable judgment on Freud:

If it [imagination] were fantasy we would imagine only what was pleasant – and doubtless sometimes what was unpleasant for others. Freud believed all dreams to be wish-fulfillments [*sic*]. He had to explain why some dreams are nightmares. We have to understand why often imagination turns to loss, danger, dread – the Tragic. (2000b: 113)

Bond's assertion that Freud never discusses nightmares is false. But this is strange since Bond surely knows that Freud does discuss nightmares in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920), in which Freud speculates about the idea of the death instinct and opposes the life instincts (Eros) to the death instinct (Thanatos). Bond's opposition to Freud precisely resides in his opposition to the idea of the death instinct as he states that 'Freud believed that the self sought escape from tensions, to find quietude (Thanatos). This is an ideological misconception [...]. It reduces death to a banality. But death is an existential drama' (2000b: 21). If Bond knows the concept of the death instinct in Freud's writing, he should know that this concept originates from Freud's analysis of war neurosis and its symptomatic repetitions of nightmares.

Although Bond argues that Freud's idea of the death drive 'reduces death to a banality', he still acknowledges the significance of death as 'an existential drama'. In fact, despite Bond's opposition, his theory is closer to Freud than he admits. In order to clarify this relation, we need to consider another difference between Bond and Freud: the concept of the super-ego. According to Bond,

Pleasure is different from pain but the holistic neonate is the self-origin of both. This later becomes the profound relation of the Tragic and the Comic. [...] There has to be a relation between p and p (later between Tragic and Comic) – and subsequently between right and wrong, and this is the basis of civilization. Right and wrong are cultural appropriations of the neonate's self creation. (Amoiropoulos 2013: 7)

In Freud's theory, the ego's sense of right and wrong is decided by the super-ego, which develops out of the ego's identification of the parental authority and later other authority figures and traditional morality (2001d: 64). The super-ego is analogous to Bond's idea of authority, which 'corrupts' the self in the process of socialization. Bond insists that the neonate is the origin of right and wrong because he resists the idea of the self being totally dominated by law and order. However, it by no means follows that Freud thinks the ego must be restricted by the super-ego; on the contrary, Freud proposes that the main aim of psychoanalysis is to strengthen the ego and diminish the power of the super-ego. As he famously states, '[w]here id was, there ego shall be' (80) – instead of obeying the super-ego, the ego should follow the id.

The original German wording of this famous statement is '*Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*'. Although in the standard edition, James Strachey translates 'Es' as 'id' and 'Ich' as 'ego', Jacques Lacan proposes a different translation and interpretation. In Seminar VII on the ethics of psychoanalysis, Lacan translates 'Es' as 'it' and 'Ich' as 'I': 'That "I" which is supposed to come to be where "it" was, and which analysis has taught us to evaluate, is nothing more than that whose root we already found in the "I" which asks itself what it wants' (1992: 7). Towards the end of the seminar, Lacan rephrases the moral experience undergone by the subject in relation to 'it' as 'Have you acted in conformity with the desire that is in you?' (314). Just as 'it' is different from traditional morality manifested as the super ego, the desire in the subject can never be satisfied with what is provided by the present norm. More intriguingly, he uses *Antigone* as his example to illustrate the problem of '*Wo Es war, soll Ich werden*' and endows the death instinct with ethical significance. For Lacan, Antigone's resistance to Creon through her suicide is 'radically destructive' (283). Although Lacan's interpretation of Antigone's desire as destructive is still reminiscent of the death instinct, the difference between 'it' and 'id' is that the former designates a purer ethical stance. That is, the destructiveness of 'it' may not necessarily entail the drive towards death; instead, the destructiveness of 'it'



derives more from it being the Kantian categorical imperative – an unconditional ‘Thou shalt’ (315-16).

Therefore, the fact that Bond misreads Freud is not so much important as the fact that this misunderstanding betrays the implicit theoretical affinity between Bond’s idea of radical innocence and Freud’s idea of the death instinct. If how the neonate experiences the world and how the neonate judges these experiences is structured by radical innocence, then radical innocence cannot only accord itself with the pleasure principle. There is always a surplus beyond the pleasure principle at work, as evidenced by ‘*Es*’, ‘it’, and the death instinct. Only through this interpretation can Bond validate the relationship between radical innocence and the ‘drama of death’, as exemplified by *Antigone* and his own plays.

### **2.3. Bond’s Structural Model of Subjectivity**

In Bond’s theory, the behaviour of the socialized self is determined by the interaction between reason and imagination. The difference between reason and imagination is that between knowing ‘what’ and asking ‘why’. As Bond states, ‘[y]ou can be instructed in bricklaying. Who will teach you whether to build a hospital or a gas chamber? – the imagination’ (2003: 119). In other words, we can be instructed to build a gas chamber and export people into the chamber reasonably and legitimately, but only imagination can question why this is reasonable and legitimate. Based on the basic interaction between reason that instructs and imagination that questions, Bond further complicates the interplay between reason and imagination in his discussion of madness. In ‘Social Madness’ (1997), Bond distinguishes two kinds of madness: clinical madness and social madness. According to Bond, people become clinically mad when they fail to create a functional relationship with society and their madness is developed as an alternative reality that questions the legitimacy of what is regarded as the real. In contrast, social madness designates the fact that people who follow the rational logic of society are mad because society itself, due to its structural injustice, is intrinsically ‘mad’. As Bond further explicates and connects

madness with his theory of subjectivity, it is clear that the ‘corruption’ that occurs when neonates undergo the process of socialization is the foundation of madness (2000b: 87). In Bond’s theory, madness is structurally formed within human subjectivity: while the socially mad undergo the process of normal socialization, the clinically mad who fail or refuse to accept the process turn to delusions to construct an alternative fictional reality. The following table shows how these two kinds of madness correspond to different structural relationships between reason and imagination:

Clinical Madness	The self dominated by imagination
Social Madness	Interaction between reason and imagination within the socialized self
	The socialized self dominated by reason

Notably, Bond’s concept of clinical madness is related to that of the core self. The pre-socialized core self refers to the state in which the child uses imagination to anthropomorphize and construct the world. Although the pre-ideologized logic of anthropomorphizing imagination is different from the logic by which the socialized self interacts with society, it is the means by which the pre-socialized self claims the right to be in the world. Following Bond’s theory of the developmental model, we can infer that clinical madness may derive from the failure of the socializing process, and this is how Bond characterizes Billy in *Chair*. As an adopted child by Alice, Billy is forbidden to leave the apartment and thus never interacts properly with outer reality. Instead, his interaction with the world is imaginatively constructed through his pictures. The other possible cause of clinical madness is the regression from the socialized self to the core self as a symptom of trauma, exemplified by Dea’s hallucination in *Dea*, in which Dea is driven mad by the death of her son.

In addition to the self being dominated by imagination, the self can also possibly be dominated by reason. As Bond states, ‘[m]adness is an excess of rationality’ (2003: 98). In the case of the self excessively dominated by reason, ‘[t]he mad are reduced to relying entirely on their

reason' (ibid.). The self dominated by reason adheres to law and order, and the symptom of this kind of social madness is the instrumentalization of the self in submission to the order. In *Chair*, the Welfare Officer, who interrogates Alice with cold bureaucratic language, demonstrates herself as an instrument of the totalitarian state. In Part Three of *Dea*, Cliff, a soldier wandering in the ruins, seems to be 'possessed' by the military command and cannot stop himself from shooting Dea. The self who completely succumbs to reason renounces any resource to imagination and acts strictly in accordance with the operation of authority. This recalls what Hannah Arendt's commentary in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (1951): 'Totalitarian government can be safe only to the extent that it can mobilize man's own will power in order to force him into that gigantic movement of History or Nature which supposedly uses mankind as its material' (1973: 473).

However, it is impossible to define the subject through such a schematic manner. As Bond states, Hitler may destroy for irrational reason, but his acts of violence are not without imagination (Hankins xcix). Lacan, in analyzing psychosis, also contends that even psychotic hallucinations are based on another kind of reason – the lack of the order of signification need not prevent the psychotic from constituting another reality (2007: 470). Thus, the problem is not to discern the topology of how reason and imagination relate to each other since, in whichever form, this entanglement structures the subject in madness. The problem is how to disentangle imagination and reason in order to articulate alternative forms of subjectivity. For Bond, this is the task of drama that dramatizes subjectivity.

#### **2.4. Dramatizing Subjectivity**

By implication, for Bond, the subject is structurally mad. Whether the subject is dominated by pure reason, pure imagination, or by any harmonious, yet corrupted, interactions between reason and imagination, the subject is anchored in different forms of madness. However, what is at stake is how radical imagination can become – radical innocence at the foundation

of imagination is the force that radically questions any form of madness. In order to go beyond the enclosed circle of madness, in ‘The Third Crisis’ (2012), Bond articulates the idea of ‘psychosis’ as another form of madness that transcends the enclosed structure of madness. While the act of authority that fills the gap with law is an act of necessary violence, the self, in certain circumstances, may not be able to accept the established order and seeks to create ‘unreal-reality’ (Bond 2012: xxxii) through imagination. This is what Bond terms as ‘psychosis’. The discrepancy between the socialized self and ideology compels the subject to question the social order and to seek justice, but those who disobey and transgress the law are usually regarded as mad and abnormal. In defence of madness, Bond states that ‘[t]he mad go mad in order to seek the truth of their situation, and in drama the fictions-in-the-fiction are the means by which our madness heals itself’ (xxxviii). It is important to point out that, for Bond, the only way to transcend the structural madness is to keep psychotically questioning and self-questioning – this is radical innocence in its purest form as well as a process of deconstructive self-dramatizing.

Although Bond seldom refers to the thought of deconstruction, he does refer to it once: ‘Deconstruction shows that there is no “closure” in thought, nowhere meaning may be secured or value confirmed. But value comes from the imagination *because* it cannot be stabilised by closure’ (2003: 114-15; original emphasis). It is due to the impossibility of the closure of meaning that Bond states that drama is ‘a form of psychosis’ that ‘unravels ideology’s contortions’ (2012: xxxviii). Therefore, for Bond, imagination refers not only to the subject’s faculty but also to the imagined dramatic work that preserves the operation of imagination. Imagination, or, radical innocence, can ‘unbind’ the distortions of reality and ‘rebind’ these elements into a new order that can be preserved in dramatic form and disclose new possibilities of approaching reality.

To illustrate the relation between Bond’s theory and his plays, in the following I will examine two plays, *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* (2001) and *Have I None* (2000), focusing on the extreme moments when the characters are forced to decide ‘the just act’ towards others and how these

actions demonstrate Bond's theory of subjectivity. While both plays are set in a totalitarian state in 2077, they delineate the world from different viewpoints and provide contrasting justifications for the justice enacted. This attests to the fact that the indeterminate nature of the Bondian subject can only be conserved through different dramatizations.

## **2.5. *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century***

*The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* was first staged by Alain Françon at the National Theatre de la Colline in Paris in 2001. Set in a dystopian future where people live under severe surveillance, *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* revolves around Sweden's journey of escape. He was incarcerated due to vandalism, but he succeeded in escaping by pulling the tag that tracks him out of his chest. Under the surveillance of the totalitarian regime, Sweden is reduced to the status of *homo sacer* – outside the control of the system, he becomes a bare life. When he first meets Hoxton and Grig in the ruins of the suburbs, Grig states: 'Escapes – law ain cover 'em' (Bond 2003: 225). When Sweden recounts how he threw the tag into the river, he is also aware of his own 'symbolic death' in the social system: 'That's 'ow I died – drown myself 'n floated out t' sea' (Bond 2003: 227). However, even though he has been excluded from the society, he remains positive and hopeful. At the beginning of the play, Sweden is portrayed as a child-like young man – he '*jumps onto the wall and balances along it*' or '*sits on the wall, casually swinging his heels against it*' (Bond 2003: 231). Sweden even cries like a child when Grig does not believe what he says about the tag. In the Paris production in 2001,<sup>23</sup> Éric Caravaca's interpretation of Sweden established him as a child-like young man by agile body movements in contrast to Hoxton's and Grig's slow movements suggestive of their exhaustion. The physical fatigue was established not only through their physical appearance but also through the way they speak. This contrast is made explicit in Françon's production, in which Grig, played by Carlo

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<sup>23</sup> My analysis of this production is based on the recording archived at Ina THEQUE.

Brandt, spoke with a sore throat due to lack of water. It is important to point out that Bond's conception of the subject is never an abstract entity but must be concretized as a human body determined by physical vulnerability and finitude. Especially in this play, Sweden's journey is also a journey of accelerating physical suffering.

Although Hoxton refuses to leave with Sweden, who claims that there is somewhere better than the ruins, he still leaves. During Sweden's absence, Grace, Hoxton's daughter, finds her mother in the ruins. Hoxton left Grace when she was chased out of her house because she could not afford to keep her. Before that, Hoxton used to work for a rich woman, and other women who could not afford to raise their children paid Hoxton and left their children there. However, Hoxton used the money only to raise Grace and abandoned other children. Contrary to Sweden, who wants to leave, Grace comes to the suburb ruins in order to live together with Hoxton. Later, when Sweden returns, he has been blinded by the army. Different from Sweden, who is determined to escape from the control of the regime, Hoxton, Grig, and Grace are reluctant to escape with him – while Grig states that he will return to his small hometown once Sweden leaves Hoxton, Hoxton and Grace only intend to stay in the suburb although Sweden warns that the ruins will soon be cleared by the regime.

Frustrated with Hoxton's refusal to leave with him and anxious to find a way of living without eyes, Sweden threatens to kill Hoxton: 'Tell me 'ow I live! Out there! No eyes! No face! Tell me!' (Bond 2003: 251). Sweden's killing of Hoxton can be explained by his revenge for her lack of care and help, and his stabbing Hoxton's breasts implies their pseudo mother-son relationship and Sweden's pre-Oedipal desire. Being reduced by the situation to, in Bond's words, 'a powerless infant' (Tuailon 2015: 195), Sweden's homicide can be compared to the neonate's insistence on his right to be – the violence enacted out of radical innocence. Sweden even sings and dances with Hoxton's corpse as if he returns to the stage of the core self and enacts his fantasy of omnipotence. In Bond's conception of the core self, children's play always potentially entails aggression and violence, and this is clearly demonstrated by Sweden's actions. After killing Hoxton, Sweden

accuses Grace of co-opting with Grig and kills her out of his fear that Grace may betray him. After the death of Hoxton and Grace, Sweden tries to escape again – this time, he still fails and his legs are mutilated by the army. Grig, though having become a member of the state, witnesses Sweden’s suffering and claims that Sweden is ‘innocent’. Grig’s assertion that Sweden is innocent suggests that Sweden’s ‘crimes’ originate from a bigger crime, that is, a bad life in which living a good life is impossible. As Bond states, since the characters’ violence derives from their resistance to the authoritarian domination, the violence bears ethical significance: ‘They can be violent to each other, but it is always on a moral ground – to save someone else and make a new valuable life’ (Tuailon 2015: 193).

In terms of Bond’s theory of subjectivity, the world of ruins both represents an imagined post-apocalyptic world and a psychic field in which the palimpsest structure of the Bondian subject can be revealed – this is made obvious especially in Sweden’s interactions with Hoxton and Grace before he murders them. In terms of images of the stage, Bond intends that the wall should delimit ‘a boundary between the site and the social world outside, between the self and the material reality, the subjective and the objective’ (Tuailon 2015: 123). As these characters are what Zygmunt Bauman designate as ‘wasted lives’, the outside social world, though only obliquely presented, perfectly embodies a totalitarian state that has the absolute right to ‘preside over the distinction between order and chaos, law and lawlessness, citizen and *homo sacer*’ (Bauman 33; original emphasis). As Bauman suggests, such society is based on the logic of ‘order-building’, through which everything should be put in its proper place (30). Therefore, paradoxically, this dystopian society of order *can* be the world of justice desired by the Bondian subject, whose imperative is to seek a world in which everything has its own place. Since the construction of a just world must always already be a deconstructive process, within any self-claimed just world there is concealed violence that maintains the surface of just order. In this sense, the landscape of ruins in this play actually discloses a terrain where the deconstructive desire for justice confronts the established social world of justice – this dystopian imagination of ruins can be

productive since it guides our gaze towards the wasted lives as well as towards the utopian potential inherent within the ruins.

In *Performance in a Time of Terror* (2011), Jenny Hughes argues that performances of waste, although they depict the mortification of the other, can provide possible sites for interrogating resilience and adaptability (195). Bond's combination of dystopian imagination and utopian longing exemplifies Hughes's idea of 'critical mimesis', which is defined as 'a practice of performance that materialises protective and habitable worlds in which life might encounter its own decay, whilst also securing itself in the world' (22). As 'critical mimesis' is not to reproduce the world as it is but a self-conscious interrogation of the process of making and unmaking of the world, the works of art that evoke ruins can 'evoke, capture and mobilise the sensual domains of mortification and adaptation, decay and vivification' (191). In addition to demonstrating the ethically extreme situations, in his stage directions Bond strikingly details how the characters cope with their everyday life in the ruins – they need to drink, wash clothes, and hang the washing. In performance, these everyday routines, which are placed in an unusual situation, attract attention since they sensually remind us of how our human existence is built on these mundane chores, and even in the ruins the possibility of humanity starts from these routines. These routines also reflect the character's situation and internal state. When Sweden kills Hoxton, he even notices how he has made the washing dirty and tries to hang the pieces of washing; however, disturbed by his murder of Hoxton, he cannot do it properly. Also, Grace, after arriving at the ruins, makes a little path by walking up and down between the ramp and the cell as if she needs to adapt to the ruins and make the place livable.

Bond uses Thatcher's dictum that 'there is no such thing as society' as the epigraph to this play, suggesting that, through this play, he interrogates how the atomized individuals can rebuild a community together and how this process inevitably leads to violence. Being both a victim who suffers from mutilation and dismemberment and a victimizer who kills Hoxton and Grace, Sweden bears the most extreme suffering and enacts irremissible violence. Through Sweden, Bond explores the extreme end of humanity and



compels us to answer whether Sweden ‘is still a man’, in Primo Levi’s terms. Sacrificing others’ lives to make oneself live seems immoral, but for Bond, this is the manifestation of the cost of resistance and emblematic of our modern human condition (Tuaille 2015: 193). Although we may understand Sweden’s violence, his actions can hardly be morally normative. Bond tends to stipulate the primacy of the imperative for justice and bypasses the problems of aggressiveness and otherness, but when subjectivity is dramatized, drama can be a medium that guides us through different extremes of (in)humanity unexplored in his theory. Although Bond may define what Sweden has done as ‘just’ and ‘innocent’, this by no means excludes other possibilities of defining humanity – whereas Sweden embodies one extreme of humanity, in *Have I None*, Sara embodies the other extreme.

## **2.6. *Have I None***

*Have I None* was first presented by Big Brum in Birmingham in 2000. Françon directed the play at the National Theatre de la Colline in 2003 and restaged it in 2008. My analysis of performance refers to the production in 2003.<sup>24</sup> In the world of *Have I None*, people are required to abolish their memories. Jams, a police patroller, and Sara, his wife, live a life of amnesia. Their life, nevertheless, is disrupted by Grit, who appears one day and claims that he is Sara’s brother because he found a photo of their past, which restored his memory. Disturbed by Grit, who breaks down their daily order, Jams and Sara decide to kill Grit by poisoning his soup, but it is Sara who ends up dying by drinking the soup.

Through Jams, Sara, and Grit, Bond’s presentation of the modalities of subjectivity in this play is almost schematic: Jams embodies the subject whose behaviour is principally determined by authoritarian reason; Sara is divided between reason and imagination; Grit evokes and become part of Sara’s memory and imagination. However, we should still be attentive to

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<sup>24</sup> My analysis of the production is based on the recording archived at Ina THEQUE.

how Bond gives nuances to this schematic presentation. Jams's logic of action is primarily determined by the external order that has been internalized. The internalization of law and order sustains the surface of everyday normality for Jams and Sara – this is demonstrated through Jams's and Sara's obsession with how the chair and table should be placed, and when Grit disrupts this order, they become paranoiac, as Bond observes: 'The characters are obsessed with the place of things because authority has abolished the past and this made society amnesiac' (Tuailon 2015: 161). However, even though Jams may embody what Hannah Arendt designates as 'the banality of evil' – 'sheer thoughtlessness' and 'lack of imagination' (2000: 379) – in Bond's characterization, he still provides the space for radical innocence. In Arendt's term, the psychic potential of radical innocence is analogous to 'natality' – the inner capacity to start new thinking against the logicity through which the mind submits itself to totalitarian tyranny (1973: 473). Jams's radical innocence is provoked by his witnessing an old woman trying to climb on a table in order to fix a picture in a ruined house. Bond states that 'this table seems to represent this old woman's home before it was ruined, so it belongs to the forbidden pre-amnesiac past' (Tuailon 2015: 118). Although Jams never awakens like Sara does, his unease regarding his sight of the old woman suggests that the potential to approach the world differently still rests inside him.

Different from Jams, Sara's encounter with Grit awakens her to the existence of her past concealed by the authorities, and her awakening results in her drinking the poisoned soup, an act that seems to be undertaken in order to save Grit:

**Grit** She drank my soup!

**Jams** What? (*He looks at the table. Points to the bowl in Sara's hands.*) No – that's his –

**Grit** (*struggling in the ropes*) I hope it chokes the bitch!

**Jams** (*pointing*) His! – poisoned.

**Sara** *cleans the inside of the bowl with her finger and licks it.*

**Jams** You drank his deliberately!

**Sara** *drops the bowl.*

**Grit** Poisoned?

**Sara** Take me outside. I don't want to die in the house.

**Grit** You tried to poison me! (Bond 2000a: 87)

Sara's suicide remains enigmatic since she never reveals her real motives. It is not clear whether she kills herself in order to save Grit or does so for other reasons. Another enigma is whether Sara is Grit's sister or not. While Sara refuses to accept Grit's claim that he is her brother, in a rather mysterious interval in this play when Sara wears a coat decorated with spoons on one side and bones on the other, she is able to share with Grit's childhood memory. Bond's comment on this question is rather ambiguous: 'He is real but he is also a figment of Sara's mind, she is inventing with various odds and ends, to create a human relationship which is forbidden by her society' (Tuailon 2015: 162). The ambiguity is deftly demonstrated in Françon's Paris production in 2003: in this interval, the lighting is darkened and fused with Sara's costumes, resulting in a dreamlike atmosphere that reminds spectators that this interval can be Sara's unconscious working instead of reality. The subjective implication is enforced by the fact that Jams cannot see Sara in her coat. This ambiguity is further sustained by Dominique Valadié's acting: she portrayed Sara living in two different worlds – in her quarrel with Jams, she was presented by Valadié as a farcical character; however, when she contemplates the door-knocking unheard by Jams, or when she starts to share memory with Grit, Valadié's Sara was calm and solemn. In addition, the spoons and bones adorning the coat are reminiscent of life and death, suggesting that Sara's unconscious may be as powerful as the neonate's primal experiences of the world.

In this play, the act of committing suicide is described by Grit as a collective phenomenon, and Bond sees it as the symptom of human desire to live on (Tuailon 2015: 161). Undeniably, Sara can commit suicide 'deliberately' to save Grit whether he is her brother or not. Nevertheless, instead of being the act of self-sacrifice, Sara's suicide can also be categorized as only one more case among others. In other words, she may commit suicide out of egoistic need rather than altruistic concern just as she imagines that Grit is his brother only to achieve self-appeasement. Obviously, Bond intends both the relationship between Sara and Jams and

Sara's motives of suicide to remain ambiguous, but we can be certain that there is another psychic level operating within Sara. Even before Grit appears, Sara keeps hearing the mysterious sound of door-knocking, a sign of Sara's inner disturbance that she cannot suppress. Both Grit's appearance and the sound of door-knocking, instead of being defined as 'real', should be regarded as 'spectral'.

In *Have I None*, it is through the dramaturgy of spectrality that Bond's presents the palimpsest structure of subjectivity. This is especially demonstrated through Sara, who is haunted and becomes herself a ghost. Before Sara recounts her memory of Grit, she appears wearing '*a ground-length loose coat of stiff sky-blue silk [...] covered with metal spoons*' (Bond 2000a: 77). After Sara finishes narrating her shared memory with Grit, she '*takes off the coat, turns the coat inside out, and puts it on again. The inside is black and covered with bones*' (Bond 2000a: 78). Sara's spectral presence makes her visible to Grit but invisible to Jams. Curiously, in 'Phenomenon and Enigma' (1957), Levinas states that an enigma manifests itself as an absolute disturbance as if '[s]omeone unknown to me rang my doorbell and interrupted my work' (1987: 64). An enigma cannot be transformed into a phenomenon that is 'a presence to the gaze and to speech' (61) – moreover, an enigma remains '[a] quite different plot [which] takes form in the I' (70). Levinas's enigma as 'a different plot' is not without dramaturgical implications. Both the sound of door-knocking and Sara's emergence as a spectre are 'enigmatic' in the sense that these occurrences interrupt the coherence of emplotment based on materialistic logic and possibility. Although Bond does not explain who knocks on the door and why Sara dresses herself like a spectre, the gaps of emplotment are not dramaturgical failures – instead, their significance derives from their rupturing force to disturb the totalitarian order within the play as the only logical emplotment of reality.

In fact, spectrality permeates underneath the ostensibly highly-ordered oppressive world. Another spectre in this play is Grit if what Sara recounts is true: 'All next day I was terrified they'd find out you were dead. Blame me! – I'd dragged you. I was frightened in the way only a child can be...No

one found out. The doctor didn't notice you were dead' (Bond 2000a: 78). If Grit is Sara's deceased brother, his ghostly appearance also manifests Sara's inner disturbance. He comes to find Sara because he has found a photo that reminds him of his sister, and Sara can only recognize him when she also starts to be haunted by her memory. However, if Jams cannot see Sara as a spectre, how is it possible that Jams can see Grit as a spectre materialized by Sara's memory? Or is it possible to assume that Grit's appearance also disturbs Jams, who seems to be a strict rule-abiding patroller? At the end of the play, after Grit takes Sara's corpse and leaves the house, Jams hears again a knock at the door. The spectral sound of door-knocking does not disappear after Sara dies and Grit leaves. Instead, the spectre still haunts the house, and Jams is no exception to this haunting.

As psychoanalysis academic Stephen Frosh points out, the experience of being haunted is to be affected by an inner voice that keeps returning (2). But what is the significance of this inner voice? Towards the conclusion of his analysis of the ethics of the voice from Socrates to Heidegger, philosophy scholar Mladen Dolar states that, in the tradition of the inner voice of conscience, the ethical voice always comes from the Other: 'The ethical voice is not the subject's own, it is not for the subject to master or control it [...]. But it does not pertain simply to the Other either, although it stems from it: it would belong to the Other if it were reducible to positive commands, if it were not merely an opening and an enunciation' (102). In other words, the voice of conscience is not an external demand that requires any specific moral actions, nor is it the inner freedom that governs the autonomous subject. It is the opening that belongs neither to the subject nor to the Other. But how should this opening be understood? Dolar ends his analysis with Heidegger's ontological description of the voice, which he regards as the purest form of the ethics of the voice: it is the voice of alterity that disrupts self-reflexivity, extricates us from submerging into existents, and directs us into the opening of Being (96). Therefore, in Heidegger's ontology, the opening is the opening of Being. However, it is peculiar that Dolar fails to take into account Levinas's ethics, which is based on a critique of Heidegger. Foreseeably, Levinas refutes the association between

the voice of conscience and being:

[T]o hear the voice of conscience – it is not enough to be (rather, it is not a question of being) in relationship with a freedom, perceiving it in the other, since we already recognize that freedom in its transactions. This freedom is already presented to me when I buy up, or exploit. For me to know my injustice, for me to catch sight of the possibility of justice, a new situation is required: someone has to call me to account. Justice does not result from the normal play of injustice. It comes from the outside, “through the door”. (1987: 39-40)

According to Levinas, the voice of conscience does not come from the opening of Being but from the outside that not only interrupts self-coherence but also resists being pacified. It is the voice ‘through the door’, the voice that originates from a stranger in proximity but beyond grasp.

In Bond’s theory, the idea of radical innocence emerges as intimately caught up with the idea of the voice of conscience. The operation of radical innocence as the existential imperative to seek justice presupposes an untotalizable residue like a voice of conscience that demands the self to correct the unjust. Even in the phase of the neonate-monad, radical innocence as the imperative to assert one’s right to be is already posited as an inner voice: ‘I have the right to be’. However, this inner voice is not completely interior as it also comes from beyond the enclosed self. Therefore, both Grit’s appearance and the sound of door-knocking dramatizes the ethical relationality that keeps structuring and haunting the subject, no matter how conformist and ideologized he or she is. Sara’s suicide also attests to this spectral structure of ethical relationality – she chooses to commit suicide either because of her desire to die for Grit or because of her awareness of the impossibility of ethical relations.

## **2.7. Conclusion**

In analyzing *The War Plays*, theatre academic Jean-Pierre Sarrazac maintains that the only character is ‘humanity’ (134). In fact, rather than

being autonomous individuals, characters in Bond's later plays embody a variety of possibilities of humanity in accordance with his theory of subjectivity. Through the comparison of Sweden's and Sara's reactions to extreme situations, we can observe that the dramatized Bondian subject foregrounds the undecidability of justice that cannot be predetermined theoretically. What confront Sara and Sweden are moments of undecidability in which they are forced to make an impossible just decision. The undecidability stems from the theoretical incompatibility between the particular situation and the universal imperative. Moreover, in a totalitarian world where every human being is reduced to a mere means of governmental rationality, possible actions of justice necessarily entail violence as a means of resistance to the dominant authorities. Such acts of violence, hence, are manifested through Sweden's homicide and Sara's suicide. In addition, as Karoline Gritzner argues, in line with Adorno's thinking, 'the concept of the self continues to be decentred and re-imagined on the contemporary stage where it functions like a residual reminder of the unrealized (utopian) promise [...] of freedom' (2008: 330). Indeed, in Bond's theory and dramaturgy of subjectivity, 'the self' remains a necessary concept, but it is always already divided and corrupted. However, this does not mean that the self is incapable of ethical actions – on the contrary, both the palimpsest structure of the psyche and the faculty of radical innocence endow the Bondian subject with the potential to decide how to act in extreme moments of undecidability and define the possible forms of humanity and freedom.

Bond's theory of subjectivity is important not only because this theory demonstrates how Bond defines humanity but also because it determines Bond's dramaturgy of his later plays. In the next chapter, I will analyze how Bond's theory of subjectivity determines his post-Auschwitz dramaturgy. As I argued in the previous chapter, throughout his playwriting career, Bond has developed different dramaturgical strategies to deal with the Holocaust, and his post-Auschwitz dramaturgy is conceivable only on the basis of his theory of subjectivity.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Aesthetics and Ethics in Bond's Post-Auschwitz Dramaturgy**

As I outlined in the previous chapter, at the heart of Bond's theory of subjectivity is his quest for a new form of drama in response to the problematic of 'after-Auschwitz'. Bond contends that post-Auschwitz drama requires a new conception of humanity and this new conception must be incorporated by drama. While the previous chapter partly explicated this problematic by focusing on Bond's theory of subjectivity, in this chapter I will focus on how Bond approaches Auschwitz both as a historical event and as a dramaturgical trope, and in what sense Bond's later drama can be defined as 'post-Auschwitz'.

While I term Bond's late works as post-Auschwitz drama, how to define this term is not without its problems. Robert Skloot, who has edited two volumes of *The Theatre of the Holocaust* (1982; 1999) and written *The Darkness We Carry: The Drama of the Holocaust* (1988), does not include Beckett's or Bond's plays in his selection and discussion. While Skloot acknowledges the existence of various dramaturgical approaches to the Holocaust, he refers to 'the historical event itself' as the shared foundation of what he terms 'the Theatre of the Holocaust' (1982: 19). Furthermore, he posits five criteria that Holocaust plays have to meet: they should 'pay homage to the victims,' 'educate audiences to the facts of history,' 'produce an emotional responses to those facts,' 'raise certain moral questions,' and 'draw a lesson from the events re-created' (14). In short, the criteria Skloot adopts are based on historical realism and the educational potential of theatrical experience. Gene A. Plunka refers to Skloot's five objectives of Holocaust drama and espouses similar criteria in *Holocaust Drama: The Theatre of Atrocity* (2011). He admits that playwrights of Holocaust drama face the difficulty of choosing dramaturgical styles between realistic and absurd: while realism cannot meet the most rigorous standards of historical truthfulness, absurdism distorts the absoluteness of reality (17). Despite this, he makes clear that his intention is to analyze those plays that are written



directly about Nazi genocide and whose historical references can be examined according to their accuracy and veracity. Therefore, he excludes absurdist plays such as Beckett's *Endgame* and Ionesco's *The Chairs* since they are not regarded as Holocaust plays as defined in this way (18-19).

Michael Rothberg proposes that Holocaust writings are principally determined by two kinds of epistemological and representational presumptions: realist and antirealist. By realist he means a claim that knowledge is attainable and such knowledge can be represented, while by antirealist he means a claim that the Holocaust – which is hardly knowable – cannot be translated by means of traditional representational conventions (3-4). The distinction between realist and anti-realist dramaturgy is not absolute. Rather, they constitute a spectrum of dramaturgical possibilities in which Holocaust plays can be situated. It is also possible to discover a blend of different dramaturgical approaches within one play.

Contrary to Skloot and Plunka, whose definition of Holocaust drama is realist, Karoline Gritzner and Élizabeth Angel-Perez adopt a more antirealist approach to discussing drama and the Holocaust. In Gritzner's *Adorno and Modern Theatre: The Drama of the Damaged Self in Bond, Rudkin, Barker and Kane* (2015), she bases her discussion of these playwrights on Adornian post-Auschwitz aesthetics, and she argues that their works can 'appear as autonomous response to the instrumental and identitarian logic of consumerist society' (18). By implication, 'Auschwitz' here, instead of being regarded only as a historical event, refers to what Adorno designates as the logic of identity thinking, which also permeates contemporary consumer society. In addition, these works are not represented 'in socially, morally or politically engaged terms', which are further challenged through gestures of dramaturgical violation (23). In *Voyages au Bout du Possible: Les Théâtres du Traumatisme de Samuel Beckett à Sarah Kane* (2006), Angel-Perez bases her analysis of British contemporary 'post-Auschwitz' drama on the idea of Auschwitz as traumatism instead of on historical events, and she clearly states that what interests her is 'the decontextualization of Auschwitz' that endows the works with 'transgression, constraint and novelty' (16).

Therefore, ‘post-Auschwitz drama’ is a term to be contested with its contours oscillating between realist and antirealist. As I suggested in Chapter One, *Summer* and *Coffee*, both based on the Holocaust, adopt different dramaturgical strategies. What makes *Coffee* different from *Summer* is Bond’s new dramaturgy and theory of human subjectivity. Dramatic representation is determined by how we approach the external world and by how we imagine the potentials of inner subjectivity. These problems determine the nature of the interaction between perceiver and representation: is it delivery of knowledge, consumption of enjoyment, or fracture of predetermined ideology? The epistemological, the aesthetic and the ethical are inseparable. Only by contextualizing Bond’s late ‘post-Auschwitz drama’ in his ‘subjective turn’ will it be possible to discuss what ‘post-Auschwitz’ means in Bond’s late works.

In the following I will re-examine the ethical and aesthetic significance of the Palermo improvisation and argue that it can be defined as a basic dramaturgical unit of Bond’s post-Auschwitz drama. After pointing out how the improvisation demonstrates what the Slovenian philosopher Alenka Zupančič defines as ‘the ethics of the Real’, I will proceed to draw on Adorno and Levinas to demonstrate that the Palermo improvisation aesthetically embodies the dramaturgy of negativity and ethically interrogates the problem of alterity. By bringing forth a tentative Adornian-Levinasian model to understand Bond’s post-Auschwitz drama, I will analyze two of Bond’s representative post-Auschwitz plays: *Coffee*, which, although I analyzed it in Chapter One briefly, will be discussed at length in this chapter, and *Born*.

### **3.1. The Palermo Improvisation and the Ethics of the Real**

In the previous chapter, I analyzed and problematized how Bond starts from the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard to develop his theory of subjectivity. However, as for the ethical significance of these two situations, they are not of the same nature. In *Ethics of the Real: Kant, Lacan* (2000), Zupančič distinguishes two modes of ethics: classical ethics

and modern ethics. In the model of classical ethics, the subject is forced by tyranny to obey and does not have any choice; however, in the model of modern ethics, the subject is involved within situations of terror in which the subject is forced to choose whether the subject wants the object chosen or not (2000: 213). According to Zupančič, classical ethics is exemplified by the case of Antigone, the ethical logic of which is as follows: for one thing (the absolute condition) in life, the subject is ready to sacrifice anything else, and the subject realizes this absolute condition by sacrificing everything, including life (257). Modern ethics is exemplified by the case of Sygne de Coûfontaine in Paul Claudel's *The Hostage* [*L'Otage*], the ethical logic of which is as follows: for one thing (the absolute condition) in life, the subject is ready to sacrifice everything without exception, but the only way the subject can realize this absolute condition is to sacrifice everything, including the absolute condition (258). To illustrate modern ethics, Zupančič provides another example that is more pertinent to my analysis: Alan Pakula's film *Sophie's Choice* (1991).<sup>25</sup> In *Sophie's Choice*, Sophie is requested by the officer at Auschwitz to choose which of her two children is to be killed. At first she refuses to 'choose'; however, because the officer threatens to kill both of her children if she refuses to choose, eventually she chooses the boy and watches her daughter taken away. The scene ends with a close-up of Sophie's silent scream.

In Zupančič's analysis, while the Real is demonstrated negatively by Antigone's suicide, the image of which bears dazzling sublime splendor, in the case of Sophie, the Real is exhibited through her grimace and voiceless scream. In Lacanian terms, the Real is the Thing [*das Ding*], which functions as the cause of desire instead of the object of desire – that is, while desire does not seek any specific object, its action of seeking is activated by the Thing. As Zupančič argues, desiring without objects does not imply that there is no object to be sought at the end of the realization of desire; on the

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<sup>25</sup> In addition to *Sophie's Choice* and *The Hostage*, Zupančič also mentions that Brecht's *The Measures Taken* is another example of the terror implicated in modern ethics, and this implies that the modern dimension of the ethical is a general one (2000: 221). I should add that, as a playwright working on Brecht's legacy, Bond in his later work engages more with the ethical dimension of Brecht's drama than with other dramaturgical devices.

contrary, the realization of desire ends with creating an object *ex nihilo* (2003: 184). She also states that the Real is encountered as ‘the impossible thing’ that reverses and reconfigures the symbolic order, and this reconfiguration of the symbolic has effect in reality (2000: 235).

In order to relate these two modes of ethics of the Real to Bond’s dramaturgy, I need to consider what ‘the Real’ might mean in Bond’s theory. In the Palermo improvisation, like Sophie, the soldier is forced to kill either his sibling or his neighbor’s child; in the Russian guard’s story, the guard, like Antigone, chooses suicide rather than to obey the order. Both cases not only exemplify different models of ethics as defined by Zupančič, but also entail different processes of subjectivation. The soldier in the Palermo improvisation experiences subjectivation that ‘coincides [...] with the destitution of the subject (Zupančič 2000: 216); while the Russian guard can only assert his subjectivity by ‘a radical desubjectivation’ (213) through death. Either through the destitution of the subject or by desubjectivation, the subject desires an object that the symbolic order can never provide, but they still keep seeking. This structure of ‘seeking without any object’ can be found in Bond’s definition of radical innocence as a permanent creative activity that seeks justice, an act that can be activated in extreme situations, or, in Bondian terms, ‘accident time’.

Since the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard presuppose the ethical structure of the Real – the impossible structure of desire aiming at the Real – the fact that Bond keeps returning to these aporetic situations not only attests to the impossibility of the ethical structure but demonstrates that he keeps the aporetic structure dramaturgically unresolved. That is, in order to respond to the aporetic nature of extreme situations, Bond’s dramaturgy negates the dramatic impulse for resolution and denouement. In the following I will argue that this dramaturgy can be understood through Adorno’s aesthetic theory of non-identity.

### **3.2. Adorno’s Aesthetics of Non-identity**

According to Adorno,

Aesthetic identity seeks to aid the nonidentical, which in reality is repressed by reality's compulsion to identity. Only by virtue of separation from empirical reality, which sanctions art to model the relation of the whole and the part according to the work's own need, does the artwork achieve a heightened order of existence. (2002: 4)

For Adorno, the principle that governs reality is that of identity – a process of reducing non-identical singularities into identical entities – and the function of art is to aid the non-identical to be emancipated from the process of identification. Thus, aesthetic identity, that is, the process of constituting an artwork, can accommodate the singularities that are removed from reality and achieve ‘a heightened order of existence’. In Adorno's terms, an artwork formed by the principle of aesthetic identity is a ‘semblance’ (*Schein*), which Adorno defines as the aesthetic unity posited against empirical reality (105). However, although an aesthetic semblance can preserve the non-identical that is excluded by reality, it is still an identity within which the non-identical may be erased by the principle of aesthetic identity. Therefore, Adorno contends that the process of forming an aesthetic semblance is one of integrating different elements that derive from the empirical world and of establishing its own autonomy against reality; however, there inevitably remains the heterogeneous in semblance (*ibid.*). In other words, the structuring of a semblance ineluctably entails the logic of negativity.

Those non-identical elements that resist the identifying process of semblance formation become what Adorno designates as ‘expression’. An artwork can thus be regarded as a field of incongruent forces that consist of constructing semblance and disruptive expression: while the former is closely associated with the positive power of society, the latter is always a force of dissonance (110). It is vital to point out that, for Adorno, aesthetic forms such as ‘particularity, development and resolution of conflict’ are based on and separated from empirical reality – in the gap between artistic semblance and empirical reality, the artwork ‘adopts its stance toward the

empirical world in which conflicts appear immediate and as absolute cleavages' and this distancing becomes 'an act of knowledge' (145). It therefore can be inferred that dramatic forms such as development, conflict, and denouement are socially determined – that is, these dramatic forms originate in how we perceive the possibilities of reality and how we are structured within these possibilities. It is not difficult to imagine that, for today's audiences, conflicts in some plays in the past have lost their relevance, or that certain ways of denouements are regarded as unrealistic. However, the effectiveness of dramatic forms by no means derives from how accurate these forms imitate empirical reality. As Adorno states, '[w]henver art seems to copy society, it becomes all the more an "as-if"' (226). It is the distance created by 'as if' that determines the gap between art and social reality.

Following Adorno's theory, I contend that, although the dramatic structures of the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard reproduce the logic of rationality employed during the war and in the camp, it is the extreme moments of ethical decision-making that potentially disrupt the logic of reality. For Bond, there can never be possible resolution for the ethical conflicts in both cases. This impossibility of resolution disrupts the conflict-denouement structure despite the fact that it is still necessary to complete the aesthetic semblance in which impossible decisions must be made according to the result of the negotiation between radical innocence and the enforcement of military discipline. It is this paradoxical structure caused by the ethics of the Real that makes the dramatic semblance negative rather than affirmative.

In Adorno's theory, the force of aesthetic negativity is preserved through mimesis and expression:

Artistic expression comports itself mimetically, just as the expression of living creatures is that of pain. The lineaments of expression inscribed in artworks, if they are not to be mute, are demarcation lines against semblance. Yet, in that artworks as such remain semblance, the conflict between semblance – form in the broadest sense – and expression remains unresolved and fluctuates historically. (110)

‘Semblance’ can be understood both as the artwork in general and as a specific constructing force as opposed to ‘expression’ decided by the logic of mimesis. What Adorno means by mimesis is not imitation but an attitude towards objectivity that is different from the subject-object antithesis. Mimetic comportment of expression implicates ‘the objectification of the non-objective’ (111) – namely, what is expressed in expression is not a graspable object or any impulse to be objectified but those non-identical elements. One of the non-identical elements that resists artistic construction and moral thematization is the body, especially the body in pain. As Adorno argues, the new imperative after Auschwitz – Auschwitz should never happen again – must involve ‘a bodily sensation of the moral addendum’ because any moral reflection must consider the insufferable bodily anguish (1999: 365). Also, Adorno’s insistence on the primacy of bodily mortality exemplifies a philosophical gesture against a society determined by the logic of self-preservation (Zuidervaart 2007: 146).

However, although Adorno compares artistic expression to animalistic pain, it is not the case that expressive artworks imitate literally any experiences of physical pain. Obviously, both the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard entail the representation of violent acts and bodily pain, and this may invoke the ‘moral addendum’ and preserve the moral significance of bodily mortality. But more importantly, the expressive power derives from the moments of ethical impasse in which the subject is forced to die or relinquish the cause that determines the subject as a subject. The expressive power emanating from the conflict between subjective radical innocence and objective rational order is mimetically preserved in Bond’s dramaturgy. As Adorno states, ‘[i]f art has psychoanalytic roots, then they are the roots of fantasy in the fantasy of omnipotence. This fantasy includes the wish to bring about a better world’ (2002: 9). In these extreme moments, the longing of radical innocence for an impossible but better world order in which the subject can be exempted from impossible decision-making is retained mimetically. As Simon Jarvis argues, in Adorno’s modernist aesthetics, it is the ‘mimesis of the

systematic framework which impoverishes experience' (122) that constitutes the power of mimesis. Dialectically, however, mimesis is not semblance as a copy of empirical reality; rather, mimesis designates the capacity of preserving non-identical relationships among disparate entities. Adorno seeks to posit art as a mimetic comportment by which not only the rationality of identity logic can be revealed but non-identical elements can also be preserved to serve as a promise for an alternative reality.

J. M. Bernstein, in explicating Adorno's aesthetics, argues that '[w]ithin works of art, universality is conveyed through form while particularity is conveyed through moments of dissonance or decomposition' (2004: 157). This structure can be detected in the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard. Arguably, the military command is a universal in terms of dramatic form – this 'universal' form constitutes one of the core dramatic structures in Bond's later plays – and it also carries its performative force in the sense that it must be obeyed by reducing any possibilities of resistance. In this regard, the moments of resistance constitute the particularity that not only challenges the authority of the command but also discloses other routes of dramatic development. This unresolved opposition between authority and resistance makes art enigmatic. As Adorno states, '[a]rt's enigmatic image is the configuration of mimesis and rationality. [...] The indefatigably recurring question that every work incites in whoever traverses it – the "What is it all about?" – becomes "Is it true?"' (2002: 127). For Adorno, the truth content of artworks is different from an idea as artworks cannot be reduced to embodying specific ideas. The truth content of artworks resides precisely in this terrain of irreducibility. Instead of conveying the author's intention or idea, what the artwork reveals is enigmatic. The truth-content of the artwork unearths 'the possibility of a nature which "is not yet"' (Jarvis 104) and makes the artwork 'an occasion for the subject to liken itself to a state of unfinishedness' (Huhn 8).

Following Adorno's aesthetics, we can infer that the power of the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard originates from the non-identity between the dramatic rational construction that seeks closure and the ethical demand that disrupts any resolutions. As Tom Huhn



points out, for Adorno, the mimesis of the artwork corresponds to the unfolding of subjectivity and the possibility of subjective movement (7). Also, as Terry Eagleton observes, in Adorno's aesthetics, artworks are 'at once determinate and indeterminate', which is demonstrated through 'the discrepancy between their mimetic (sensuous-expressive) and rational (constructive-organisational) moments' (1990: 353). In other words, the non-identity that renders the artwork enigmatic also attests to the indeterminacy of the subject's potential – in Bond's terms, this is the nature of radical innocence. Although Adorno explicates the aesthetic logic of Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy, it is Levinas's theory that can more clearly disentangle the ethical implications of Bond's dramaturgy.

### **3.3. Levinas's Aesthetics and the Ethics of Alterity**

Unlike Adorno, Levinas does not construct a theory of aesthetics *per se*; therefore, it is difficult to discuss 'Levinasian' aesthetics without specific provisos. In 'Reality and Its Shadow' (1948), one of Levinas's early aesthetic treatments, he not only questions the function of art as a source of knowledge but also criticizes artistic enjoyment for being egoistic and wicked.<sup>26</sup> Part of Levinas's distrust of art stems from his awareness of the danger of Nazi artistic participation for political purposes (Eagleton 262). The most obvious danger of art resides in the fact that it may dissimulate face-to-face ethical experience, which can be reduced neither to cognitive knowledge nor to sensual enjoyment. Theatre scholars have also been cautioned against applying Levinas's idea of the face to theatre since Levinas's idea of the face is neither visual nor representational (Ridout 53-56; Grehan 29-34). However, despite the fact that the Levinasian ethical face-to-face encounter may be anti-aesthetical, this by no means excludes any further nuanced reading of theatrical experience based on Levinas's ethics.

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<sup>26</sup> 'Reality and Its Shadow' has been widely discussed by scholars who aim to extricate thoughts of aesthetics from Levinas's philosophy. For detailed discussions, see Robert Eagleton's *Ethical Criticism: Reading after Levinas* (1997), and Jill Robbins's *Altered Reading: Levinas and Literature* (1999).

It is undeniable that Levinas does not completely dispense with arts, and he advocates artworks that embody or demonstrate his ethical thinking such as those of Maurice Blanchot and Paul Celan. From the authors that concern Levinas and the way he discusses their works, it can be inferred that Levinas, like Adorno, seeks to articulate an alternative aesthetics that can respond to the catastrophe of Auschwitz.<sup>27</sup> As Jill Robbins points out, Levinas bases his critique of art on conceiving art as a totality – ideas such as musicality, rhythm, and participation all presuppose the idea of totality. However, Robbins questions whether it is really possible to set participation and ethics apart (89).<sup>28</sup> Robbins’s argument is not without reason if we evaluate how Levinas redefines his idea of ‘meanwhile’ [*entretemps*]: in ‘Reality and Its Double’, Levinas states disapprovingly that art brings about an immobilized interval of ‘meanwhile’, different from living instants open to ‘the salvation of becoming’ (1989: 149); however, in ‘Phenomenon and Enigma’ (1957), Levinas uses ‘meanwhile’ to designate an anomalous temporality in which the identity of self-consciousness is disrupted and the possibility of encountering the other emerges (1987: 68). Although Levinas deploys the same concept, this concept refers to different experiences: the former refers to an aesthetic experience in which observers are either stuck in the immobilized moment or absorbed in the musicality of art, while the latter dislodges an ethical dimension in which the self can encounter the other. By implication, Levinas’s theory by no means excludes the possibility of being ethically implicated in aesthetic experiences.<sup>29</sup> What is at stake, therefore, is how it is possible for aesthetic experiences to entail ethical dimensions.

In order to elucidate how Levinas’s theory can deepen our

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<sup>27</sup> About Levinas and the Holocaust, see Robert Eaglestone’s ‘Inexhaustible Meaning, Inextinguishable Voices: Levinas and the Holocaust’ in *The Holocaust and the Postmodern* (2004): 249-78.

<sup>28</sup> As Josh Cohen points out, Levinas’s writing on aesthetics is not coherent and he remains ambiguous about the role of art in relation to the ethical (73). The ideas that Levinas casts into doubt in ‘Reality and Its Shadow’ are even used conversely in his later writings to account for ethical subjectivity (74). Seán Hand also posits that Levinas in his later writings recognizes the potential of the artwork to attain ‘a modality of transcendence’ (78).

<sup>29</sup> For example, when Nicholas Ridout analyzes Maria Donata D’Urso’s *Pezzo 0 (due)*, he points out how the ‘invasion of the shadow’ in performance can yield ethical potential (67-69).

understanding of the ethical significance in Bond's plays, first, I want to relate Levinas's concept of the face to the Palermo improvisation. This particular passage is worth quoting at length because it contains a useful description:

“What is there in the Face?” In my analysis, the Face is definitely not a plastic form like a portrait; the relation to the Face is both the relation to the absolutely weak – to what is absolutely exposed, what is bare and destitute, the relation with bareness and consequently with what is alone and can undergo the supreme isolation we call death – and there is, consequently, in the Face of the Other always the death of the Other and thus, in some way, an incitement to murder, the temptation to go to the extreme, to completely neglect the other – and at the same time (and this is the paradoxical thing) the Face is also the “Thou Shalt not Kill.” (Levinas 2000: 104)

Instead of being a phenomenon, the face – the human face – is an event that demands the self to respond to the other. It is not difficult to recognize the relevance of the passage to the Palermo improvisation, which foregrounds the relationship between self and other in terms of ‘an incitement to murder’ and perfectly embodies ‘the paradoxical thing’, as Levinas describes. While Bond thinks that it is paradoxical for the soldier to kill the baby in his house instead of the neighbor's baby, the real paradox in the improvisation resides in the soldier's hesitation prior to his murder. In the moment of undecidability, the self's sovereign power over others is suspended. The difficulty not only resides in ‘which one to kill?’ but also in ‘whether to kill or not?’ The paradox inherent in the improvisation is the soldier's calculation of the incalculable as well as his ethical experience in which his ego is disrupted by the face of the other – both the face of the neighbor's baby and that of the baby in his house. If he did not hesitate, he would not encounter the face as an event – in this case, the face can never emerge since it has been completely neglected. This argument also applies to Bond's discussion of the story in which the Nazi soldier refuses to kill his communist brother – although the soldier knows both of them are to be

killed by the commandant, he still chooses to obey the imperative 'Thou shall not kill' instead of the commandant's order.

Levinas's idea of the face is also related to the Holocaust: 'In speaking of the Holocaust, I am thinking of the death of the other man. I am thinking of the other man, for whom, I know not why, one can feel oneself to be already a responsible survivor' (1999: 162). For Levinas, the problem posed by the Holocaust is how to respond to the death of the other man. For him, the death of the other man 'awakens me to the other' (161). Likewise, in the Palermo improvisation, what troubles Bond is the death of the other man: how can I take responsibility for the other man's death? How can I measure one man's life against another man's life? The repetitions and variations of the Palermo improvisation that permeate in Bond's later plays manifest how this ethical aporia affects him to such an extent that it becomes obsessional. If, like Levinas, what affects Bond is the death of the other man, the problem is whether it is possible to dramatize those extreme situations without dissimulating their ethical weight and affective power.

When Levinas refers to drama, he is usually skeptical of its ethical value. In addition to his skepticism of art as unethical enjoyment in general, he also criticizes the 'three unities' as a dramatic principle. For Levinas, the principle of the 'three unities' is a method of assembling that cancels the difference between the same and the other and falsely synthesizes the differences between terms (1998: 83). Moreover, Levinas also contends that 'enjoying a spectacle' presupposes 'thematizing consciousness' that aims at identifying the non-representational and the non-identical (67). However, more importantly, Levinas states that the movement from unthematizable ethical proximity to thematized monstration is like a plot structured by 'the saying' and 'the said'. In Levinas's later writings, he regards language as the source of otherness, and every discourse includes 'the saying' (*le dire*) and 'the said' (*le dit*). By 'the said' Levinas designates the general discursive language usage determined by intentional consciousness, while by 'the saying' Levinas refers to a pre-linguistic ethical proximity that is absorbed into the said and resists being totally thematized in accordance with discursive logic.

Levinas demonstrates the way that the relationship between the saying and the said is constructed as such:

The said thematizes the interrupted dialogue or the dialogue delayed by silences, failure or delirium, but the intervals are not recuperated. Does not the discourse that suppresses the interruptions of discourse by relating them maintain the discontinuity under the knots with which the thread is tied again?

The interruptions of the discourse found again and recounted in the immanence of the said are conserved like knots in a thread tied again, the trace of a diachrony that does not enter into the present, that refuses simultaneity. (170)

Derrida points out that in Levinas's writing, interruptions often refer to those that tend towards the Other and refuse to be thematized as the said (2007: 163). It is important to note that the saying, though being thematized and recounted as the said, can never be totally turned into the said – instead, the saying will be conserved as traces, like 'knots in a thread' [*les nœuds d'un fil*]. As the traces of the saying, these knots can evoke the Other and elicit interruptions. While Derrida describes Levinas's text in which the saying and the said are intertwined as a 'heterogeneous tissue' (162), I propose that this method of constituting a text can also be dramaturgical and theatrical. That is, although a dramatic text or a theatrical performance is necessarily the result of thematization – a process in which the inconsumable may be consumed as knowledge or enjoyment – this by no means excludes the possibility that, in the thematized, there are still traces that conserve the knots of interruption. In 'The Trace of the Other' (1963), Levinas states: 'when a trace is thus taken as a sign, it is exceptional with respect to other signs in that it signifies outside of every intention of signaling and outside of every project of which it would be the aim' (1986: 356-57). Notably, Levinas does deploy the concept of 'trace' to designate a disturbance within the phenomenal order. As Levinas states, the movement from the trace preserved by the said back into the saying is 'the phenomenological reduction' (1998: 54). This logic of 'phenomenological

reduction' between the saying and the said is also manifest in the relationship between thread and knot and between sign and trace.

Therefore, although Levinas is skeptical of thematizing consciousness and any thematized representation, he presents the possibility of phenomenological reduction through which the trace of saying can be detected in the said. The saying cannot be exhausted in the said, and there must be traces left. For Levinas, this process of reduction is through the question: 'What is it about...?' (44). In the case of the Palermo improvisation, we can infer that what is important is not the final decision but the space of interruption between the demand and the reaction – it is the ethical space in which 'what is it about...?' can be proposed and the identifying violence of the demand can be suspended. It is also the space in which the ethical imperative 'Thou shall not kill' can be heard and the face of the other can be encountered. For Levinas, this ethical knot in thematized threads also activates 'the knot tied in subjectivity' that still functions latently and can disrupt thematizing consciousness (25). In other words, this Levinasian structure of knots and threads is not only on the level of representation but also on that of subjectivity. Here, we can observe how Adorno's aesthetics that regards aesthetic mimesis as the configuration of subjectivity can converge with Levinas's idea that knots in the plot of representation can disrupt the identifying process of consciousness and open up the dialogue with the other. That is, Levinas's emphasis on the ethical significance of the traces of saying inherent in the structure of representation complements Adorno's aesthetics of non-identity.

Through my analysis above, I intend to demonstrate why Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy can be epitomized in the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard. They can be regarded as basic narratives that not only expose the process of subjectivation and de-subjectivation in ethically aporetic situations but also aesthetically preserve the aporetic nature of these extreme situations without simplifying or reducing the ethical significance into any moral message. In this sense, Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy eloquently responds to Adorno's demand that aesthetic semblance should preserve the expressive power of the

non-identical as well as Levinas's demand that the traces of the unthematizable proximity to the other should be retained in the thematized narrative assemblage. In the following I will analyze how this post-Auschwitz dramaturgy and its variations are manifested in *Coffee* and *Born*.

### 3.4. *Coffee*

The professional premiere of *Coffee* was directed by Françon at the National Theatre de la Colline in 2000. The whole play revolves around Nold's journey: Nold, an engineer and part-time student in his room, is lured by Gregory into a forest. Upon entering the forest, Nold is puzzled as to why Gregory leads him there. However, Gregory denies that he knows Nold, leaving Nold more confused about where he is and why he is there. The ghostly Gregory seems to be haunted by his own memory:

**Gregory** [...] They must 'a 'ad me in casualty. Rows a' people on seats. [...] Things go wrong. Yer wander round the bricks. Kids everywhere. When yer die they come 'n stare at yer open mouth. Old man's gob, no teeth [...]. (Bond 2003: 130)

It can be inferred that Gregory is traumatized by his memory of serving in the military, but still this cannot explain why Gregory appears in Nold's house and how he can lead Nold into the forest without being conscious of doing so. One possible explanation is that Nold and Gregory are trapped in a world of unconscious mechanisms determined by a different logic from that of empirical reality. The other explanation is that it is Nold who has entered his imagination in which Gregory functions as one of the imagined figures. Whatever the logic is, linear causality is interrupted in the forest. The situation becomes more complex when a Woman and a Girl enter the forest: when the Woman enters, she threatens Nold and Gregory with a knife; when questioned by Nold, Gregory denies that he knows the Woman and states that 'she got inside me when I slept!' (Bond 2003: 131). As the Woman

exists only ‘inside’ Gregory, as he suggests, which means that the Woman figures as part of Gregory’s traumatic memory, the forest can be regarded as a site of imagination and traumatic memories shared by these characters. Françon’s production emphasized the imaginative aspect of the forest scene by making the stage extremely dark.<sup>30</sup> Although Bond’s stage directions clearly describe that this scene is set in ‘[a] *dark opening*’ (2003: 128), theatrically this darkness succeeded in blurring the boundary between reality and imagination – especially when this darkness is contrasted with the massacre in the following scene, which takes place under ‘[f]ull *afternoon sunlight*’ (Bond 2003: 167). In addition, there were holes on stage through which characters appeared and disappeared – characters were stripped of coherent psychological motives that determine their actions; rather, their dreamlike figurations were presented as if they are created out of Nold’s (or their collective) imagination.

In contrast to the Woman, whose first appearance is accompanied by her desire to push away or even kill Gregory, the Girl appears and asks for food to feed her doll. ‘Killing’ and ‘begging for food’ are two fundamental logics that govern how these characters act in the forest and this is not without significance as these actions stand for the most elemental human behavior of self-preservation. Confronted by the Girl’s demand for food, Nold decides to go home to retrieve some food. Nold, however, fails to find his way back because there is a war. The Girl gives the only bread kept by the Woman to Gregory and decides to kill her doll in order to eat it. How the Girl eats her doll is described enigmatically:

*The Girl jerks the doll down and tears it with her teeth.*

**Girl/Doll** Mummy! Mummy! Mummy! Don’t ’urt precious! Don’t bite so deep! It was lovely t’ fly in the air! Away!

*The Girl stares at the doll for a moment then tosses it in the air and jerks it back.*

**Girl** On the plate! On the plate! Thass the place for you till yer go in Mum-ma’s tum-tum! (*She tears the doll with her teeth.*)

**Girl/Doll** Ah! (Bond 2003: 143)

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<sup>30</sup> My analysis of the production is based on the recording archived at Ina THEQUE.



In *The Great Peace*, there is a baby-bundle made to speak to his mother. However, the effect of making an inanimate object speak is different in this play as the Girl and her doll speak as if they are the same person/object. The forest is a zone of indeterminacy wherein the boundary between reality and imagination is blurred, but principally the relationships among characters can still be defined as subject-object relations. The only exception is the Girl-Doll relationship, which exceeds the limit of self-preservation and demands an absolute co-existence as in the neonatal world, where there is no distinction between inside and outside. Therefore, the forest scene is also a site of imagination in which different levels of the Bondian subject are manifested. The Girl's neonatal state is also implied when she prepares to have an imaginative picnic. The picnic for the Girl is a game of make-believe, and she has to invent her own rules of picnicking. One instance is that the Girl has no idea about what glasses are for:

**Girl** [...] (*She looks at the picnic.*) O Mum-ma...It's beautiful. What are these things for?  
**Woman** It was the lady's I worked for – she –  
[...]  
*The Girl runs down the hole. The Woman picks up a glass and stares at it.* (Bond 2003: 147)

The Girl's innocence and her ignorance of table manners and the 'rules' of picnicking point to a phase of human subjectivity anterior to socialization.

However, this seemingly 'innocent' game-playing is soon disrupted by the Woman's decision to use the sheet to strangle the Girl. In performance, the changing significance of the sheet was clearly demonstrated: both the Woman, played by Dominique Valadié, and the Girl, played by Stéphanie Béghain, treated the game of picnicking seriously – in Bond's terms, the area delimited by the picnic sheet can be regarded as the playground of the core self's imagination. Their seriousness of playing the game evokes the possibility of the world undisturbed by the cruel reality. However, the Woman knows that it is only a game and decides to use the sheet as a tool for murdering the Girl. Valadié's performance, which proceeded from painful hesitation to cool decisiveness, demonstrated the complexity of the

Woman's decision. Béghain's performance of the Girl, who is hooded by the sheet, demonstrated the Girl's fragility as a 'faceless' being that is comparable to the inanimate doll. In Bondian terms, the moment when the Woman turns the sheet for picnicking to a tool for murdering is also the moment when the Girl at the stage of the core self is forced to face the external reality as the socialized self. Therefore, even though the forest is a site of imagination, this by no means excludes the operation of the logic of 'reality' – only by revealing this reality can the ethical significance of the moments of make-believe and violence be evaluated.

In *Coffee*, Bond's interrogation of subjectivity is demonstrated through ethical decision-making in extreme situations. These situations are exemplified by the Woman's disruptive decision to use the picnic sheet to strangle the Girl and the Girl's subsequent suicide by exhausting herself to death. It is difficult to judge whether the Woman is right or wrong since what she intends to do is to liberate the Girl and herself from the pain of hunger and danger. In extreme situations, the ethical demarcation line between victim and victimizer is challenged or even eradicated. This can be best explicated by the concept of an ethical 'grey zone' proposed by Primo Levi and theorized by Giorgio Agamben: according to Agamben, the grey zone is a 'zone of irresponsibility' wherein exists the unimaginable 'banality of evil' and the real responsibility is unassumable (1999: 21). The example that Agamben provides is the mechanism of 'Sonderkommando', by which some prisoners are ordered to slaughter other prisoners (25). Bond does not deal with any specific case of the camp, but his negotiation of the 'grey zone' of ethical irresponsibility can be understood as his response to the Holocaust. Angel-Perez also utilizes the concept of the 'grey zone' to designate the central ethical problem in *The War Plays* (2006: 101). In fact, the ethical aporia of the grey zone and the problem of humanity and non-humanity constitute the pivotal point of Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy.

Near the end of the forest scene, when Nold returns, he has been dressed as a soldier and states that there will be a war. The scene then shifts into 'The Big Ditch', a scene based on a real historical event: the Babi Yar

massacre. This is how Bond narrates the incident that provoked him to write

*Coffee:*

The coffee wasn't spilt at Auschwitz. It was at Babi Yar. Soldiers had machine-gunned civilians all day. Then it was over – at least for that day. The soldiers stood down and brewed coffee. No one screamed, in the silence you could hear people talking. A soldier put his cup to his lip. And a late lorry turned up with more civilians to be shot. They couldn't be stored overnight and shot next morning. In disgust the soldier threw his coffee on the ground. [...] They're entitled to their free time, their rest, their coffee, a fag ... the incident is true. (2013: 21)

Bond possibly became familiar with the episode through Anatoly Kuznetsov's documentary novel, *Babi Yar*, and this is how Kuznetsov describes the site of the massacre:

On their left was the side of the quarry, to the right a deep drop; the ledge had apparently been specially cut out for the purposes of the execution, and it was so narrow that as they went along it people instinctively leaned towards the wall of sandstone, so as not to fall in.

Dina looked down and her head swam, she seemed to be so high up. Beneath her was a sea of bodies covered in blood. On the other side of the quarry she could just distinguish the machine-guns which had been set up there and a few German soldiers. They had lit a bonfire and it looked as though they were making coffee on it.

When the whole line of people had been driven on to the ledge one of the Germans left the bonfire, took a machinegun and started shooting. (83)

While this episode of the novel focuses on how Dina, one of the Jews, survives the massacre, Bond focuses on the role of the perpetrator. This is demonstrated in how he conceives the stage:

*A cliff top. [...] The cliff's other edge is upstage facing the ravine and the opposite cliff. [...] Upstage, two MGs (machine-guns) are trained on the opposite cliff. Centre stage, a portable filed canteen, Primus, coffee-pot and billy-can [...].* (Bond 2003: 167)

The spectator is compelled to observe how these soldiers act in response to those victims that are shot dead in the ravine, off stage. By juxtaposing the horror of violence represented by the gun-machines and the normalcy of banality represented by the coffee machine, Bond demonstrates that the horror of the massacre is both continuous with and complicit in its banal and procedural coldness. However, the soldiers are depicted in a more differentiated way than might be expected of collective representation:

**Jolly, Simon, West and Zemlinsky crouch with their rifles. Jelly makes coffee. Nold stands at the Primus, his mug held out in his hand, his head bowed in angry thought.** (Bond 2003: 178)

Jolly, Simon, West and Zemlinsky obey the military order while Jelly makes coffee to serve them after they finish the task. Under the pressure of the structural violence, there is little difference between a man who kills and a man who does not kill. The reason why Jelly throws coffee when he hears the official demand is not that he loathes killing people but that the task interrupts his rest. What attracts Bond to this incident is how the tremendous horror of the Holocaust can be epitomized in this banal act, which manifests the precedence of individual egoism and indifference for the suffering of others. In this sense, this banal act presupposes the same logic as the Holocaust that is based on collective self-preservation through eliminating others. Different from Jelly and other soldiers, Nold is described as being silent '*in angry thought*' (ibid). Nold seems to think about the meaning of the extreme situation and how he should act – a typical gesture of Bondian major characters, who ask the meaning of the extreme situation by remaining silent and interrogate the possibility of acting differently by transgressing predetermined norms and order.

In addition to the incident of spilling coffee, the most disturbing incident in this scene is how the soldiers treat the suffering of the prisoners as an enjoyable and curious spectacle:

**Nold** *picks up his rifle and joins the other soldiers at the edge.*  
**Simon** ... the Girl ... look she's climbin up the cliff be'ind 'er ...  
 [...]  
**Jelly** (*calls*) Coffee.  
**Gregory** (*going up to the soldiers*) Whass going on? (Peers across the ravine.) I'm not 'avin that! Bring 'er down!  
**Simon** No sarge watch.  
**West** 'S only 'er 'n the woman –  
**Jolly** 'N the ol' sod on the end – soon 'ose 'em down, no bother.  
**Simon** Yer don't see this every day.  
 [...]  
**Jelly** (*bored*) D'yer want this coffee or what?  
*A barrage of feet: Nold, Jolly, Simon, West and Zemlinsky drum the ground like sports spectators.*  
 [...]  
**Gregroy** (*slow*) ... This is a picture ... [...]  
 [...]  
**Simon** Normal yer never see it ...  
**Jelly** I'll pour.  
 [...]  
*The soldiers fire. Silence.* (Bond 2003: 183-85)

While Nold joins the other soldiers and enjoys the spectacle of the prisoners' suffering, Jelly still makes coffee to serve them. These soldiers do not want to kill because they want to prolong this exceptional spectacle which cannot be watched every day – even Gregory, who first orders the soldiers to fire immediately, also starts to be attracted by the 'picture'. The logic of these soldiers' actions stands in opposition to Levinasian ethics – the face of the other is completely eradicated and turned into an enjoyable spectacle that only serves the pleasure of the ego. Since, for the soldiers, the prisoners' faces are stripped of the ethical weight, they can fire without hesitation when they have enjoyed the spectacle. Bond even makes this action of 'watching a spectacle' more disturbing by indicating that these soldiers act like 'sports spectators'. Françon's staging strictly follows Bond's stage directions and succeeds in differentiating a variety of the soldiers' reactions to the massacre – their boredom, resistance, excitement, and coldness. Instead of delineating individual motivations, Françon's staging presents a picture of different modalities of subjectivity.

Bond's dramaturgical framing of how the soldiers watch the pain of the other invites audiences to reflect on the nature of 'spectating' and visibility.

In representing the soldiers, Bond by no means intends to represent them ‘realistically’ – rather, as I have argued, Bond’s presentation of the soldiers exhibits his understanding of the modalities of human subjectivity. His calculated use of gestures that remind audiences of sports spectacles also ‘alienate’ the stage image and encourage audiences to critically examine what takes place on stage. In addition, Bond’s tactical representation of the victims through the perspective of the soldiers makes what is unrepresented on stage being present in the spectator’s imagination – the spectator knows there is no victim on stage, but he or she is invited to reflect on the pain of those who have really suffered in the massacre. In performance, the clarity of Françon’s staging rendered Bond’s complex dramaturgical construction of the stage image highly effective – this effectiveness derives from those moments of suspension that invite the spectator’s reflection. In *Watching War on the Twenty-First Century Stage*, Clare Finburgh emphasizes the importance of ‘suspension’ in watching spectacles of war:

‘Suspension’ performs two functions. It enables the kind of interruption or breach [...] which invites the spectator’s considered critique and reflection. Suspension also constitutes the time needed to watch the world critically. It is precisely in theatre that this suspension, this ‘waiting’, can take place. (289)

Indeed, the logic of suspension is embedded in Bond’s dramaturgical framing through which the Babi Yar massacre is represented and spectated. Through these moments of suspension, the massacre on stage cannot be easily identified with the historical massacre, and this non-identical relationship encourages critical reflections on what is represented, what is not represented, what can be represented, and what cannot be represented. More importantly, Bond emphasizes the subject’s potential to ‘suspend’ what is ordered from him or her and the capacity for acting differently. Only through this capacity can the non-identical neglected by the logic of identity, embodied by the military order, be recognized and other alternatives be imagined.

Although Nold joins the other soldiers and shoots the prisoners in the

ravine, it is not until the next scene that we know what the angry Nold is thinking about. In this scene, which takes place in the ravine in which people have been shot dead, Gregory, Simon, and Nold meet the Woman and the Girl who appeared in the forest and are now survivors of the massacre. Gregory orders Nold to shoot the Girl, but Nold resists:

**Nold** Less leave it sarge. Pretend it never 'appened.

**Gregory** It did.

**Nold** Pretend. That'll get us through. We can walk back t' barracks in 'arf 'n 'our ... 'n be free.

**Gregory** I must 'ave order. I must 'ave order.

**Nold** I can't do what yer want. I don't know why. [...]  
(Bond 2003: 203)

By 'pretending' that they never meet the Woman and the Girl, Nold thinks it can exempt them from killing. Nold's ideas underscore the fact that the capacity to fictionalize reality and suspend the imposed order can possibly resist authority. This is also what the Girl does in the forest – her interaction with her doll and her invention of new picnic rules, while possibly symptomatic of madness, demonstrate the potential power of human imagination. The borderline between rationality and madness is challenged and deconstructed by imagination: is it rational to obey the rules to kill or is it rational to pretend in order to deprive the rule of its effects? While Gregory insists that Nold should obey the rule, Nold puts the rule into question and suspends its effects.

Nold eventually kills Gregory and Simon in order to rescue the Girl. At the end of the play, Nold visits Gregory's daughter and tells her that he killed her father in order to survive. *Coffee* can be read as Nold's journey from innocence to experience: Nold, at the end of the journey, is not innocent anymore in both a literal and figurative sense. How we define Nold's innocence and guilt depends on how we define what justice and humanity is. In probing the ethical aporia of the 'grey zone' of irresponsibility, Bond aims to interrogate complex potentials of humanity without sticking to a specific message or idea.

*Coffee* begins in Nold's room, and, in the following scenes, he is

transported to a dark forest of no-man's land, to the large ditch of the Babi Yar massacre, to the ravine, where the Jews die, and finally back to a citizen's house after the war. Regarding this structure, Bond explains: 'If the play had gone immediately to Babi Yar [...], audience would have been much more able conventionally to cope with that. [...] But because of the way the drama is constructed, the audience don't ask the question, the question questions them' (Tuailon 2015: 149). By preceding the Babi Yar massacre with the forest scene, Bond states that 'the world of darkness and imagination [...] goes on haunting the whole play' (Tuailon 2015: 150). The forest scene haunts the whole play because it is the scene in which the ethical human relationship based on the face-to-face encounter is explored – characters in the forest have to decide how they should treat each other, and the decisions determine how they define their humanity. These moments of ethical decision-making are concealed in the massacre scene, the logic of which is always already determined by the authorities.

Therefore, Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy does not aim to represent any historical event in the Holocaust, but he emphasizes the possible existence of the basic ethical relationality of face-to-face encounter even in the most dehumanizing situation. This dramaturgy preserves the ethical moments in which the identity logic of military authorities meets the non-identity logic of ethical encounters.

### ***Born***

*Born* was first staged by Françon at the Avignon Festival in July 2006. If the ethical dilemma Nold faces is whether he should kill, Luke, the protagonist in *Born*, is bothered by the desire to know what is involved in being killed. In Scene One, Peter and Donna move into a new house and have a baby, Luke; in Scene Two, twenty years later, however, the normal society collapses and turns out to be governed by a totalitarian regime. Peter and Donna do not know that Luke has become a WAPO (war police) and that their house is going to become a new police unit. At the end of the scene, Donna and Peter are taken away from their house separately by other



WAPOs. In Scene Three, on a hillside, Luke and other WAPOs encounter a Woman and her baby. Whereas other WAPOs think the Woman and her baby should be killed immediately, Luke wants to know how the Woman feels and what she is thinking about towards the end of her life. In short, he wants to bear witness to the Woman's testimony at the end of her life: 'I want t' know whass it like at the end? I know what 'happens t' the body. Know all that. Seen it. I want t' know what it's like inside. What 'appens in yer 'ead at the end' (Bond 2006: 21).

Luke's voyeuristic desire reminds us of Len in *Saved*, in which he observes how the baby is stoned to death without interfering. However, unlike Len as an observer, Luke is the perpetrator *as well as* the observer. Moreover, the Woman is portrayed as paralyzed and unable to speak or react, that is, as a *Muselmann* – a term used to refer to those who have lost their will and consciousness in the concentration camps. Although Bond uses these obvious references to the Holocaust, unlike *Coffee*, which is set in the Babi Yar massacre, *Born* is set in an indefinite future, when the world is controlled by a totalitarian regime and its WAPOs. In *Born*, Bond is still concerned with the face-to-face encounter between perpetrator and victim exemplified by the Palermo improvisation, but his focus shifts to the perpetrator's witness of the victim as a *Muselmann*.

As Levinas proposes, death is an enigma: 'Death is at once healing and impotence; an ambiguity that perhaps indicates an other dimension of meaning than that in which death is thought within the alternative to be/not-to-be. The ambiguity: an enigma' (2000: 14). Luke is obsessed with the enigma of death and he desires to bear witness to that enigma. In order to obtain the Woman's answer, Luke even threatens to murder her baby, thinking that the Woman's panic may force her to speak. However, the Woman remains silent, except that she utters a meaningless sound from her throat.

The Woman's mysterious sound is reminiscent of Primo Levi's description of Hurbineck, a child at Auschwitz who had no name and could not speak. Although Hurbineck cannot speak, he kept uttering a sound that bespeaks the urgent need of speech, and Levi transcribes it as 'mass-klo' or

‘matisklo’ (198). In *Remnants of Auschwitz: the Witness and the Archive* (1998), Agamben contends that this non-language reveals testimony as structured by two impossibilities: first, in order to bear witness to the impossibility of bearing witness, language must be replaced by a non-language; second, this non-language bears witness to the impossibility of bearing witness to that which does not have language (1999: 39). For Agamben, the complete witness is the *Muselmann*, who is completely deprived of the ability to speak, and, by implication, any attempt to deploy language or non-language as testimony is inevitably ensnared within the structure of two impossibilities. However, Agamben remains cautious that, although this structure of impossibilities may be theoretically valid, advocating it risks repeating the logic of the camp, in which the ultimate goal is to turn the human as a speaking being completely into the inhuman as a living being (157). By contrast, Agamben argues that ‘the witness attests to the fact that there can be testimony because there is an inseparable division and non-coincidence between the inhuman and the human’ (ibid.). For Agamben, the witness is a *remnant* in the sense that the true witness is the one whose humanity has been completely destroyed but who still *remains* – that is, the human cannot be completely eradicated and the human remains to be what may be defined as the inhuman (133). In other words, testimony is the disjunction between the living being (the inhuman) and language (the human) (130).

About the authority of testimony, Agamben contends:

Precisely insofar as it inheres in language as such, precisely insofar as it bears witness to the taking place of a potentiality of speaking through an impotentiality alone, its authority depends not on a factual truth, a conformity between something said and a fact or between memory and what happened, but rather on the immemorial relation between the unsayable and the sayable. (157-58)

Here, Agamben makes clear that testimony has nothing to do with factual truth or memory; rather, precisely because testimony cannot take place through speaking but through the impotentiality of speaking, testimony

guarantees an ‘unarchivability’. In this sense, intriguingly, Luke bears witness to the Woman’s testimony by bearing witness to the impossibility of testimony.

In Scene Five, Luke is brought home by Peter, but he remains unconscious. Donna, also at home, is busy nursing the dead *Muselmänner*, and she is unable to recognize Luke or Peter. This scene can be compared to the forest scene in *Coffee* as both are constructed as sites of imagination. Regarding this scene, Bond states: ‘For *Born*, I put both on stage at the same time, as one site: what the fiction assumes as the real and what Luke experiences in his imagination – but the other characters also bring their own realities into it’ (Tuailon 2015: 156). This scene is thus a site where different characters’ imaginative worlds converge: Donna imagines that she can unconditionally nurse the dead; Luke keeps asking the Woman and imagines that the Woman’s dead baby comes to life; Peter imagines that he becomes a WAPO and fires the *Muselmänner*. In the imaginative world, the Woman can speak, and when asked by Luke about what happens at the end of life, she answers that she wants her baby. Luke then imagines that the dead people start to assemble the baby’s body parts and make the baby come to life. However, although Luke thinks that the Woman will tell him something, the Woman shakes the baby’s fists open and grabs the food. Unable to get the Woman’s answer, Luke asks the dead *Muselmänner* the same question: ‘Tell me, teach me what yer know. What ’appens at the end? Tell me something that makes sense a’ the life I ’ave t’ live! [...] I kill all a’ yer. I made yer wounds’ (Bond 2006: 61). Luke then starts to play with the baby – it is only when Peter reminds him of the fact that the baby has been dead that Luke howls in pain.

In *Born*, the fact that Bond explores the ‘zones of crisis and exception’ through the perpetrator’s perspective may seem ethically challenging – for Bond, the command ‘thou shall not kill’ can be found not only on the face of the victim but also within the perpetrator’s capacity for imagining an ethical relationality with the other. However, along with the logic of ethical imagination, Bond’s post-Auschwitz dramaturgy is still based on the logic of reality. That is, *Born* concludes with the WAPO’s killing of Luke, Peter,

and Donna. Just like the end of *Coffee*, in which Nold acknowledges his action of murder, *Born* does not end with the scene of imagination but with the atrocious violence of reality. Commenting on this dramatic structure, Bond states: ‘Structurally, once the line of each character has been driven to its extreme, then the play has no further use for the world of imagination. The audience would know what is happening inside the characters and where they subjectively stand, so reality can come back again’ (Tuailleon 2015: 172). This dramatic structure demonstrates again the logic of Bond’s post-Auschwitz dramaturgy, which resides in the convergence of and tension between the logic of reality and that of imagination – the former encloses aesthetic semblance of narrative while the latter generates a space for non-identical ethical proximity.

Different from *Coffee*, in which Bond examines humanity through a series of decisions that characters have to make, in *Born*, Bond explores the possibilities of humanity through a series of ethical images of wasted life. As Jenny Hughes argues, ‘the circulations of waste and wasted life in performance evoke uncertainties relating to how we might live together in the unpredictable and exposed zones of crisis and exception without interpersonal violence’ (28). As I argue, Bond’s post-Auschwitz dramaturgy aims to explore and retain moments of irresolvable ethical difficulties – only by preserving the traces of otherness that resist being reduced to any moral prescription can post-Auschwitz dramaturgy remain powerful. In performance, the image of the otherness of ‘wasted life’ is demonstrated through the actor’s body.<sup>31</sup>

In performance, Stephanie Béghain, who played the Woman, embodied a *Muselmann*’s physical suffering – throughout the performance, Béghain seemed drained of energy and remains inactive to such an extent that she looked like a mannequin. In a similar manner, in the scene where Donna feeds the dead *Muselmänner*, they were performed mannequin-like when they move. Although Bond, through Luke, implies that the *Muselmann*’s experience cannot be expressed or represented, in *Born*, he does imagine

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<sup>31</sup> My analysis of the production is based on the recording archived at the National Theatre de la Colline in Paris.

and represent the *Muselmann* – an image that is arguably forbidden to be represented. Bond's representation of the *Muselmann* seems to break the belief that the Holocaust cannot be represented figuratively, but we need to be more cautious about how Bond constructs and contextualizes the stage image – by setting the play in an indefinite future, it can be inferred that these *Muselmänner* are not represented as those who suffered in Nazi concentrations camps but are imagined as those who may suffer in the future. In addition, these *Muselmänner* should be regarded as the construction out of the characters' imagination – this further problematizes any direct comparison between these stage images and historical references. Therefore, although unlike *Coffee*, in which the prisoners and the dead remain unrepresented except the Woman and the Girl, in *Born* Bond seems to adopt a more direct approach to presenting what may be regarded as unrepresentable, Bond's representation is strategically framed and cannot be interpreted as any direct representation of historical facts.

In 'The Intolerable Image', Jacques Rancière's analysis of the relationship between image and genocide is pertinent here:

The problem is not whether the reality of these genocide can be put into images and fiction. [...] It is knowing what kind of human beings the image shows us and what kind of human beings it is addressed to; what kind of gaze and consideration are created by this fiction. (102)

Rancière continues to argue that images 'help sketch new configurations of what can be seen, what can be said and what can be thought and consequently, a new landscape of the possible' (103). As Rancière points out, what is important in image construction, instead of the truth or falsehood of the image, is what kind of human beings the image demonstrates and how the image relates to our understanding of the world. Therefore, in Bond's theatre, the construction of images reflects how he understands human subjectivity: in his presentation of different human bodies – the soldier's disciplined body, the prisoner's suffering fragile body, the baby's dismembered body, and the *Muselmann's* dead body – we

are reminded of the mortality of human beings and how these bodies are produced through the apparatuses of authority. In his configuration of these human images, Bond aims to imagine the ethical relationality between human beings through these images and explore the potential of the human being to act creatively.

### **3.6. Conclusion**

In this chapter, by drawing on Adorno's and Levinas's philosophical reflections on post-Auschwitz aesthetics and ethics, I argued that Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy is exemplified in the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard because both episodes examine the processes of de-subjectivation and re-subjectivation in extreme situations of decision-making and preserve the ethical aporias by means of dramatic form. Based on this model, I analyzed *Coffee* and *Born*, both of which involve references to the Holocaust. However, what concerns Bond is not the accuracy of historical facts but how to imagine the non-identical ethical relationality between human beings in the ethical grey zone involved in extreme situations epitomized at Auschwitz. Having examined Bond's theory of subjectivity in relation to its dramatization and his post-Auschwitz dramaturgy, in the next chapter I will approach the later Bond through another perspective: trauma-tragedy.

## **Chapter Four**

### **The Structure of Bondian Trauma-Tragedy: Justice, Truth, and Madness**

In the previous chapters I have examined Bond's theory of subjectivity based on post-Auschwitz ethics, how this theory determines his dramaturgy, and how this dramaturgy responds to the representation of the Holocaust. In this chapter I will examine one pivotal concept that has emerged in the previous discussions: the Tragic. In Bond's theory of subjectivity, both the neonate's feeling of pain and the core self's idea of the Tragic are essential in subject formation in the sense that the Bondian subject cannot be conceived without encountering the painful and the Tragic. Correlative with the concept of the Tragic is that of trauma – indeed, the Bondian subject is also a post-traumatic subject. Not only is the Bondian subject traumatized on the level of psychical formation, but the Bondian subject also experiences traumatic frustrations in the process of socialization, as Bond states that the self's imperative to seek justice is always frustrated in an unjust society. The aim of this chapter is to examine how Bond conceives the possibility of contemporary tragedy based on his theory of subjectivity, how his concept of tragedy is related to the idea of trauma, and how he negotiates post-traumatic subjectivities in his tragedies.

In the phase of the neonate, the monad's world is governed by the pleasure principle, by which the neonate relates to the world by differentiating pain from pleasure. Later, in the phase of the core self, this pain/pleasure pattern becomes the dramatizing structure constituted by the Tragic and the Comic. This dramatizing structure then becomes the subjective origin of the objective art forms of tragedy and comedy. Although Bond only uses the neologism 'drauma' (Stuart 2001a: 42) once, it suggests the inherent intertwinement of subjective traumatic experiences, subjectivity as a dramatic structure, and dramaturgy of trauma-tragedy. Bond's theory of subjectivity in relation to trauma can be illustrated as follows:

The Neonate		The Core Self		The Socialized Self	
Pain	Feelings	Tragic	Ideas	Tragedy	Cultural
Pleasure		Comic		Comedy	Artifacts
The Primal Trauma		Repetitions of Traumata		Trauma-Drama (Drauma)	

For Bond, although in the phase of the core self, the concept of the Tragic constitutes the core self's dramatization of the Tragic and the Comic; tragedy, however, implicates the external reality in relation to the self's imagination. In a letter to Jean-Pierre Vincent on 13 October 2004, Bond writes: 'Tragedy throws the indifference of the universe in our face, and only the self's concept of the Tragic [...] can receive the assault and restore the self's humanness' (Davis 2005: 193). For Bond, the aim of drama is to 'create Tragic danger' (ibid) in order to cope with the 'the indifference of the universe'. In 'Drama Note 1 – Being In a State', Bond asserts: 'Radical innocence is not naive, its ultimate expression is in the implacability of the Tragic, when it chooses to be human in the face of authority and the administration of Ideological [*sic*] law-and-order' (2016b: par. 5). In other words, for Bond, fabricating suffering and danger to revitalize 'the Tragic' as an idea inherent in our consciousness is not only to redramatize the core self's imagination on a personal level but to create 'a political tragedy which will describe and invoke the suffering of our time' (Stuart 1998: 22). Therefore, the Tragic should not be conflated with tragedy, which does not repeat dramatizing the Tragic but bears political significance through revealing how personal trauma is structured by a broader ideological framework.

In addition to conceiving tragedy based on his theory of subjectivity, Bond also frequently draws on Greek tragedy and Shakespearean tragedy as his references. In an interview with Peter Billingham in 2007, when asked about the problems that impact on the contemporary world, Bond replies:

They are essentially the problems of Oedipus and Orestes. Oedipus is the problem of the self and Orestes (and Antigone)



is the problem of the relationship to authority and the community. Of course, both of these problems overlap but that is the basic conflict. (Billingham and Bond 2)

Bond's reply furnishes another lens through which to approach his tragedy: its indebtedness to Greek tragedy. In another interview with Fabienne Arvers, he states that if Antigone is the most important character in the twentieth century, in the twenty-first century it is Medea (2016c). Although Bond has adapted Shakespearean and Greek tragedy in *Lear* (1971) and *The Woman* (1978), his recent plays adapt Greek and Shakespearean tragedy in a different way: these plays are not set in mythological or legendary circumstances, nor do they invoke Greek or Shakespearean characters. Instead, they are constructed either in a contemporary or in a dystopian futuristic world and depart from the plots of specific and well-known tragedies.

As theatre scholar Margherita Laera points out, theatre is like a memory machine which incessantly recollects, re-elaborates, and contests existing cultural materials to produce new ideas, and this is in line with the logic of adaptations that, by returning to the past to repeat or to reject it, results in evolutionary reoccurrences (3). This is how Bond imagines, in a tellingly humorous manner, what it would be like if major characters of Greek tragedy lived today:

If Oedipus lived now he would not blind himself, he would be treated by a psychiatrist. Orestes and Electra would not kill their mother, she would be in prison for murdering her husband. Antigone would not hang herself, she would vote for the party that opposed Creon. (2012: xxii)

Bond's irony underscores how the epochal discrepancy between our age and ancient Greece corresponds to the differences of dramatic imagination conditioned by social and political structures. Admittedly, it is not the case that Bond sends his tragic characters to a psychiatrist, prison, or a ballot box, but he acknowledges the necessity of constructing his tragedy in a world determined by contemporary networks of psychiatric, juridical, and political

discourses. Before analyzing how Bond constructs his tragedy by recollecting and reorganizing existing cultural materials, I first turn to explore Bond's idea of 'drauma' – drama-trauma – in relation to trauma studies in order to elaborate the theoretical foundation of his tragedy.

#### **4.1. Bondian Trauma-Tragedy: Ontological, Historical, and Structural**

According to *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, trauma is defined as '[a]n event in the subject's life defined by its intensity, by the subject's incapacity to respond adequately to it, and by the upheaval and long-lasting effects that it brings about in the psychological organisation' (Laplanche and Pontalis 465). Accordingly, the structure of trauma presupposes both the occurrence of traumatic events and their belated effects. The question, therefore, is how we conceive those traumatizing events. As Griselda Pollock argues, it is productive to differentiate structural trauma and historical trauma – while the former refers to those universal psychic events that contribute to the formation of the subject, the latter refers to those particular events experienced by the individual subject (43). Since I use 'structural' to refer to the idea of social structure, here I use 'ontological' to describe the traumatic events inherent in subject formation. In Bond's theory of subjectivity, trauma can be a transhistorically ontological concept – that is, every human subject experiences the traumatic feeling of pain due to the separation from the mother, and this pattern of feelings (pain/pleasure) is later translated into corresponding patterns of ideas (Tragic/Comic) in the phase of the core self when it starts to be conscious of the external world. This pattern of trauma extends to the stage of the socialized self, as Bond states that 'trauma repeats and attenuates itself in daily life in society and in its crises' (2000b: 140). This kind of trauma can be defined as 'historical'. However, we should not conflate ontological trauma and historical trauma as this conflation obscures the specificity of historical trauma and unproductively perpetuates the repetitive return of ontological trauma.

Furthermore, when we examine the full process of subject formation, we need to consider that, at the advent of the subject being structured by the

symbolic social order, the subject also experiences the constraining and traumatizing effects of socialization. Trauma is not only a concept related to the psyche, but it also refers to a network of social and political conditions that determine how the socialized self is fashioned. In Freud's theory, in addition to the trauma model structured around an original trauma event and belated traumatic effects, in 'Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety' (1926), Freud proposes another model of trauma based on the expectation of danger-situations. For Freud, instead of waiting for a traumatic situation to take place, the individual may develop a capacity for expecting incoming danger and producing anxiety. Regarding anxiety, Freud states: 'Its connection with expectation belongs to the danger-situation, whereas its indefiniteness and lack of object belong to the traumatic situation of helplessness' (2001b: 166). It is based on this model that Derrida interprets the form of trauma produced by terrorism: 'We are talking about a trauma, and thus an event, whose temporality proceeds neither from the now that is present nor from the present that is past but from an im-presentable to come (*à venir*)' (Borradori 97).

More precisely, in Bond's later plays, it is the biopolitical structures exemplified by the camp, the security state, and neoliberalism that define the parameters of traumatizing reality. Operating by differentiating the livable from the unlivable, these traumatizing structures constantly produce unrecognized wasted lives. Regarding how these structures produce political subjects, political sociology scholar Mark Neocleous argues that the permanent pursuit of security and preparation for resilience against trauma build the foundation of contemporary political subjectivity that entails '*the making of the self in preparation for the trauma to come*' (209; original emphasis).

Bond's dramatic articulation of traumatizing structures is not an exception. As Roger Luckhurst argues, in the 1990s there emerged a new articulation of subjectivity based on the concept of trauma (28). He proposes that this emergence of 'trauma culture' derives from the disappearance of structures of communality, as a result of which traumatised identities become the sites of communality although they are still unable to process

the traumatization of the individual (38-39). In the field of theatre, we can find similar observations of this ‘trauma culture’ and anxiety caused by the loss of communality, the detachment from experiential reality induced by the accumulation of spectacles, and the totalizing logic of neoliberalism. According to Liz Tomlin, due to the fact that reality is experienced more and more through mediations of media communication and information technologies, the distinction between reality and representations of reality begins to collapse. Therefore, the preoccupation of the theatre during the 1990s with individual identities can be regarded as a response to the anxiety about the possibility of an identity outside mediated simulacra (2008: 498). However, contemporary theatre by no means accepts the obsession with the individual identity without problematizing the phenomenon of the atomization of the individual. As Tomlin argues, the ending of Mark Ravenhill’s *Shopping and Fucking* (1996) expresses a longing for community (504). Mark Taylor-Batty also points out that Sarah Kane’s dramaturgical strategy in *Blasted* is to arouse visceral effects through mimetic bodily suffering as an opposition to mediated televisual images produced during the Bosnian War (61-63). Along similar lines, in an essay on bodily mutilation in British theatre during the 1990s, Dan Rebellato argues that the theatrical images of violent bodily mutilation are attempts at affirming the possibility of human contact in opposition to the neoliberal logic of reducing human bodies into mere parts of industrial processes or acts of consumption (2008a: 200-04). In another essay on the apocalyptic in British theatre in the twenty-first century, Rebellato argues that the prevalent use of the apocalyptic signals a ‘counterstrategy to capitalist realism’ and that this dramaturgy of the end of neoliberalist capitalism is revolutionary in the sense that it endeavors to think beyond totality and explore the unthinkable (2017: par. 58-59).

These theorizations about the political significance of dramaturgical features such as the use of violence and apocalyptic images presuppose a traumatic structure embedded in the context of contemporary neoliberalist social order and the accumulation of mediated spectacles. The individual is so entrenched in the totalizing symbolic and imaginary orders that it is

impossible to conceive other alternatives of reality and communality. Trauma in this kind of analysis refers to a traumatizing structure that produces trauma symptoms instead of a recognizable trauma event. Theatre academic Patrick Duggan's study of 'trauma-tragedy' encapsulates this strand of analysis: 'Trauma-tragedy is a model of contemporary performance that has arisen in response to the de-cathected, individualized, and flattened society in which we live at the beginning of the twenty-first century' (174-75). In contradistinction to Christina Wald's analysis of 'trauma drama', which emphasizes the representation of the traumatized subject in relation to trauma events (156), for Duggan, trauma-tragic performances reflect how the individual is being traumatized by a traumatizing structure and provide the possibility of re-cathected aesthetic experience.

As Dominick LaCapra cautions, trauma may be used as a generalizing idea that subsumes the particular into the universal, and it is crucial to address the 'mediation between the particular and the general' (223). Similarly, Michael Rothberg notes that event-based trauma theories should include the perspective of structural violence while theories of structural violence should consider individual psychic effects that derive from structural victimization (2014: xiv-xv). Insofar as the concept of trauma entails at least three levels – ontological, historical, and structural – of meaning, I argue that Bond's idea of 'drama' should also be considered in relation to post-traumatic subjectivity, historical trauma events, and traumatizing structures.

As Bond states: 'Drama "re-enacts-out" the neonate's original creativity but now burdened with the experience of injustice and Ideology and the social chaos they cause' (Bond 2015: par. 17); dramatic imagination is also structured traumatically in the sense that it involves traumatic events or structures and the structure of repetition. However, the dramatic imagination of trauma should not be regarded as pathological repetitions of ontological, historical, or structural trauma. Instead, by dramatizing trauma, the dramatic terrain becomes a space where historical traumatic events can be evoked and traumatizing structures can be revealed. Furthermore, this

imaginative encounter with trauma not only initiates a subjective process of ‘acting out’ but also prepares a hermeneutic space for ‘working through’. More specifically, this double process of acting out and working through can be considered in terms of Bond’s theory of subjectivity. Based on Bond’s theoretical structure of subjectivity, I argue that Bond’s tragic dramaturgy comprises justice, truth, and madness as three structurally interdependent concepts:

1. The Bondian subject seeks justice when Nothingness *qua* the source of legitimizing authority is contested.
2. The Bondian subject seeks the truth when Nothingness *qua* the source of signifying order is contested.
3. Since the site of Nothingness is occupied by ideology, the site of Nothingness determines what is rational and what is mad. The Bondian subject therefore is structurally mad since the subject seeks reason beyond that defined by ideology.

The Bondian subject is always already traumatized by ‘Nothingness’, which is a site where the subject undergoes the process of subjectivation – for Bond, this process entails the seeking of justice, truth, and sanity. Moreover, in Bond’s tragedy, ‘Nothingness’ can be experienced through specific historical trauma events or through general traumatizing structures. Bond’s imagination of the subject’s encounter with Nothingness opens up a subjective terrain in which traumatic events and structures can be negotiated with the subject’s pursuit of a new distribution of meanings around the ideas of justice, truth, and sanity. Based on these concepts, I examine *Chair*, *People*, and *Dea* to demonstrate Bond’s dramaturgy of trauma-tragedy.

#### **4.2. *Chair*: Freedom and Justice**

*Chair* was first broadcast on BBC Radio 4 on 7 April 2000 and was staged at the Avignon Festival on 18 July 2006, directed by Alain Françon. In 2008, the play was restaged at the National Theatre de la Colline. As Sean Carney

observes, *Chair* is set in a totalitarian regime under a permanent state of emergency, a place where even the most tiny action of compassion can be a crime (173). This totalitarian state is also a welfare state governed by biopolitical measures. As Michel Foucault argues that biopower can be applied both through the discipline of the body and through the regulation of populations (145), in *Chair*, Bond imagines an extreme form of the Foucaultian welfare state that not only applies its biopower to every individual but also normalizes these biopolitical administrations and perpetuates a traumatizing anxiety-inducing structure in everyday life. In *Chair*, this biopolitical operation is exhibited not only dramaturgically but also theatrically. To facilitate my analysis, I draw extensively on Françon's production in 2008,<sup>32</sup> which successfully mounted Bond's dystopian worldview on stage through the actors' nuanced performances. By examining how Bond's characters are embodied, we can not only understand how the Bondian subject is structured within a biopolitical state of exception, the manipulation of which is best expressed through the human body, but we can also see how the palimpsest structure of the Bondian subject is manifested.

At the start of the play, Alice looks through the window at the Soldier and the Prisoner in the street while Billy, Alice's adoptive son, is drawing pictures. Partly because Alice thinks the Prisoner is her mother, and partly because Billy suggests that Alice should take a chair for the Prisoner or the Soldier, she decides to take a chair down to the street. The interaction between Alice, played by Dominique Valadié, and Billy, played by Pierre-Félix Gravière, exhibited how the intersubjective relationship is conditioned by the external world of totalitarian control. Valadié's performance demonstrated how the individual under the domination of the totalitarian state lives in constant fear and anxiety. When she looked out of the window, her taut face and uneasy body expressed her apprehension about what happens on the street as well as her indecision about what action to take. Alice knows that she will be interrogated if she does anything that

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<sup>32</sup> My analysis of the production is based on the recording archived at Ina THEQUE.

breaks the norm, but she also knows that she needs to take action. Valadié's reserved performance made the restraining effects of the totalitarian authority on the body palpable through minute bodily expressions, but her performance also indicated the inner conflict between Alice's fear and her will to act against the fear. In contrast to Alice, Billy never undergoes a full process of socialization due to his lack of contact with the outside society, and this explains why he is unable to understand Alice's anxiety and occupies himself with constructing fictional worlds through painting. According to Bond, through his drawings and stories, Billy imaginatively controls the external world (Tuailon 2015: 158). Gravière's Billy was a carefree man who was not only physically child-like but also intellectually immature. His performance embodied Bond's idea of the core self, a pre-socialized state in which the self is obsessed with constructing a world uncorrupted by ideology. In performance, whereas Alice's actions demonstrated how her reason, which has internalized the totalitarian order, prohibited her from freely taking action activated by imagination, Billy's actions externalized the activities of the pre-ideologized imagination.

When Alice descends to the street, the Prisoner is unable to communicate with her by words although she can utter some meaningless sounds. As Alice tries to decipher what the Prisoner intends to convey, she bites Alice. Later, the Soldier shoots the Prisoner dead as she is about to chase Alice. In this scene, Léna Bréban's performance as the Prisoner was powerful in emphasizing the dehumanizing aspect of the totalitarian state. While Bréban's performance remained faithful to Bond's description in the play, her embodiment of the Prisoner as an old fragile woman shorn of grey hair was enigmatic in visually presenting how the human figure can be extremely distorted, dehumanized, and even desexualized in the totalitarian state. The Prisoner's physical presence on the stage made us instantly understand why Alice is uncertain about the Woman's identity though she thinks she knows the Prisoner, who is in fact her mother. When commenting on the meaning of the Prisoner's reaction to the chair, Bond states how the chair can become a cage or even a prison with bars, and how the Prisoner is devastated by emotion when she meets her daughter (Tuailon 2015:



115-16). However, in performance, the semiotic meaning of the chair and the Prisoner's relation to Alice remained uncertain. Bréban foregrounded the unpredictability of the Prisoner's reactions – from taking hold of the chair, murmuring to Alice, to biting her – but the sense of unpredictability was achieved by acting in a determined and logical manner. By restraining the expression of overt emotions and avoiding explicit gestures to determine the relationship between the Prisoner and Alice, Bréban's performance not only made the Prisoner an enigmatic person but made her relationship with Alice ambiguous.

Back in the house, Alice starts to tear off all the pictures and burns them because she knows the authority will investigate what has happened on the street. It is because we know the importance of the paintings for Billy that the concentrated theatrical power is stunning when Alice starts to tear all of the paintings off the wall. Valadié's Alice acted with determination, as if this decision was based on her rational calculation. However, this also marks the point from which Billy's neonatal innocence starts to be destroyed, and Gravière's reactions – from calmly intervening, losing control of himself to bursting into tears – illustrated how a child anxiously responds to the destruction of his imaginary world. Later, Billy is consoled by Alice's story about his birth as if the new story in place of his preceding imaginary construction enables him to regain the psychic balance.

During the Welfare Officer's investigation, the Officer examines any tiny actions and even meaningless sounds in accordance with the rationalized standards and procedures. While Alice states that she intended to take the chair to the Soldier, the Officer focuses on the Prisoner's behavior towards Alice and asks Alice whether her action was prompted by her pity for the Prisoner. The investigation is meticulous to such an extent that even the Prisoner's whispering must be deciphered. Bréban's performance as the Welfare Officer embodied the dehumanizing coldness of authoritarian bureaucracy.<sup>33</sup> Her unaffected way of speech highlighted the

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<sup>33</sup> The fact that Bréban played both the Prisoner and the Welfare Officer demonstrates the two facets of the same process of dehumanization: while they occupy different biopolitical positions – one is bare life and the other is responsible for maintaining the biopolitical order of the regime – they are governed by the same logic of instrumentalization.

alienating formality of official language, and her matter-of-fact attitude underscored how the authoritarian logic can be present in the form of procedural banality.

Due to the Welfare Officer's investigation, Alice decides to commit suicide and leaves a note for Billy to follow. After Alice commits suicide, Billy is not shocked by her corpse but treats it only as a dangling object behind the door. Gravière's performance showed that Billy seems to be unaware of the meaning of Alice's death. What he can do is follow Alice's death note and bring the urn of ashes to the parking lot. While the stage directions describe in concrete detail how Billy experiences his first contact with the outside world, Françon used darkness with various soundscapes, which were divided by several blackouts, to represent Billy's encounter with the outside world. By situating Billy in the middle of the darkness, Françon intensified Billy's sense of estrangement and vulnerability in the face of the menacing omnipresent power of the state, the horror of which was highlighted by Billy's death by a stranger's shot. Billy can never grow up from the state of the core self to that of the socialized self because the totalitarian state must eradicate any anomalous existence such as Billy.

In *Chair*, both Alice's taking the chair down to the street and her final suicide can be regarded as 'Antigone moments' – rebellious gestures against the totalitarian authority. In what ways can *Chair* be read as a reworking of *Antigone*? Bond's understanding of *Antigone* is anti-Hegelian: 'Hegel might have argued that [...] both Antigone and Creon had equal rights. I think this is not so because Antigone is right and Creon is wrong' (Billingham and Bond 6). The debate over the meaning of *Antigone* derives from different modes of understanding tragedy. As Hans-Thies Lehmann argues, there are two models of tragedy: the conflict model and the transgression model (59). The conflict model designates the tragedy, the form of which 'involves the ever-repeated conflict between personal autonomy and social *nomos*, or the law of history' (59-60), while the transgression model designates the tragedy in which 'the tragic constitutes the human being insofar as it proves essential for mortals to overstep given borders' (61). Whereas the conflict model necessitates the collision of two equally justified positions, the

transgression model emphasizes the anarchic force of destabilizing the prevailing order.

Among the many interpretations of *Antigone*, Hegel's reading and Lacan's reading of *Antigone* correspond to each of these two models. In Hegel's view, the essence of tragedy is a conflict within which each side is justified in affirming its positive ethical content and in infringing the power of the other. However, the tragic collision must come to resolution and peace is restored by eternal justice (1196-7). *Antigone*, for Hegel, is the perfect example of tragedy that represents the conflict between Creon, who embodies the ethical order of the state, and Antigone, who represents the ethical order of the family. Each of them preserves its one-sided justification, and their collision ends with the cancellation of the conflict in reconciliation (1215). Lacan, however, disagrees with Hegel's conception of tragedy that ends with the reconciliation of equally antagonistic forces. On the contrary, Lacan reads Creon's judgment as '[promoting] the good of all as the law without limits, the sovereign law, the law that goes beyond or crosses the limit' (1992: 259). For Lacan, the common good and the sovereign law cannot dominate over everything without an emerging excess (ibid.). For Lacan, the content of the excess is realized in Antigone's objection to Creon's law as the supreme reason: 'She lives in the house of Creon; she is subject to his law; and this is something she cannot bear' (263). Antigone's desire does not obey the common good and the sovereign law, in opposition to which her desire only commands that she should act in accordance with desire itself. For Lacan, the universalization of the service of common good by no means resolves the problem of the relationship of the individual to his or her desire (303).

Bond's understanding of *Antigone* is similar to Lacan's. Instead of representing another established collective legal order, Antigone embodies her own desire to transgress the order imposed by Creon. Antigone's death never amounts to a resolution that accomplishes justice; on the contrary, Antigone's death operates as a non-totalizable surplus that problematizes the possibility of resolution. Lehmann also argues that *Antigone* should be read as a tragedy of transgression as 'it conjures up a final point of

uncertainty in the law: the groundlessness it harbours' (2016: 82). The idea of the 'groundlessness' of law resonates with Bond's idea of Nothingness as the origin from which the legal is divided from the illegal by the dominant ideology.

For Bond, radical innocence as the potential power of imagination can be activated in extreme situations to resist the total domination by ideology, and this imaginative power is the foundation of ethical acts. Whereas, in Chapter Two, I have pointed out the relationship between Bond and Kant, here I refer to Kant again and focus on the concept of freedom in order to account for the ethical implication of Alice's action. In 'Freedom and Drama', Bond evokes Kant's idea of freedom and morality to explain his idea of the imperative of 'radical innocence'. According to Kant, 'the sole principle of morality consists in independence from all matter of law (namely, from a desired object) and at the same time in the determination of choice through the mere form of giving universal law' (1997: 30). Kant's practical reason is not determined by any 'matter', any specific desire or object, but by a mere 'form' of universal law. Kant restricts his theory within the field of practical reason in the form of universal lawgiving and excludes any consideration of practical applications in empirical reality. Bond's idea is Kantian in the sense that he refuses to explain the imperative through psychological motives; nevertheless, he acknowledges the discrepancy between practical reason and empirical actions by stating that 'the imperative remains constant but the act changes' (2006: 217). As Kant's idea of freedom is posited to guard against causal determinism and pathological determinants, Bond's idea of the imperative as a constant without predetermined causality makes freedom possible. For Bond, the locus of freedom is that of radical innocence as the psychic potential inherent in imagination. What Kant designates as determinism in Bond's theory is ideology as he states that 'ideology seeks to impose the determinism and necessity of nature on us, the human imperative seeks the freedom it does not have' (221-22).

Bond's conception of radical innocence presumes that there exists the psychic potentiality that is not completely ideologically determined. As

ideology can be understood as the source of legitimacy, radical innocence designates the possibility of defying the established legitimate order. The universal self-lawgiving form of the Kantian categorical imperative also entails that the self-lawgiving causality is free from the restraint of the empirical legal sphere. Therefore, radical innocence is analogous to the Kantian imperative as both presuppose that the cause of self-determination is different from legality. However, while the Kantian categorical imperative presupposes a transcendental subject and requires that the imperative should be universally valid, the Bondian subject of radical innocence is situated in concrete material conditions and the decision activated by it is therefore in accordance with the particular situation.

In *Chair*, one of Alice's ethical acts is her decision to take the chair down to the street. How do we understand Alice's decision? She denies that she does it out of pity. What determines her action is an imperative without clear motives. In fact, this is not the first time that Alice breaks the rule of the state. Her adoption of Billy is illegal as she acknowledges that she did not hand him over to the authority because she was afraid of being questioned. Alice's actions are not out of her moral rationalizations as she never asserts what she does is right and the authority is wrong. She knows what the authority demands for the common good but she never regards her action as an overt violation of the rule. Instead, she tries to secure a space where the authority might cease to operate, the rule fails to apply, and authentic human relations are possible.

However, her action of taking the chair implicates her in the field of the operating sovereign power. For the Welfare Officer, the nature of Alice's action does not matter: Alice is a criminal if she acts out of pity, which is forbidden; if Alice does not act out of any motive, then she should be regarded as mentally deranged. Either way, juridically her action is illegal – in the state of exception, the authority does not follow any predictable legal procedures but imposes its law through administrative decisions. Every administrative application is lawful and needs no further legitimacy. As a result, the regulation of one's physical acts and mental state is so complete that the possibility of acting out of freedom is cancelled –

even motiveless benevolent acts are forbidden. This makes Alice choose death. For Bond, ‘Alice is a rebel. [...] So she claims there is a part of her that they will never possess and this is a shared humanity’ (Tuaille 189). Determining one’s death as the resistance to being ‘possessed’ turns out to be the only possible way of acting out of self-lawgiving freedom against the totalizing legal sphere. Alice’s suicide, like her adoption of Billy and her taking the chair for the Prisoner, is one of her actions that seek the space of freedom beyond the sovereign power.

Alice’s suicide and Billy’s death make explicit the prevalence of the traumatizing structure conditioned by the biopolitical governance and the permanent state of exception. These events take place in what trauma studies scholar Jenny Edkins defines as ‘trauma time’ – ‘a time where events that we call traumatic or unspeakable both expose the lack that underpins a sovereign political symbolic order and reveal the radical relationality of life’ (127). Although Alice’s suicide and Billy’s death evidence the violence of the political order, Alice’s compassionate acts and Billy’s biological existence, which is defined as anomalous, also demonstrate the ‘radical relationality of life’ – the ethical dimension entailed in the sphere of human contact. Since the anxiety-inducing traumatizing structure of permanent threat manufactured by the welfare security state leads to the ‘colonisation of political imagination’ (Neocleous 199), remaining resilient towards anxiety only prolongs the policing of imagination. In *Chair*, we can see that it is only by confronting traumatizing structural anxiety can alternative political and ethical envisioning of freedom and justice be made possible.

#### **4.3. *People*: Truth and the Account of the Self**

While *Chair*, by focusing on Alice’s ethical actions, is modeled on *Antigone*, those plays that interrogate the problem of knowledge and self-knowledge are modelled on the myth of Oedipus. In the following I will analyze *People*, the fourth play of *The Paris Pentad*, to demonstrate how Bond conceives the problem of knowledge and truth. Premiered by director Françon at the

Théâtre Gérard Philipe in Saint-Denis on 13 January 2014, *People* includes four traumatized characters – Postern, Lambeth, Margerson, and Someone – who wander over post-catastrophic ruins, and the play is structured as a collective journey towards self-knowledge. While theatre critics agree that Françon's staging of *People* presents the post-apocalyptic no-man's-land persuasively and praise the performance of the actors, they are uncertain about the validity of the play's message. Brigitte Salino points out that Bond fails to answer what it means to be human, the pivotal question that permeates his other plays.<sup>34</sup> Additionally, she argues that Françon's fidelity to the atrocity depicted in the play turns the spectacle into a 'trial'. Similarly, Philippe Chevilley remarks that, although a few stories and some poetic passages are moving, overall the play fails to transform the spectators as his preceding plays did.<sup>35</sup>

These responses are understandable as *People* is an exception to the standard Bondian plays that interrogate the human potential of acting out justice in extreme situations. It is reasonable to speculate why Bond chooses to change his dramaturgy to such an extent that it fails to meet the expectation of the theatre critics. Does this mean that Bond thinks the problem of justice is associated with that of truth? As Bond acknowledges that *The Paris Pentad* should be read as a series of plays in which one play answers the question left by the preceding one, we can consider the relationship between *People* and the preceding play, *Born*, to see what is the question left unanswered. As we have seen in the preceding chapter, while the pivotal scene in *Born* takes place when Luke decides to kill the Woman's baby, what concerns Luke more is the meaning of death and life. Before killing the baby, Luke keeps questioning the Woman about the meaning of being at the end of life, but she remains silent throughout Luke's interrogation. The question unanswered in *Born* is the question about the truth of the subject as a living human being. If *People* has to answer the unresolved question, logically it must be a play concerned with the problem

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<sup>34</sup> See Brigitte Salino's 'Les atrocités mécaniques d'Edward Bond' in *Le Monde* on 22 January 2014.

<sup>35</sup> See Philippe Chevilley's 'L'apocalypse et après?' in *Les Echos* on 26 January 2014.

of desire for the truth. Since *People* lacks overt sustaining dramatic actions that connect every character, it is more approachable if we read it as composed of four different journeys of the characters' self-discovery. After recounting their journeys, I will focus on how they define themselves through the quest for their own truth.

Throughout the play, Margerson keeps telling the same story about 'he' as a boy – in fact, the 'he' in his story is himself. The obsessive and repetitive story-telling not only functions as a method of objectifying the story in order to master it, but it also demonstrates how Margerson is tormented by his memory. According to the story, Margerson used to be a boy killer who was trained to kill and was ordered to kill every morning as a routine. One day, however, Margerson found out that the one he was ordered to kill was another boy of his age, which made him unable to kill and drove him mad. The next morning, a game was designed: Margerson and the boy were ordered to run from two sides of a square to get a rifle to shoot the other. The boy got the rifle but he failed to kill Margerson on the spot. That night, the camp was raided, and Margerson managed to escape. From that moment, he has kept returning to the story and told it repetitively.

Lambeth is a woman who collects the clothes of dead soldiers and sells them in a market to earn her living. At the start of the play, she is waiting for Postern's death so that she can obtain his quality overcoat. Later, we discover that Lambeth is not only able to distinguish good clothes from bad ones, but she can also figure out what happens to those who wore the clothes. Near the end of the play, Lambeth reveals that she lost one of her two sons under the violence of an army gang, and the other son, blaming her for the death of his brother, started to abuse her. She escaped and ended up earning her living by selling the clothes of the dead.

Postern lies unconscious and bleeding on the ground at the beginning of the play. After waking up, he tries to remember what has happened to him. When he sees Someone, he gives him an overcoat which he obtained from a prisoner killed by him. He keeps the coat because he remembers that the prisoner did his button up even before being killed – a gesture that troubles him. Postern gives Someone the coat because he insists that



Someone is 'innocent'. However, Someone confesses that he is not innocent. Unable to accept this truth and haunted by the gesture of the prisoner he killed, Postern ends up repeating the phrase 'do yer button up' (Bond 2006: 108) and finally dies.

Someone is a man who has forgotten his identity and hopes to find out who he is by interrogating others. Someone discovers who he is, rather than by factual evidence, by a process of remembrance and confession. When hearing Margerson's repetitive story, Someone is reminded that he also used to be a boy who was trained to kill. It is only when Lambeth starts to recount her domestic tragedy caused by the army gang that Someone truly acknowledges his own identity as a soldier killer. He is traumatized because, like Margerson, he was also ordered to kill a boy of his own age. He disagrees with Postern's insistence that he is innocent and confesses that he is guilty. He also discovers that the button of the coat given to him by Postern has been ripped off, suggesting that what the prisoner did was to rip off the button instead of doing it up. In other words, Postern misreads the prisoner's final gesture, which in fact demonstrates angst and defiance. At the end of the play, worried that other soldiers from Postern's camp may return, Someone parts company with Lambeth, who asks Margerson to accompany her and help her bear her sack of rags and clothes.

Regarding these characters, Bond states: 'They are fighting to find out what happened to them in order to take their particular responsibility for it. It is like a summing up speech in a trial where various lawyers are giving their version of what happened' (Tuailon 2015: 197). This statement clearly encapsulates the play, but it needs further clarification: first, Postern and Someone are 'fighting to find out' their past but Lambeth and Margerson are not – if they are, it is a fight of a different nature. Second, not every character is taking 'their particular responsibility': Postern refuses or evades his own responsibility by misreading the meaning of the prisoner's gesture and misconceiving Someone's past, while Margerson, tormented by his traumatic past, is unable to take responsibility at all. Third, it is true that they are 'giving their version of what happened' but, as lawyers, who are they defending? If it is a trial, what is the verdict of this trial? What is the

truth that legitimizes the verdict of the trial? How does *People* relate to the myth of Oedipus? All these questions revolve around the desire for the truth, and this is related to how Bond understands the myth of Oedipus.

In the myth of Oedipus, by answering the Sphinx's riddle, Oedipus gains his self-knowledge as a human and his status as the king of Thebes. However, as we know, what Oedipus knows about himself is not the truth – the missed encounter with the real traumatic past is made possible only after he investigates the cause of the plague in Thebes. The traumatic past posits itself as an enigma and compels Oedipus to produce a new truth that can reconstitute the order. It is only when Oedipus accepts the past, blinds himself, and declares that he is Oedipus that he completely grasps the whole truth. Bond's interpretation, however, problematizes the relationship between crime, innocence, and truth:

Oedipus defies the gods and is outside social law. His acts are not crimes, they come from the pre-social need to be at home in the world. To seek justice, Oedipus murders his father and marries his mother. [...] When Oedipus *commits* his crimes, peace comes to the city, because Oedipus, anticipating the future, answers the Sphinx's riddle: the definition of a human being. When Oedipus's story is known, his acts *become* crimes. Administration makes innocence criminal and uses the transcendental to make it a sin, an impurity. (2000b: 130; original emphasis)

Bond regards Oedipus's flight from Corinth to exempt himself from committing the crime foreshadowed by the oracle as an act of innocence. It is due to his innocence to seek his right in this world that he murders Laius and marries Jocasta. What makes him criminal is not his act of innocence but the transcendental power, which causes the plague, and the administration of the state, the investigation of which makes Oedipus juridically guilty. For Bond, it is ideology that turns Oedipus's acts of innocence into crime. While the truth established by the facts and witnesses reveals that Oedipus is the criminal juridically, this by no means suppresses the innocent nature of the crime. Similarly, Oedipus's self-blinding can be regarded as a form of punishment that results from the investigation as well

as an innocent act of self-determination. For Bond, innocence and crime do not exclude each other – on the contrary, innocence persists in crime and can take the form of crime. What is at stake is what authorizes the establishment of truth that determines the conviction. Juridical conviction based on factual evidence as truth is not justice since it is authorized by the state that legitimatizes the structural injustice in society. Conversely, the persistence of innocence in crime can only be revealed by the self-authorized determination of subjective truth.

More importantly, this subjective truth is based on a desire for narration. According to philosopher Adriana Cavarero, although Sophocles' Oedipus can answer what man is in terms of philosophical definition, he cannot know who he is as a singular human being by abstract knowledge – Oedipus can know who he is only through the narration of his story and it is others who narrate his story (2000: 12). In a similar manner, *People* revolves around different forms of self-narration. In *People*, audiences are not provided with facts or witnesses that can completely guarantee the veracity of the characters' confessions. However, the relationship between subjectivity and truth can be established by means other than facts. The conflicts of various narratives are in principle propelled by each character's desire for their subjective truth established by remembrance, confession, and others' narratives. The disclosure of truth is an event initiated by the interrogating subject, and it is through the process of self-conviction of crime and innocence that the meaning of the truth is contested. However, unlike the Sophoclean Oedipus, who arrives at self-understanding through the others' narratives, not every character in *People* can achieve self-understanding. Speculating about the ethics of accounting for the self, Judith Butler states:

To tell the truth about oneself involves us in quarrels about the formation of the self and the social status of truth. Our narratives come up against an impasse when the conditions of possibility for speaking the truth cannot fully be thematized, where what we speak relies upon a formative history, a sociality, and a corporeality that cannot easily, if at all, be reconstructed in narrative. (2005: 132)

As Butler suggests that narrative presupposes the conditions of speaking about the truth and the self, the difficulty for the characters in *People* to articulate about themselves derives from the fact that their traumatic experiences may not be articulable according to the conditions of narrative. This does not mean that these characters can never speak about themselves, but they do need to surmount the obstacles of speaking. The process of self-narration thus requires a redistribution of the conditions of speaking and a negotiation between the speakable and the unspeakable.

When Someone is still struggling to seek his own identity, Postern gives him a gun and orders him to shoot Margerson. Someone, while failing to shoot Margerson, confesses that he did kill:

**Postern** Kill 'im! Do it! 'E cant 'urt yer! – 'E try I break 'is back! If yer was a killer yer'd kill me for saying that! Yer ain kill! Listen t' what yer know! I made yer see it! Ken! Ken! Ken! – yer cant kill (*Pushes Margerson face down to the ground.*) Try it! Do it professional! Back a' the neck!

[...]

*Someone stares down at Margerson's face.*

**Postern** Piss bullets in 'is eyes!

**Someone** I killed! I killed!

**Postern** *falls unconscious.* **Margerson** *twists and drags away.*  
(Bond 2006: 99)

Postern urges Someone to kill Margerson because Someone's failure to kill Margerson can confirm his belief that Someone is unable to kill anyone. After Postern recovers from a coma, he insists that Someone is innocent and did not kill Margerson. Someone, at first pretending that he did kill Margerson, later reveals that he did kill someone other than Margerson before:

**Postern** [...] Yer never kill!

**Someone** I did. I did. Before. What can I do about it? – it's 'oo I am. Lie? *Thass* the lie! Kill meself because I begun t' live!

**Postern** Yer never kill! I swear it on this earth! [...] (Bond 2006: 104)

Later, Someone further admits that he did kill another person who is the same age as him after Lambeth recounts her story. When Someone first appears, he does not know his own name and interrogates other characters about his identity. However, no one can confirm his identity or provide any clues except Postern, who declares that he is innocent. Postern's witness, nevertheless, fails to help Someone recover from his amnesia due to the fact that his insistence of Someone's innocence is not confirmed by Someone as true. Someone's recovery begins with his gaze at Margerson's face and we should not underestimate the significance of this Levinasian face-to-face encounter. It is when he refuses to kill and surrenders to Margerson's impotent gaze that Someone admits that he used to kill. Margerson's gaze operates as an enigma that questions Someone's inner resistance and activates Someone's subjective transformation. The mere utterance of 'I killed' as a confession is the point from which Someone starts to take responsibility for what he has been doing.

In contrast, Postern's identity has to be sustained by another man who demonstrates ideal innocence. If what helps Someone to reconstruct his identity is the acknowledgment of guilt, for Postern, it is the innocent alter-ego that he intends to identify himself with. However, Someone's confession of guilt makes Postern's identification impossible. A similar logic also applies to the button of the coat: an object that Postern believes to be the token of human dignity turns out to be the proof of human agony and suffering during the war. Whereas Someone's traumatized self reconstitutes itself through his encounter with the real traumatic past, Postern's defence mechanism defers him from the real encounter. However, it is not necessary that the encounter with the traumatic past results in a subjective truth-seeking. Margerson's repetitive remembering demonstrates another form of symptom:

**Mergerson** [...] 'E look at the face. It was 'is own age. 'E couldn't kill 'im. Never kill 'im. Not 'is own age. Never should a' look at 'is face. Y'ad a killer's face. 'Is eyes was 'oles punch in the 'ead. Knew straight off. 'E'd met 'is killer. The one 'e'd bin

call t' kill 'd kill 'im one day. The rifle drop. Men watch. (*He wanders aimlessly in silence.*) 'Is breakfast 'd be cold. They never kep it one a 'ot plate. (Bond 2006: 72)

Margerson's repetitive verbalization of his traumatic memory may be explained by the notion of the 'compulsion to repeat' in terms of Freudian psychoanalysis. The function of the compulsion to repeat, however, is contested: the repetitive compulsion aims to 'master and abreact excessive tensions' or tends towards 'absolute discharge which is implied by the notion of the death instinct' (Laplanche and Pontalis 80). Whether the repetition is to 'master' or 'discharge', it is the sign of the failure of psychological homeostasis. In Margerson's repetitive monologue, he is recounting his trauma, but he never uses 'I' to articulate the past. Instead, he uses 'he' as the subject of the story in order to veil the unbearable truth. Moreover, he tends to use short sentences and fragmentary phrases as if he is unable to formulate and complete the whole story. In contrast, Lambeth recounts her traumatic past without difficulty only because she has undergone the process of subjective reconstitution. To sum up, through confessing the traumatic past and acknowledging their guilt, Lambeth and Someone gain their self-knowledge. Margerson, however, is traumatized to such an extent that it is impossible for him to recover like Lambeth and Someone do. As for Postern, since he cannot find a suitable self-defining moral frame to account for his 'crime', he can only stick to the impossible hope that Someone is innocent, which is not the case.

*People* is an investigation into the post-traumatic subject that seeks the truth based on acknowledging what is singularly negative and inherently criminal within oneself. Truth is not an objective fact to be learned but a truth-event to be experienced subjectively. The truth-event is always related to the traumatic experience as a 'deferred action' (*Nachträglichkeit*). 'Deferred action', as a Freudian term, designates a deferred revision caused by events that allow the subject to obtain new meaning of the past by reactivating earlier traumatic experiences that resist full incorporation (Laplanche and Pontalis 112). Bond also expresses similar viewpoints: 'A child is traumatised when it must face a situation too brutal or confounding

to be used creatively in its story [...]. The child must be helped to redramatise its mind and change its story' (2003: 114). The deferred action of redramatizing the traumatic event is less a truth-event that aims to discover the objective truth in the past than an event in which the trace of the past reconstitutes the present. Furthermore, Derrida, in analyzing Freud's idea of deferred action, states that 'the structure of delay [...] prohibits [...] a simple dialectical complication of the present' and that '[t]he trace cannot be conceived [...] on the basis of either the present or the presence of the present' (1973: 152). This means that the process of subjective reconstitution initiated by the trace of the past as an alterity still cannot be completely incorporated into the present.

In this sense, Someone's recovery from amnesia is a process of subjective reconstitution without completely obliterating the alterity of the trace of the past. By confessing that he used to kill, Someone recognizes himself as a criminal and starts to take responsibility for his past and others. However, his act of pleading guilty cannot exonerate him from guilt, nor can this act enable him to be responsible for what he has done. On the contrary, taking responsibility for the dead is impossible since the dead always already remain the alterity that problematizes the idea of 'taking responsibility' as a way to justify the self-preservation of the living. Someone's plea of guilty requires him to respond to his guilt and his past infinitely. This is an ethical task never to be completed. Postern fails to reconcile himself with the traumatic past because he fails to recognize the impossibility of reconciliation.

Through the contrast between Postern and Someone, Bond problematizes and complicates his idea of 'innocence': radical innocence by no means designates a regression into neonatal innocence or a progression into an impossible terrain outside corruption. Rather, radical innocence as a desire to articulate the truth can function through making the self acknowledge the impossibility of being innocent, as Bond states: 'Truth is an act of violence: it is the truth when you cannot lie to yourself' (2012: xxxviii). This truth is not determined by the ideological frame through which innocence is usually defined as juridically culpable; rather, this truth

reveals the incongruity between the abstract definition of innocence and embodied singularities. The process of seeking the truth is a process of returning to the point where the self is challenged to determine the meaning for him/herself – it is thus a process of deferral in which the meaning of repetition can only be discovered in differences.

#### **4.4. *Dea*: Madness and Terror**

*Dea* premiered at Sutton Theatre on 24 May 2016 and was directed by Bond himself.<sup>36</sup> As Bond states that ‘[t]heatre is the madhouse where the audience go to find their sanity, just as madmen go mad in reality to find theirs’ (2000b: 95), his dramatization of madness achieves the pinnacle of complexity in *Dea*, as Cliff, one of the characters, remarks by rephrasing Hamlet’s famous dictum: ‘To be sane or not to be sane, that is the question’ (2016a: 78). Indeed, the whole play can be read as an extensive interrogation of the demarcation between sanity and insanity, or, that between reason and madness.

As the title suggests, *Dea* gains its inspiration from Euripides’ *Medea*, but it is by no means an adaptation of the original. Instead, while Euripides’ *Medea* ends with Medea’s murder of her children, Bond’s *Dea* starts with filicide. At the beginning of Part One of *Dea*, Dea is preparing for the soirée in celebration of the end of the war. In the absence of her husband, Johnson, Dea smothers her two babies and batters them with her shoes. Appalled by the death of the babies, Johnson asks why she committed the murder, and Dea replies: ‘You wanted me to do it’ (Bond 2016a: 11). Out of rage, Johnson rapes Dea as if to retrieve his lost children. It is striking that Dea does not kill her children out of hatred, jealousy, and solitude as Medea does but because of an ‘order’ that Johnson gives her. However, nothing in the play indicates that Johnson orders Dea to kill their children; instead, Johnson only orders Dea to get dressed as soon as possible. Why does Dea attribute the motive of her murder to an order that does not exist?

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<sup>36</sup> My analysis of the production is based on the live performance that I attended at Sutton Theatre.



In fact, Dea's defiant act is to problematize the authority of Johnson's order. When Johnson realizes his children have been killed, he remembers how children were dying in the trench during the war – it is as if the death of his children reminds him of how other children have been murdered. Without doubt, Dea knows how Johnson's military order could have caused the death of other children during the war and it is from this fact that Dea senses the ironic nature of Johnson's order about dress change. Therefore, Dea's disobedient obedience reveals the illegitimate nature of legitimacy: if murdering children during the war can be accepted, why should the same act be regarded as monstrous at home? If a mother who kills her children is wicked, why should a man who kills other people's children be glorified and celebrated? By pushing the legitimacy of military order to the extreme, Dea aims to reveal the essential void of the order even at the expense of her children.

The second section of Part One starts with Dea's homecoming eighteen years after she murdered her children. Dea was sent to a psychiatric hospital after she gave birth and was detained there before another war destroyed the hospital. She returns to claim her right to stay in her house and asserts that she is not mad:

**Johnson** [...] Why did you ruin my life?

**Dea** I don't know. [...] Every day I was with the mad my sanity was clawing at my brain. When the bombs fell they opened the roof. Suddenly there was sky everywhere – I was free – and I ran out into a bigger madhouse. Help me. [...] I have a right to live here.

**Johnson** A right!

[...]

**Johnson** [...] You are monstrous! Why why did you do it?

**Dea** Because I'm wicked! Isn't that it? Is that what you want to be told? I'm wicked! Wicked! Wicked! I stink of fire and brimstone and the madhouse! It satisfies everyone else. Why doesn't it satisfy you? (Bond 2016a: 19-20)

After eighteen years, Johnson still cannot understand why Dea murdered their children, nor can Dea clearly express what motivated her. However, Dea is sure that she is neither mad nor wicked. Three days later, Dea tells

Oliver, one of her sons, that she is his mother. Realizing that Oliver knows the truth, Johnson decides to send Oliver to the army in order to separate him from Dea. During the quarrel between Johnson and Oliver, they argue over the motives of Dea's murder, and Oliver states that he understands Dea:

I know why she killed them. Bits of me are killed every day since I can remember. [...] You put on a uniform to kill. Where you kill and she killed are the same place – it's where my dead brothers are kept and because they were killed when they were little they ride round and round on a merry-go-round and wave at us and cheer. (Bond 2016a: 32)

The way Oliver associates Dea's murder with Johnson's murder is illuminating. He questions whether putting on a uniform can justify killing and regards those who were killed during the war as his 'dead brothers'. Like Dea, Oliver also problematizes the essential emptiness of the military order. Later, Dea kills Johnson as he is about to rape her and fellates a sleepwalking Oliver besides Johnson's corpse. When Oliver awakes, Dea accuses him of killing Johnson and then kills him. Despite these transgressive actions, Dea still asserts that she is not mad.

How do we understand Dea's statement that she is not mad? On stage, Helen Berg's performance as Dea in Part One was highly controlled and calm: she executed every act of transgression in a determined manner as if these crimes are rationally calculated and voluntarily committed. Even when Johnson rapes her after she killed her babies, Berg's Dea did not physically resist but froze herself like a mannequin. Berg's controlled performance did not exclude any explicit emotional expressions or deny the underlying psychological logic, but she never let her emotions and psychology overtake the logic that determines the meaning of the situation. When she declared, in a rational manner, that she is not mad, the audience was made to be aware of the difficulty of simply attributing her transgressive acts to madness. Instead, Berg's performance foregrounded the indeterminacy of the situation.

Part One of *Dea* reveals the violence underneath the surface of military victory through Dea's symptoms of 'madness'. Although *Dea* alludes to the

myth of Medea, it can hardly be regarded as an attempt to rewrite the whole myth; rather, *Dea* deconstructs the motivations of Medea's filicide and reintegrates this violent act within the context of the contemporary 'War on Terror'. Still, we can ask in what sense can *Dea* be related to *Medea*? As Greek tragedy scholar Edith Hall points out, Euripides's Medea is aware of the fact that her filicide is morally wrong, but she is so overwhelmed by her rage that she cannot resist the temptation to murder her children; therefore, Medea's filicide is framed in a terrain of moral ambiguity since we cannot be sure whether her acts are completely intentional or they are driven by uncontrollable rage (189). *Dea*'s filicide is dramaturgically more ambiguous and enigmatic than Medea's since the killing takes place at the beginning of the play, which renders the whole act practically impossible for the audience to make sense of. As to *Dea*'s motivation, Bond explains that *Dea* performs her murder in sleep, and in her dream she can 'perform the truth of her situation' (Tuailon 2015: 163). In performance, however, the fact that *Dea* murders in a state of sleep is by no means obvious; instead, Berg's performance demonstrates *Dea*'s self-consciousness and determination. Although whether *Dea* performs her murder consciously or unconsciously, which obviously replicates the moral ambiguity of Euripides's Medea, is open to interpretation, what is more important is 'the truth of her situation'.

Judging from *Dea*'s statement that it is Johnson who orders her to murder their children, and from Olivier's explanation, it is tenable to state that *Dea* is haunted by the war and by the casualties it has caused. Johnson cannot understand *Dea*'s sense of unease because those casualties are outside the frame of the grievable. As Judith Butler argues, 'whether and how we respond to the suffering of others [...] depends upon a certain field of perceptible reality' (2009: 64). This frame of perception determines what is grievable and what is ungrievable by manipulating the field of representation, in which certain lives are represented as grievable while other lives are prohibited from being rendered grievable. For Butler, this frame of representation is a mechanism of violence that completes a process of dehumanization (2004: 148). From this perspective, the reason why Johnson cannot understand *Dea*'s unease is due to the frame of perception

through which those who have been killed by him can never be mourned and rendered grievable. *Dea*, however, is haunted by those who should never be mourned, and her filicide subverts this frame of perception, throwing into relief the conditions that determine the demarcation between the grievable and the ungrievable. That fact that she mourns for the unmourned and murders indifferently those who should be mourned is what makes her murder transgressive and incomprehensible for Johnson. In analyzing the images of torture at Abu Ghraib, Derek Gregory cites an Iraqi woman's blog: 'I felt ashamed to be looking at them [...] each and every one of them is a son and possibly a brother' (qtd in 229). Gregory contends that, although vulnerability is distributed unevenly, it can be shared – in an age of terror, everyone can be reduced to the status of *homo sacer* (230).

The framework that distinguishes the grievable from the ungrievable determines correspondingly the structural difference between reason and madness. Euripides's *Medea* is an alien in Corinth, and her status as a barbarian, as Cavarero argues, can be perceived to account for her 'barbarous' murders, which can only be committed by a savage alien (2007: 26). However, unlike *Medea*, *Dea*'s murder is not attributed to her being a foreigner but being a mad woman, and her madness derives from her mourning for the ungrievable.

Part Two of *Dea* is set in the interior of a military tent. This spatial configuration combines the conventions of 'frontline drama', which dramaturgically focuses on the participants of military invasion in the frontline (Gupta 101), and 'the global war prison', defined by Derek Gregory as 'a series of sites where sovereign power and bio-power coincide' (206) such as the U.S. army's prisons at Guantánamo Bay and Abu Ghraib. By simultaneously locating his soldiers in the frontline of counter-terrorism and 'the global war prison', Bond emphasizes the normalization of the biopolitical paradigm as a traumatizing structure and charts various traumatized and subjected subjects within this structure.

In the age of the global 'War on Terror', the concept of 'frontline' should be renegotiated – indeed, the soldiers are in a military tent and they are about to fight against their enemies. However, they do not know who

and where the enemy is – the line that separates ‘us’ as soldiers from ‘they’ as enemies is always indefinite, so are the binary concepts such as frontline/home-front, military/civilian, and inside/outside. The impossibility of identifying the enemy and the possibility of the enemy being within us render the invisible enemy ‘the phantom enemy’ (Galli 217). As Butler points out, this spectrality of the enemy makes the war against terrorism ‘infinite paranoia’ (2004: 34), and Part Two of *Dea* is structured around the phenomenon of paranoia.

At the beginning, Dea’s other son, John, is investigating the Prisoner, a potential suicide bomber. The Prisoner, however, remains silent and refuses to tell John anything about her plan. At the same time, John is also disturbed by the fact that children start to appear on a nearby hill. However, John is not permitted to kill those children, neither is his plan to send the Prisoner to kill the children accepted – in fact, he does not even know if those children are enemies. In order to force the Prisoner to speak, John orders his soldiers to gang rape her. The soldiers, however, feel unable to do what John orders them to do though John persuades them that ‘[r]aping her’s the most honourable charitable civilized thing you can do’ (Bond 2016a: 52). Later, when John is urged by the soldiers to rape the Prisoner, he shoots her dead. At the same moment, Dea is ushered into the tent. The soldiers discover that the children on the hill have disappeared, and this makes them more anxious about the situation to come:

**John** I stand before something so big...! Listen to me!  
There are things in nature – twisted up in the wheels of reality  
too complicated to --! I can’t make you understand. (To  
**Sergeant**) One shot in a woman’s head’s not enough! Go  
outside. Order the men to shoot the hill! Massacre it!  
Massacre the earth! (Bond 2016a: 62)

Out of anxiety, John forces Dea to use a beer bottle to rape the dead Prisoner. The soldiers then drag the Prisoner away to continue using the beer bottle to rape her while John starts to rape Dea and accuses her of intending to murder all of them. Near the end of Part Two, the atmosphere of accelerating anxiety obviously implies that the military order is on the

brink of disintegration, and the soldiers seem to have become psychologically unstable and deranged. Eventually, the Interpreter, who most of the time remains silent and helps John to translate ‘rape’ into the language that the Prisoner can understand, puts on the Prisoner’s suicide jacket, straps the explosives onto the jacket, and detonates it, resulting in the death of the soldiers.

Analyzing the phenomenon of violence and torture at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay, Anne McClintock uses the concept of ‘paranoid’ to define the logic that determines the behaviour of the torturer. She considers ‘paranoid’ to be ‘a double-sided phantasm that oscillates precariously between deliriums of grandeur and nightmares of perpetual threat’ (53). This oscillation between megalomania and fear is demonstrated in performance: while John and other soldiers justify their violence and rape as sanctioned by the military order, Christopher Birks’s performance as John implied otherwise. Birks’s performance emphasized the process of his inner disintegration in the face of the potential danger in the surroundings. While he kept emphasizing that his order must be obeyed and executed, what the audience sensed is his sense of insecurity and the fundamental emptiness of his order. Moreover, as anthropologist Allen Feldman points out, in torture scenarios, instead of extorted information, it is the mimetic control represented through the degraded body that demonstrates triumphant domination (344). This logic explains the soldiers’ rape of the Prisoner despite the fact that she is dead and cannot yield any information.

Part Two ends with Dea carrying John’s head back into the tent, an image reminiscent of Agave’s holding Pentheus’s head in Euripides’s *The Bacchae*. Bond’s appropriation of this image of decapitation invites us to compare the relationship between Dea and John to that between Agave and Pentheus. In *The Bacchae*, both Agave and Pentheus are in a Dionysiac trance, and Pentheus is decapitated by Agave due to her delirium. Only when Agave comes to normal consciousness does she realize her violent deed. As Edith Hall notes, *The Bacchae*, by blurring the distinction between illusion and reality, can be regarded as a reflection on the experience of theatre, which entails ‘a mimetic enactment of the journey into and out of

illusion' (293). In a similar vein, the dramaturgy of *Dea* revolves around the relationship of, and complication between, reason and madness. However, unlike *The Bacchae*, in which it is Agave who beheads Pentheus, in *Dea*, it is the Interpreter's suicidal bombing that decapitates John. Moreover, instead of attributing the source of madness to Dionysiac entrancement, Bond destabilizes the distinction between reason and madness by suggesting that madness derives from the excess of reason. In analyzing *The Bacchae* with an intention to draw parallels between the Greek tragedy and the contemporary 'War on Terror', Terry Eagleton argues that Pentheus is 'an exponent of state terrorism' (2005: 5). He emphasizes the fact that Dionysus informs Pentheus that 'I am sane and you are mad', which demonstrates that the excessive dominance of reason over madness can only lead to paranoia: 'It is sane to acknowledge madness, and lunatic to imagine that such madness could ever simply be bullied into reason' (11).

The beheading image is not only reminiscent of *The Bacchae*, but it also directly refers to the online videos of beheading released by ISIS. As Jenny Hughes argues, the performance of beheading 'mimics the contours and forms of exception' (48). This performance of exception produced by terrorists mimetically reproduces the state of exception at Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay, and this is especially demonstrated by the color of the victims' clothes – in both cases, the victims wear bright orange jumpsuits. Since, for Muslims, men wear orange before execution, for the detainees at Guantánamo Bay, the color functions as part of psychological torture. This form of psychological torture is mirrored and aggravated by ISIS when they physically execute the victims dressed in orange jumpsuits. In other words, ISIS's performance of beheading is a mimesis of the U.S.'s soldiers' performance of treating the prisoners as bare life outside legal protection. Likewise, since the spectral enemy can always mimetically reproduce the state of exception, John's beheading demonstrates that the soldier who exercises the power to kill without committing homicide can also be turned into bare life.

While Part Two of *Dea* revolves around the paranoiac nature of excessive reason and the mimetic structure of violence in the state of

exception, Part Three focuses on the traumatized subject's psychic negotiation with sanity and insanity. Part Three takes place in a forest wilderness where Dea lives in ruins. Dea treats John's head as her lost child and takes care of it in an imaginary world of wholeness. The head is not merely a 'part' of the human body but a fragmented image that forms a whole, a psychic truth that protects Dea from collapsing. In Dea's delusion, she recounts how she has been searching for her son and building a proper home for him. Yet, Dea is simultaneously troubled by another woman who has followed her for years in search of her child's disjointed bodily parts to make him up. Dea understands the pain of the woman but also feels threatened by her madness. Caused by the traumatic experiences of the war and exile, her delusion functions as a psychic regression into the state of the core self, in which she can construct an alternative reality uncorrupted by the outside world. Both Dea's delusional union with John and her fear of the imagined mad woman also demonstrate the psychic logic of the core self that oscillates between the Comic and the Tragic in interacting with the fictional world.

It is not until Cliff contradicts Dea's imagined world that she is made aware of the 'reality' of John's head:

**Dea** [...] He ordered you to go!

**Cliff** Who ordered me?

**Dea** My son!

[...]

**Cliff** (*stares at Dea*) That? (*Turns to look at the head.*)

That's real? A – (*Shocked.*) When I was here before I thought it was a toy. Kid's party mask.

**Dea** He's my son.

**Cliff** Your son ... ? (*Turns to look at the head. Turns back to Dea.*) It's a head. (Bond 2016a: 75)

Cliff tells Dea that John's head is only a head and not her son. However, in the end, it is Cliff who treats the head as his authority – he starts to hear John's command and shoots Dea. Even after he has shot Dea dead, Cliff can still hear the command:



No sir. No need. She's dead. (**Dea** raises an arm to feel for support.) Dying. (Plea.) Please sir. No! (Stamps.) Order order order. 'Elli! (Goes to door. Stoops over **Dea**.) Sorry. Order. The second shot. (Yells to make her hear.) An order! (Bond 2016a: 83)

Though Cliff feels hesitant about the order issued by the head, he still hears and obeys the voice of the command from the head. In contrast to Dea's psychotic delusions, in which John's head is taken to be her son, Cliff's fantasy turns John's head into the source of authority that must be obeyed. David Clayton's performance as Cliff embodied how he is 'possessed' by the authority of the order. Clayton did not always talk to the head directly; instead, he usually gazed blankly as if he was struggling with the order inside himself. Unlike the Welfare Officer in *Chair*, who instrumentalizes herself as a tool only to perform the official task, Clayton's Cliff suggested that the subject may not be completely subjected to the ideologized reason as his performance underscored the madness of rational self-instrumentalization and revealed the force of resistance inherent in the subject.

Though Cliff is ordered to fire the second shot, he never manages to do so. Moreover, Dea, while being shot, reappears in bloody clothes like an undead ghost. It is as if, near the end of *Dea*, we are led into an indeterminate zone where the boundary between life and death is blurred. The final image of Dea can be compared to what Lacan designates as Antigone's beauty between two deaths. After being punished by Creon, Antigone is 'suspended in the zone of life and death' (Lacan 1992: 280). While the second death is the 'real' death of Antigone as a living being, the first death is the 'symbolic' death that makes her separate from the symbolic operation of social life. In the zone between life and death, Antigone is a pure living being stripped of her status as a social being. Similarly, as an outsider of the social order, Dea eventually realizes what to do with the head:

**Dea** My twins! (*She smashes the head on the table.*) I killed my twins! (*She smashes the head on the ground.*) A skull with

brains in it! I killed my – (*She stamps on the skull. It breaks in pieces. Stamps. Kicks the bits away.*) My twins! My twins! (*Kicks and stamps.*) My twins! My twins!  
[...]  
**Dea** (*stamping*) An order! An order! (*Gagging*) The – the –  
the – the – (Bond 2016a: 90)

The dramatic interrogation of the meaning of order is crystallized in the moment when Dea smashes John's head. By smashing the head, Dea eradicates the source of fictional authority as well as that of imaginary wholeness: only by symbolically killing the authority can it be possible to reorganize how justice is defined, and only by acknowledging her murder of the twins can Dea confront the truth of her real trauma and start to take responsibility for what she has done. However, Cliff never recovers from the fantasy that John's head commands him to shoot.

It should be pointed out that the final scene of *Dea*, in which Cliff is possessed by the order and Dea is an undead enigma, perfectly dramatizes Bond's idea of 'the fictions-within-fictions'. This idea is a conceptual continuation of that of 'levels of reality' presented in 'Commentary on *The War Plays*'. The dialogue between Dea and Cliff is analogous to that of the Woman and the soldier in *Great Peace*: the Woman treats her bundle of rags as her baby, but the soldier reminds her that it is not a living being. Later, the Woman also concedes that the bundle is only a bundle. Nevertheless, the head in *Dea* not only operates as the imaginary child for Dea as the bundle does in *Great Peace*, it also functions as the source of authority. Therefore, in *Dea*, Bond complicates the use of the object to manipulate the levels of fiction and reality: John's head can be a head cut off during the war, a head that stands for the imaginary child for Dea, or a head that still commands for Cliff. How a head is perceived reflects how the subject structures the relation with the object that stands for an imagined objective reality. It should also be noted that the three subject-object relations defined by the head correspond to Bond's structural conception of madness.

If, in theory, *Dea* has presented exhaustively how the subject can be structured in terms of madness, how do we understand the undead state of

Dea? Does Bond suggest that there could be a residue beyond the structural madness of the subject? For Bond, the use of ghosts is another dramaturgical device of fictions-within-the-fiction:

In drama fiction is the first layer of psychosis. But there are fictions-within-the-fiction: God, ghosts, witches, phantoms. [...] Then the fictions-in-the-fiction undo, decathex, the fictions of ideology, because the audience know they in fact are not the dead who came to the theatre as ghosts. [...] It is a matter of the relation between fictions. (2012: xxxvii)

For Bond, ghosts as ‘fictions-in-the-fiction’ are deployed to undo the fictions of ideology. As Bond’s theory of subjectivity revolves around the development of the self and the structure of the self, theoretically, the existence of the ghost already lies outside the idea of subjectivity. However, Dea’s state of being undead situates her between a living individual and a ghost, and it is this in-betweenness that makes her existence a possible residue outside the Bondian structure of subjectivity. To be more specific, through the final image, Bond probes into the possibility of the birth of a new subject once the ideology is undone. The birth of the new subject cannot be conceived through regression into the phase of the core self or the neonate, nor can it take place in a static state completely structured by the dominant ideology. Rather, the birth can only be possible in an originary moment when the dominant ideologized structure is rendered inoperative.

In fact, Bond’s conception of madness as a structural constituent of subjectivity can be related to Derrida’s reading of Descartes’s idea of *cogito*. According to Derrida, ‘the cogito escapes madness only because at its own moment, under its own authority, it is valid *even if I am mad*, even if my thoughts are completely mad’ (2005: 67; original emphasis). For Derrida, cogito excludes madness from reason by asserting its authority over the exclusion even if this authority might be based on madness. Derrida demonstrates that, at the originary moment, the act of the rational cogito to distinguish itself from madness is already an act of violence – the attained certainty of reason is always already ‘attained within madness itself’ (ibid.). The violence enforced by reason upon the indeterminable common origin of

reason and madness suggests the distinction between reason and madness is always in crisis. Therefore, for Derrida, ‘reason is madder than madness – for reason is nonmeaning and oblivion [...] and [...] madness is more rational than reason, for it is closer to the wellspring of sense’ (76). Due to the structural common origin of reason and madness, Derrida states that, when the speaking subject needs to conjure up madness, madness must be confined in the realm of fiction (66).

According to Derrida, for the speaking subject, the realm of fiction is secured in order to exclude madness from the rational subject. However, it follows that the realm of fiction is potentially a threat to the rational order of reality. While the speaking subject divides reason from madness at the originary moment, this divide is never stabilized. Potentially, there could be another originary moment that undoes and rearranges the reason/madness divide. In this regard, *Dea* not only demonstrates the unstable divide between reason and madness but also reveals the possibility of imagining a new order yet to come.

#### **4.5. Conclusion**

In this chapter I have examined the relationship between trauma and tragedy in Bond’s theory and unravelled the structure of ‘drauma’ – Bondian trauma-tragedy. In order to fully grasp Bond’s dramaturgy of trauma-tragedy, we need to see different levels – ontological, historical, and structural – of trauma in operation in Bond’s theory and dramaturgy. This implies that, in Bondian trauma-tragedy, the dramatization of the Tragic can always open up a terrain in which we can encounter the trauma that can be acted out and worked through. In Bond’s theory, the interaction between the Tragic and the Comic decides the psychic reality of the core self; this implies that the dramatization of trauma-tragedy can provide an imaginative space into which the socialized self can retreat and the ideologized descriptions of justice, truth, and sanity can be disentangled. This imaginative space is a point of convergence of psychic and social reality in which the ontologically traumatized subject can engage with historical

trauma and structural trauma. In this encounter, newly described subjectivities and social realities can be imagined. Having examined Bond's dramaturgy of trauma-tragedy, in the next chapter I will turn to Bond's TIE plays, which constitute a major part of Bond's later plays and deserves special attention to their dramaturgy of education.

## Chapter Five

### Approaching Otherness: Storyability, Spectrality, and Hospitality in Bond's TIE Plays

In Bond's conception of the 'site', theatre is regarded as an intermediate social site in which the dominant ideology of society can be temporarily suspended and questioned in a structure of self-reflexive critique. However, this kind of intermediate site is not limited to theatre. Although theatre is exemplary as a self-reflexive structure due to its theatricality based on the relationship between stage and spectator, any social sphere that bears potential to criticize the society in which it is embedded can be tantamount to the status of theatre. In light of this, it is not surprising that Bond regards school as a potential site in which this self-reflexive structure can be built. The fact that Bond has cooperated with Big Brum since 1995 and written ten plays for the group exemplifies his commitment to TIE, but Bond's involvement in theatre as a means of education started much earlier.

In 1969, as a part of the ESC's Edward Bond season and the Royal Court's Young People's Theatre Scheme, a workshop entitled 'Violence in the Theatre' was held for young students, and several scenes from *Saved* and *Early Morning* were selected for the workshop to explore the ethical problems posed by the plays (Saunders 2014: 192-93). From 1975, Bond started a series of workshops with The Activists, the Royal Court's Resident Youth Theatre Club, and this relationship culminated in the production of *The Worlds*, which was performed by the members of The Activists and directed by Bond at the Royal Court in 1979. Furthermore, in 1983 he wrote *After the Assassinations* for students at the University of Essex. During the same year, he was a Visiting Professor at the University of Palermo, where he held a workshop and developed the Palermo improvisation, which became the foundation of his later dramaturgy and theory of subjectivity. During the 1990s, Bond was invited to write not only theoretically about drama and young people but also in support of TIE companies that faced cuts in funding (Cooper 2005: 51). His collaboration with Geoff Gillham and support for the TIE movement later motivated him to write *At the*

*Inland Sea* in 1995, his first TIE play for Big Brum.

Although Bond had been engaged with writing for students and other education activities prior to his cooperation with Big Brum, it should be emphasized that *At the Inland Sea* was written after he started to formulate his theory of subjectivity from the late 1980s and was completed nearly simultaneously with *Coffee* (1994). The two plays' similarities in terms of content and structure are easily discernable: both deal with the horror of the Holocaust through the protagonist's nightmarish subjective journey that disrupts the established order of their everyday life. As Bond states, in terms of dramaturgy, there is little distinction between his plays for adults and those for young people except for the practical concerns that determine the scale of his TIE plays (Tuaille 2015: 50). Like his other later plays, one of the thematic concerns of Bond's TIE plays is the engagement with ideological totalization epitomized by Nazism and Thatcherism.

In a letter written to Phil Davey on 26 May 1989, Bond states:

Children are going to be educated into being adroit and disciplined at taking instructions in school – and that means, in later life, orders – without the sensitivity to ask themselves if they ought to follow their orders and without the understanding of society and psychology to enable them to give a human answer. Really its [*sic*] preparing the mentality which makes it possible to use people as apparatuses of government. That is what Nazi education was about. (Stuart 1998: 1)

'Nazi education', for Bond, means the type of education that prepares conformist mentality through which authority can exert its power without being questioned and the individual is made to be merely a means to execute orders. Thus, Nazi education is not restricted to the Nazi regime but may possibly take other contemporary forms. In a statement given at the public meeting organized by Belgrade TIE on 24 February 1996, Bond relates this type of education to Thatcherism: 'The reduction of education to training, the frenetic activity of Thatcherism, the Sisyphean task of maintaining the economy – these are not creative responses to the crisis' (Stuart 1998: 120). Bond defines the 'crisis' as the combination of the

progress of technology and instrumental rationality that could result in a complete catastrophe such as the Holocaust. For Bond, education after Auschwitz is the same as education after Thatcherism – he advocates the type of education that can resist ideological totalization that serves the interest of the state or the interest of capital. To counter the conformism of education, Bond states that ‘TIE performs education’s most fundamental duty. Today education is being reduced to learning how to make money and fit into the economy. These things are necessary but they will never teach children what a civilized society is – what moral sanity is – what responsibility for others is’ (Stuart 1998: 113). In other words, for Bond, a civilized society is based on an ethics that calls for responsibility for others, which also constitutes the foundation of education.

Bond’s thoughts on education resonate with Adorno’s ideas on post-Auschwitz education and the TIE movement in Britain. In ‘Education after Auschwitz’, Adorno states that the most essential problem of education after Auschwitz is to cultivate autonomous self-awareness to critically examine how the administered society functions by subsuming the particular under the universal (2003: 21-23). For Adorno, the universal can be demonstrated either as a ‘reified consciousness’ that follows authority and posits the historically contingent as the unchangeable absolute or as psychical coldness that originates from the blind pursuit of self-preservation and the fetishization of technology (27-29). Although the TIE movement in post-war Britain is not necessarily founded on Adornian post-Auschwitz ideas, the emphasis on the cultivation of autonomy through education is also pivotal to the movement. As Roger Wooster argues, the battleground for education and the TIE movement revolves around the aim of education: ‘is education to socialize or to promote change?’ (2016: 25). The emergence of the TIE movement in the mid-1960s is ‘born out of an expectation of social reform, an implicit trust in progressive education ideas and the hope for prosperity after fifty years of thwarted aspirations’ (Wooster 2016: 77), but this optimism for change diminished in the 1980s and 1990s due to the rise of Thatcherism and the fall of the Berlin Wall, both of which testify to the decline of left-wing ideologies commonly shared by TIE practitioners



(Nicholson 2009: 35-36). After the 1990s, it became commonsensical to regard education as a way of socialization that manufactures students according to the needs of the neoliberal social-economic order. The challenge for the TIE movement after the 1990s, therefore, is how to retain the purpose of education to promote change and cultivate autonomy (Nicholson 2009: 43).

Bond's TIE plays should be understood both through Adorno's post-Auschwitz thinking and in the context of the TIE movement in post-war Britain. As Helen Nicholson observes, Bond's education work provides a moral education that promotes young people's self-creativity through the engagement of imagination (2003: 13). Although I agree that Bond's TIE works aim to promote the journey of self-creativity, in the following I argue that, beneath the possibility of self-creativity, lies the attention to the other. In order to create something different from the universal, the heterogeneous particular must be sought out and preserved. This attention to otherness creates a gap within the subject, and this gap makes it possible to attain self-creativity without repeating the logic of the violence through which the universal subsumes the particular. Following Bond's definition of teaching, in this chapter I will explore how Bond incorporates the ethical concern for others into the dramaturgy of his TIE plays by interrogating three interrelated concepts that are conducive to addressing the problem of otherness: storyability, spectrality, and hospitality.

## **5.1. Story and Storyability**

### **5.1.1. Story**

Considering that Bond's theory of the neonate is formulated as a narrative of the self that seeks coherence, it is not surprising that Bond's idea of the story is also related to his theory of subjectivity. Bond states: 'Our instinctual capacities form a totality which is interconnected by the story' (Stuart 2001a: 41). He further defines the story as composed of two major

elements: individual experience and social interaction (42). For Bond, human action is never instinctual but is always mediated by the story that integrates individual experience and social interaction. In this respect, storytelling is not just to construct a story but is also an essential part of the human capacity to understand the self as well as the world. As Bond states, ‘stories structure our minds’ (2000b: 3). In addition, for Bond, ‘culture’ designates an agglomeration of stories that constitutes a plot in which the self can be defined (ibid.). Within this collection of stories as culture, the dominant and grand narratives can be apprehended as ideologies that determine how the self perceives and understands the world. For Bond, ‘story can release energies and change meanings in ways that laws and institutions cannot’ (Stuart 2001a: 48). Thus, the significance of the self’s ability to tell stories lies in its potential to question narratives of ideology. As Bond states, the power of storytelling is ‘to conceive of justice yet *question* it’ (2000b: 4; my emphasis).

Bond’s idea of the human subject as mediated by storyability – a concept refers to the subject’s ability to tell stories and the possibility of stories being told – is not as straightforward as it seems, because human life, although it can be organized by narrative, is prone to be seen as ‘pre-narrated’. For example, Hannah Arendt in *The Human Condition* states that ‘[t]he fact that man is capable of action means that the unexpected can be expected from him, that he is able to perform what is infinitely improbable’ (1998: 178). Arendt further states that human action produces stories because human action must enter into an existing context of conflicting intentions, but the hero in the story is only an ‘agent’ instead of an ‘author’ (184). For Arendt, the agent cannot determine the outcome of the action, neither is the agent capable of obtaining the significance of the action. Only the storyteller who perceives and narrates the story can disclose the full meaning of the story and the essence that defines the character of the agent (192-93). Arendt’s idea reflects the tendency to see human action as unmediated by the story, and the meaning of human action can be revealed only when it is narrated as a story.

In order to bridge the gap between recounted stories and lived lives,

Paul Ricoeur proposes the idea of ‘narrative identity’:

Our life, when then embraced in a single glance, appears to us as the field of a constructive activity, borrowed from narrative understanding, by which we attempt to discover and not simply to impose from outside the *narrative identity which constitutes us*. (Ricoeur 1991: 32)

For Ricoeur, life is already understood in terms of narrative. This narrative is not necessarily an external narrative through which the meaning of life can be discovered; instead, narrative is a constitutive part of subjectivity in the sense that life is lived as if it is a narrative being narrated. In addition, Ricoeur distinguishes narrator from author: we can narrate our own stories and live according to the narrative voices, but we are not the omnipotent author that can determine the course and outcome of the narrative. However, Ricoeur proposes that this difference could be partially conquered by applying the plots from traditional narratives as cultural symbols to the self (32-33).

While Ricoeur still regards external narratives as indispensable for constituting self-identity, philosopher Richard Kearney furthers Ricoeur’s idea of narrative identity and defines storytelling as an act of the self’s self-definition. As he states, ‘[t]he story told by a self about itself tells about the action of the “who” in question: and the identity of this “who” is a narrative one’ (2002b: 152). For Kearney, the narrative identity of a person does not necessarily rely on an external narrative, although he by no means intends to exclude engaging with external narratives as a way for the self to gain the experience of selfhood defined by storyability. He emphasizes that the self is defined by the stories told by its self. In addition, Kearney complicates storytelling as an act of repetitive self-affirmation by considering the self’s ethical commitment for the other as an act which destabilizes the certainty of selfhood. He proposes that ‘for narrative selfhood to be ethically responsible, it must ensure that self-constancy is always informed by *self-questioning*’ (2002a: 93; my emphasis). The self’s ‘self-questioning’ can even entail ‘the possibility of its own self-destruction’

(ibid.). The possibility of ‘self-destruction’ inherent in the self’s storytelling is obviously reminiscent of the Levinasian subject as a substitution for the other. In fact, Kearney, basing his argument on Levinas’s ethics, clearly states that ethical imagination ‘responds to the surprises and demands of the other’ (1999: 111). As Levinas defines subjectivity as the-one-for-the-other, the ethics of imagination originates from acknowledging the other’s face that concerns the self, and this acknowledgement prevents the self from remaining indifferent to the other. This non-indifference to the other thus renders impossible the self’s imagination solely as a means for self-affirmation. Therefore, subjectivity as storyability is always connected with the other’s questioning of the legitimacy of the self’s story. To recapitulate: storytelling is not merely fabricating a fictional narrative – it entails the construction of selfhood and connects the self’s ethical commitment with the other.

As I argued in Chapter Two, while Bond recognizes the existence of the other outside the self and intends to include the other in his theory of the self, it is contestable how significant the concept of otherness is in Bond’s theory, which overall emphasizes the self’s cohering process. Likewise, although I have argued that Bond’s idea of storyability involves the quality of self-questioning, that is, the possibility of the other’s interruption, storyability is also what makes the self coherent. In order to explicate how Bond bases his dramaturgy on the idea of storyability and stories, I will analyze *At the Inland Sea* and *The Angry Roads*.

### **5.1.2. *At the Inland Sea***

*At the Inland Sea* is Bond’s first play commissioned by Big Brum and was first directed by Geoff Gillham at Broadway School, Aston, Birmingham, on 16 October 1995. This play depicts how the Son, as a student preparing for his examination in his room, encounters and interacts with the Woman, who comes from the concentration camp and is about to be gassed. While the Woman demands that the Son should tell a story to save her baby, the Son is unable to tell the right story to change the life course of the Woman

and her son. Out of desperation, the Son even takes the baby away and makes the time in the concentration camp stand still, but this action still fails to save the baby. The Mother, however, cannot see the Woman and thinks that the Boy's strange behaviour is caused by his anxiety towards the examination. At the end of the play, the Son succeeds in finishing the Woman's story in his words and tells his mother that he is not a child anymore.

Although Bond's theory of subjectivity still presupposes the possibility of the subject being a coherent and autonomous self endowed with imagination and reason, his drama tends to complicate, even contradict, his theoretical statements. The structure of the self in *At the Inland Sea* is one of such instances. As Bond states that the Old Woman is 'someone from the boy's mind' (Stuart 1998: 152), it is reasonable to read the Woman also as the Boy's mental configuration. The emergence of the Woman and her demand that the Boy should tell her baby a story exceeds the Boy's control – that is, if the Woman is understood to be part of the Boy's psychic activities, her appearance cannot be domesticated by the Boy's imagination. As Tony Coult points out, the Woman is not the product of the Boy's imagination but a challenge to the Boy's mind (1997: 47):

**Boy** The soldiers have guns! How will a story stop them?

**Woman** It only has to stop them for a moment. So that they look down at the stones – for a moment – or look at each other. Then I'll reach up and put my baby in the tree. Where the branches fork – there. Soldiers don't look for babies in trees. They'll think it's rags blown there by the wind. Someone will find it and keep it.

**Boy** There's no story!

*The Woman goes to the Boy.*

**Woman** Then why did you bring us here? I don't know you – this house – this room – I don't even know your name. You brought us here. If you can do that you can tell a story. My baby will live. (Bond 1997: 11-12)

The Woman seems to be one of the repressed ghosts of the traumatic past,

and her appearance exhibits the irreducible otherness conjured up within the Boy's mind. In spite of the fact that the Woman is evoked by the Boy, he cannot preside over this evocation – as if he is surprised and taken hostage by the unknown part of his psyche. In other words, the Boy cannot resist the Woman's intrusion and must take responsibility for her request.

The unique relationship between the Boy and the Woman can be explained by Levinas's idea of 'inspiration' in 'Truth of Disclosure and Truth of Testimony' (1972), in which Levinas asks: 'Cannot the psychism be thought of as a relation with the unrepresentable? As a relation with a past on the hither side of every present and every representation, not belonging to the order of presence?' (1996: 101). In terms of Levinas's notion of psychism as inspiration, the Woman's emergence can be regarded as '[a]n ambivalence that is the exception and the subjectivity of the subject, its very psychism, the possibility of inspiration: to be the author of what was, without my knowledge, inspired in me – to have received, whence we know not, that of which I am the author' (105). For Levinas, this ambivalence caused by inspiration is the enigmatic trace of the infinite, the responsibility for the other. Levinas also designates this coming to pass of the infinite as 'the saying' (104). Education scholar Clarence W. Joldersma relates the idea of inspiration to education by arguing that learning is both a process of spontaneous enjoyment and of being exposed to disturbing rupture. For him, if education can inspire students, students have to open themselves to otherness, that is, a teacher (52). Although, for Levinas, education indeed is more than absorption of knowledge as enjoyment, it is questionable whether the otherness that renders education an ethical relation necessarily derives from a teacher. For the Boy in *At the Inland Sea*, he must absorb the history taught by a teacher in order to pass the exam. It is therefore not the ethical relation of inspiration that Joldersma argues would take place in teaching because here history has been thematized as 'the said' and instrumentalized as materials only to serve the purpose of examination. What disturbs the Boy is not what is taught or what is written in the textbook but what remains unwritten and untaught. What disturbs him is the otherness within himself – or, in Bond's terms, his radical innocence that singularizes the thematized

history – as well as the ethical moment of the past irreducible to historical accounts.

For Levinas, history is always involved in the process of representation, that is, '[t]he assembling of being in the present, its synchronization by retention, memory and history, reminiscence' (1998: 140). This process of representation, therefore, cannot bear responsibility for the separated entities beyond the grasp of retention. It evades the face of the other. Responsibility, Levinas argues, is only possible when 'a traumatic hold of the other on the same' (141). Levinas continues to argue that this traumatic hold is inspiration, which is also the saying instead of 'the communication of the said' (143). As I argued in Chapter Three, the saying as the proximity of the other, the exposure to the other, is another term that Levinas uses to describe ethical subjectivity as the-one-for-the-other. What should be noted is the linguistic implication: while the said is what is thematized, the saying is the unthematizable prior to thematization. The Woman's demand that the Boy should tell a story, in this regard, is the saying just as her emergence is what is inspired in the Boy's psyche. As the saying, this demand cannot be incorporated into history, nor can it be used to change the course of history. This demand is useless just as the Woman knows that stories can never save her baby from death. Nevertheless, it is precisely this impossibility of the demand that renders this demand unthematizable and makes this demand purely ethical. The Woman's ghostly apparition cannot be expelled by telling a right story to save the baby because this story is impossible to tell.

Despite this, at the end of the play, the Boy still completes the story the Woman fails to tell to her baby:

Once. A man walking in a dark forest. A hut in the distance. He heard singing from the hut. Happy. Beautiful. He went towards it. Hard. Bushes and trees in the way. He came to the hut. He stopped outside the door. He listened. It was late. He was hungry and tired. He knocked. The singing stopped. The door was unlocked. He opened it and went in. the hut was empty. [...] He left the hut and went on. Before he'd gone far the singing in the hut started again. He didn't turn back. He knew what'd happen if he did. After that, starting from that day, whenever he met someone in the forest sick or old or

wounded or in need he – (Bond 1997: 34)

This forest story could be read as a variation of the forest of *Coffee*. As the forest in *Coffee* is a liminal space uncannily governed by multiple imaginations, the forest in this story is also a mysterious space where a hut expected to be full of people, once entered, is found to be empty. While Bond refuses to give any definite answers so as to stimulate the spectator's imagination, there are still some clues regarding the meaning of the story. Firstly, what happens in the hut can only be heard instead of being seen. However, the impossibility of witness does not prevent the man from careful listening. Secondly, the reason why the sound of singing appears and then disappears is contestable: does the sound exist as external reality, or does it exist as part of the man's inner reality? Or rather, could it be the case that the sound is situated in-between, that is, it reveals the hidden real both of the hut and of the man? The logic of indeterminacy is similar to the logic that works beneath the transformative journeys experienced by the Boy and Nold, and, in this way, the story can be read as a prototypical narrative of how imagination works in both *Coffee* and *At the Inland Sea*. Lastly, the most enigmatic part of the story is the ethical decision made by the man: how does he achieve such ethical understanding as if it is an epiphany? In fact, the relation between the man and the hut corresponds to that between the Boy and the Woman: it is a relation of inspiration and responsibility. The singing from the hut can be both the irretrievable trace of the past and the voice of the man's conscience – it is an ethical demand whose origin cannot be decided.

But is it possible to continue to tell the stories of the dead, especially those who die from premature death – those who leave so little trace that even their existence could be easily forgotten? Bond reformulates the question in a contemporary situation in *The Angry Roads* and explores further the relationship between subjectivity and conditions of storytelling.

### **5.1.3. *The Angry Roads***



‘Is it possible? They didn’t tell me I had a brother’ (Bond 2018: 174). This is Norman’s last remark in *The Angry Roads*, produced by Big Brum in 2015, and the whole play revolves around this possibility, or impossibility. This question problematizes the relationship between the source of the story and storytelling: is it possible to tell an untold story based on unknown facts? Is it possible to rely on subjective imagination when objective evidence is so obscure? *The Angry Roads* focuses on the process of Norman’s awakening to the truth about his father’s past; however, because of his father’s selective mutism, Norman must recall the past via his imagination and his communication with his father by table-tapping. The truth repressed by his father is an accident: before Norman was born, the Father killed the woman with whom he had affairs and her baby by driving his taxi over their bodies. There are two interrelated details about the accident that are important but not specified: one is about the reason for the ‘row’ that gave rise to the accident; the other is about Norman’s role in the accident. It is implied that, although Norman was not yet born, he was also ‘present’ at the site of the accident. This suggests that the Father’s wife could be pregnant at that moment, and Norman’s existence might make the Father decide to end his affairs with the woman. However, the woman might quarrel with the Father over their relationship and their son, so the Father, feeling unable to cope with the situation, decided to murder the woman and the baby deliberately. Norman’s mother knew about the accident, and she decided to leave Norman and the Father when Norman was six because she was unable to bear the unresolved pain of the event. According to Norman, his mother used to tell him about part of the accident, but she never revealed the whole truth to him. Therefore, he can only rely on his imagination and table-tapping to communicate with his father to reconstruct the truth of the accident.

Norman’s quest for the truth is both a process of breaking the structure of egoism and a rite of passage toward maturation. Intriguingly, read in terms of Bond’s theory of subjectivity, *The Angry Roads* actually subverts and contradicts Bond’s theory. While Norman’s quest for the truth of his brother’s premature death could be propelled by radical innocence that

keeps asking why, it is not a quest to affirm his right to be at home in this world but, rather, a quest to inquire why his brother is denied the right to be in this world. In other words, the question is why Norman and his brother fail to be 'at home' together, and the answer is that it is because Norman occupies the place of his brother. Norman's 'right to be in this world' presupposes his brother's death. It is in this sense that the existential imperative of radical innocence to assert one's own right to exist is suspended and self-effaced as an imperative. This process of disclosing the truth about Norman's brother is analogous to the structure of inspiration that underlies the logic of *At the Inland Sea*. Norman's recollection is not completely motivated by his autonomy – he is also obliged by a heterogeneous force to bear witness to his brother's death. Although this force remains enigmatic throughout the play – as we never know how it is possible for Norman to fully realize the truth – it is this impossibility that interrupts any attempt at attaining absorbable knowledge and coherent interpretation. Norman's rite of passage does not lead to an autonomous self but a traumatized self that acknowledges the violence inherent within the assertion of the self and recognizes the irreversible death of the other due to his existence. This rite of passage leads to the birth of an ethical subject that recognizes the ineradicable heterogeneity inherent in the subject.

As Levinas states, '[t]o be oneself, the state of being is a hostage, is always to have one degree of responsibility more, the responsibility for the responsibility of the other' (1998: 117). It is clear that, for Levinas, the ethical subject as the one-for-the-other is always already a subject of responsibility, a subject that bears 'guilt without fault' (2001: 52). Therefore, although Norman does not directly kill his brother, this by no means exempts him from bearing the consciousness of guilt for his brother's death. The fact that he cannot be indifferent to his brother's death testifies to his being a subject that is, to use Levinas's terms, 'non-indifferent' to the other. Norman's final remarks are revealing:

Deliberately. (*Silence. He doesn't look at **Father***) It was your son. You said your last words to him. Then you lost your voice. How do I know all this? They live in the past. They

want you to go back there and sort out their lives for them. You cant [*sic*]. I wasn't there. How did I know it? It seeps out of the silence. – Tomorrow he wont [*sic*] know any of this. Wasn't even an hallucination. He took an overdose of tablets. Passed out. And it didn't happen.

[...]

The worst thing that can happen is not knowing it happened. Then it didn't happen – so its [*sic*] always happening. (*Lets the curtain fall.*) I heard my father's voice.

[...]

Look in in a few days when you're out. Pick up the rest of my things. Last time I speak to you. You dont [*sic*] hear. Keep the toys. You should get something for them. – Is it possible? They didnt [*sic*] tell me I had a brother. (Bond 2018: 174)

The incessant table-knocking that stimulates the process of Norman's telepathically inspired recollection is a sign of the dead brother's spectral return that 'seeps out of the silence'. His father's mutism, caused by the traumatic loss of his child, is an enigma for Norman, and it is this enigma that situates Norman within the structure of the familial tragedy even though he never experienced it in person. In spite of the fact that it is reasonable to suppose that Norman has communicated with his father through table-knocking for a long time, Norman's recollecting process still surpasses rational communication. How can he hear his father's voice? According to Levinas, 'silence is not a simple absence of speech; speech lies in the depths of silence [...]. It is the inverse of language: the interlocutor has given a sign, but has declined every interpretation; this is the silence that terrifies' (1969: 91). Silence thus 'appears within a relation with the Other, as the sign the Other delivers, even if he dissimulates his face' (93).<sup>37</sup> Unlike the silence that refuses communication, Norman can hear his father's voice even in his silence – he can detect a sign of otherness that demands approaching and understanding. This understanding is not about the

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<sup>37</sup> As Rudi Visker analyzes, in Levinas's ethics silence can also be understood as an attempt to evade the obligation demanded from the Other (130). In my analysis, silence is primarily understood as the speechless demand from the Other. Both views can be found in Levinas's theory. In terms of theatre, Levinas criticizes the spectator for remaining hidden silently in the darkness and enjoying the spectacle. The silence of irresponsible spectating exemplifies the silence of indifference. However, the spectacle of silence that defies representation and disrupts intelligibility also demands listening. The gap between intelligibility and unintelligibility constitutes the possibility of ethical spectating and listening.

pathological diagnosis of mutism, nor is it about discovering the traumatic past – both are likely to be ossified as mere knowledge. This understanding is about approaching the otherness that endows the subject with responsibility to respond to it – for Norman, this understanding is to face the unbearable truth about his own birth as the cause of his brother’s death. Norman’s own story can never be complete if he fails to tell the insupportable story, nor can his future be possible without basing his self-knowledge on this truth.

In performance,<sup>38</sup> Richard Holmes’s portrayal of the Father retained the enigmatic quality of the action of table-knocking. Although it is tempting for the actor and spectator to try to decipher the meaning of the sound, Holmes’s performance made this method of communication seem ‘natural’ for the Father and Norman without emphasizing its peculiarity – it is just another language that is shared by him and Norman. In fact, this ‘naturalness’ can be regarded as another example of Bond’s post-Brechtian dramaturgy of alienation without explicitly alienating the spectator or actor from the spectacle. This nuanced effect can be difficult to achieve, as Holmes admits: ‘The hardest thing I found as an actor was not to over-explain the story through the knocks or make the father’s silence mystical or menacing. I couldn’t do the audiences work for them, while at the same time doing enough to let them into the story and accept, quickly, this is how it is’ (Wooster 2015: 15). How Danny O’Grady performed Norman also preserved the enigmatic quality of the interaction between the Father and Norman, and it should also be pointed out that the discrepancy of age between O’Grady as actor and character had the same effect of ‘alienation without alienating’. Instead of trying to imitate a teenager’s behaviour, O’Grady’s performance remained demonstrative and neutral, and this made it possible for the spectator to feel distanced and involved simultaneously. Norman’s first action in this play is to sort his toys, a gesture that signifies his farewell to his childhood – although it may seem weird at first sight to see an adult actor sorting toys, O’Grady’s neutral

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<sup>38</sup> I attended Big Brum’s production of this play at mac Birmingham in February 2015, on which I based my analysis of the performance.

performance, which evaded the realistic identification between actor and character, made it possible for the spectator to contemplate the relationship between childhood and adulthood. Intriguingly, one of the thematic concerns of *The Angry Roads* is the transition from childhood to adulthood, and the image of ‘the inner child’ in an adult can also be understood through Bond’s concept of the palimpsest structure of the subject.

In ‘The Storyteller’ (1936), Walter Benjamin argues: ‘If the art of storytelling has become rare, the dissemination of information has had a decisive share in this state of affairs’ (2007: 89). Benjamin contrasts information, the dissemination of news, with stories in terms of verifiability and intelligibility: while information can be easily verified and clearly explained, stories, the validity of which derives from their origin in foreign countries or tradition, cannot be verified and usually remain unexplained (ibid.). Like Benjamin, Bond suggests that the hyper-saturation and commodification of information as one of the causes that renders storytelling difficult. However, Bond differs from Benjamin over the source of the validity of stories by stating that the validity of stories originates from responsibility for the future, and he thinks that the insatiable consumption of ‘the present’ nullifies the possibility of imagining the future (Tuaille 2015: 51). Bond argues further that, by daring to tell stories to imagine the future, young people can potentially be liberated from authority and the market (52). Moreover, different from Benjamin’s postulate about the antagonism between information and stories, Bond holds the relationship between information and stories in tension by turning information into stories. For Bond, the source of storytelling is not the past or foreign countries but the present and the local. Turning information into stories is to save from consumable news the inconsumable, that is, the ethical.

## **5.2. Spectre and Spectrality**

### **5.2.1. Spectre**

The process of storytelling is not merely a process of revealing or creating a

fiction. In *At the Inland Sea*, the Boy is required by the Woman to tell a story – this external demand destabilizes the Boy’s equilibrium of self and implies the inherent otherness within human subjectivity. This otherness, always already within the subject, for Levinas, is the trace of ‘otherwise than being’. According to Derrida’s hauntology, this otherness can be termed as a present absence, an uncanny ghost, a spectre. It is thus unsurprising that Angel-Perez describes the Woman as a ghost that demands the responsibility of memory (2006: 116). However, the Woman as a ghost is not an apparition out of nowhere – instead, as the Woman makes clear, she is conjured up by the Boy. In other words, the Boy is demanded by an unknown part of himself as a human subject to be responsible for the past. The subject is always already haunted by alterity dwelling in its self. This return of the past, according to Angel-Perez, can be explicated as the outcome of the traumatic compulsion to repeat (16). Basing her argument on trauma theory, Angel-Perez states that the trauma of the Holocaust can be inherited by later generations, and part of contemporary British playwriting can be regarded as a response to this traumatic inheritance, including Bond’s *At the Inland Sea* (ibid.).<sup>39</sup> However, as María der Pilar Blanco and Esther Peeren argue, the ghost is a figure that does not necessarily reappear in the manner of traumatic repetition and provokes reactions that gesture towards the future (13). In contrast to trauma studies, which focus on how the traumatic past structures the present, hauntology holds possibilities to engender alternatives to respond to the past in the future.

So, what is a spectre? How do we understand our relation to spectres? In Derrida’s discourse on spectrality, the spectre is always related to the problem of justice: ‘If I am getting ready to speak at length about ghosts [...], it is in the name of justice, of justice where it is not yet, not yet there, where it is no longer’ (1994: xviii). Derrida further states that justice is impossible without responsibility – justice requires that responsibility

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<sup>39</sup> In ‘Spectro-poétique de la scène’ (2009), Angel-Perez uses the concept of spectrality to discuss Bond’s plays, especially the Monster in *The War Plays* and the linguistic spectrality in *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* and *Existence*. She interprets Bond’s use of spectrality as a means both to confront the aesthetic aporia of representation after Auschwitz and to meet the ethical demand that human nature must be interrogated. I argue here that Bond’s other plays can also be understood in terms of spectrality.

should be taken for those who have been exterminated by the injustice of violence, war, and oppression (ibid.). By arguing that '[a] spectral asymmetry interrupts here all specularity. It de-synchronizes, it recalls us to anachrony' (6), Derrida associates his hauntology with Levinasian ethics, of which 'the traces of the past' are extended to spectres that either have passed away or have not yet come. For Derrida, the exemplary spectre that demands justice is Hamlet's father, whose ghostly appearance endows Hamlet with the responsibility to adjust injustice and restore order. In opposition to Derrida's Levinasian hauntology, in which the messianic justice is always yet-to-come, Slavoj Žižek proposes a Lacanian hauntology: 'symbolization ultimately always fails, that it never succeeds in fully "covering" the real [...]. *This real (the part of reality that remains non-symbolized) returns in the guise of spectral apparitions*' (21; original emphasis). For Žižek, the spectre is a residue that symbolization fails to incorporate into the symbolic order; therefore, the spectre demands that we should take a transgressive action of freedom to found a new reality: 'The act of freedom qua real not only transgresses the limits of what we experience as "reality", it cancels our very primordial indebtedness to the spectral Other' (27-28). By nullifying our 'indebtedness to the spectral Other', Žižek's hauntology aims to renounce the endless deferral prior to the impossible justice and calls for actions of freedom despite the fact that the founding action as a renewal of the symbolic order may produce new residues of symbolization and necessitate further actions.

In fact, Žižek's response to Derrida's hauntology, instead of refuting Derrida's argument, broadens how the spectre can be conceived: while Derrida's spectre attests to the unjust oppression of ideological apparatuses, Žižek's spectre as an unideologized residue calls for revolt against the oppressing order. Through the lens of Derrida and Žižek, I argue that, in Bond's theory, although the self is always structured and 'haunted' by the unjust society, the ideological oppression of which has victimized and will continue to victimize, radical innocence as the Žižekian spectre can retain the potential of rebelling against the injustice. In this regard, the Woman in *At the Inland Sea* can be seen as a returning ghost, a victim of the Holocaust,

and a manifestation of the Boy's radical innocence, which disturbs the self's incorporation of history as static and transmissible knowledge. In the following, I will extend this analysis of the spectre and examine Bond's dramaturgy of hauntology in *The Hungry Bowl* and *A Window*.

### **5.2.2. *The Hungry Bowl***

Many of Bond's plays are haunted by spectres – both visible and invisible. In *At the Inland Sea*, the Woman appears as a ghost who returns from the gates of Auschwitz to demand a story; in *Have I None*, Sara is haunted by her ineradicable memory shared by her and her brother; in *Coffee*, Nold is haunted by Gregory, who guides him into the forest. The spectre is disquieting because it signals that the perceived reality may not be the only reality – behind the normalized reality always exists the repressed caused by the structural violence of reality that excludes what is forbidden. In this section, I examine another play that directly uses the spectre as a dramatic device: *The Hungry Bowl*, which was produced by Big Brum in 2012 under the title of *The Broken Bowl*.

In a city towards the end of 2077, the Girl's family live on rationing because of food shortage. Despite this, the Girl has an imaginary friend, and she keeps feeding him. While the Mother thinks the imaginary friend only reflects the Girl's natural psychological need, the Father cannot bear the Girl's imaginary friend, who keeps consuming their food. In the middle of the play, however, the Girl's imaginary friend appears as No One, dressed in white jump suit with ordinary fastenings, and only the Girl can see him. Later, when No One reappears, he becomes starved and drained because the Father has eaten the food for him. In addition, this time the Father can see No One – this shocks him and makes him decide to escape from the house with his wife to find a new place to live. In fact, because of the Girl's strange behaviour, their house has been marked by a red X, a mark of exclusion, and other neighbors have all left. The play ends with No One appearing again as Someone, wearing an ordinary white jump suit:



**Someone** People ran from this house.  
**Girl** (*looks up*) People?  
**Someone** Two. Has something happened?  
**Girl** I thought you –. You're like someone I knew.  
**Someone** Oh.  
**Girl** You havent [*sic*] seen me before?  
**Someone** No. – Something split?  
**Girl** Accident.  
**Someone** Are you all right?  
**Girl** Can I touch you?  
**Someone** (*puzzled*) Touch me?  
**Girl** (*touches his arm. Silence.*) We have to feed the hungry  
don't we.  
**Someone** Yes.  
**Girl** And shelter the poor.  
**Someone** Yes.  
**Girl** And bring the lost home.  
**Someone** Something's happened here. The streets are  
empty. Shall we see?  
**Girl** Yes. (Bond 2018: 205)

The final gesture is an ethical one, and the most extreme form of it is Levinas's imperative that one should give the food in one's mouth to others. In fact, Bond uses No One/Someone as a spectre not only to embody the Girl's psychological need of security but also to interrogate the ethics in a period of precarity. Relating the Levinasian face to the precariousness of life, Judith Butler states: 'To respond to the face [...] means to be awake to what is precarious in another life or, rather, the precariousness of life itself' (2004: 134). However, the condition of being awake to the precariousness of another life requires that another life should be 'recognized' as a life. As Butler points out, any act of recognition presupposes recognizability that consists of selective norms and power operations (2009: 5). In *The Hungry Bowl*, the Girl's family live in precarious conditions, but they are still recognized by the authority as living beings to whom rationing should be allotted. Their subsistence depends on the fact that their lives are still recognized by the norms of recognizability. When the Father categorizes the Girl's imaginary friend as a 'zombie', he in fact subconsciously duplicates the biopolitical logic of exclusion employed by the authorities. For the Father, the Girl's imaginary friend is a zombie instead of a living human

being that can be included within the norm of the human. However, dramaturgically, Bond refutes the Father's categorization by making the imaginary friend appear as a living human being – it is important to note that by making the friend appear as a boy, Bond renders questionable the norms that the Father adopts in categorizing the boy as a zombie instead of a living being. Butler describes the figure that destabilizes the norms of recognizability as a 'spectre' that endangers the boundaries and must be exorcised (12). It is thus possible to posit that the boy is a living human being who, despite being a living being, is excluded from the norms, and therefore becomes a spectre.

Although the boy is not recognized by the authorities, the Girl is still capable of 'apprehending' him as a friend. As Butler distinguishes recognition from apprehension by arguing that the latter denotes the intelligibility to apprehend something not yet recognized (5), the boy as a spectre indicates the possibility of being apprehended despite being an unrecognized being. His spectral presence casts into relief the remainder outside the norms. However, the boy's existence as a spectre also attests to the precariousness of the situation of the Girl's family: by encountering the 'zombie' that is excluded from the norm, the Father is reminded of the fact that his status of being categorized as a living being is never guaranteed. His anger towards the Girl and his anxiety to protect his house from outer danger demonstrate his inconvenient awareness of the precariousness inherent in the predicament. As Butler states, 'precariousness underscores our radical substitutability and anonymity in relation both to certain socially facilitated modes of dying and death and to other socially conditioned modes of persisting and flourishing' (14). The 'substitutability' inherent in precariousness is made manifest in *The Hungry Bowl* when the Girl's family is labeled as a target of exclusion and banishment. In Butler's view, 'a specific exploitation of targeted population' is one of the 'contemporary conditions of war' (31). However, this is not only one of the contemporary conditions of war, this logic of exclusion is also tantamount to what Adorno terms as a kind of identity logic exemplified by the Holocaust. Under this logic, the precariousness of life is manifest by the fact that it is deprived of

its right to proper death. Living is indistinguishable from death since both are merely instances of the operation of the systematic manufacture of death.

Invoking Adorno and Horkheimer's 'On the Theory of Ghosts', Avery Gordon argues that haunting is 'a form of social figuration' that reminds us of the historical atrocity that reduces individuals into a mere succession of experiences without traces (20). For Gordon, haunting is a particular social figure that makes us aware of what has occurred and what is occurring (8). In this light, engaging with haunting as a social figure directs attention to the historical and social conditions that determine specific hauntings and precarious circumstances. As I have argued, the precariousness detectable in *The Hungry Bowl*, despite the fact that this play is conceived to take place in a dystopian future, in fact attests to the haunting of the Holocaust. In 'Something of Myself', a short autobiographical piece, Bond starts with his experience of being evacuated to Cornwall during the Second World War. He describes the last day of the war as follows:

On the last day of war we ran to the sweet shop. We thought rationing was over. The sweetshop owner shouted. He accused us of not using our ration coupons at his shop in the war and now we expected to wallow in luxury. Anyway rationing wasn't over. I went home. On the radio Churchill announced peace. A voice in my head told me 'So you will live.' We thought violence was at an end. Not even adults would be so foolish again. Later when bombs were dropped in the first Gulf War I spoke at a peace rally. I used an obscenity. I hadn't intended to. I'd never spoken obscenely before in public. The word spoke itself. It was an after-shock from forty years before. I do not remember the sound of bombs. If I close my eyes and listen I hear it. In all its baroque horror. If I did not hear it I would have lost my self. It was my soul that swore. (Bond 2005b: 3)

Apparently, the damaged world of *The Hungry Bowl*, where people have to depend on rationing is the same as the world that Bond describes above. Precariousness in life thus comes into view as 'unhomeliness', a condition of being denied the right to be at home. In German 'unheimlich' means 'uncanny' as well as 'unhomely' – a haunted home is unhomely. Bond's

own story is already haunted with unhomeliness and continues to be told and dramatized because of this unhomeliness.

It is also evident that Bond's conception of radical innocence based on the Palermo improvisation is in fact a spectral return of those who died a premature death during the Second World War: how can killing be justified? How can justice be possible in a world that still manufactures mass killing? This is the structure of hauntology inherent in Bond's theory and dramaturgy, and this is why Bond superposes the sound of bombing in the first Gulf War with that of the Second World War. This 'after-shock' attests to the spectral and traumatic structure inscribed in Bond's perception of the world. For Bond, the sounds of bombing even become his *raison d'être* in the post-War world. At a fundamental level, the source of the imperative of radical innocence to affirm its right to be at home derives from this inexorable unhomeliness. What should also be noted is that, underneath Bond's narrative, is a cacophony of sounds and voices: the announcement of peace, Bond's inner voice, the sounds of bombing during the Second World War, and the sounds of bombing in the first Gulf War. Revealingly, Bond's inner voice – 'So you will live' – is almost the prototypical voice of radical innocence, but this voice cannot be heard without the sounds of bombing. Such is the unhomeliness of radical innocence: the inner voice of the self comforts itself in a safe place sheltered from the danger of being bombed, but through the door there always exists another voice that also demands shelter and claims its right to be at home.

### **5.2.3. *A Window***

Whereas in *The Hungry Bowl* the spectral boy (No One/Someone) attests to the haunting of the Second World War and the unhomeliness inherent in radical innocence that seeks the feeling of being at home, the spectre in *A Window*, instead of taking visible form, is made tangible through the character's psychic imaginings. First staged by Big Brum and directed by Chris Cooper on 19 October 2009, *A Window* is subtitled 'A Triptych' and is composed with three 'panels'. In Panel One, Liz decides to sleep on a

*chaise longue* on her own and this makes her partner, Richard, agitated and worried about her mental state. Liz claims that she is not ill and does not need any useless pills. She decides to sleep alone because she needs to ‘sort it out’ (Bond 2011: 183) for both her and Richard. By ‘it’ Liz refers to a news item about a mother who blinds her child’s eyes with scissors in order for the child not to know the corrupt world and for her to be able to take care of the child forever. This involuntary re-imagining of the violent act troubles Liz, but Richard only sees Liz as mad. When Liz reveals to Richard that she is pregnant, Richard demands that she has an abortion and implicitly blames her mental illness on prenatal depression.

In Panel Two, Dan, Liz’s son, returns from the street where he has had a fight with his friend and brings Liz a packet of drugs. Liz, worried about Dan’s injury, uses a sheet of cloth as a bandage to bind up his arm while Dan tells her that this is the last time he buys her drugs. When Dan falls asleep on a chair, Liz, looking at him, begins to be haunted again by the news item and decides to blind Dan with scissors. Amid the process of reimagining how the mother blinds her child, Liz realizes the real reason is different from what she presumed: the mother blinds her child, not to protect it, but to ensure she will never be left alone. This epiphany changes her mind and she commits suicide instead.

In Panel Three, Richard disguises himself as a social service worker to visit Dan in order to loot anything valuable left by Liz. When questioned by Dan about his real identity, Richard discloses that he is his father and tells Dan that he left Liz due to Liz’s mental derangement: ‘None a’ it ’appened. Never in the papers. In ’er ’ead. Thass why I left. She’s screwed’ (Bond 2011: 201). Moreover, Richard tells Dan that Liz earned money by being a prostitute while he was outside robbing to get her drugs. Dan cannot accept what Richard says, so he ties Richard to the *chaise longue* and warns him that he will blind him. Dan also starts to talk to Liz’s clothes as if Liz was still alive. Finally, Richard escapes and accuses Dan of being mad.

In this play, we can see that both Liz and Dan are haunted: while Liz is haunted by the mother’s violent act in the news, Dan is haunted both by the news and by Liz’s death. These spectres represent their need for emotional

connection and longing for a communal harmony. When we examine the relationship between Liz and Richard, it is evident that what Richard really cares about is materialistic satisfaction and his ‘looting’ after Liz’s suicide best exemplifies his logic of action. However, Liz longs for deeper affectionate connection and the promise of a future, both of which Richard is unable and reluctant to offer. While Richard may also be victimized and marginalized by the logic of the neoliberal world, in which the pursuit of profit is the supreme goal, he embodies the same logic by exploiting Liz. Moreover, as a more ‘rational’ man, Richard justifies his refusal to understand Liz by pathologizing her haunted vision. It is Richard’s logic of indifferent reason that alienates Liz, and this alienation makes Liz sympathetic to the mother in the news. Liz understands and experiences the same sense of alienation as the mother does, and it is this experience that justifies the mother’s violence to her child. Liz, however, is troubled by such a vision. As Bond states, ‘[s]he is above all frightened by the fact that the woman talked about it as if it were very normal, as if she thought it was a perfectly obvious thing to do’ (Tuailon 2015: 132). She keeps returning to the violent act in her mind in order to understand the meaning of what happened to the mother and to her.

Throughout the play, it is uncertain whether this news item actually exists or not – only Liz’s mental obsession with it is certain: as Bond states, Liz ‘is obsessed by this story because later, as a mother and a drug addict, she doesn’t feel able to take care of her son’ (ibid.). By discovering the real reason why the mother blinded her child, Liz can understand her own loneliness. Liz has lost Richard, and she realizes that Dan can never always buy her drugs, implying that he may leave her in the near future. Liz can only justify the mother’s violence by thinking that it is for the good of her child. When she realizes that this is not the case, Liz renounces her desire to blind Dan and decides to commit suicide out of despair. Unlike the spectre in *The Hungry Bowl*, which materializes the Girl’s constructive sense of justice, Liz’s haunted vision is destructive – the spectre emerges as a psychic residue through which the subject can define and redefine his/her relationship with others, whether this relationship is constructive or

destructive. In Bond's theory, the potential power of radical innocence is based on this indeterminacy, and how the destructive force of the spectre can be turned constructive is demonstrated by Dan's response to his haunted visions.

After Richard tells Dan that Liz was haunted by the news event and that Liz used to be a prostitute, Dan denies that what Richard revealed is true and turns to Liz's clothes for help as if the clothes were Liz herself:

**Dan** (*holding up the clothes, hugging them*) Look at 'er! Tell 'er! Ain 'er – only 'er clothes! [...] Y ain' got away from 'er! Tell 'er yer sorry! Tell 'er – yer can see 'er – !

**Richard** Son son don't – yer 'arm yerself – no one's there – [...]

**Dan** Look at 'er! – 'cause yer goin t' lose yer eyes! Thass why yer come 'ere! Why yer come in this room! So I can put the room right! Yer goin t' lose yer eyes! (Bond 2011: 206)

Dan seems to be haunted by Liz's clothes and the news simultaneously, and he threatens to blind Richard as the mother in the news does. However, unlike Liz, who cannot cope with her haunted vision and commits suicide, Dan struggles to find another way out of this haunting:

Look! – what did the kid see – what did its 'ands do – (**Richard's hands rise. Jerking. Shaking. Still tied in the strips. Dan stamps.**) – when it saw the – (*Stamp.*) when it saw the (*Stamp.*) comin – (Bond 2011: 207)

Instead of resorting to violence towards himself or Richard, Dan tries to understand what the blinded 'kid' experiences and decides to do something 'for the kid', which is what he finally murmurs while Richard escapes. Through the double haunted visions of Liz and the atrocious news, Dan encounters the spectral 'kid', whose spectral death functions like an ethical call through which Dan can understand the meaning of his death. Dan stops himself from harming Richard as if the suffering of the child prevents him from continuing the vicious cycle of violence manifest through the mother's blinding her child and Liz's suicide.

In *The Hungry Bowl* and *A Window*, Bond uses the spectre to unsettle

the ostensibly untroubled reality and force the characters to confront both their inner desire and wider social problems. The spectre always emerges as ‘the other’ that decenters the stability of the self, and the demand of the spectre for a response puts the self into a state of crisis – this crisis can result in either self-destruction or rebirth. How to address the spectre is in fact a problem of hospitality, which permeates through Bond’s TIE plays – in addition to the spectre, in the following I will analyze the foreigner and stranger as other forms of otherness.

### **5.3. Foreigner, Stranger, and Hospitality**

In *At the Inland Sea* the problem of hospitality is conspicuous – when the Woman as a spectre confronts the Boy to demand a story, the Boy needs to decide whether he should accept this Woman. The spectre could have been exorcised if the Boy refuses to acknowledge the Woman, and this would in turn render storyability impossible. The three concepts – storyability, spectrality, and hospitality – decide the dramaturgical structure of *At the Inland Sea*, the first of Bond’s TIE plays. Therefore, we can observe that from the beginning of Bond’s TIE plays, the dramaturgy of learning already presupposes alterity as the necessary condition for stories to unfold. Hospitality requires that the spectre should be accepted even at the expense of making the house haunted. If the possibility of storytelling entails unconditional hospitality, then Bond’s dramaturgy confronts an aporia: the self needs to be haunted to tell a story in order to affirm its right to be at home. ‘Unhomeliness’ always already filters through what Bond calls the existential imperative that one should be at home in the world. The problem of hospitality also pervades *Have I None*, *The Hungry Bowl*, and *A Window*. In these plays, the acceptance of spectral others amounts to ethically redefining the subject. Hauntology not only reveals spectral structures of historical and social injustice but also demands actions at least to encounter and accommodate the spectre. Following the analysis of storyability and spectrality, in this section I will examine *The Under Room* and *The Edge* to discuss the presence of the foreigner and stranger that puts into relief the



problem of hospitality in Bond's TIE plays.

### **5.3.1. *The Under Room***

First staged by Big Brum in October 2005, *The Under Room* starts with the Dummy, an illegal immigrant, who breaks into Joan's house to escape from soldiers. It is important to note that Bond makes a distinction between the Dummy as a human effigy and the Dummy Actor who speaks the Dummy's words. Throughout the play, other characters only interact with the Dummy and ignore the existence of the Dummy Actor. After the Dummy tells Joan that he has no papers, Joan asks him to stay for the sake of security. Later, Joan asks Jack to help them to get the necessary documents for the Dummy to cross the border. However, the Dummy's money has been stolen, so he is unable to pay Jack. Joan promises that she will try to get the money, but when Jack returns, he brings the Dummy's pass. Jack reveals that he has joined the army to get the pass for the Dummy and threatens Joan and the Dummy that they have potentially become the criminals. Despite this, the Dummy decides to escape with Jack while Joan kills the Dummy out of fear. The play ends with the Dummy Actor speaking the Dummy's native language.

As Derrida points out, the question of hospitality starts with language: '[M]ust we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language [...] before being able and so as to be able to welcome him into our country?' (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 15). Derrida further distinguishes two types of language: one is linguistic operation while the other entails an ensemble of norms and values (133). The Dummy speaks two languages: he speaks English, the same language as Joan speaks when he is awake; however, when he falls into a coma, he speaks his native language, which is totally incomprehensible to Joan. In order to seek asylum, the Dummy must speak a foreign language that enables him to communicate with Joan; without this shared language, the Dummy for Joan would become a total foreigner. However, the Dummy that Joan speaks to is not the Dummy Actor that really 'speaks'. The foreignness of the Dummy

effigy foregrounds the fact that it is language itself as a linguistic operation that communicates – Joan can communicate with the Dummy without knowing ‘who’ he is. The discrepancy between the Dummy who ‘is’ and the Dummy Actor who ‘speaks’ leads to another question: does speaking the same language really communicate and reduce foreignness? In the sense that Joan can speak to the Dummy, the Dummy is not a total foreigner. But this shared language also conceals the irreducible otherness embodied, in both figurative and literal ways, in the Dummy.

At the end of Scene Four, the Dummy Actor puts his jeans on the Dummy and the knife in the pocket of the Dummy’s shirt – these gestures suggest that the Dummy is gradually ‘humanized’, and, in the process of humanization, the Dummy starts to speak his native language in Scene Five when he falls into a coma:

**Dummy** Mnyches. Mnyches. Vczxq bzcvcx.

**Joan** [...] Now I have an obligation to you. I wont [*sic*] abandon you. [...] I’m an immigrant in my own country. This house is my prison. This is the last night I’ll spend in it. [...] The things you told me haunt me. I cant [*sic*] get the pictures out of my head. [...]

[...]

**Joan** [...] Get up! We’ll be here when the soldiers come! Is that what you want? Who are you? I know nothing about you! I have to run out of my house like a criminal! Then you take it over! [...] (Bond 2006: 191-92)

Joan not only expresses her obligation to the Dummy but also reveals that she is – or feels like – an immigrant in the country. As the end of the play suggests, Joan might in the past have greeted the Dummy’s grandmother. It is not clear whether Joan really encountered the Dummy’s grandmother or she just met another elderly woman who spoke the same language as the Dummy does. But it is possible to assume that Joan used to greet foreigners but, due to legal changes or other causes, immigration becomes illegal. The totalization of state power makes Joan feel as if she is an *immigrant in her own country* despite the fact that she is the country’s native. This is why Joan is haunted by the Dummy’s past because the Dummy’s story possibly

reminds her of the past when she encountered other foreigners. However, when the Dummy keeps speaking his native language to articulate his inner anxiety, Joan dislodges her hatred of the Dummy suppressed under her benevolent appearance. Once the suppressed anxiety is released, it turns into violence towards the Dummy, as Bond describes Joan as one who ‘contains in fact a lot of unexpressed aggression, probably based on fear’ (Tuailleon 2015: 95). Joan’s fear is twofold: she fears the real foreignness embodied by the Dummy, but she also fears the foreignness within herself – her desires and anxieties repressed within the process of being civilized as a law-abiding citizen who must follow the legal regulations on immigration.

After the Dummy is dead, Joan is uncertain about whether she should expose his body or hide it. She finally decides to hide it out of the fear of being punished. Joan’s morality of hospitality is revealed to be based on the suppression of her fear and uncertainty, and, once undone, it turns into brutality. In other words, not only those who are endowed with the executive power can exercise violence, but normal citizens can also internalize the fear and resort to violence. It is also important to note how Bond dramatizes the point at which the Dummy decides to go with Jack: when he confesses that he was forced by the soldiers to kill his mother or father and he decided to kill his mother, Joan responds with moralizing horror; Jack, however, understands the aporetic nature of the involuntary choice and the atrocious crime committed by the Dummy. As Jack decides to escape with the Dummy but finds that he has been killed, he states: ‘I never turned t’ crime out a’ weakness. I ’ad a different reason. Hope’ (Bond 2006: 202). Unlike Joan, Jack has no consistent morality: he can be a comrade with the army, but he can also be an outlaw who offers help to the Dummy. Jack understands the nature of the state as a totalized order, and, ironically, his radical innocence takes the form of crime. This is also why the Dummy uses his knife as his identity paper, as he states: ‘The knife is my papers. You must have weapon when you live on street and have no papers’ (Bond 2006: 173). The knife has two meanings: it represents the violence required to resist the rules imposed by the authorities; it is also a reminder of how he was forced to kill his mother by the soldiers.

The discussion of *The Under Room* demonstrates that the problem of hospitality entails both ethical/legal conditions and psychic mechanisms. As Derrida states, the ethics of hospitality involves an aporia:

I want to be master at home (*ipse, potis, potens*, head of house, we have seen all that), to be able to receive whomever I like there. Anyone who encroaches on my “at home,” on my ipseity, on my power of hospitality, on my sovereignty as host, I start to regard as an undesirable foreigner, and virtually as an enemy. This other becomes a hostile subject, and I risk becoming their hostage. (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2000: 53, 55; original emphasis)

Derrida’s description of the aporia of hospitality also exposes the inherent aporia of Bond’s idea of radical innocence. As I have argued that Levinas’s idea of alterity, *illeity*, destabilizes the constancy of the self as *ipseity*, the existential imperative of radical innocence that everyone should be at home can be challenged when this imperative fails to answer the demands of the homeless and foreigners who ask for asylum. If Joan can truly be open to the Dummy as an intruder who ‘breaks into’ her house and threatens her safety, she should unconditionally accept the Dummy without knowing his identity or asking for any identity documents. However, considering that the Dummy is an illegal immigrant, Joan asks him to stay until she can obtain the legal documents:

**Dummy** I do not want to give you some trouble. I pay for broken window and go. First I ask you check no soldiers outside. That would be kind.

[...]

**Joan** You are an illegal immigrant. You loot shops. If the soldiers catch you you will be shot. I do not want you to walk out of *my* house into that.

**Dummy** [...] You are a good person. You do not cause trouble for the authorities. [...] (Bond 2006: 175; original emphasis)

In fact, the Dummy never asks for legal documents – it is Joan who wants to help the Dummy to secure such documents. In addition, she does not want the Dummy to be shot just because she fails to take care of him. However

good-intentioned Joan may be, it is this problematic 'good' will that causes her and the Dummy the trouble that follows. In Derrida's words, Joan's actions implicate her and the Dummy within the logic of 'conditional hospitality' determined by the law of the state. The only true document for the Dummy is his knife – he is not only an illegal immigrant but also an outlaw who knows how the rule of the state can be destructive instead of protective. However, Joan cannot understand this, nor can she detect the irony in the Dummy's remark that she is 'a good person'. If Joan's desire to accept the Dummy follows the logic of radical innocence, this operation of radical innocence is likely to be ideologized by the law of the state. As a result, any practice of radical innocence, once involved within the order of ideology, loses its radicalness as a transgressive force.

Moreover, this distortion of radical innocence necessitates psychic repression. In analyzing the relationship between psychic apparatuses and xenophobia, Julia Kristeva argues that 'the psychic apparatus represses representative processes and contents that are no longer necessary for pleasure, self-preservation, and the adaptive growth of the speaking subject' (184). In the process of growth, the speaking subject must repress those elements that arouse displeasure and threats to self-preservation. While Kristeva's analysis focuses on the psychic mechanism, it is notable that the process of 'adaptive growth' necessarily entails the adaptation to the social reality conditioned by extra-psychic rules. And this mechanism explains why Joan bursts into violence when she recognizes that the Dummy is a foreigner that threatens her self-constancy: this violence is not inherent in the sense that it is inborn but the result of the psychic operation conditioned by psychic apparatuses and extra-psychic ideologization. However, it should still be pointed out that Joan is not innately violent towards foreigners, nor is the law necessarily formulated against foreigners. The fact that Joan keeps a Muslim headscarf which she claims used to be owned by the Dummy's grandmother implies that there used to be an era when the state was more tolerant of foreigners. The headscarf further betokens the otherness that constitutes a part of Joan's memory and identity. Objectively, it is the change of the legal order that redefines whether a foreigner should

be perceived as a friend or an enemy, but this intensification of control over foreigners also subjectively affects Joan's perception of them.

With regard to the psychic operation of xenophobia, Kristeva reminds us of the importance of facing the inner otherness that in fact uncovers the contours that define the identity of a community (192). In a similar manner, Derrida also interprets the stranger as a liberating force: '[T]he stranger could save the master and liberate the power of his host; it's *as if* the master, *qua* master, were prisoner of his place and his power, of his ipseity, of his subjectivity' (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 123; original emphasis). Can the Dummy liberate Joan? Considering that Joan feels uneasy in her own country and intends to escape with the Dummy, the Dummy could be a liberating force for Joan in the sense that the Dummy can make Joan aware of the oppression the state imposes on foreigners as well as natives. However, since the possibility of emancipation presupposes Joan's ability to alter her knowledge of the status quo, her failure to question the established legal order thus implies she still has to depend on the official order and even executes it by herself.

### **5.3.2. *The Edge***

While Bond interrogates the problem of hospitality and the border between 'the national we' and 'the foreign them' on the collective level through the Dummy in *The Under Room*, in *The Edge* Bond interrogates the problem of otherness on a personal level through the character, 'the Stranger', whose presence, like the Dummy in *The Under Room*, is both hostile and liberating. Produced by Big Brum in 2012, *The Edge* takes place during Ron's last night at home before he leaves his mother, Sal. After a night with his friends, Ron encounters the Stranger on his way home, who lies on the ground motionless. When Ron arrives home and has a row with Sal, the Stranger appears and accuses Ron of stealing his wallet. Although Ron denies that he stole the Stranger's wallet, Sal cannot decide what really happened and intends to settle the problem by paying the Stranger. Sal's decision outrages Ron because this implies that she does not trust him. Intriguingly, faced

with Ron's denial, the Stranger states that whether Ron stole the wallet or not does not matter:

**Ron** [...] I never touch yer wallet!

**Stranger** Yer stole me wallet! Rob me! Even if yer didnt makes no difference. [...] If ye rain got me wallet it's 'cause some other young bleeder got it first! Nip round the corner 'n share it with 'is mates before yer will stop! Look under 'is bed – be full a' me wallets 'e stole! 'E's got me stuff under these floorboards! [...] When did I last swaller a meal that did me any good? When's the last time yer slep on the streets? (Bond 2011: 227)

What Ron actually did to him makes no difference – the Stranger accuses Ron *as a young man* of stealing from the Stranger *as an old man*. While this accusation of generational inequity may make sense, later when the Stranger lies motionless on the floor, Ron and Sal soon discover that the wallet, loaded with money has been in the Stranger's jacket. This revelation, however, by no means leads to reconciliation between Sal and Ron – Ron feels cheated and degraded because Sal did not believe him. This quarrel culminates in an emotional climax:

**Ron** Too late!

**Sal** I need yer! Please!

**Ron** Get off!

**Sal** Is this all I'm worth?

**Ron** Yer lied t' me!

**Sal** Would yer leave me lying in the street!

**Ron** Yes! (*Shocked silence.*) Yes! – Get off me! (Bond 2011: 235)

It is not only Ron who is shocked by his reply, but Sal (and likely, the audience) are also be shocked. In fact, Ron's ostensible indifference to Sal's emotional needs should be considered along with the Stranger's accusation – Ron may leave Sal lying in the street just like he left the Stranger lying on the street and dismissed him as trash. In other words, Ron's response indirectly validates the Stranger's accusation that intergenerational relations can be founded on exploitation and indifference.

The helpless image of ‘lying on the street’ suggests an ethical dimension obscured by this kind of exploitation and indifference, and this moment becomes the turning point of the play. After this shocking emotional culmination, however, the play seemingly enters another level of reality: when the Stranger wakes up and continues to accuse Ron of robbing his wallet, Sal, knowing that Ron did not steal the wallet, asks the Stranger whether he has any place to go and whether there is anyone who can take care of him. Instead of treating the Stranger as an offensive intruder, Sal addresses him as a neighbor, whose need is not money but care. When Ron comes back and finds that Sal is absent – she is preparing tea for the Stranger – he also realizes that he cannot abandon his mother and that the real problem in the house is his deceased father. At this moment, Ron wears his father’s jumper, and the Stranger puts on Ron’s clothes – through these symbolic acts, both of them enter liminal zones where they subjectively encounter their repressed desires.

Ron realizes that his dead father still haunts the house. He also recounts how Sal used to make him imitate his father – Sal’s emotional attachment to the dead father is the reason why Ron needs to leave the house, but it is also due to Sal’s unfinished and repressed mourning that Ron feels he can never leave the house. After recognizing the role of the father, Ron is worried that his absence may prompt Sal to commit suicide, and it is at this moment that he acknowledges his love for Sal. As Ron undergoes this subjective enlightenment, the Stranger’s repressed desire for violence is also released – he keeps trying to kill Ron, but he eventually fails and ends up eating chocolate in a grotesque manner. The Stranger wants to kill Ron as a revenge for generational inequity, and he puts on Ron’s clothes as if this can make him return to childhood. However, both of these acts are vacuous. In the end, Sal strips Ron’s clothes from the Stranger, and she also rejects Ron’s decision to stay at home:

**Ron** I want t’ be ’ere.

**Sal** (*the backpack*) Keep it steady. (*Packing.*) Yer cant [*sic*] stay. Look at this, look around yer. – I need yer t’ go.

[...]



**Ron** Cant [*sic*] leave yer with 'im.

**Sal** 'E's a child. I can manage 'im. 'E'll sleep in your bed tonight. In the morning I'll arrange somewhere for 'im t' go. You'll be far away. Somewhere safe. (Bond 2011: 242-43)

Sal's reactions to Ron and the Stranger materialize the ethics of maternity. As Levinas states, '[i]n maternity what signifies is a responsibility for others [...]. Maternity, which is bearing par excellence, bears even responsibility for the persecuting by the persecutor' (1998: 75). Sal realizes that she can no longer treat Ron as a substitute of her husband, and she also knows that underneath the Stranger's violence is his desire to be taken care of. However, she also states that she will find somewhere else for the Stranger – therefore, Sal's attitude towards the Stranger is not only ethical but also practical.

In fact, Bond is always aware of the practical dimension even within extreme ethical situations; otherwise, ethical gestures risk being empty. For Bond, hospitality always entails the process of calculating the incalculable, and only through this process can ethical situations be made concrete and logical. Although Derrida's idea of absolute hospitality or Levinas's idea of the subject as the hostage of the other can deconstruct any predetermined calculation towards the other, unconditional hospitality logically entails the possibility of self-destruction of the subject who encounters the other. As Richard Kearney argues, in order to resist this possibility of self-ruin, 'a hermeneutic pluralism of otherness' is required – 'In ethical relation, I am neither master nor slave. I am a self before another self – brother, sister, neighbour, citizen, stranger, widow, orphan: another self who seeks to be loved as it loves itself' (2003: 81). Either on the personal level or on the collective level, Bond does not follow the logic of the proclivity to demonize the other, nor does he moralize about the ethical imperative to welcome the other unconditionally. When a stranger, a foreigner, or a neighbour appears, the ethical encounter is also socially and politically determined – the negotiation of the nature of the other is indefinite and processual. In *The Edge*, as Bond points out, although the Stranger is outside the family, he can bring in wider problems of the society and penetrate into the emotional impasses between Sal and Ron. He also states

that the Stranger's presence engenders a 'sense of somewhere else' that renders another world possible for the characters and the audience to step into (Ballin and Cooper 26). This territory of 'somewhere else' is an uncertain liminal zone in which the ethical dimensions of everyday normality can be revealed and coped with practically – that is, the sphere where the meaning and limits of hospitality can be interrogated.

#### **5.4. Conclusion**

My analysis in this chapter points out the dramaturgical features utilized by Bond in his TIE plays that open the possibility of ethical learning in response to the post-Auschwitz neoliberal world order. In explicating how Bond's TIE plays function, Cooper states: 'In the specific site of the story Bond's dramaturgy creates a gap in meaning for the audience as the site of the imagination to step into and fill for itself' (Ballin and Cooper 24). In this chapter, I have argued that what makes a 'gap' possible is through the disposition of various forms of otherness that elicit stories to be told, spectres to be encountered, and guests to be accommodated. Only based on the experience of encountering otherness can the process of self-creation be imaginable.

From Chapter Three to this chapter, I have examined Bond's later plays through the perspectives of post-Auschwitz dramaturgy, trauma-tragedy, and the dramaturgy of his TIE plays. Alongside his dramaturgical development, based on his theory of subjectivity, Bond has also formulated a theory of theatre for practically mounting his plays on stage. In the next chapter, I will explore Bond's theory of theatre and demonstrate how this theory applies to the performance of his plays.

## **Chapter Six**

### **Theatre Event: Performing Subjectivities**

Since the 1990s, along with his theoretical and dramaturgical inventions, Bond has been articulating a new method of acting and directing in order to effectively translate his theory and dramaturgy into theatrical practice. Bond invents several terms such as Theatre Event (TE), gap, centre, site, and situation to describe his ideal model of theatre. As Bond has used these terms in different contexts, the definitions of these terms have evolved and interacted with one another. Therefore, instead of trying to define these terms comprehensively, I will start with tracing the genealogy of Bond's theory of the Theatre Event as a post-Brechtian theory of theatre. I will argue that one of the most vital theoretical tasks for Bond is to establish a post-Brechtian theory to accommodate his theory of subjectivity and that of theatre practice.

#### **6.1. Theatre Event**

According to Bond, his idea of the Theatre Event was inspired by a real incident that he saw on TV and what intrigued him was a woman's gesture in a Middle-Eastern city during war. This is how Bond describes the woman who runs beside a stretcher on which lies an injured man:

As the woman runs she screams and raises her clenched fists to heaven. Then she opens her hands – with the palms up and fingers spread – and shakes them over the body, pleading with the crowd to look at it. [...] And then she sees – half sees – men pointing a TV camera and sound-boom at her. Her right hand – with the open, upturned palm and spread fingers – sweeps down to the body in a gesture of display – then clenches to a fist and rises to heaven. In the same instant her left hand glides gently to her hair and – gently, delicately, with a salon gesture – pats it into place: she is on TV. The gap is filled. That is a TE. (1998: 308)

From this instance, it can be inferred that a Theatre Event designates an

extreme situation in which those involved are expected both to experience it emotionally and to be aware of the experience reflectively from a distance. As I will demonstrate, for Bond, the woman's gesture epitomizes the ideal method of acting that is neither Stanislavskian nor Brechtian as it incorporates emotion and reason. In addition to psychological reactions, the actor must be conscious of the meaning involved in these reactions and explore different possibilities of acting based on this self-consciousness. In other words, there is no pre-established character to be replicated; on the contrary, the character demands that the actor demonstrate 'the truth about them both' (303). This is why Bond uses 'enactment' instead of 'acting' to refer to the actor's performance because it is not simply the character to be acted but the meaning to be enacted through the character.

If the Bondian actor aims to enact the meaning of the situation, the question remains as to how to evaluate whether the enactment is appropriate. In explicating the difference between the Brechtian alienation effect and the Theatre Event, Bond advises his readers to '[i]magine a poem in which someone says to a hungry woman: All you need is a bowl of soup and the works of Lenin' (Stuart 1994a: 50). For Bond, giving a book to a hungry woman and her starving baby is a shocking Brechtian gesture that reminds us that we need both food and analytical knowledge in order to live (ibid.). To transform the gesture from an alienation effect into a Theatre Event, Bond advises the actress to consider the following questions:

Does she give the baby a spoonful of soup – then read aloud (perhaps she can't [*sic*] read well) one sentence? Then how true, relevant, simple, earth-shattering, is the sentence? Does it become more important than the soup – perhaps the soup is put down and she reads the text to herself and the child as if it were a fairy story that had become true? Perhaps soup is spilt on the book – perhaps the child cries each time the spoon is taken from its mouth as the woman uses it to painfully underline the text. Perhaps someone comes on and kicks the soup away – and thrusts the book in her hand: and tells her she and her child will die if they don't understand the book. (Stuart 1994a: 51)

It is clear that the nature of the Theatre Event is not so much about theatrical

spectacle of sensational effects as it is about a precise analysis of the situation the character confronts in a certain moment. This process requires the actor to eschew analyzing the character from a purely psychological point of view or using the character only to construct message-laden alienating gestures. On the contrary, the ideal TE-acting is the combination of emotion and analysis. However, the difference between Brecht and Bond by no means resides in whether emotion is involved in acting or not, as Brecht states that '[t]he *Verfremdung* effect intervenes [...] in the form of emotions that need not correspond to those of the character portrayed' (2015: 154). Brecht further explains how to interrupt a coherent process of constructing emotions:

By letting his voice rise, holding his breath and tightening his neck muscles so that the blood shoots to his head, the actor can easily conjure up a rage. In such a case, of course, the *Verfremdung* effect does not occur. But it does occur if the actor at a particular point unexpectedly shows a completely white face, which he has produced mechanically by holding his face in his hands with some white make-up on them. If the actor at the same time displays an apparently composed character, then his fright at this point (as a result of this message, or that discovery) will give rise to a V-effect. (2015: 154)

By comparing the two excerpts above, it is clear that Bond's method of acting achieves 'estrangement' by exhausting possible reactions in a specific situation and choosing one that the audience might find unexpected, while Brecht achieves the V-effect by a deliberate theatrical gesture that guides the audience to notice the artificiality of the displayed emotion.

In his documentation of Bond's workshops with the RSC's actors in 1992, Ian Stuart points out that the aim of the workshops was to find a 'post-Stanislawsky, post-Brecht, anti-happening drama' (1994b: 207). In the workshops, through breaking the usual patterns of enacting emotions, Bond led the actors to explore how imagination can function as the mediator between 'I the imaginator' and 'emotion' and how this mediating process can endow the actors with more choices before performing certain emotions

(210). By replacing emotion with imagination, Stuart observes, the actor was more likely to ‘stage the paradox’ that is characteristic of Bondian drama (214). Instead of being completely consumed by emotion, the actor must self-consciously observe how emotions can possibly operate in every situation and how the meaning can be decided by demonstrating certain emotions. The actor’s imagination, therefore, aims for a rationalized emotional reaction as well as affective reasoning.

The distance between actor and emotion required by Bond is also necessary for Brecht. Brecht uses Lear’s rage as an example and states that, by using the techniques of *Verfremdung*, Lear’s rage is estranged and manifests itself as historicized: ‘Lear’s experiences need not produce this rage in all people and at all times’ (2015: 143). However, while in Brecht’s theatre emotions are historicized in accordance with the specific socio-economic conditions, in Bond’s theatre emotions are denaturalized to reveal other imaginative manifestations of subjectivity. In fact, Bond’s demand for an anti-Stanislavskian and anti-Brechtian method of acting based on imagination poses a challenge to the actor. In an interview with Peter Billingham, Chris Cooper states that his first encounter with Bond’s work was when he, as an actor, participated in the production of *At the Inland Sea*, directed by Geoff Gillham in 1997. Cooper acknowledges that his understanding of acting had been mainly Stanislavskian, but he soon discovered that general emotionalism failed to work in Bond’s plays, nor did Brechtian commentary. Gillham advised him to imagine Bond’s work as composed of different ‘departments’ of feelings as the signposts of the mind; therefore, there is no need to connect different feelings naturalistically or psychologically but to discover the structure of experience from one extreme to another (Billingham 158-59). The idea of constructing ‘the structure of experience’ resonates with the idea of using imagination to explore different facets of emotions in the RSC workshops. This process begins with interrupting psychological stereotypes, imagining alternative reactions, and ends with reconstituting a structure of psychologically real and self-conscious enactments.

According to Clovis Cornillac, in rehearsals, Françon emphasized that

the actor should discover the way of enacting (*la conduite*) instead of acting the psychology of the character: it is ‘a road that one searches in a scene, mysterious and surprising, and it is a coherence of narration’ (François and Tuaille 31). Cornillac further clarifies the importance of being ‘at the present’ and the establishment of the character is based on the logic of enactment (*ibid.*).<sup>40</sup> In her interview with A.-F. Benhamou, Dominique Valadié describes her experience of acting the Woman in *Coffee*: she needed to perform as a dead woman, but how should she perform the Woman if she has never experienced being dead? The only way to do it was to use the body and the language to invent something that was never imagined before but can only be determined by the play. For Valadié, to perform the Woman is to plausibly and vividly incarnate something that no one has ever seen (Benhamou 76). Bond thus summarizes his ideal way of acting:

TE-acting tends to be more graphic, direct, simple, theatrical and powerful than [...] naturalism; and because it combines expression and demonstration it does not produce a false language of compulsion, sentiment and inflated emotion. (Bond 1998: 318)

Another difference between Bond and Brecht is the way they relate their dramaturgy to theatricalization. Brecht’s V-effect is invented to correspond to the dramaturgy of epic theatre as Brecht makes clear that ‘[e]xpounding the plot and getting it across with suitable means of *Verfremdung* constitutes the main business of the theatre’ (2015: 252). In order to facilitate the spectator’s reflection on the events on stage, Brecht requires that every component of the plot must be connected conspicuously instead of imperceptibly (251). Thus, Brecht’s epic theatre arguably resolves around the principle that ‘[e]ach individual event has its basic

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<sup>40</sup> As ‘*la conduite*’ in French means ‘driving’ and ‘conduct’, it clarifies the meaning of enactment: instead of acting the character, the actor’s enactment of the character is like a journey of driving across a variety of dramatic situations. Like a driver, the actor knows the precise features of the excursion and the ways to adapt to different conditions. Instead of focusing on characterization, the Bondian actor is more attentive to how to reveal the ideologized reality to the spectator through the use of objects and the disclosure of the ‘invisible object’. In the following sections, I will elucidate these ideas in concrete examples.

gestus' (250). That is, dramaturgically every event must be a complete unit in which the dramatic action bears its social significance, and theatrically this social point is revealed through the V-effect. Although Bond conceives of the Theatre Event as an alternative of acting to the Brechtian V-effect, the Theatre Event is closely related to this dramaturgical structure.

## **6.2. Accident Time**

Another concept close related to the Theatre Event is 'accident time', which Bond thus explains:

Accident time resembles the stillness at the center of the whirlwind. The storm protects us from the dangers of the storm. We are suspended in the accident. Accidents remove the normal connections between things, the ideological net. In TE the audience have to create the connections. That means they must take responsibility for them. (2000b: 48)

In short, the Theatre Event can be understood as the dramatization of extreme situations during accident time. Bond believes that it is only through constructing extreme situations which put spectators into 'accident time' that the ideologized reason can be unsettled and self-dramatization is possible.

Bond's concept of accident time should be considered alongside with Brecht's 'street scene' as a demonstration of epic theatre. According to Brecht, 'the street scene', regarded as a basic model for epic theatre, depends on the eyewitness who demonstrates to bystanders how a traffic accident took place. This demonstrator needs to imitate the action rather than the character, which means that helping bystanders form their opinions about the accident objectively is more important than making them subjectively re-experience what happened. In order to further subject the accident to scrutiny, the demonstrator can even focus on certain movements, emotions, or gestures in order to produce effects of estrangement (2015: 176-81). Bond also uses traffic accidents to define 'accident time':



In emergencies such as a car crash the brain is flooded with chemicals as concentration increases. The effect is the apparent slowing down of time. More is seen and more actions become possible. Extreme drama creates this effect. The accident is not physical, it is a crisis in existential meanings. It exposes contradictions we accept in daily life in order to survive. (2005: 90)

From Bond's description of what happens in accident time, it is inaccurate to state that the concept of accident time is completely different from Brecht's street scene. Both of the devices seek to construct a theatrical space in which the meanings buried under the surface of everyday normalcy can be contested. However, Bond emphasizes the importance of the experiential aspect – for him, the extreme emotions provoked by the accident are essential for the spectator to undergo the subsequent process of interpretation. Although Brecht by no means excludes the experience of emotions, he tends to emphasize that emotions can exist only insofar they are subject to critical scrutiny. Another difference is that, while Brecht intends the spectator to understand the Marxist-inflected social meanings within the situation, Bond's 'crisis in existential meanings' hinges upon a broader concept of the process of subjectivation. According to Bond's later theory of subjectivity, what concerns him is not how the socialization of the subject is determined by class or other social-economic conditions, but how the subject, while being structured by ideological apparatuses, still retains the potential for resistance and self-reflection.

Regarding Brecht's epic theatre, Walter Benjamin argues: 'The thing that is revealed as though by lightning in the "condition" represented on the stage – as a copy of human gestures, actions and words – is an immanently dialectical attitude. The conditions which epic theatre reveals is the dialectic at a standstill' (1998: 12). In contradistinction to Benjamin's concept of 'dialectic at a standstill' is Gilles Deleuze's idea of 'encountered signs' – 'things that do violence' (101). According to Deleuze, thought is not produced by cognitive recognition made possible by the correlation between the object and the subjective unity of consciousness but by signs that violently force us to think: 'To think is always to interpret – to explicate, to

develop, to decipher, to translate a sign' (97). The dramaturgy of accident time comprises of a conglomerate of encountered signs that firstly do violence to our sensibility and then force us to think. While Bond is renowned for his dramaturgical use of violence, the violence of encountered signs is by no means restricted to physical violence.

What should also be noted is that, in Bond's theory, aggro-effects are produced by the dramaturgy of accident time although he does not explicitly associate these two concepts. According to Bond, there are two kinds of aggro-effects: 'It may shock the audience so as to disturb and bewilder them, disorientate them [...]. Or it may set them a dilemma – an either/or which requires a decision' (Stuart 2001b: 267). These 'aggro-effects' not only exert visceral impact but also provoke critical reflection. According to Bond, both the concepts of the Theatre Event and accident time aim to suspend the 'ideologized' perception of reality in order to substantiate a new understanding of the world. Regarding how theatre can achieve this suspension and understanding, Bond uses other concepts to describe the process, one of which is the 'Invisible Object'.

### **6.3. The Invisible Object and the Use of Objects**

As I have analyzed, Bond's dramaturgy revolves around a core of Nothingness, a gap of undecidability. In 'Drama Devices' (2005), Bond states that 'TE invalidates received and ideological meanings and establishes new meanings in their place' (2005a: 85). For Bond, the Theatre Event, through theatricalizing the analysis of the dramaturgical discourse of the play, aims to destabilize the presumed relationship between self and society. Regarding how the actor achieves the effects of restructuring the perception of the ideologized reality, Bond introduces a new term, the 'Invisible Object', to describe the actor's task. According to Bond, '[d]rama searches for the IO. It may be almost anything – the actor himself, a thing such as a cup, chair or button, words, a sound, a situation, an interchange with another' (2004: 28). For Bond, anything can be made invisible by ideology, that is, a set of values and ideas that legitimize the status quo

and determine how we understand reality. Therefore, searching for the Invisible Object means seeking to expose and make visible the ideological implications underneath what is perceived as usual and natural (ibid.). In a Theatre Event, the two most effective means to reveal the Invisible Object are material objects and the actor's gestures. The focus of this section will be on the use of objects.

Bond emphasizes the importance of the use of objects because, through the interaction between object and actor, the actor can demonstrate how different values are attributed to objects without resorting to psychology. In addition, the process of value attribution is a process of freeing the object from its ideologized use and reinvesting it with a new significance. In order to articulate the relationship between subject and object, Bond uses the term 'cathexis' and often describes how one object can be 'decathezed' and 'recathezed'. In psychoanalysis, cathexis refers to 'the fact that a certain amount of psychical energy is attached to an idea or a group of ideas, to a part of the body, to an object' (Laplanche and Pontalis 62). Although Bond by no means intends to approach the object psychoanalytically, his choice of the term 'cathexis' indicates his idea of how the self can subjectively attach certain meaning to the object.

In fact, in analyzing British Brechtianism, Peter Holland points out that Bond's *Saved* is exemplary of how the social analysis of the individual can be achieved through the use of objects as *gestus*. He demonstrates that, in the exchange between Len and Fred in Scene Six, the significance of the fishing rod and the cigarette oscillates between the economic value and the social symbol of friendship, and the shift of meaning further reveals the social circumstances that define them (28-29). Using objects to demonstrate the social and economic situation of the individual is one of the features that illustrates how Bond has been influenced by Brecht, and this dramaturgical device can also be detected in Bond's other plays such as Shakespeare's paper in *Bingo*.

Therefore, Bond's emphasis on the importance of objects in his later theoretical writings still retains the Brechtian influence. However, what makes his later theory post-Brechtian results from how he incorporates the

use of objects with his theory of subjectivity. For Bond, before the self accepts the social and economic value of the object through socialization, the process of value attribution is closely associated with the phase of the core self in his developmental model of the subject. It is a stage where the self can freely endow subjective significance on external objects without being influenced by how these objects are determined ideologically. The core self as the transitional stage between the neonate and the socialized self is closely related to D. W. Winnicott's psychoanalytical concepts of 'transitional phenomenon' and 'transitional object'.

According to Winnicott, when infants begin to separate from the union with the mother figure, that is, when they start to interact with outside objects, they need some specific objects like a bundle of wool to ease their anxiety about separation. Winnicott describes the object as a transitional object and the phenomenon as a transitional phenomenon (4-5). He proceeds to state that the meaning of a transitional object is to be gradually decathexed as the transitional phenomenon is diffused across the field between 'the inner psyche' and 'the external world' (7). In other words, the intermediate area of experience aims at easing the infant's anxiety of being separated from the mother, who adapts to the infant's need by providing the illusion that what the infant wants really exists (19). Even after transitional objects are decathexed, the transitional phenomenon can still be 'retained in the intense experiencing that belongs to the arts and to religion and to imaginative living, and to creative scientific work' (ibid.).

It is noteworthy that, in Winnicott's theory, the disappearance of the transitional phenomenon coincides with the time when the infant starts successfully to be incorporated with the external cultural field. As a result, the transitional area becomes the cultural field in which the inner psyche is cultivated according to the logic of the external world. Noticeably, this theoretical model corresponds to two phases of Bond's theory of subjectivity: the transitional phenomenon is closely related to 'the core self', which designates a status in which the infant can freely endow objects with subjective meaning, and the end of the transitional phenomenon is comparable to the process of socialization indispensable for the birth of the

socialized self. Therefore, the significance of objects not only reflects how objects are defined socio-economically, but also how the subject creates and recreates the relationship with the external world. It is thus understandable that the use of objects is essential in constructing a Theatre Event. In addition to the concept of the Invisible Object and the use objects, in order to describe how the Theatre Event operates, Bond proposes another set of ideas: the centre, the site, and the gap.

## **6.4. Centre, Site, and Gap**

### **6.4.1. Centre**

The first time Bond explicates in detail his concept of the ‘centre’ is in his letter “‘The Centre’ Notes’ (1992), where he gives a response to Françon’s question: what is the centre of *In the Company of Men*? Although he was familiar with Bond’s previous plays, *In the Company of Men* was the first Bond play to attract Françon. Françon’s questions about Bond’s plays and its dramaturgy initiated a continuous and mutual dialogue between the director and the playwright: by answering the questions, Bond is able to develop and broaden his theory of dramaturgy, and by incorporating these ideas into practice, Françon achieves a more refined and precise *mise-en-scène*.

In this letter, Bond introduces the idea of the centre as both an analytic tool to understand his plays and as a method of acting. More specifically, in every play, there is a central speech that ‘contains the basic theme of the play and also – in its utterance – the way the characters relate to the theme’ (Stuart 1996a: 161). According to Bond, the central speech is not a certain part of a speech in a play but a group of speeches spoken by different characters. These speeches revolve around centre situations and their meaning may evolve as the play unfolds. Apart from the central speech, there is also a ‘central line’ that is nearest to the centre (167).

Françon’s reception of Bond’s idea is clearly reflected in an interview in which he states that Bond develops the theme of the central speech

alongside the character and that the text is not a psychological reproduction but a discourse (Millon 27). In practice, Françon requires his actors to seek the central discourse and central images in order to perform in a way that clarifies their understanding of the text. However, he never imposes his own interpretation of the text upon the actors; instead, Françon describes his directing as a ‘dramaturgy in process’ that incorporates the reactions of the actors (Françon 2010). Revealingly, Françon describes his method of *mise-en-scène* as a process that starts with one central idea through which all the details of the text are examined (Françon and Boiron 10). While he upholds the importance of the central idea of a play, this by no means implies that he intends to deliver a message through his *mise-en-scène*. On the contrary, Françon understands the importance of the gap in Bond’s theory and states that the goal of all art is to create paradoxes (1999: 100). He thinks that the act of choosing one central idea as the truth and excluding others is itself an ethical act that always results in paradoxes (Françon and Boiron 10). As Bond states: ‘The centre is the site of the drama’s paradox’ (Bond 2000b: 14). The paradoxical nature of Bond’s tragedy derives from the act of determining what is undecidable. In this sense, by making ‘paradoxes’ the core idea of his *mise-en-scène*, Françon succeeds in capturing the distinctive feature of Bondian tragedy.

Cooper also uses the idea of the ‘centre’ to approach Bond’s works, structure rehearsals, and devise TIE programmes. In ‘Some Notes on Bondian Drama’, part of the teachers’ resource for *The Edge* edited by Cooper and Ben Ballin, it is stated clearly that for Big Brum, ‘[t]he central problem of all drama is justice. Particularly plays deal with the centre in relation to specific situations. [...] Its patterns or structures are extended from the centre’ (Ballin and Cooper 22). It is notable that, for Big Brum, although the centre is the governing idea throughout the process of rehearsal and devising, they admit that one play could possibly be defined by several centres. Therefore, it is their task to choose one centre as the basis from which to explore the central speech, the central line, central images and the central action. As indicated in the teachers’ resource, the idea of the centre is a much more useful dramaturgical tool than any other ideas such as

emplotment or characterization. What is decisive is how the plot delineates the development of the centre and how the character interacts with the centre. As Bond defines the central situation as ‘an aspect of society in which the definitions and practice of being human becomes critical and often contradictory’ (Stuart 1996a: 169), it is clear that the idea of the centre aims at unveiling the paradoxical nature of the ideological construction of society.

#### 6.4.2. Site

Another important idea related to the centre is the idea of the ‘site’. In ‘The Site’ (1999), Bond refers the site to the paradox of the social situation that stimulates the reactions of imagination in a Theatre Event (2000b: 47). In ‘Modern Drama’ (1999), Bond elucidates the idea of the site by stating that drama has four sites:

- A. It conforms to the social sites (city, era, culture, etc.), which are self-evident to the audience.
- B. It conveys to the audience the play’s specific sites. [...]
- C. It conveys the play to the audience – the audience *as* site. [...]
- D. The audience as site of imagination. [...]

(2000b: 10; original emphasis)

Site A situates drama within certain social contexts. In this sense, drama is not merely an art form but should be regarded as a cultural institution conditioned by a broader ideological network. Site B refers to the play, that is, the dramatic world created by the playwright. However, there is ambiguity in Bond’s differentiation between Site A and Site B. For example, Cooper thinks that Site A of *The Broken Bowl* is ‘the world of 2012’, which is also ‘present in the dysfunctional future society’ of the play while Site B is the specific room in the play (2013b: 133). However, in Cooper’s co-written chapter with David Davis, they state that Site A of the play refers to the world of disaster outside the room (Davis 2014: 144). If Site A refers to the broader social background within a play, it can hardly be ‘self-evident’ as Bond defines since this context can only be decoded gradually as the play

unfolds. Moreover, it makes more sense to differentiate the dramatic world from the extra-dramatic world than to distinguish the specific dramatic site from the broader social context within a play. In terms of theatrical semiotics, as defined by Anne Ubersfeld, the conditions of theatrical enunciation are of two orders: ‘concrete *stage* conditions of enunciation’ and ‘*imaginary* conditions of enunciation, conducted through performance’ (161; original emphasis). While Ubersfeld does not especially emphasize the importance of the social reality as stage conditions of theatrical enunciation, I argue that, for Bond, in addition to imaginary conditions of enunciation, the significance of any staged event must also be evaluated by considering drama as part of social institutions and concrete social conditions. It is no wonder that Cooper identifies Site A as ‘the world of 2012’, the year when *The Broken Bowl* was produced, since it is important for a TIE practitioner to construct the dramatic world in relation to contemporary society in order to fulfill the sociological function of theatre.

Site C is the interaction between stage and audience, that is, the theatrical process of conveying Site B to the audience. In fact, Ubersfeld’s idea of stage conditions is more suitable to explain the function of Site C as it involves the concrete decisions made by directors, actors, and designers to construct Site B, the imaginary conditions of performance. Therefore, it is clear that Bond’s Site B and Site C constitute the field of theatrical semiology. Site D is the psyche of the spectator, whose imagination can be activated by theatrical experiences. Despite the fact that Site B and Site C constitute the semiotic field of theatrical enunciations, Site D should not be regarded as the site of an ideal receiver as defined by semiotics. Rather, for Bond, Site D is the site of imagination, in which the production of significance should never be pre-determined by ideology. Therefore, in order to put imagination into operation, it is necessary to interrupt or suspend the process of signification in Site B and Site C. This explains why the conception of effective theatrical devices such as the Theatre Event or the Invisible Object is indispensable.

As Bond states that ‘[a]ll the sites come together in the play’s centre and are on the stage’ (2000b: 18), the dramaturgical analysis and theatrical



practice which start with the idea of the centre should encompass all the sites of drama, that is, produce an effective theatrical experience to stimulate the spectator's imagination to interrogate the relationship between self and ideology. While the centre could be defined as justice, as suggested by Cooper, or as a paradox, as indicated by Françon, the essence of the centre is always a void to be filled, that is, a gap.

### 6.4.3. Gap

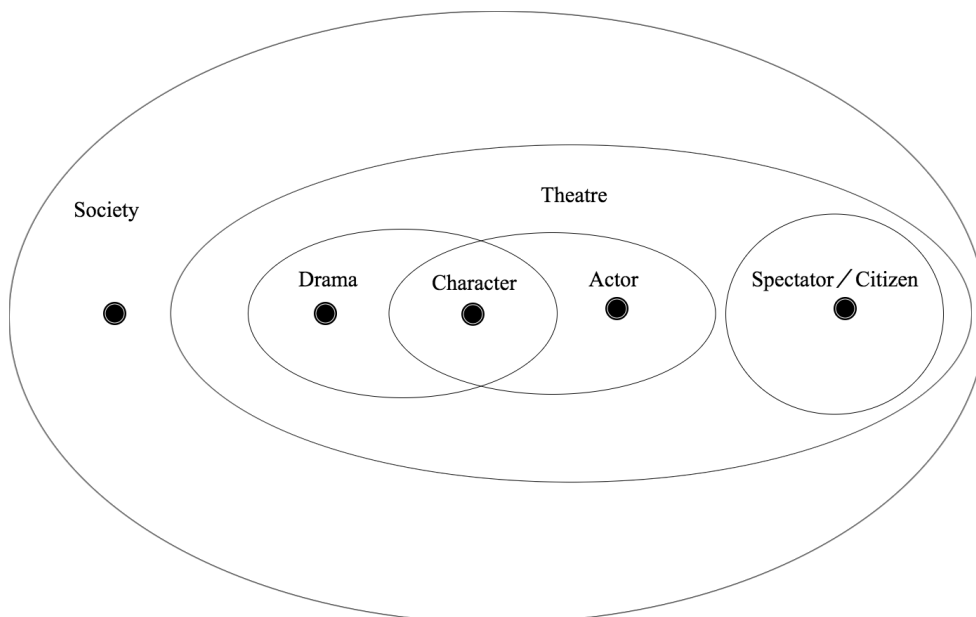
The 'gap' is a complex idea that Bond returns to in different writings. In 'Commentary on *The War Plays*', he proposes that the gap is associated with the actor, character, and spectator: 'Interpretation depends on meaning and in drama that must be a philosophy of nature, society and self. So the triangle of actor, character, and audience forms a gap that *only* philosophy can fill' (Bond 1998: 303). Therefore, the stage could also be regarded as a gap: 'The empty space invokes social meaning' (304). By this, Bond means that the stage functions as a starting point of interpretation and understanding, which should not be confined to psychological analysis but should extend to social analysis. The stage is a gap that needs to be filled with philosophy instead of psychology or theatrical effects. In addition, Bond also extends the idea of the gap to social reality: '[I]n real life, the "gap" exists between authority and behavior, speaking and understanding. Negotiating the gap is a social process' (335). This definition of the gap as the discrepancy between ideology and reality is vital in understanding how Bond regards drama as a social institution endowed with the power to interrogate the legitimate status of social reality.

In 'The Seventh of January Sixteen Hundred and Ten' (2000), Bond defines the gap as follows:

The gap is in tension because of the relationship between the real and the ideological, and this is the tension of 'being.' The gap is also the site of our individual story, which is partly our specific biography and partly the events in ideology. (2000b: 176)

The gap exists between the real, which is the potential of imagination originated from radical innocence, and the ideological, which is the socialized self instrumentalized by the system of rational administration. Therefore, such a gap is persistent inside the human psyche, that is, ‘the site of our individual story’. The gap, defined in this way, is almost equivalent to the idea of Nothingness. Nothingness is the originary void that can be occupied by ideology or imagination, and this structure of void constitutes a constant dynamic between the human psyche and society. In other words, the gap as an idea not only foregrounds the undecidable nature of the process of signification in theatre, but it also connects Bond’s theory of theatre with the idea of Nothingness in his theory of subjectivity.

To sum up theoretically: The self is a gap. Drama is a gap. Society is also a gap. The mimetic structure between self, drama, and society is the nucleus that governs Bond’s theories of subjectivity, dramaturgy, and theatrical practice. Defined in this way, the gap is also a ‘site’: Site A as social reality is a gap; Site B as the theatrical event on stage is a gap; Site C as the interaction between stage and audience is a gap; Site D as the psyche of the spectator is a gap. Moreover, the centre as the kernel that connects all the sites is also a gap. These Bondian terms, due to their spatial connotations, can be graphed as such:



The black dots refer to the sites of Nothingness that can be occupied either by ideology or by imagination. For Bond, the operation of society relies on a dominant ideological network that determines how values are defined. Therefore, the site of Nothingness in society is occupied by ideology. In Bond's theory, a citizen needs to abide by the rules conditioned by such ideology; otherwise he or she is prone to be designated as guilty, wrong or insane. The theatre as a social institution provides an intermediate space in which the ideological centre of society can be suspended by constructing a dramatic sphere in which the site of Nothingness is occupied by another logic. For Bond, by turning the citizen into a spectator in theatre, it is possible for the citizen to experience and reflect on how the order of society is constructed and can be reimagined.

Having described how Bond conceives a new form of theatre through the concepts of the Theatre Event, the Invisible Object, the centre, the site, and the gap, in the following I analyze more specifically how Bondian subjectivity is performed through the actor's enactment.

## **6.5. Performing the Palimpsest of Subjectivity**

### **6.5.1. Character and Subjectivity**

In addition to the use of objects, how to construct a human figure is another major task that actors encounter in Bond's theatre. Since Bond is suspicious of Stanislavski's idea of subtext and Brecht's idea of alienation effects, how to perform Bond's 'characters' through his idea of 'metatext' is a pressing issue. As Patrice Pavis states, the character as a person is a historically specific concept that derives from the bourgeois drama, which treats the character as a substitute for the autonomous individual (1998: 47). The character cannot be merely reduced to 'an awareness of self in which ideology, discourse, moral conflict and psychology coincide' (51). Moreover, the process of abstraction through which theatricalized figures replace psychological characters is recurrent in modern and contemporary

dramaturgy (2016: 78). Arguably, Bond's use of ghosts and his dramatization of the core self can be regarded as his dramaturgical devices to transcend the limits of the psychologized character. Through these devices, Bond is able to articulate 'the human image' without resorting to a complete erasure of the human individual. Therefore, in Bond's dramaturgy, at times the human image is more like a human-like 'figure' instead of a character. In her seminal study on the death of character since modernism, Elinor Fuchs proposes that, since character is deprived of the integration of human identity in the modernist theatre, '[t]he burden of signification [...] begins to shift from the unfolding of character and plot to the more abstract interest of the play of ontological and ideological levels' (35). 'The play of ontological and ideological levels' that Fuchs attributes to the modernist theatre also describes Bond's use of character as determined by the palimpsest structure of subjectivity, in which the neonatal ontological quest for justice meets with the ideological restraints imposed by external authority. In this sense, Cristina Delgado-García's definition of character as 'any figuration of subjectivity' (231) can be used to describe the relationship between the Bondian subject, the character, and the actor's performance – since Bondian characters are not merely determined by ideology as the socialized self but also retain the potential of radical innocence, the actor's performance should also retain this subjective space of undecidability.

In Alastair Macaulay's review of the RSC production of *In the Company of Men*, directed by Bond in 1996, he accurately describes John Light's performance of Leonard as 'economical' and 'expressive' with minimal movement. Although the production may not necessarily demonstrate Bond's ideal approach to performance, Light's restrained performance as Leonard was arguably illustrative of one of the possible methods to perform radical innocence.<sup>41</sup> Notably, in Marvin Carlson's review of the production directed by Françon in 1992, he observes that

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<sup>41</sup> Bond's evaluation of his experience of working with the RSC in rehearsing *In the Company of Men* is mixed. For Bond, certainly it was not a 'disaster' in the way *The War Plays* was in 1985 (Stuart 2001a: 140); however, the major problem resides in the actor's method of performance, which he regards as having been corrupted by TV and film (135).

Benoit Régent's performance as Leonard was devoid of psychological motives or decipherable thoughts, and this powerful sense of detachment made it uncertain whether this implies 'an emotional void' or 'a calculated suppression of human emotion' (241). While these two critics review different productions, both point out the detachment that characterizes both actors' performances of Leonard, one of the typical Bondian characters who keeps searching for the meaning in an indifferent world. Without demonstrating any psychological motives, the eruption of Leonard's 'radical innocence' is theatricalized through his final gesture of shooting Hammond after he hangs himself – an impossible gesture that both compels the audience to think about the situation and reveals the hidden part of Leonard's psychic operation.

*Tuesday* also illustrates Bond's idea that emotions are ideologically coded. *Tuesday* was broadcast by BBC TV Education in 1993 and was directed by Bond and Sharon Miller.<sup>42</sup> At the start of *Tuesday*, Irene is studying in her room. Later, her boyfriend Brian comes in and admits that he is running away from the army in the Gulf. Irene's father finds out that Brian has run away from the army and urges him to go back. However, Brian is reluctant to do so and refuses to reveal why he cannot go back. Unable to bear the Father's abuse of his authority, Irene uses Brian's gun to shoot the Father, but she realizes that the gun is unloaded. Shocked by Irene's reaction, the Father leaves the room to call the police. In the room, Brian tells Irene about his experience in the army and his witnessing of a child running away from other people in a desert. Later, the police break in and shoot Brian because they suspect he may use weapons to resist. At the end, Irene is informed that Brian is dead, and she seems to have realized and experienced something she never imagined before.

Like Leonard's shooting, Irene's shooting of her father can also be defined as the violent action deriving from her radical innocence. Although Brian states that Irene's facial expression is that of a killer when she shoots the unloaded gun at the Father, Natalie Morse's performance as Irene by no

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<sup>42</sup> My analysis is based on the recording archived at the BFI National Archive in London.

means indicated what a killer should look like – instead, Morse’s facial expression remained so neutral and inscrutable that it is impossible to decipher her feelings or thoughts. We can observe that, in Bond’s theatre, the character in extreme moments is usually purposefully performed as devoid of predictable emotions in order to emphasize the situation rather than the character. The fact that the character does not seem to be shocked by the shocking moment is also reminiscent of how Bond describes the site of accident time to be the peaceful centre of a storm. Although performing radical innocence often involves creating a moment of undecidability by excluding emotions or gestures with explicit social or psychological implications, this does not imply that all of Bond’s characters should be neutrally performed. Rather, in order to contrast with and create the context for the moment of undecidability, certain social gestures are exaggerated. For example, Bob Peck’s performance as Irene’s father emphasized both his authority over Brian and his later paranoid bipolar reactions to Irene’s decision to shoot him. Also, one of the policemen shouted in excitement when he arrested Brian. These are moments in which the spectator is made aware of the ideological meanings of emotions and gestures. Overall, the performance of *Tuesday* was naturalistic, but these moments of exaggerated emotions and those of inscrutable tranquility demonstrated how Bond orchestrated the actors’ gestures and emotions to display different figurations of subjectivity.

In the following, I will compare two productions of *The Great Peace* to further illustrate how subjectivity can be performed in Bond’s theatre. In fact, although Bond assisted directing *The War Plays* in the RSC production at first, he left during the rehearsal of *The Great Peace* because he was frustrated with not being able to explore the text and the possibilities of acting. Therefore, I will also compare the RSC production of *The Great Peace*, the third part of *The War Plays*, directed by Nick Hamm in 1985, with Françon’s production in 1995 to elucidate the features of Bondian performance.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> The recording of Françon’s production is archived by INA THEQUE. The recording of the RSC production is archived at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust in Stratford-upon-Avon.

*The Great Peace* can be divided into two parts: the first part (from scene one to scene six) deals with the Son killing the Woman's baby, his own sibling, in order to fulfill the order by the army; the second part (from scene seven to scene twenty) illustrates the Woman's journey through the ruins seventeen years after the traumatic experience. In order to illustrate the differences between the productions by the RSC and Françon, in the following I will especially focus on the parts that pose challenges to the director as well as the performer.

The first major difference can be detected in the scene in which the Son stifles the baby. In the RSC production, through his emotional delivery of words and body language, Gary Oldman's performance as the Son left the impression that he felt hurt and unwilling to kill the baby. In Françon's production, however, Clovis Cornillac stood still throughout the scene except when he stifled the baby. When he killed the baby, Cornillac did not exhibit his emotion and acted in an unaffected manner. Françon did not intend to completely evade naturalistic acting; on the contrary, in the preceding scenes, both the Woman and Mrs. Symmons were highly emotional and even hysterical when they realized that their babies were threatened. That is, in this respect, there is no essential interpretative difference between the two productions. Nevertheless, by restraining from revealing his emotion in a moment of ethical significance, Cornillac's performance was more persuasive and effective than Oldman's performance, which represented predictable psychological reactions as might be expected from the Son.

According to Tuaille, Françon insisted that actors should act 'naturalistically' as much as possible and that they should also perform 'at the present moment' by demonstrating how the army's order should be reacted to (2009: 847). While these two methods seem at odds with each other, the actors' combination of naturalistic banalization and objective display of the process of decision-making contributes to a much more nuanced performance. Since the Son's infanticide is a reenactment of the

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My performance analysis is based on these recordings.

ethical paradox of the Palermo improvisation, it is likely that the actors are prone to demonstrating the process of tackling the paradox in a too logical manner at the expense of the quotidian quality that should be incorporated through the whole process. Therefore, Françon tried to ‘banalise’ the scenes through adjustment of acting and use of objects to establish normality that reduces ‘artificial tensions’ (839). For example, Valérie Dréville as the Woman treated the Son in an infantilizing manner and at times talked in a gossipy way (*ibid.*). Cornillac even smoked when he discussed with the Woman about the army’s order of killing a baby in order to make this order one among other normal orders (844). In the RSC production, Oldman also smoked in the same scene, but, as has been pointed out, Françon treated naturalistic acting as only one of his directorial strategies and complicated the performance with other tactics. In order to evade naturalistic introspection or calculation, Françon requested that every reply should be enunciated ‘at the present’ to foreground the urgency of the situation and clarify the mechanism of the dramaturgical structure (Tuailon 2009: 849). Dréville states that she had the impression that this method of acting makes ‘things before oneself instead of being in the inside’ and consequently produces the quality of clarity and swiftness in performance (*ibid.*).

Therefore, it can be inferred that naturalistic acting, which duplicates emotions as self-evident to make characters banal and tangible, by no means necessarily contradicts with the acting approach that highlights the logic of the development of dramatic action. The comparison above exemplifies why Bond criticizes psychological naturalism for ignoring the social and political dimensions of human behaviour. By demonstrating personal emotion, Oldman’s performance made the Son’s decision to kill the baby an unwilling act and may arouse the audience’s sympathy towards his situation. By contrast, Cornillac’s unaffectedness made the Son’s killing ‘strange’: how can a man being forced to kill his sibling manifest no emotional reaction? The Son’s coldness is the coldness of the military order, which has nothing to do with personal emotions and can hardly be altered. In this respect, the Son is only an instrument to execute one of the military orders. Oldman’s performance might also arouse the spectator’s awareness of the



social and political dimensions implicit in his infanticide despite his psychological approach; however, it is because Cornillac's interpretation clearly circumvented explicit personal emotion to resist the spectator's expectation that the social and the political aspects of his behaviour can be directly foregrounded.

About his experience of rehearsals in the RSC production, Bond states that '[t]he rehearsals were painful because the actors are given two objectives. My co-director's (Let's make it work) and mine (What does it mean?)' (Stuart 1996a: 88). The interaction between the Woman and the speaking bundle shows the difference between the directorial choice to 'make it work' and that which complicates the meaning. In Scene Thirteen and Fourteen, the bundle speaks to the Woman and thus defies the assumption that it is only a bundle of rags instead of a living baby. In the RSC production, Magie Steed changed the pitch and volume of her voice to imagine and imitate how an infant might speak, and in this way, the bundle was understood to be the imaginative infant played by the Woman herself. According to Tuailleon, Françon at first also asked Dréville to produce two different voices directly, but they found this method ineffective. They then worked with the sound designer, Daniel Deshays, to design a piece of electronic sound equipment hidden in the bundle, which transmitted the voice of the infant recorded by Dréville to the audience (2009: 709-11). As a result, audiences might be left uncertain about the relationship between the Woman and the bundle: is it the voice produced by the Woman or is it the voice of the bundle? By retaining the ambiguity of the status of the bundle, Françon succeeded in translating the Woman's experience of interacting with the bundle as a transitional object to a common experience shared by audiences. The difference between the two approaches to the bundle is vital since it illustrates what the 'gap' between actor, character, and spectator means: while Steed's acting clearly defined the Woman's relationship to the bundle and thus fills the gap, Dréville's interpretation left the relationship indefinite and keeps the gap open for the audience to decide. In other words, Steed *demonstrated* what the meaning of the bundle is, but Dréville *engaged* the audience in the transitional area in which the meaning of the bundle is

not yet defined.

In addition to the use of objects, the difference between how Steed and Dréville constructed the Woman's image and gestures is also exemplary in showing Bond's ideal acting method. As Valadié describes how she needed to 'invent' a ghostly female figure in *Coffee*, the Woman in *The Great Peace*, who has been struggling and nursing her bundle baby in the desert for seventeen years, is another figure that defies normal characterization and demands an imaginative configuration. In order to play the Woman, Dréville made more than three hundred pages of notes to make sure that she understood every word and image (Tuailon 2009: 857). Regarding how to approach the text, she notes: 'It's not me who does everything. The rehearsals can help me discover the just place if this text can pass through me, retreat, turn transparent, bring oneself back in order to let the other pass' (qtd. in Tuailon 2009: 858). In order to let the text 'pass through' her, Dréville based the construction of the image of the Woman on materialist details. According to Tuailon, Françon recommended that she imagine that the Woman is mad, and this simple suggestion became 'an open door' for Dréville, who was then stimulated by her encounter with some socially marginalized people, whose ways of speaking and body gestures became the base of her imagination (2009: 860). However, this by no means suggests that Dréville attempted to 'imitate' the images of the insane. As she notes, the Woman is a person who knows nothing other than some remnants of language and whose past is a void. Dréville further describes the Woman's madness as the site of irrationality, where some 'flashes of intuition' traverse (ibid.). Tuailon states that, by following the logic, Dréville was able to construct the process through which the Woman's mental state passes from insanity to reason (ibid.). From the perspective of Bond's theory, Dréville's logic corresponds to the Woman's psychical state, which is a regression into the phase of the core self due to traumatization. Her interaction with the bundle is one example of the transitional phenomena characteristic of this phase. As Winnicott states, 'Should an adult make claims to on us for our acceptance of the objectivity of his subjective phenomena we discern or diagnose madness' (18). In this regard, Françon's

suggestion that the Woman is mad is correct because it defines how the Woman may be objectively diagnosed. On top of this, Dréville's interpretation retained the nuisances and energies of the Woman's subjective reality without resorting to any stereotypical image of madness.

### **6.5.2. Body and Emotion in Performance**

From the discussion above we can observe that the figurations of subjectivity in Bond's theatre require an accurate analysis of how characters are defined and self-defined in the situation. Based on the analysis, actors can then decide their gestures, emotions, ways of speaking, and their relation to objects. In this section, I focus on the role of the body and emotions in performing Bond's plays as the human body is the point where the ethics in Bond's theatre can be foregrounded. In fact, Bond's conception of subjectivity is from the beginning closely intertwined with the body and emotions. According to Bond, the neonate's monadic world is determined by corporeal feelings of pleasure and pain. Later, these feelings are abstracted as ideas of the Comic and the Tragic attached to emotions, and the emergence of consciousness is concomitant with these ideas. For the socialized self, instead of repeating the neonate's experiences of pleasure and pain, the ideas of the Comic and the Tragic are further influenced by how the self confronts the ideologized world and its injustice. For Bond, the neonate's primitive feelings are instructive in differentiating justice from injustice, and this differentiation later determines the self's sense of morality. Therefore, feelings and emotions are not only physical or psychological reactions, but they also indicate how the self is engaged with the world. In this section, I will discuss the body and these two roles of emotions in Bond's theatre.

The neonate's feelings of pain and pleasure are more than bodily feelings – for Bond, the feeling of pain puts the existence of the body under threat. This threat is the otherness that terrorizes the neonate because it may eradicate the existence of the neonate's body and deprive the neonate of 'the right to be in this world'. This implies, therefore, that the neonate's body is

a terrain where the neonate's identity is being questioned and claimed – only by expelling the otherness that threatens the body can the neonate establish its relationship with the external world. However, as the traces of this exposure to the other are registered in emotions and its attached ideas, the body that defines the contour of the self always bears the memory of its exposure to the other. As Levinas states, 'the one-for-the-other characteristic of the psyche [...] is not an ordinary formal relation, but the whole gravity of the body extirpated from its *conatus*' (1998: 72; original emphasis). It should therefore be noted that Bond's conception of the subject, the psyche that seeks justice by establishing its co-existence with others, is grounded in the neonate's experience of bodily discomfort, and this discomfort continues in the self's later development. Simon Critchley defines this exposure to the other as 'the performative stating, proposing or expressive position of myself facing the other' (2004: 18). Adorno also eloquently explicates the moral significance of the body in a post-Auschwitz world:

A new categorical imperative has been imposed by Hitler upon unfree mankind: to arrange their thoughts and actions so that Auschwitz will not repeat itself [...]. Dealing discursively with it would be an outrage, for the new imperative gives us a bodily sensation of the moral addendum – bodily, because it is now the practical abhorrence of the unbearable physical agony to which individuals are exposed even with individuality about to vanish as a form of mental reflection. (1999: 365)

Therefore, the figuration of subjectivity is never abstract – the post-Auschwitz damaged self is intertwined with the damaged body, only from which new ethics can be made possible.

According to Erika Fisher-Lichte, in theories of acting, there has always been 'a tension between the actor's phenomenal body, their bodily being-in-the-world, and the use of that body as a sign to portray a character' (26). She further points out that, while Stanislavkian acting requires the actor to hide behind the character, that is, to merge the phenomenal body with the semiotic body, Brecht foregrounds the importance of the actor's semiotic body as marking the character's action and the actor's stance

towards the character without giving account of how the phenomenal body should be treated (29). Pavis also contends that the body in theatre oscillates between being a transmitter of psychology or morality and being a self-referential material (1998: 34). Instead of strictly differentiating the body in theatre as semiotic or phenomenal, it is more important to identify how the body in Bond's theatre 'oscillates' between these levels of conceptions.

As Stanton B. Garner states, Bond's imagination of violently tortured bodies in his early plays reflects 'biological materialism that underlined Bond's theatre, a materialism that grounds the political and the economic in human corporeality' (158). This dramaturgy of bodily affliction permeates his later plays, in which the damaged body demonstrates either how the self is being paralyzed by the operation of power, or how the traumatized survivor strives to live. This also accounts for the importance of 'correct' embodiment in Bond's theatre, which can be demonstrated through a comparison of how the Woman in *The Great Peace* was performed by Dréville and Steed.

It is clear that the Woman's appearance changes over the period of seventeen years in the desert. Dréville based her construction of the Woman's body and gestures on very concrete questions: how to express happiness after twenty years of wandering? How to once again take a hand and caress a human head? How to eat with a shrunk stomach? (Tuailon 2009: 861) In addition, she varied her pace of walking in different scenes to suggest the passing of time and to eschew a naturalized image of the Woman (863). Dréville also applied the same strategy to her vocal interpretation: while manifesting the senility, exhaustion, and destitution of the Woman, Dréville tried to exhibit the heterogeneity of the Woman's voice (870). In comparison, Steed's performance did not create a sense of consistency or complexity as Dréville did. At times, she imitated how a destitute woman might walk and speak, but at other times she delivered a long speech in a fluent and flamboyant manner and acted in a 'normal' way. As Dréville adopted a strategy through which she could demonstrate a range of the Woman's physical and vocal variations, she achieved a well-managed

consistency that Steed's performance lacked. As Jenny Hughes argues, performances in a time of terror that evoke the experiences of unsettlement and disturbances by representing life in the alienated and abject form can unleash 'the critical and affective force of the abject to disorder the beautifying schemes of an orderly, rule-bound universe' (21). The consistency of Dréville's damaged body, despite its fictionality, is powerful as it requires the spectator to gaze at and imagine the possible degradation that can take place in the human body.

In addition to the damaged body, what may seem the 'normal' body can also be a site of domination, which can be manifested through the control of emotions. As Bond states that '[a]uthority corrupts imagination by making it fearful' (2003: 104), authority can exercise its power through the production of fear. In *Theatre & Feeling*, Erin Hurley differentiates affect from emotion by stating that, while affect refers to an organism's unconscious response to external changes which may result in emotional expressions, emotion situates these affective responses in a social context (17-21). By implication, we need to be aware of the difference between 'emotional expressions' and 'emotions' since, as Martin Welton points out, emotional expressions ignited by affective feelings are undifferentiated across a spectrum of emotional states (27). While different emotions may be expressed through similar physical expressions and physiological changes, emotions cannot be reduced to these biological states. On the contrary, as Robert C. Solomon succinctly states, '*emotions are subjective engagements in the world*' (77; original emphasis). This implies that emotions are differentiated according to how the subject interacts with the object, and these interactions often entail judgmental appraisals conditioned by the subject's position within a wider social context.

Bond's theatre is concerned less with how to reproduce the character's emotions than with how the character's emotions are produced and ideologically conditioned. As I have explained, in Françon's production of *Chair* in 2008, Dominique Valadié's performance as Alice and Pierre-Félix Gravière's performance as Billy demonstrated how seemingly normal everyday emotions are embedded within the biopolitical logic of

anxiety-inducing. Here I want to emphasize how the performance may render the spectator complicit in conforming to this logic of fear and anxiety. While the Woman's body as 'bare life' that can be killed without breaking the law should arouse our sympathy and bring us into awareness of the precarious status of *homo sacer*, Léna Bréban's performance rendered the Woman a 'fearsome' existence, which makes the spectatorial experience highly nuanced. Due to her appearance (a bald woman with her face looking downwards and her back arched), mutism, and the uncertainty of her reactions to external stimuli, the spectator is invited to fear her than sympathize with her. Moreover, the Woman attacks Alice, and this not only confirms her status as a threatening existence but also justifies the Soldier's shooting. In other words, although *Chair* by no means explicitly refers to terrorism, this performance metaphorically reproduces the logic of anti-terrorist surveillance, which warrants any anti-terrorist strike and presupposes the structural possibility that terrorist attacks may occur anywhere at anytime. As Hughes argues, in a time of terror, theatre should 'take up performance's capacity for affect as a possible site for working within and against an affect economy that mobilises terror' (20). The success of Françon's production resides in the fact that it critiques totalitarianism by reproducing how totalitarianism manipulates fear and encouraging the spectator to unconsciously identify with the logic of authorities.

Although theatrical representations of the body and emotions are usually assumed to be embodied by the actor's corporeal presence, some of Bond's most effective scenes that engage the spectator's attention by no means represent any extreme bodily conditions or emotions. As Dan Rebellato argues, insofar as metaphor makes us think of one thing in terms of another thing, theatre is metaphorical in the sense that spectators are invited to understand the fictional world through the particular representation (2009: 25). In a similar logic, the presence of the body and emotions can be metaphorically represented through their absence – this representation does not 'replicate' any corporeal presence but 'evokes' our

imagination. We can understand Joan's violent reactions to the Dummy in *The Under Room* through this metaphorical relation. Sara Ahmed suggests that emotions, in responding to the other's proximity, do not originate from the inherent attributes of others but from how others are perceived as possessing qualities (52-53). Therefore, when we consider someone to be hateful, it is not that intrinsically he or she is hateful, but that he or she is perceived to be hateful. This process of perception that endows others with certain attributes is determined through a wider network of ideological value attribution. Bond's use of the Dummy implies that the object is in fact never endowed with inherent features. Joan's hate towards the Dummy is produced by the manipulation of the state, which defines the Dummy as a hateful foreigner.

## **6.6. Spectatorship**

'TEs invoke the audience's real life socio-psyche processes, so that their dramatized psyche works for itself' (Bond 1998: 331). As Bond regards human subjectivity as a dramatic structure, he argues that the effects of drama derive from stimulating the spectator's subjective reaction. More specifically, the Theatre Event 'helps to teach audiences a new species of subjectivity appropriate to its changed world' (Bond 1998: 298). In Bond's plays, when characters are confronted with extreme moments when a just act is required, the undecidability of the decision by no means prevents the decision from being made. It is at such moments that the 'gap' between actor, character, and spectator is disclosed and spectators are required to respond to the decision.

By invoking the inner potential of the spectator to mediate the process of tragic experience, Bond refuses to provide any external solution to the paradox of humanity delineated in his plays or any simplified utopian blueprint to replace the dystopian worldview. For Bond, the paradox of the imperative imposed upon a soldier to kill other human beings can only be solved by a world where there are no soldiers (2000b: 81). For Bond, the administration of injustice cannot be altered merely by changing the



structure of administration, which will turn out to be another system of injustice – the establishment of justice can only be possible when every individual is aware of the conflict between radical innocence and unjust reality.

The production of *Coffee* in Paris in 2000 aroused fierce debates among the spectators. According to the third issue of *frictions*, a French theatre journal, during the run of 40 performances, 28 to 30 percent of the spectators left the theatre because of the massacre scene. Responding to this phenomenon, Françon explains that the power of *Coffee* does not derive from the horror of the massacre but from the way Bond connects atrocious violence with a banal gesture of spilling and drinking coffee (2000: 16). Françon argues that the reaction of the spectators who leave represents a way of survival by ‘escaping into the ruins’ instead of confronting extreme situations (18). As Helen Freshwater points out, the audience is not a unified community but a collective composed of differences – even the experience of the individual spectator during the performance may consist of a variety of reactions (6). She also proposes that theatre makers’ suspicion towards audiences results from a belief that audiences may not necessarily receive and appreciate what the performance tries to deliver (55). In this light, although Françon proposes his explanation as to why the spectators leave the theatre midway through the performance, it is impossible to have a definite answer. Even those who stay for the whole performance may not necessarily react to the play as expected by Bond or Françon. As Marie-José Mondzain observes, Françon’s representations do not refrain from shocking the audience, neither do they end up with hopelessness. Rather, because of ‘a kind of uncertainty and indetermination within the representation’, audiences are troubled and are forced to reflect on their reactions (Françon and Tuailon 20).

## **6.7. Conclusion**

In this chapter, I argued that Bond’s theory of theatre can be regarded as post-Brechtian by analyzing how this theory is based on his theory of

subjectivity, and how this theory of theatre can be realized through performances. Although Bond proposes a variety of concepts, all of these different ideas address the problem of theatrically exposing both the essence of the subject and the basis of ideology as a gap. Since Bond's theory of subjectivity suggests that both the subject and society are founded on 'Nothingness' as a gap, the performance of his plays must keep the openness of the gap. Through performance analysis, I explained how directors and actors are able to achieve this openness through the actor's body, control of emotions, and use of objects. I also argued that, in Bond's theatre, experiences of shock and unexpectedness produced by the 'gap' are important for the spectator since these experiences can further invite the spectator to respond to and reflect on the meaning of the performance.

## Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, I have examined the later Bond through three perspectives: his theory of subjectivity, the dramaturgy of his later plays, and how these plays have been produced and performed. The importance of Bond's theory of subjectivity resides in the fact that it is pivotal in determining the dramaturgy of his later plays and the theatricalization of these plays. In Chapter One, I argued that Bond's development of theory should be reconsidered both as his response to Brecht's theory and as his reflection on the human condition in the post-Cold War new world order. Although during the 1970s and early 1980s Bond tended to define the subject as the product of social and economic relations like Brecht did, from the late 1980s, Bond started to articulate a theory of subjectivity defined through the psyche as well as its relation to society. For Bond, in a consumer society in the neoliberal era, appealing to specific political ideals such as socialism or endorsing any form of revolution seems inadequate and naïve – what is more important is to reveal how the subject is socialized and ideologized and how to interrupt this seemingly natural process. In order to account for the process of subjectivation and the possibility of de-subjectivation and re-subjectivation, Bond proposes the idea of 'radical innocence' – arguably the most important idea in his later theory – by examining the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard in a Nazi camp. I pointed out that Bond's theory of subjectivity can be regarded not only as a response to neoliberalist capitalism but also as a response to the problem of the status of the subject in the post-Auschwitz era. I also demonstrated how Bond's new conception of the subject distinguishes the early Bond from the later Bond by examining his relation to Brecht in terms of theory, dramaturgy, and his evolving dramaturgy of the Holocaust.

Moreover, I have drawn on Adorno, Levinas, and Agamben to demonstrate the significance of the later Bond in terms of aesthetics, ethics, and biopolitics. Bond's theory follows Adorno's argument that late capitalism and the Holocaust share the same logic of identity thinking

involved in instrumental rationality. Since the structural violence, exemplified through the camp and neoliberal capitalism, reduces individuals to disposable entities, Adorno argues that the individual is liquidated after Auschwitz. In biopolitical terms, the individual is reduced to the status of bare life. Despite the liquidation of the individual, the concept of the subject cannot be abandoned but reconceived. In this sense, Levinas's ethics that questions the primacy of the ego and foregrounds the superiority of the other provides us with useful theoretical resources to engage in the reconception of the subject. Furthermore, both Adorno and Levinas contend that subjectivity and ethics cannot be dissociated from aesthetics – that is, artworks always presuppose an ethical stance of the subject towards the other and the world. Therefore, reconceiving the structure of the post-Auschwitz subject necessitates re-envisioning the aesthetic representation of subjectivity and its ethical implications. On the whole, I suggested that what concerns Bond in his later plays is how to keep dramatizing the post-Auschwitz liquidated subject as bare life in order to explore the possibility of the subject's agency and responsibility in the post-Auschwitz neoliberalist era.

Based on the arguments proposed in Chapter One, I critically explicated Bond's theory of subjectivity in Chapter Two. I clarified Bond's concept of 'radical innocence' as the existential imperative to seek justice by exploring its relation to Kant's moral philosophy and the inevitable aporias involved in the concept of justice. Following the analysis of radical innocence, I proposed that Bond's theory of subjectivity consists of two models: the developmental model and the structural model. The developmental model illustrates the process of subject formation while the structural model explains the interaction between reason and imagination within the subject. The aim of Bond's theory is to comprehend the cause of the subject, which conditions the process of subjectivation and the possibility of re-subjectivation. For Bond, the cause of the subject is a void – that is, although the process of socialization experienced by the subject is determined by ideology, the subject still retains the potential to suspend and question the ostensibly natural ideological order of the world. The subject's

potential to ‘re-subjectivate’ can be best demonstrated in extreme situations of ethical decision-making. I explored *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century* and *Have I None* to demonstrate how Bond dramatizes his theory of subjectivity and how the dramatization ineluctably involves ethical moments of undecidability. In *The Crime of the Twenty-First Century*, the act of justice is realized through Sweden’s homicide, whereas, in *Have I None*, the act of justice is demonstrated through Sara’s suicide. In fact, these dramatizations do not so much determine what acts of justice entail as explore the conditions that render acts of justice impossible. Although Bond advocates the power of radical innocence as the faculty to resist complete ideologization, in his plays he reveals both its potential and how it is still limited by objective conditions.

Following the analysis of Bond’s theory of subjectivity, in Chapter Three I discussed the ethics and aesthetics of Bond’s post-Auschwitz dramaturgy. By referring to Adorno’s and Levinas’s thinking about post-Auschwitz aesthetics and ethics, I argued that Bond’s post-Auschwitz dramaturgy can be epitomized in the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard in the sense that both episodes not only reveal the process of de-subjectivation and re-subjectivation in extreme situations of decision-making but also aesthetically retain the aporetic nature of the dilemmas without removing the ethical complexities and nuances. This dramaturgy can be described as ‘post-Auschwitz’ because it responds both to Adorno’s demand that post-Auschwitz artworks should keep the expressive power of the non-identical and to Levinas’s claim that post-Auschwitz artworks must retain the traces of the proximity to the other. Based on this post-Auschwitz dramaturgical model, I analyzed *Coffee* and *Born*, both of which include references to the Holocaust. However, what concerns Bond is not the accuracy of historical references but the preservation of the expressive power of the non-identical. In *Coffee*, Bond dramatizes a series of moments wherein Nold is forced to decide how to treat the other – these are moments in which the ethical relationality of Levinasian face-to-face encounters confronts social norms defined by authority and ideology. In *Born*, Bond focuses on Luke’s encounter with the

Woman, a *Muselmann*, and the impossibility of bearing witness to what the *Muselmann* experiences. In both plays, instead of faithfully representing historical events related to the Holocaust, Bond's post-Auschwitz dramaturgy is demonstrated through the way he scrutinizes the ethical grey zone involved in extreme situations epitomized at Auschwitz.

In addition to the model of post-Auschwitz dramaturgy, in Chapter Four, I examined the later Bond through the idea of trauma-tragedy. I argued that Bond's dramaturgy of tragedy derives from the concept of 'the Tragic', which he deploys in his theory of subjectivity. According to Bond's theory, 'the Tragic' and 'the Comic' are the ideas used by the core self to interact with the external world. Moreover, 'the Tragic' is also the idea that associates with the neonate's experiences of pain and the socialized self's imaginative ability to dramatize tragedy. I also contend that, in order to expose the complexities of Bond's conception of tragedy, it is necessary to delve into the concept of trauma. By spelling out how three dimensions of trauma – ontological, historical, and structural – operate in Bond's theory of subjectivity in relation to tragedy, I proposed that Bond's trauma-tragedy revolves around three essential concepts – justice, truth, and madness. According to Bond, the subject is ontologically traumatized by 'Nothingness', a site wherein the subject experiences the process of subjectivation that involves the seeking of justice, truth, and sanity. In Bond's tragedy, 'Nothingness' can be invoked through historical trauma events or through traumatizing structures. The subject's encounter with Nothingness makes it possible to engage with traumatic events and structures by examining the subject's search for a redistribution of meanings around the ideas of justice, truth, and madness. In *Chair*, Bond imagines a totalitarian state where the state of exception has become the norm and constituted a permanent anxiety-inducing traumatizing structure, which is made tangible by Alice's suicide and Billy's death. I argued that, in *Chair*, Bond demonstrates that freedom and justice can be imagined only through suspending the violence of political order and foregrounding the ethical dimension of human life. In *People*, Bond analyzes different types of traumatized subjectivity and probes how the search of 'truth' can be an

event of re-subjectivation. I argued that, in Bondian tragedy, truth is not determined by objective facts, but it designates a subjective event in which the traumatized subject interrogates the conditions of truth and learns to accept the truth even though this process can be difficult or even futile. In *Dea*, Bond examines the divide between sanity and insanity and situates his analysis within the context of the ‘War on Terror’ by adapting Euripides’s *Medea* and *The Bacchae*. Bond exposes the instability of the divide between reason and madness by demonstrating the paranoiac nature of rational order and interrogating the subjectivity of the soldiers who fight in the ‘War on Terror’. Bond also explores the aspect of rationality embedded in madness by delineating Dea’s physical and mental journey. I suggested that, in this play, Bond indicates that the foundation of rationality resides in the exclusion of madness, and, through the traumatized Dea, Bond questions the traumatizing effects of the order of rationality and upholds the imaginative power of madness that evinces the possibility of conceiving an alternative order of rationality.

In Chapter Five, I focused on Bond’s TIE plays, which constitute a major part of Bond’s later plays. I argued that, for Bond, education in theatre as an ethical experience can be made possible through a dramaturgy of approaching otherness. Specifically, I used three concepts – storyability, spectrality, and hospitality – to analyze Bond’s dramaturgy of otherness in his TIE plays. In *At the Inland Sea* and *The Angry Roads*, Bond foregrounds the importance of storyability – the self’s ability to tell stories and the possibility of stories being told – for the subject to approach the other. Storytelling is not an act of self-affirmation but an ethical experience in which the relation between self and other can be imagined and constructed. In *The Hungry Bowl* and *A Window*, Bond uses the spectre to disturb the seemingly untroubled reality and compels the characters to address their inner desire and wider social problems. The spectre that appears as ‘the other’ always disquiets the self and puts the self into a state of crisis, which can result in rebirth or self-destruction. In *The Under Room* and *The Edge*, through dramatizing encounters with the foreigner and stranger, Bond interrogates the limits and conditions of hospitality. Throughout this chapter,

I argued that the dramaturgy of Bond's TIE plays presupposes that the possibility of ethical learning is based on the experience of otherness in which the relationship between self and other can be reimagined.

In Chapter Six, I analyzed Bond's theory of theatre, which is based on his theory of subjectivity, and how this theory of theatre can be realized through performances. I proposed that, although Bond proposes a variety of concepts such as the Theatre Event, the site, the centre, the gap, accident time, and the Invisible Object, all of these ideas aim to explain how to expose both the nature of the subject and the foundation of ideology as a gap. Since Bond's theory of subjectivity presupposes that both the subject and society are founded on 'Nothingness', indicating that the subject and society are changeable, the staging of his plays must retain the ambiguity of implied dramaturgical gaps. Through performance analysis, I explained how directors and actors achieve this ambiguity by demonstrating the structure of subjectivity through physical embodiment, control of emotions, and use of objects. I also contended that, based on these theatrical devices, the implied spectatorship in Bondian theatre often involves experiences of shock and unexpectedness produced by the 'gap', through which the spectator is invited to actively respond to and reflect on the meaning of the performance.

On the basis of the findings summarized above, I maintain that this thesis contributes to Bondian scholarship in five ways. First, this thesis is the first thorough attempt to investigate Bond's later theory of subjectivity and explicate how this theory is pivotal in determining the dramaturgy of Bond's later plays and how these plays should be performed. Although there have been academic attempts to formulate Bond's later theory, they tend to reformulate Bond's ideas without critically contextualizing and problematizing these ideas.<sup>44</sup> In contrast, in this thesis, I contextualize Bond's theoretical development historically within the post-Cold War era and theoretically within the post-Auschwitz philosophy of ethics and aesthetics. In addition, I problematize the ambiguities and aporias involved

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<sup>44</sup> See Allen David and Agata Handley's "'Being Human': Edward Bond's Theories of Drama' (2017) and Bill Roper's 'Imagination and Self in Edward Bond's Work' (2005).



in Bond's theory and argue that, intriguingly, these aporias constitute the basis for Bond's dramaturgy. Second, based on Bond's explication of the Palermo improvisation and the story of the Russian guard, this thesis is the first attempt to theorize Bond's concept of 'post-Auschwitz drama' in relation to his theory of subjectivity. I argue that this theorization not only explains the dramaturgical logic of plays that directly refer to the Holocaust like *Coffee* and *Born* but also clarifies why plays that do not include references to the Holocaust can be described as 'post-Auschwitz'. Third, this thesis is the first to chart the structure of Bondian trauma-tragedy. I develop Bond's theory of tragedy from his theory of subjectivity – especially the concept of 'the Tragic' – and incorporate the idea of trauma within my analysis. Additionally, I propose that justice, truth, and madness are three pivotal concepts that support the structure of Bondian trauma-tragedy. Fourth, this thesis delineates the theoretical foundation of the educational aspect of the later Bond by analyzing Bond's TIE plays in terms of otherness. Fifth, this thesis analyzes Bond's theory of theatre through his theory of subjectivity. Based on archival recordings, live performances, and other documents, I also investigate the productions of Bond's later plays in order to demonstrate how his ideas of subjectivity can be theatricalized and how this theatricalization conditions the implied spectatorship.

Finally, I want to add a few comments on the legacy of the later Bond. In the introduction to *Dea*, Bond states that it is a mistake to create documentary and verbatim theatre because drama is not an imitation of reality but an integral part of it (2016a: viii). Arguably, documentary and verbatim theatre can never be reduced to 'an imitation of reality' because how the materials are assembled, edited, and presented always presupposes ideological and aesthetic frameworks, the complexity of which surpasses the simplified idea of imitation. However, Bond's comment emphasizes that what seems 'fictional' compared to documentary and verbatim theatre in fact cannot be reduced to a 'fiction' unrelated to reality. For Bond, the dichotomy between reality and fiction is problematic because reality is always already established on a fictional foundation. The power of theatre

derives from its function to expose both the fictionality of reality and the potentiality of fiction, and this is also where the force of the later Bond resides.

The most important legacy of the later Bond is his theorization of human subjectivity in relation to drama. In this theory, dramatization is a process in which the human psyche, social reality, and artistic creation converge – drama is a site in which human imagination can suspend, interrogate, and redescribe social reality. In Bond's theatre, dramatic mimesis is not about imitation but about creation – the efforts to create a space in which humanity can be defined and redefined. Bond never defines humanity theoretically since the definition of humanity can only be possible in concrete dramatized situations. According to Agamben, we are still living in a world determined by the biopolitical logic of the camp, and Bond's theory of subjectivity and his later dramaturgy should be situated in this context. While Bond's definition of 'radical innocence' as 'the existential imperative to be in this world' or 'the right to be' is rather ambiguous, we can consider what this 'right' means. Human rights are never self-evident – they are always politically defined and unevenly distributed. Moreover, the political institutions that endow people with human rights can also deprive them of these rights. In this sense, Bond's insistence on 'the right to be' should not be conflated with the idea of human rights – it is a 'right' that cannot be given or deprived legally. This right conditions how we approach the other and is also conditioned by this ethical relationality. This is the point where the most basic form of human subjectivity meets the most basic form of drama – the right to be defines the self-other relationship and is defined by this relationship. It is the exploration of the fundamental relationship between the human subject and drama that constitutes the theoretical and dramaturgical legacy of the later Bond.

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