



مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط

مجلة علمية مُدكَّمة
(مُعتمدة) شهرياً

العدد الثاني والتسعون
(أكتوبر 2023)

السنة التاسعة والأربعون
تأسست عام 1974

الترقيم الدولي: (2536-9504)
الترقيم على الإنترنت: (2735-5233)



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مركز بحوث
الشرق الأوسط



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رقم الإيداع بدار الكتب والوثائق القومية : ٢٤٣٣٠ / ٢٠١٦

الترقيم الدولي: (Issn :2536 - 9504)

الترقيم على الإنترنت: (Online Issn :2735 - 5233)



مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط

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- تنشر الأعداد تبعاً على موقع دار المنظومة.



العدد الثاني والتسعون - أكتوبر ٢٠٢٣

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السنة التاسعة والأربعون - تأسست عام 1974



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والدراسات المستقبلية - جامعة عين شمس

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تنفيذ الغلاف والتجهيز والإخراج الفني للمجلة

وحدة الدعم الفني

تدقيق ومراجعة لغوية

د. هند رافت عبد الفتاح

تصميم الغلاف أ/ أحمد محسن - مطبعة الجامعة

ترجمة (المراسلات الخاصة) بالمجلة (إلى): د. حاتم العبد، رئيس التحرير merc.director@asu.edu.eg

• وسائل التواصل: البريد الإلكتروني للمجلة: technical.support.mercj2022@gmail.com

البريد الإلكتروني لوحدة النشر: merc.pub@asu.edu.eg

جامعة عين شمس - شارع الخليفة المأمون - العباسية - القاهرة، جمهورية مصر العربية، ص.ب: 11566

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الرؤية

السعي لتحقيق الريادة في النشر العلمي المتميز في المحتوى والمضمون والتأثير والمرجعية في مجالات منطقة الشرق الأوسط وأقطاره .

الرسالة

نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والرصينة والمبتكرة في مجالات الشرق الأوسط وأقطاره في مجالات اختصاص المجلة وفق المعايير والقواعد المهنية العالمية المعمول بها في المجالات المُحكَّمة دولياً.

الأهداف

- نشر البحوث العلمية الأصيلة والرصينة والمبتكرة .
- إتاحة المجال أمام العلماء والباحثين في مجالات اختصاص المجلة في التاريخ والجغرافيا والسياسة والاقتصاد والاجتماع والقانون وعلم النفس واللغة العربية وآدابها واللغة الانجليزية وآدابها ، على المستوى المحلى والإقليمي والعالمي لنشر بحوثهم وإنتاجهم العلمي .
- نشر أبحاث كبار الأساتذة وأبحاث الترقية للسادة الأساتذة المساعدين والسادة المدرسين بمختلف الجامعات المصرية والعربية والأجنبية .
- تشجيع ونشر مختلف البحوث المتعلقة بالدراسات المستقبلية والشرق الأوسط وأقطاره .
- الإسهام في تنمية مجتمع المعرفة في مجالات اختصاص المجلة من خلال نشر البحوث العلمية الرصينة والتميزة .



مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط

- رئيس التحرير د. حاتم العبد

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- ومقرر لجنة الترقيات بالمجلس الأعلى للجامعات - مصر
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- الهيئة الاستشارية العربية والدولية وفقاً للترتيب الهجائي:

- أ.د. إبراهيم خليل العلاف جامعة الموصل- العراق
- أ.د. إبراهيم محمد بن حمد المزيني كلية العلوم الاجتماعية - جامعة الإمام محمد بن سعود الإسلامية- السعودية
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- أ.د. عبد الله حميد العتابي جامعة الملك سعود- السعودية
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- *Prof. Ulrike Freitag* Institute of Islamic Studies, Belil Frie University, Germany

شروط النشر بالمجلة

- تُعنى المجلة بنشر البحوث المهمة بمجالات العلوم الإنسانية والأدبية ؛
- يعتمد النشر على رأي اثنين من المحكمين المتخصصين ويتم التحكيم إلكترونياً ؛
- تقبل البحوث باللغة العربية أو بإحدى اللغات الأجنبية، وترسل إلى موقع المجلة على بنك المعرفة المصري ويرفق مع البحث ملف بيانات الباحث يحتوي على عنوان البحث باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية واسم الباحث والتايتل والانتماء المؤسسي باللغتين العربية والإنجليزية، ورقم واتساب، وإيميل الباحث الذي تم التسجيل به على موقع المجلة ؛
- يشار إلى أن الهوامش والمراجع في نهاية البحث وليست أسفل الصفحة ؛
- يكتب الباحث ملخص باللغة العربية واللغة الإنجليزية للبحث صفحة واحدة فقط لكل ملخص ؛
- بالنسبة للبحث باللغة العربية يكتب على برنامج "word" ونمط الخط باللغة العربية "Simplified Arabic" وحجم الخط 14 ولا يزيد عدد الأسطر في الصفحة الواحدة عن 25 سطر والهوامش والمراجع خط Simplified Arabic حجم الخط 12 ؛
- بالنسبة للبحث باللغة الإنجليزية يكتب على برنامج word ونمط الخط Times New Roman وحجم الخط 13 ولا يزيد عدد الأسطر عن 25 سطر في الصفحة الواحدة والهوامش والمراجع خط Times New Roman حجم الخط 11 ؛
- (Paper) مقياس الورق (B5) 17.6 × 25 سم، (Margins) الهوامش 2.3 سم يمينًا ويسارًا، 2 سم أعلى وأسفل الصفحة، ليصبح مقياس البحث فعلي (الكلام) 13×21 سم. (Layout) والنسق: (Header) الرأس 1.25 سم، (Footer) تذييل 2.5 سم ؛
- مواصفات الفقرة للبحث : بداية الفقرة First Line = 1.27 سم، قبل النص = 0.00، بعد النص = 0.00، تباعد قبل الفقرة = 6pt (تباع بعد الفقرة = 0pt)، تباعد الفقرات (مفرد single) ؛
- مواصفات الفقرة للهوامش والمراجع : يوضع الرقم بين قوسين هلاكي مثل : (1)، بداية الفقرة Hanging = 0.6 سم، قبل النص = 0.00، بعد النص = 0.00، تباعد قبل الفقرة = 0.00، تباعد بعد الفقرة = 0.00، تباعد الفقرات (مفرد single) ؛
- الجداول والأشكال: يتم وضع الجداول والأشكال إما في صفحات منفصلة أو وسط النص وفقًا لرؤية الباحث، على أن يكون عرض الجدول أو الشكل لا يزيد عن 13.5 سم بأي حال من الأحوال ؛
- يتم التحقق من صحة الإملاء على مسئولية الباحث لتفادي الأخطاء في المصطلحات الفنية ؛
- مدة التحكيم 15 يوم على الأكثر، مدة تعديل البحث بعد التحكيم 15 يوم على الأكثر ؛
- يخضع تسلسل نشر البحوث في أعداد المجلة حسب ما تراه هيئة التحرير من ضرورات علمية وفنية ؛
- المجلة غير ملزمة بإعادة البحوث إلى أصحابها سواء نشرت أم لم تنشر ؛
- تعتبر البحوث عن آراء أصحابها وليس عن رأي رئيس التحرير وهيئة التحرير ؛
- رسوم التحكيم للمصريين 650 جنيه، ولغير المصريين 155 دولار ؛
- رسوم النشر للصفحة الواحدة للمصريين 25 جنيه، وغير المصريين 12 دولار ؛
- الباحث المصري يسدد الرسوم بالجنيه المصري (بالفيزا) بمقر المركز (المقيم بالقاهرة)، أو على حساب حكومي رقم : (9/450/80772/8) بنك مصر (المقيم خارج القاهرة) ؛
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- استلام إفادة قبول نشر البحث في خلال 15 يوم من تاريخ سداد رسوم النشر مع ضرورة رفع إيصالات السداد على موقع المجلة ؛
- المراسلات : توجه المراسلات الخاصة بالمجلة إلى: merc.director@asu.edu.eg
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يسر مركز بحوث الشرق الأوسط والدراسات المستقبلية صدور العدد (92 - أكتوبر 2023) من مجلة المركز « مجلة بحوث الشرق الأوسط ». هذه المجلة العريقة التي مر على صدورها حوالي 49 عامًا في خدمة البحث العلمي، ويصدر هذا العدد وهو يحمل بين دافتيه عدة دراسات متخصصة: (دراسات قانونية، دراسات تاريخية، دراسات اقتصادية، دراسات إعلامية ، دراسات لغوية) ويعد البحث العلمي **Scientific Research** حجر الزاوية والركيزة الأساسية في الارتقاء بالمجتمعات لكي تكون في مصاف الدول المتقدمة.

ولذا تُعتبر الجامعات أن البحث العلمي من أهم أولوياتها لكي تقود مسيرة التطوير والتحديث عن طريق البحث العلمي في المجالات كافة.

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والله من وراء القصد

رئيس التحرير

د. حاتم العبد

الدراسات الإعلامية

MEDIA STUDIES

**Edward Bond's Lear:
A Phenomenological Reading**

**مسرحية «ليار» لإدوارد بوند
«قراءة من المنظور الظاهري»**

**Sarah Seif-eldin Ali Attia
Assistant lecturer, Faculty of Arts
Ain Shams University**

**سارة سيف الدين علي عطية
مدرس مساعد بقسم اللغة الإنجليزية وآدابها
كلية الآداب - جامعة عين شمس**

sarah.seifeldin@art.asu.edu.eg



www.mercj.journals.ekb.eg



المخلص:

تسعى هذه الورقة البحثية إلى دراسة مسرحية إدوارد بوند "لير" (1971) الذي يعيد النظر في مسرحية شكسبير الشهيرة "الملك لير". يستخدم بوند مسرحية شكسبير كأداة لتسليط الضوء على قضية معاصرة مُلحة تتمثل تحديداً في انعزال الإنسان المعاصر عن الطبيعة وعن الأثر النفسي الناتج عن ذلك. قام بوند بتحويل النص ببراعة وبشكل جذري ليحمله يستقر في محيطنا المعاصر بسلاسة. ويرجع ذلك أساساً إلى هوس بوند وعدم ارتياحه للظاهرة الحديثة المتمثلة في الاغتراب عن الطبيعة والاستغلال المفرط للموارد الطبيعية؛ الظاهرة التي يمكن تلخيصها في مصطلح روسزاك "القلق الحضري" الذي أصاب الإنسانية بأسرها. ومن ثم، يعتمد بوند في مسرحيته "لير" أساساً على انتقال الملك لير إلى الريف، وتأثير انغماسه في الطبيعة ومع أناس أبرياء على سلامته النفسية وصقل حكمته ووعيه. كما أنه يلقي الضوء على رحلة لير النفسية والتحول التام في شخصيته من خلال التصالح مع الطبيعة، والتعايش مع جميع المخلوقات بمزيد من التعاطف والتفاهم. وفقاً لذلك، يفسح النص المجال لقراءته وتحليله من منظور علم النفس الإيكولوجي، وبشكل أكثر تحديداً علم الظواهر، مع التدقيق بشكل خاص على التحول الدرامي لير وتطوير عقلية جديدة أو "عقلية الأرض".

**Abstract:**

This paper seeks to examine Edward Bond's adaptation *Lear* (1971) which revisits the Shakespearean canonical text and dwells on pressing contemporary issues. Bond has brilliantly and radically transformed the text to make it settle in our contemporary setting seamlessly. This is mainly due to Bond's obsession with and uneasiness with the modern phenomenon of alienation from nature and overexploitation of natural resources. The consequent and inevitable result can be summed up in Roszak's term "urban angst" which has befallen humanity in its entirety. Hence, Bond's *Lear* builds basically on Lear's displacement to the countryside, and the impact of Lear's bonding with nature and innocent people. It additionally sheds light on Lear's psychological journey and his transformation through reconciliation with nature, and approaching the entire range of creatures with more empathy and understanding. Accordingly, the text lends itself to an ecopsychological, and more specifically a phenomenological, reading focusing specifically on Lear's dramatic transformation and developing a new mindset or an "earthmind".

Keywords: Contemporary drama, ecopsychology, phenomenology, walled-in self, urban angst.



1. Introduction:

The history of western thought has depicted nature as Man's wild mistress and private property which needs to be exploited infinitely to satisfy his needs. In a parallel manner, the west has also celebrated and promoted urbanization and transforming the countryside into massive concrete constructions. Bond tackles the consequences of such catastrophic and destructive thoughts and attitudes towards nature and the biosphere at large which would never attain humanity prosperity and well being. In the postmodern version the tragedy of *King Lear* becomes the tragedy of a lost fragmented man suffering from overindulgence in his authority, power, urbanization, and alienation from nature and more importantly himself. The play underlines Lear's struggle to set himself free from the shackles of modernity and the sense of entrapment within "walled-in selves".

2. Phenomenology: an offshoot of Ecopsychology

Ecopsychology is essentially a holistic approach that draws a link between the earth and the human psyche with the ultimate goal of human-planet well-being. This approach is neither anthropocentric (man-oriented) nor ecocentric (ecologically oriented). Rather, it is considered a discipline betwixt ecology and psychology. As David Abram asserts, ecopsychology conceives of the biosphere as one dynamic system, "a community of animate material agencies" (*Phenomenology*, foreword viii). This means that the "the needs of the earth and the needs of the human individual are interdependent and interconnected" and hence, the road is two way as Sarah Conn affirms (180). She also adds that "human health and sanity must include sustainable and mutually enhancing relations with the natural world" as puts it (180). In fact, modern man's dilemma and neurosis are directly related to man's detachment from nature and the consequent sense of guilt towards mother earth for its exploitation and draining its resources. This is what Theodore Roszak refers to as the "urban angst" in his seminal book *The Voice of the Earth* (1992). Therefore, ecopsychologists maintain that the ulterior motive behind ecopsychology is to heal the mind and earth combined. This can be



accomplished through sustaining preservative praxes in relation to the biocommunity in the most general sense which will in turn relieve both the anguished human psyche and the long suffering earth.

Ecopsychology has recently given rise to a more empirical approach, namely the phenomenological approach, which centres on the subjective experiences and interrelations between man and nature. This approach emphasizes the necessity of experiencing nature by the senses, unviolated by any distraction or mediation. Phenomenologists emphasize the indispensability of developing a personal bond with nature based on intimacy and care, which in turn contributes to psychological growth and inner balance. Bond's *Lear* is a perfect case in point because it showcases the impact of place and the elimination of materialist distractions on Lear's psyche and insight. To conclude, ecopsychological and phenomenological practices call upon humanity to sharpen their consciousness through indulging in a state of harmony with all nature's creatures on earth. This can only be achieved through detaching oneself from the complexities of high-tech communities every now and then to maintain one's psychological and spiritual well-being.

3. Lear from a phenomenological perspective:

The ecopsychological and phenomenological aspect is manifest in the adaptation. A close investigation of the text reveals how Bond utilizes the Shakespearean text as a vehicle to deconstruct and subvert the persistent ideological myth of White man's supremacy over nature and his absolute right to "tame" it. In relation to this, Kaisa Puhakka propounds that it is time to deconstruct the otherness of nature because simply nature and man are part and parcel of one indivisible unit. Thus, this constructed "twoness" needs to be interrogated and undermined for it is the core of the predicament of our present times. As a cure, she invites the reader to develop a unique relationship with nature based on "intimacy and care." She argues that nature is always available to us but we fail to perceive it and interact with it since we are blinded by materialism which leads to "dullardism" or the sensory shutdown. As



a cure, Puhakka suggests phenomenological practices through “an encounter with nature [which] allows the self that is derivative of... culture and technology to unravel and to be metabolized” (3). This direct contact with nature allows for introspective observation and self-realization as opposed to our habit of making nature the object of our constant surveillance and gaze. Such phenomenological experiences allow for overcoming the phenomenon of “dullardism” and the fragmentation of human consciousness. A retreat into nature enables humanity to undergo moments of self-transcendence; and consequently establish an intimate bond with our fellow creatures in the biocommunity.

4. Lear and deconstructing the stereotypical representations of Nature

The long course of Western thought reveals how nature's value is acknowledged only in terms of its benefit to humanity in a pure anthropocentric vein. Nature is constantly being exploited and tamed to suit Man's purposes and greed. Hence, those constructed binaries (Man/Nature and Culture/Nature) are undermined and deconstructed through establishing a new relationship between Lear and the countryside. If the Shakespearean source delineates the “heath” as a hostile place in which the king seeks refuge, yet suffers the unbearable storm and goes mad, one encounters a thoroughly different representation of nature in the postmodern version. In other words, the countryside is the only safe refuge which contains him and helps him develop and heal psychologically upon his unconditional immersion in nature.

In Bond's play, Lear becomes a king with two daughters only: Bodice and Fontanelle. From the outset of the play, he is delineated as an obsessed maniac with a bent to build a wall to secure his country against any possible threat. He enslaves his people and imports them from the countryside to fulfill his project in spite of everybody's objection, including his own daughters. Frustrated with his obstinacy, his daughters marry his enemies, Dukes of North and Cornwall, and plot a coup to overthrow him. Hence, Lear is left no option but to flee



to the countryside to escape death. There, he encounters the Gravedigger's boy and his wife Cordelia, who provide him with food and shelter. In the village, Lear undergoes a transformation journey which is juxtaposed to his daughters' transformation to grotesque monsters. Ironically, the daughters inherit the obsession of building the wall, apparently a curse that haunts whoever is in power. Towards the end, Lear decides to correct all the wrongs he has done, despite his suffering, till he eventually dies. The play probes "the postmodern condition" as it tackles deep philosophical issues pertaining to man's savage exploitation of everything: power, family, workers, and nature, ironically to aggravate his misery and his deep-seated feelings of regret and guilt resulting from alienation from nature and from our fellow beings.

Lear's tragic flaw is latent in being a dictator who clings to his plan hard and fast to the extent of becoming thoroughly blinded with it. From the very beginning he is depicted as a coercive maniac who simply crushes anybody who opposes his "nationalistic enterprise" or obstructs his future "vision". Hence, the conventional representation of Lear as the archetypal old father wronged by his ungrateful daughters does not fit the bill in the 1970s version. Lear is not the cathartic tragic hero who invites pity and fear in the Aristotelian sense. Rather, he is a modern protagonist who needs to bear his cross to redeem all the injustices and servitude he has imposed on his people, even those in his inner circle. Nobody can save Lear except himself, and he will never attain salvation unless he bears responsibility for what he has done.

The heath is depicted as the place where King Lear experiences his break point and loses his mental sanity for good. In Bond's adaptation, the place where the king escapes death gains a new dimension and new nuances. After his defeat in the civil war, Lear is spared nothing but his sheer existence in the heart of the wilderness. This is a moment when Lear is put to the test and the major challenge he faces is to save himself not from any other enemy but himself. He goes through the experience and defies himself and fights his fears with all the resilience and determination in the world. He seeks to amend all



the distortion his megalomaniac disposition has previously caused. Thence, he gets a chance to explore the world and the reality about his existence and his responsibilities from an entirely different perspective. He lives a unique and authentic experience of integrating with himself, his very soul and the surrounding universe.

Consequently, when the Shakespearean heath travels to the postmodern world, it becomes more sophisticated and multidimensional. The relationship between the suffering king/father and the space is entirely subverted and reconstructed anew. The heath becomes the village that “contains” Lear and heals all his wounds; the physical and psychological. It becomes the psychiatrist that offers him the required therapy and guides him through the way till he is finally “restored to his senses” through developing an unbreakable bond of intimacy and care. Hence, Bond’s personal signature in the adaptation is best demonstrated in his deconstruction of the stereotypical representation of nature as a scary, subservient, and passive entity that is totally indifferent to man’s suffering, if not aggravating it. The newly born relationship between Lear and his natural surroundings reveals how deconstruction and Ecopsychology interrelate in perfect harmony as exemplified in Lear’s case.

In the capital city, the audience clearly observes that King Lear is a ruthless tyrant, an absolute dictator who acts according to his whims. He never listens to any voice but his own, and would never tolerate opposition or different opinions. The very first scene in the play takes place in a construction site where “the wall” is being built. It is worth noting that the wall here represents a pivotal and extended symbol. It is not just a prop or gap filler. On the contrary, it is crucial and bears emblematic relations. It is a place where time, effort and money are consumed, and unfortunately for a lame purpose.

The site is muddy and foul smelled. It is crammed with “A stack of building materials – shovels, picks, posts and a tarpaulin” (Bond 1), and it is associated with a multiplicity of negative connotations. The workers are displaced from their fields in the village to serve in the mandatory task of setting up this wall. Lear’s daughters keep



complaining about the water submerging the ground and they feel irritated after spending just a few minutes. Later on, the scene is further distorted when Lear insists in a frantic megalomaniac manner to shoot an innocent worker just because he killed a colleague by accident in spite of everybody's pleas to spare him his life. The daughters clarify that the setting has impacted Lear's decision and that he is not in a stable state of mind:

Thus, from the very beginning, Lear is delineated as a ruthless tyrant who is willing to spill innocent people's blood to project himself as a strict and fearsome ruler. He makes this show to instill fear in everybody's hearts. He reacts in a fanatic manner and vents his fury through shooting the worker. When the firing squad abstains from fulfilling his order, he keeps screaming "I must be obeyed... My orders are not little matters!" (*Lear* 6); and he eventually grabs a pistol and shoots the worker himself.

Lear's megalomania and his authoritative attitude and playing the archetypal role of the protective father can be detected in this speech:

I gave my life to these people... When I'm dead my people will live in freedom and peace and remember my name, no – venerate it!... They are *my sheep* and if one of them is lost I'd take fire to hell to bring him out. I loved and cared for all my children, and now you've sold them to their enemies. (7; emphasis added)

These lines show how Lear rests heavily on ideological discourse to maintain his hegemony over his people. He exaggerates his grandeur and superiority while simultaneously asserting the vulnerability and helplessness of his people; his "sheep" and "children" as he refers to them. This is of paramount importance as he projects himself the patriarchal model and the doting father who is responsible for his children's protection and well-fare. Hence, his right to be "obeyed" and "venerated" is taken for granted.



His tyranny is explicit when he orders his men to import more manpower from the village to consummate the constructing process. Warrington shockingly tells him that's impossible because "the countryside would be left derelict and there'd be starvation in the towns" (*Lear* 2).

The Gravedigger's Boy, ironically and not knowing that he is talking to the king himself, narrates to Lear how he abstained from going to the work camps to avoid humiliation and oppression:

Boy. The king was mad. He took all the men from this village. But I hid. They'd worked with their hands all their lives but when they started on the wall their hands bled for a week... You died of work or they shot you for not working. There was a disease ... '*Wall death*'. Their feet used to swell with the mud. The stink of it even when you were asleep! Living in a grave!" (25; emphasis added).

Therefore, the wall becomes nothing but the ghost of death haunting the entire village.

5. Modern man and the dilemma of "a walled-in self":

Lear's attachment to the wall is very intriguing from the outset of the play. He is dealing with it as a national enterprise with compulsive disorder: "I'm not free to be kind or merciful. I must build the fortress" (*Lear* 5). Throughout Scene One, Lear is fanatically lecturing everybody about the greatness of the wall and that he will always be remembered for building it. Paradoxically, the wall has converted the country into a waste land where people are trapped, manipulated and even lose their lives. Rather than being the icon of political stability and future prosperity, it becomes a tangible evidence of absolute sabotage and tyranny.

On another level, the wall becomes an epitome of modern man's "urban angst" symptomatic in the tendency for isolation and detachment from the rest of the world. It further reflects the ever-present menace and fear of the unknown. Marla Morris argues that "Buildings serve mostly to cut us off from the outside world - as if there are two worlds – one inside buildings and the other outside buildings"



(162). This renders an accurate description of the situation in the play. Through building this wall and coercing his people, Lear experiences an inner fissure resulting from his estrangement from the entire world. He manages to do one thing: developing phobic relations with all the creatures in his world instead of living in symbiosis and peace. Hence, he develops what Castrillón refers to as the syndrome of the “walled-in self” (5). This same tendency for isolation is further echoed in Cordelia’s words, a simple country girl married to the Gravedigger’s Boy. She is so anxious and feels threatened by anybody who approaches their life that her husband states that, “she’d like to put a fence around us and shut everyone else out” (*Lear* 26). Simply put, planet earth is our only home. It is where we originally and forever belong. Hence, cutting ourselves off it and pretending that our ultimate happiness, security and welfare are inherent in urbanization is far from being plausible.

In Act One, Scene Five, the setting shifts to the woods for the first time where one witnesses “a bare stage” and a minimalist setting. Lear is forced to go there after his defeat in the civil war. This is the threshold of Lear’s transformation afterwards as new traits start to surface and new life lessons start to be assimilated. The impact of nature on our psychological maturity is articulated by Tucker as he asserts that “[l]earning about nature in the field ... takes us back to the primal connections that we have forgotten in our embrace of the built, technological environment. It is often in our relationship with the nonhuman that we find our deepest humanness” (103). Therefore Lear’s move to the “heath” or the village represents a turning point in his life where he starts to delve deep in his psyche to discover his “authentic” identity and the purpose of his existence.

This step represents Lear’s rite of passage or the “pre-liminal phase”. It is true that Lear’s presence in the natural space has never been a deliberate choice. However, it bears its indelible imprint on his psyche for good. John Davis in his notable article “Wilderness Rites of Passage: Healing, Growth, Initiation” comments on the rite of passage and its impact on psychological healing and growth. He asserts that “Every rite of passage, whether undertaken consciously or stumbled



into, mirrors the universal quest". Such quest represents pursuing one's "unique medicine, power, or potential," and it basically depends on "a solitary trial after which a gift is won, and it culminates in sharing that gift through one's life." Therefore, the psychological healing and the newly acquired vision about self and the world are Lear's true "gift". It is what he "needs in order to carry on [his] life journey, and what [his] people need to thrive". Lear takes on a life transition course and dedicates the rest of his life to selfless endeavours in his attempt to rid his people of his legacy of tyranny incarnated in Bodice and Fontanelle.

When Lear makes it to the village, he is drained and starving. He is deprived not only of extravagant luxuries but also his basic needs. He finds nothing to eat except a few pieces of bread on the ground which he eagerly picks up. In that moment, he undergoes the experience of introspective contemplation, a state described by Puhakka as the natural outcome of connecting directly with the universe. Lear now realizes his tragic situation and the drastic shift in his fortune after his daughters have abandoned him, and after he has lost all the worldly possessions: he robustly says:

My daughters have taken the bread from my stomach. They grind it with my tears ... and eat. The night is a black cloth on their table and the stars are crumbs, and I am a famished dog that sits on the earth and howls. I open my mouth and they place an old coin on my tongue. They lock the door of my coffin and tell me to die. (17)

Lear acknowledges his solitude and vulnerability, and that he is not "venerated" for his past "heroic" deeds. He realizes that his grave is the only thing that awaits him, and that death is the ultimate truth. It is apparent that the analogy is thoroughly derived from nature and it portrays a vivid tableau to reflect Lear's agony and disappointment. At this moment, his consciousness is intricately enmeshed with the natural surroundings and consequently he perceives the sky, the stars, and the earth as witnesses to his grief and desolation. Laura Mitchel refers to this moment as one of developing an "earthmind" through "firsthand immersion within earth processes and the ecological imagination." The outcome of enjoying this earthmind, Mitchel emphasizes, is a kind of



“ecological wiring, which attunes us to our kinship with all life-forms” (Mitchel 109). Hence, and for the first time, Lear “rediscovers a universe of living beings intimately related” (Gray 226) which represents a major step in his rite of passage and his vision quest. He is now aware that he is a humble creature, a part of a massive whole, not the arrogant king encountered in the first scene. The natural surroundings are no longer out there to fill a vacuum; rather they are part and parcel of his very existence. All are interconnected.

The Gravedigger’s Boy is the substitute of Shakespeare’s wise fool. The recipient recognizes the Boy’s amiable and empathic qualities instantly. Lear asks him for anything to eat and apologizes for not having the money, and he assures him that he is glad to help. The way he seeks to help everybody without speculation or hesitation shows him as a devout follower of the ethics of intimacy and care towards the entire range of beings. The Boy’s place conveys intense feelings of cosiness and simplicity. It is a modest wooden house with a well and a bench in its front yard. Lear and the boy sit on the ground and start to engage in a casual talk. This is the first moment of peace and tranquillity Lear witnesses together with the audience. Hysterical conflicts and pervasive sadism are suspended for a while. A tension-free pace is restored and maintained. The Boy narrates his life stories and how he passionately and independently initiated this house and his farming career rather than digging graves like his father. This way he has shifted from the realm of death to the realm of life and vivacity:

BOY. When [my father] died I found this place and started to dig his grave. And when I got down I struck a well. I thought, there’s water here and some land, why do I want to dig graves all my life? So I live here and built this farm. (*Lear* 18)

The simple and authentic tone of his words render his story exceptionally impressive and touching. It further plays a pivotal role as it shows deep gratitude and appreciation of things that might seem normal or commonplace. Fresh water and a tiny piece of land mean “the world to him”. His deep and immersive existence in nature makes his



life very special. He has a loving wife and they are expecting a child soon. Thus, there seems to be no menace whatsoever in this rural space except for the presence of Lear himself! It is noteworthy that this Boy and the place he inhabits are the primary catalyst in Lear's transformation.

Lear realizes the deep cliff between the fake and politicized urban life in contrast to the smooth country life after just one day. In this liminal space he discovers new nuances to his existence and he is startled by the discovery. As a result, he immediately sets an alternative plan to start a new journey and leave the past behind.

LEAR. I could have a new life here. I could forget all the things that frighten me – the years I've wasted, my enemies, my anger, my mistakes... I'm tormented by regrets – I must forget it all, throw it away! Let me live here and work for you. (25)

He admits committing his past crimes with feelings of guilt and remorse, and he shows a sincere determination to change it all. His words are not merely driven by the spur of the moment. Yet, his forthcoming actions prove the authenticity of his inner voice and his resolution to take this purgatory journey despite all the suffering he goes through. Lear's last days are spent to comfort the Boy's ghost and to aware his people not to be manipulated by their leaders discourses and deluding speeches.

Lear's maturity and individuation keep building through the way. Elisabeth Ryland relies on the Jungian model to assert that this "individuation" process depends solely on "the courage and strength of the individual psyche to ... integrate the chaotic forces in a way to achieve the wholeness and healing" (389). Lear now admits that he is a "Destroyer! Murderer!". He also believes that now is the time to amend all these mistakes. He goes on, "And now I must begin again. I must walk through my life step after step, I must walk in weariness and bitterness ... I must open my eyes and see!" (*Lear* 60). Hence, Lear finally decides to face reality with a solid and resilient self. A more "conscious" and healed Lear is born out of Fontanelle's death.



Added to this, Lear's blindness and his consequent suffering paradoxically illuminate his insight and ignite his vision. He starts to learn more about himself and the world. He is terrified by the people's conformity to be abused and enslaved by despotic regimes. In one instant he stumbles upon a farmer and his youthful son. They are hurrying because the son has been ordered to join the army or the wall camp. Lear warns him that he is going to meet his destiny. Nevertheless, they proceed heedless of his advice because they are driven by fear and tyranny. Lear is driven mad by their passivity and subjugation as if their inner power is totally lost. He astutely blames his people saying:

LEAR. They feed you and clothe you – is that why you can't see? All life seeks its safety. A wolf, a fox, a horse – they'd run away, they're sane. Why do you run to meet your butchers? Why? ... I could learn to endure my blindness with patience, I could never endure this! ... I am the King! I kneel by this wall. How many lives have I ended here? (66)

For the first time, Lear draws a link between being a king and his subsequent responsibilities to save the people. He stands up valiantly and honourably to face this corruption and to protest. It turns out that Lear, albeit accused of madness, is the only sane person. This is the liminal space which endows Lear with the gift of life: "wisdom and a vision." Lear is now ready to bear this gift back to his people which marks the third and final stage of his rite of passage. Ironically and tragically, Lear dies at the very end by the hand of the Farmer's Son while attempting to pull the wall down. The curse of the wall does not seem to it end. However, humanity will still beget people like Lear who are willing to make a change, to defy capitalism and the exploitation of every single being and every single resource on earth.

6. Conclusion:

Finally, the previous analysis shows how the phenomenological approach is in perfect tandem with Bond's new project. The adaptation shows how King Lear, the iconic tragic hero, is totally humbled and



transformed into an ordinary person after his immersion in nature; without interruption, without mediation. He goes through his purgatory journey and performs the rites of passage to gain deeper insight of the world and most importantly himself. Lear is not at the apex of the hierarchy and his position would not save him. Moreover, the pathetic fallacy is shaken at its very roots. The world is not Lear's monopoly and the universe would not torture the human race for deposing a corrupt king. On the contrary, one needs to achieve a sense of oneness with the universe to be empowered. Eventually, Lear attains wisdom and psychological growth symbolized by his determination to destroy the wall. Therefore, doing some effort is inevitable; letting go of self-centeredness is a necessity.



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Middle East Research Journal

Refereed Scientific Journal
(Accredited) Monthly



Issued by
Middle East
Research Center

Vol. 92
October 2023

Forty-ninth Year
Founded in 1974



Issn: 2536 - 9504
Online Issn: 2735 - 5233