

A Psychoanalytical Approach to
Harold Pinter's Plays:
Old Times, The Homecoming and The Birthday Party.

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Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy in English Language and Literature

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2017

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2.0. Declaration of Originality

The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where references have been made to the work of others.

Dalia Abu-Arja

3.0. Acknowledgements

This PhD thesis would have never been completed without the support and contribution of my supervisory team. My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisors, Dr. Richard Talbot and Dr. Carson Bergstrom. Their experience and clear guidance was priceless. I sincerely appreciate the accuracy they have put in reading my drafts and providing me with extensive in-depth feedback.

The quest of writing my PhD thesis has often been a frustrating journey. However, there are a few special people who have provided great support and love throughout those tough years. I would like to extend gratitude to my parents for their encouragement and unconditional love; to my brother for always extending a helping hand; to my fiancé for his love and patience, and to my beautiful friends back in Jordan who always support and encourage me to be a better version of myself.

4.0. Abstract

This PhD thesis presents an analysis of a number of Harold Pinter's plays, by using a Freudian psychoanalytical approach aligned with a close reading of the following works: *Old Times* (1971), *The Homecoming* (1965) and *The Birthday Party* (1957). Furthermore, the thesis aims at conducting a thorough analysis of the selected plays, by using key Freudian concepts such as the Oedipus complex, the castration complex, the 'uncanny,' aggression and dream analysis, and by providing an alternative understanding Pinter's plays from a psychoanalytical point of view.

The method used herein involves critical analysis, starting with a close reading of the abovementioned works and Freudian material consisting of the Freudian psychoanalytical terms mentioned earlier. The thesis proposes that, the psychoanalytical terms applied here support a substantial analysis of the plays. This is particularly the case, I argue, because Pinter, through his creative writing process, produces complex plays that touch on controversial subjects including sexual aggression and unconventional dysfunctional familial dynamics. The other method I used is conducting a psychoanalytic reading of the theatre event, including a review of the reception of the plays and aspects of design, thus connecting theatre and theatricality, sexual dynamics, Pinter's process and Freudian theory.

The study is supported by a reading of extant literature addressing Freud, Pinter and literature which links them with each other and with the theatre in general. The other resources and data I have drawn on include witnessing live performances of the selected plays, watching recorded film adaptations and archive including interviews with the actors, with directors, Pinter's own commentary and that of his wife Lady Antonia Fraser.

5.0. Introduction

Reading Pinter's plays have created an impact on my personal life and particularly on my thinking process as a woman who comes from a Muslim, Middle Eastern and Arab background. I grew up in a conservative Muslim community in Amman, Jordan where there is no profound interest in literature in general and theatre specifically. Despite my upbringing, I tried to defy the cultural norms by majoring in English Literature at university – for both my Bachelor and Master's degrees. Although my major, studying for both degrees, was named 'English Language and Literature', only one third of the courses taught at university were actually literature related, and they were formatted as 'Introduction' courses to the various literary genres. The two remaining thirds I had to study at university, regardless of my major being Literature, were either 'Linguistics' or 'English-Arabic-English' translation courses. I majored in English Literature because I was genuinely interested in learning about literary genres and getting involved in the somehow 'exclusive' Jordanian literary scene. However, I struggled a lot during university years because I was not satisfied with the teaching methods nor with the purposeless compulsory materials, and I was not given enough support to pursue a comprehensive understanding of the English Literature I had always been interested in. I, subsequently, decided to be in charge of my own future and started searching for literary reading material which would spark my interest and satisfy my curiosity about the different aspects of the other part of the world – the world undefined by cultural traditions and religious guidelines, or the world to which I do not belong. After studying the 'Introduction to Literature' courses at university, I found that I was mostly interested in Drama studies, although I was only taught two Drama related course: 'Introduction to Drama' and 'Shakespeare and His Age'. My interest in Drama studies started after realising that there was a certain type of Drama drawing my attention constantly. I later learnt this type is called the 'Kitchen Sink Drama'. According to the *Dictionary of Modern and Contemporary Art*, the term 'Kitchen Sink' is 'derived from an expressionist painting by

John Bratby [who] did various kitchen and bathroom-themed paintings, including three paintings of toilets'. The Dictionary also adds that Bratby also painted people who 'often depicted the faces of his subjects as desperate and unsightly' (2009, p. 259). I expressed interest in this particular type of Drama because it appeared to me that it expresses the societal problems through theatrical performance and that it creates a bond between the playwrights, the plays, the characters, and the audience. I started searching for examples demonstrating the Kitchen Sink Drama, so I was recommended by one of my dearest Literature professors in Jordan to read some of Pinter's plays, and then she lent me my first group of Pinter plays to read. It was Pinter Plays 2 which included *The Caretaker*, *The Dwarfs*, *The Collection*, *The Lover*, *Night School*, *Trouble in the Works*, *The black and White*, *Request Stop*, *Last To Go*, and *Special Offer*. *The Lover* was the first play to have caught my interest because I thought it was too provocative for my taste, and I was curious about how this play might be performed before an audience in the 1960's. I found *The Lover* provocative because it tackles role playing in marital affairs which creates sexual tension. And as I mentioned previously, I come from a conservative Muslim culture and I was shocked by the amount of sexual innuendos Pinter had congested in the play. I, however, kept reading the collection of plays I was kindly lent, and realised that this is Pinter's writing style – using the elements of shock and sexually charged conversations between the characters. After reading the first book, my growing curiosity directed me to learn more about Pinter's writing style and what triggered such a creative being to write these plays. Consequently, I started searching the Jordanian libraries for more of Pinter's plays and I eventually found Plays 1 which included *The Birthday Party*, *The Room*, *The Dumb Waiter*, *A Slight Ache*, *The Hothouse*, *A Night Out*, *The Black and White*, *The Examination*. I got more interested in the plays as I read more of Pinter's work. I found his plays to be captivating, thought-provoking, yet offensive. The fact that the plays were captivating and thought-provoking in my perspective made me more inquisitive about what lies beneath the surface of such plays and playwright. Moreover, the fact that I found the plays to be offensive caused me to search for more information about the plays, how the original reviewers received them, and how a potential researcher like myself could justify the use of offensive language and interactions with appropriate analysis and perspective.

Choosing the plays was a lengthy process. As I will explain later towards the end of the introduction, I am writing a PhD thesis which must have constraints, so I chose to explore three plays thoroughly instead of a larger number of plays. Thus, the choice was eventually

made to include the three plays titled: *The Birthday Party*, *The Homecoming*, and *Old Times*. I decided to include *Old Times* first because it was the first play I attended in London when I started writing my thesis. It was a remarkable experience especially that the play was performed at The Harold Pinter Theatre because being at this theatre had been a dream of mine since I started reading Pinter's plays. Therefore, *Old Times* holds a special place in my heart and it was the play which triggered my theatregoing hobby to commence. *The Birthday Party* is the second play I decided to include in this thesis because I attended the performance held in The Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester and it was my second play to attend after *Old Times*. *The Birthday Party* had been one of my favourite plays since I read it, and it became more special after the theatre experience. It is a play of contradictions; it is a humorous, witty, yet a very miserable play. Attending the play, after reading it for a few times, made the characters seem more real to me, and I could understand how all these contradictions express the different stages a human being goes through in life. The last play I chose to include in my thesis is *The Homecoming*. After reading *The Homecoming*, I was intrigued by the special family it demonstrates. Max's family has a unique relationship with each other and with the outside world. It intrigued me because of the immense amount of sexually charged conversations and interactions between the characters which, created discomfort to me as a reader. I did not have the chance to attend a live performance of the play, but I watched a video of a film adaptation directed by Peter Hall in 1973.

The idea of psychoanalysing Pinter's plays and using Freud's psychoanalysis originated as soon as I finished reading the first collection of Pinter plays, specifically after reading Plays 3: *The Lover*. I found *The Lover* to possess a rich psycho-analysable content. Consequently, I thought that I would use the limited number of Freudian concepts I had briefly studied at university during my BA and MA to analyse Pinter's plays. During my university years, I had the chance to study courses titled 'Introduction to Psychology in English' and 'Introduction to Psychology in Arabic', which gave me brief knowledge of the psychoanalytical concepts, and I believe these concepts shaped my thinking process which did not conform to my cultural background. For example, I studied Hawthorne's 'Young Goodman Brown' which is set in Salem, Massachusetts in 17th century Puritan New England during the witch trials period. The story discusses the main character Brown and the journey he decides to take which leads him to losing faith in his Christian beliefs and losing faith in his wife, who was ironically named Faith. The analysis I had written on this story as a student in an Arab Muslim community was mainly religion-orientated; however, having briefly studied

psychoanalysis in a previous semester, I also mentioned Freud oedipal concept by using Brown's Christian faith and his wife Faith as symbols for a mother who smothered her young child with love until he wanted to free himself and begin a new phase of his adult life outside of her dark womb. In my analysis, I also briefly mention phallic objects because Brown's journey took place in the woods where numerous erect trees existed. So, I used the trees to symbolise Brown's need to be an independent entity which is separate from the smothering higher forces: the mother symbolised by F/faith. I would confirm that after I submitted my analysis to my lecturer, it was not received well, and I was looked at as someone who was trying to deviate from the norm, mainly by adding the two points mentioned above in my analysis.

Since my BA years, I have had the Freudian psychoanalytical concepts I studied hidden in my subconscious, because I was curious and interested to know more and study his concepts in detail. After researching and reading the original Freudian material for the purpose of writing my PhD thesis, I discovered that during BA years I was directed towards learning less than 25% of the original Freudian concepts, and I was also directed towards thinking that what I learned at university is the whole concept. For example, Oedipus Complex is taught at Jordanian universities as briefly as a short definition without any evidence or examples to clarify it. I was taught that little boys love their mothers more than they love their fathers and will eventually develop a complex called the Oedipus Complex. The complex is named Oedipus because someone who existed in ancient history was named Oedipus, and this Oedipus loved his mother too much and his mother loved him more than anyone, even more than his father. I remember this clearly because there was no mentioning of Oedipus killing his father unknowingly, marrying his own mother, having children with his mother, or blinding and banishing himself when he recognised what he did. I firmly believe that a detailed explanation of Freudian concepts at universities which exist in Arab Muslim communities is non-existent. There was no mention of official reading lists or published books or even a list of references for further reading; instead, the lecturers would compile the eclectic course material, print it out, and spiral bind it for the students to study. I believe that the Freudian concepts were restrained in Jordanian universities because these concepts would create controversy among students considering that the concepts discussed students think about 'taboos' thoughts, especially sex and religion. This caused my struggle to find answers about Freud and to find the right Freudian concept to use for literary analysis.

However, as someone who is interested in learning and researching, I personally decided to defy a taboo by writing this thesis. I am writing this thesis and framing my original contribution as a Literature student whose primary curiosity is literature and who tries to enhance literary reading by drawing on the field of Freudian psychoanalytical concepts. Moreover, I believe that my Arab cultural and religious background locates me in a different position to other readers of Pinter's plays because my thesis is a reaction to the suppression of sexuality, freedom of expression, and considerations of male perspectives in the teaching of literature that I encountered in Jordan and before the PhD. And I believe that my contribution will add a fresh, unique, perspective to the plays in relation to Freud's psychoanalytical approach.

Pinter's plays, as will be explained further in the thesis, have shocked the original audiences and critics, due to their sexual content. When they were first produced in the 1950s, theatregoers were 'mystified' by this sort of humour (Dukore, 1982, p. 1), and so, as a result, he was classified as one of the more controversial playwrights. The theme of controversy is applied by Pinter throughout his plays as a consequence of his use of sexual references and domestic violence. His work creates an element of shock, controversy and ambiguity, especially in parts where he produces his unconventional reflection on familial ties in *The Homecoming* and *The Birthday Party*, in addition to his sexual objectification of women in all three plays selected in this thesis – *Old Times*, *The Homecoming* and *The Birthday Party* – but mainly in *The Homecoming*. In this play, Pinter portrays Ruth as a sexual object, prey, a prostitute, a surrogate mother to her husband's family and a mother to her own children. She has a tendency to act like a caring mother to her husband's father, his uncle and his brothers; however, she also insinuates an unconventional incestuous relationship with the same men, whom she treats as her children. Ruth's characteristics and significance will be further explained in section (9.2 *The Homecoming*), but I will briefly mention an example conversation between Max, Ruth's father-in-law, and Lenny and Joey, Ruth's brothers-in-law. Lenny suggests facilitating a career in prostitution for Ruth and taking 'her up with [him] to "Greek Street"', because, he thinks, she is going to be expensive to keep home as the lady of the house, and she will eventually have to work to earn her own money. Since Ruth is portrayed as a mother who is turned into a prostitute by her in-laws, I concluded that this type of family dynamics requires adopting a Freudian concept to analyse the play.

Whilst Pinter's plays tackle realistic domestic matters, they additionally employ elements of fantasy that create a sense of ambiguity and horror to the audience. This results in the critics

criticising the plays for having no obvious theme or purpose. For this particular reason, Freud's psychoanalytical theory is applied to Pinter's plays in this thesis, to try to explain how they act like therapeutic experiences but without the audience's complete awareness of this matter. The audience is being unknowingly treated psychologically by these theatrical performances because of what these plays trigger in their minds, including memories, past sexual experiences, oedipal feelings towards their mothers, incestuous feelings towards their family members, anger towards anyone who makes them feel insecure and unworthy or other repressed emotions they have been forced to hide in their subconscious and never think about.

Following a Freudian view of Pinter's plays, here are a few examples of how Freudian psychoanalytical concepts could be used in my thesis for analysis purposes. For example, Ruth, in *The Homecoming*, is a representation of a mother who, along with her metaphorical husband Max, takes care of her three metaphorical children Teddy, Lenny and Joey. As events progress in the play, it becomes clearer and clearer that the sons' relationship with their parent is oedipal, because in this case they look forward to engaging in sexual relations with their mother and eliminating their father. They do not mind sharing Ruth with each other, and even with other men, as long as they have the opportunity to gain some sort of sexual experience from their mother and kill their father in the process. Achieving this fantasy, the sons will be able to fulfil their oedipal desires and resolve their Oedipus complex. They might also understand that it is unnatural for them to engage in incestuous sexual relations with their mother, so they try to facilitate a career in prostitution for her, in order to eventually benefit, financially and psychologically, from her having sex with other men. Yet, the sons also want to benefit from her motherly duties in cooking and cleaning their house. Ruth seems agreeable to their conditions and says that 'it might prove a workable arrangement' (p. 85). The whole situation the sons put Ruth in – the proposal that she should become a prostitute – is highly unlikely to happen in most families; nevertheless, she deals with it as a normal situation that could occur at any time in her life. Pinter, in *The Homecoming*, portrays themes of sexual relations, incestuous innuendos and aggression in one specific family, all of which compose textbook material for Freudian psychoanalysis. Personally, after reading *The Homecoming*, based on Ruth's situation with the men in her husband's family and the oedipal observations in their metaphorical relationship, I decided to undertake a Freudian approach, with emphasis on the Oedipus complex. In addition, during the period of my research, I found that only a limited number of critics associate Freudian

concepts with Pinter's plays and characters, which created the need for me to engage in more research on the topic and finally to present a logical Pinter-Freud connection.

The Pinter-Freud connection I seek to establish is not only a result of analysing Pinter's plays from a Freudian point of view, but it also comes as a result of the connection between Pinter's plays and my personal view as an educated Jordanian woman who sits among the audience and chooses to attend these plays willingly, despite the plays being contradictory to her own different background, culture, and religion. The reason why I, as an audience member, choose to attend Pinter's plays is one of the elements I am attempting to explore in this thesis by defining the connection between my cultural background and reflecting on my own response and my own situation while watching these plays and reading the scripts. In my view, the Freudian aspect of being in a dark, womb-like room watching the actors act and narrate lines which could bear an 'uncanny' resemblance to a theatregoer's real life. If an audience member is in a similar position as mine, they will feel that they are forced to limit their thinking and interpretation of a play because of the archetypes and collective memories humans share and store in their subconscious, they will have more internal struggles to deal with, especially if they suffer from identity crises or struggle to have their personal opinions heard, and more specifically if their opinions do not conform to the social standards and norms in the environment in which they live. For example and in connection to my cultural context, I perceive Ruth in *The Homecoming* as a concoction of all the images mentioned earlier – the sexual object, the prey, the prostitute, the surrogate mother to her husband's family and the mother to her own children – first, by the other characters in the play, who happen to be all men, second, by Pinter himself as the writer who created her and third, by my view as an audience members who is mostly influenced by and biased toward Pinter's personal perspective of the characters he invents. The audience, including myself, have their own lives to worry about and their personal problems that sometimes include psychological issues. For example, I would relate to my personal experience in fighting my inner demons resulting from many elements. The first element is my negative past childhood experiences, which include being silenced as a child and as a teen and not being able to state my personal opinion for fear that it would be different and contradictory to the Arab Muslim upbringing. The second element is a result of suffering from claustrophobia, which is an anxiety disorder resulting from an irrational fear of confined places, after being trapped in a small dark lift for an hour. Furthermore, the third personal problem I was fighting is questioning if I were being influenced by some archetypes, mythology, and religious figures which influence the real

lives and critical decisions of my family members and everyone who grows up in a Muslim community. Following the previously mentioned personal background, I find myself relating to what Enrique Pardo says in his essay ‘Electricity in Hell: Notes on the work of Romeo Castellucci, and praise for Italy’ (2000), regarding the audience being influenced by the point of view of the playwright and relating these views to their personal experiences, ‘symbolic attitudes tend to side-track theatre into ceremonial and ritual, often imposing an injunction for reverence on the spectator’ (p. 4). Pardo explains that using symbolic characters or events ‘happens too often when the word “archetype” is invoked by artists’, and in order to avoid being dragged down by the ‘symbols’ and ‘archetypes’ he says:

I tend to flee if I see “archetypes” in a programme: I fear being trapped in a pious surrogate of religion. Lively image-work incorporates its own antidote: iconoclasm, humour. It achieves fictional life as unique, alive, particular (even peculiar). It works on idiosyncrasy; it seeks and respects the unique characteristics of its actors and objects. It achieves “character” [...] (p. 4).

Pardo suggests that theatregoers ‘flee’ to avoid the influence of archetypes on their opinions or view of the play they attend. However, this solution is not always ideal. Human beings live an archetypal life, and everything around us is connected, somehow, to a single or multiple archetypes – and these cannot be easily ignored or kept hidden in the subconscious. Thus, when someone attends a play, they consciously or unconsciously connect what they see in front of them with the archetype that suits the situation best. For example, if I were to take Pardo's perspective it may render Pinter appear conventional to me because his characters may seem archetypal and therefore would, according to Pardo, lead me to flee Pinter. However, Pinter's characters are, in fact, both uncommon and archetypal--shocking on stage, and hence they must strike the spectator as uncommon, but archetypal in that they initiate responses in the audience which can only be understood as Freudian. For example, in *The Homecoming*, Ruth and the men in the family evoke the archetypal sense that they have the type of relationship better described as a superiority/inferiority relationship, due merely to the fact that Ruth is the only woman in a house full of men, and the way they view her as a sex object most of the time makes her appear inferior, powerless, insignificant, worthless, passive and dependent. This is the initial effect the archetypes enforce on theatregoers, including myself coming from a patriarchal society, before they get the opportunity to attend the play

and form their own opinions as to whether Ruth is actually inferior to these men or she is the one holding the superior position, and whether being a woman, in this case, makes her an active or a passive member in the family. However, the characters in *The Homecoming* are also uncommon and do not conform to social norms; and that is why they are shocking on stage. I agree with Pardo's statement that the 'symbolic attitudes' could 'impos[e] an injunction for reverence on the spectator' (p. 4), merely for the reason that I had first-hand experience of preconceived thoughts about a Pinter play. When I attended a recent production for *The Birthday Party* at The Royal Exchange Theatre in Manchester which was directed by Blanche McIntyre in 2013, for example, I had read the scripted play first and sat in the theatre thinking about the relationships between the characters, especially the metaphorical or symbolic mother-son relationship between Stanley and Meg. Moreover, because I am mostly interested in the oedipal side of the relationship, I took a personal approach to the play while attending this production and related it to my personal experience as an audience member coming from a different cultural background where it is mainly defined as a patriarchal society where men are the dominant sex. I had the preconceived thoughts that Meg was the feeble mother figure who was underrated despite her substantial efforts around the house. She is a key element in the household who keeps the house tidy and keeps the residents satisfied by providing emotional support and by undertaking the household chores by herself. Meg proved to fit the description I had imagined in my mind after reading the script. However, attending the live play did not force me to 'flee' when I sensed the archetypes; instead, I embraced my initial thoughts and added new thoughts to the mix. I compared Meg to Ruth in the sense that she is being the person in control throughout the play, solely for being a woman in the mother's position. Similar to Ruth, I perceived Meg as the metaphorical mother figure to her metaphorical son Stanley, who pursues his 'mother' sexually to fulfil his Oedipus complex despite the fact that she is married to Petey, the father-figure in the play. Petey, in the Freudian theory of Oedipus complex, would be the person to be eliminated from the love triangle: the mother, the father and the son. However, as an oedipal mother figure, Meg is being sexually pursued not only by Stanley, but also by Petey and the intruders Goldberg and McCann, the latter of which can be perceived in two different ways. First, they sometimes appear as metaphorical sons to Meg by possessing the same sexual desires as Stanley; however, the other times they appear as the second and third father figures to Stanley. Their role as father figures create greater struggle for Stanley. If the intruders are perceived as fathers, then Stanley has to eliminate them along with Petey, which proves to be an immense task for him to handle. Whether Pinter intentionally created such characters or not, it appears

that they are complex representations of the human beings who hide their oedipal intentions towards their mothers and fathers. Pinter's characters usually create shocking controversy and confusion in the minds of the readers and the audience because of the way they are perceived as oedipal sexual beings. In addition, one of the main focus points of this thesis is how Freudian oedipal features are shown throughout Pinter's work and how his characters drift towards being aggressive and act against social values.

The intensity of Pinter's plays and the amount of sexual references confused critics such as J. A. C. Brown (1972), Arther Ganz (1972), Bernard F. Dukore (1982) and D. Keith Peacock (1997) have criticised these works in relation to Pinter the playwright, someone who has a distinct style of writing. Dukore's *Harold Pinter* (1982), for example, starts with a ten-page 'Biographical Survey' and an analysis based on Pinter's character, background and theatrical creativity. For instance, Dukore relates *Night School* (1960) to Pinter by referring to it as a play which 'may be as close to a formula play as Pinter has written' and noting that it 'contains his trademarks' (p. 55). In 'Words and Silence' (1972), Brown also relates Pinter to his plays by saying

[Pinter] is an essentially dramatic writer, in that he knows how to acknowledge the effects of time [...] Pinter has spoken of the nausea which he sometimes feels for words and describes his encounters with words as if he had had to penetrate and master them [...] and] Pinter has faced his distrust of words and explored the means whereby the theatre can express in lively form his perceptions and discoveries (pp. 98- 99).

This thesis provides a Freudian psychoanalytical approach to criticising Pinter's plays and occasionally sheds light on the man himself. Moreover, it lays the ground for other theorists' concepts, because 'Freud brought every manifestation of the irrational into the sphere of scientific investigation' by proving that 'the individual's projections or the projections of social groups are scientific facts capable of being interpreted' (Brown, 1994, p. 191). The term 'psychoanalysis' is not a modern expression – it is almost 120 years old. 'In the spring of 1896, [Freud] first used the fateful name, "psychoanalysis"' and 'offer[ed] psychological explanations to psychological phenomena' (Gay, 1989, p. xiii). Freud was aware of the need to adjust, modernise and develop his original theories to meet with the new psychoanalytical findings he arrived at through years of experience. At the beginning of Lecture XXIX:

Revision of the Theory of Dreams (1933), he acknowledged the ‘novelties’ and the ‘improvement [which] the intervening time has introduced into psychoanalysis’ (p. 8). Freud also admitted that ‘the unrecognized facts of the neuroses used to confuse [his] inexperienced judgement’ (p. 9), and he bravely declared that he developed his theories because his own ‘judgement’ was ‘inexperienced’ and that he had ‘[begun] to have doubts of the correctness of [his] wavering conclusions’ (p. 9). Therefore, his awareness of the necessity to upgrade his theories makes him a major figure in creating psychoanalytical theories and developing them accordingly as time progresses. In this thesis, the focus points are oriented toward reading Pinter through a Freudian approach, to understand how the mind and body interrelate both narratively and dramatically. Since drama demands conflict and a story, where that conflict must be illuminated and, in some sense, resolved, the Freudian approach offers the dramatist an extensive field of human conflict on which to play. Freud’s talking cure method, which resembles acting on stage, is a theatrical treatment implemented clearly in his treatment of a little boy called Hans in 1909 in ‘Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy’, which will be explained further in the Methodology and Definition of Terms section (7.0). Hans is being observed not only by Freud, but also by his parents, who were the first people to notice little Hans’s interest in his penis and in his father’s penis: the fact that the penis exists and the size difference between both appendages. Hans’s parents noticed his increased interest in his ‘widdler’, as he called it, which led them to conduct many conversations with him featuring the ‘widdler’ as the main topic (p. 7). In comparison, in *The Homecoming*, Ruth’s husband’s family men are sons who have lost their biological mother and have had to adjust to her absence by replacing her with a surrogate metaphorical mother, namely Ruth. The men here know that they can be in charge of the whole family by possessing ‘widdlers’, and yet they need Ruth, who is a castrated woman, to hold the family together and provide for their sexual and financial needs. These men are adults with past experiences; therefore, they have already faced their oedipal challenges with their late biological mother and their metaphorical mother Ruth. They have also faced the castration challenges forced on them by their father for the purposes of keeping their late mother, and Ruth, to himself. In contrast, although Hans seems to be more advanced and sexually curious than other young children of his age, he is still a little boy who is yet to experience his oedipal mother-son relationship in addition to his future castration complex, which will be executed by his father.

Freud’s psychoanalysis has generated conflicts among critics, one of which is whether a patient can contribute to his own talking cure treatment by speaking honestly to his

psychoanalyst about his fantasies, dreams, fetishes and general struggles in daily life. Dufresne and Brown, however, contradicted these ideas regarding the patient's contribution. On the one hand, Dufresne, in *Killing Freud: Twentieth-Century Culture and the Death of Psychoanalysis* (2003), suggests that the main problem which makes Freud 'provocative' is that 'when it came to fantasy, sex, money and so on, Freud insisted as a fundamental rule that the patient, but also the analyst, speak candidly', which in turn caused the 'truths of psychoanalysis' to be 'dark, brutal, rude and anti-social' (p. x). He also accuses Freud of basing his analysis of patients on 'a motivated spin of the facts', 'retrospective illusion' and 'gossip' (p. 21). On the other hand, J.A.C. Brown, in *Freud and the Post-Freudians* (1994), defends Freud's analytical techniques, in that 'myths, fairy-tales, literature, political and religious beliefs, or arts, become scientifically meaningful to the psychologists precisely to the degree that they do *not* correspond with the facts of external reality [...] and they are none of the psychologist's business' (p. 191). Brown's defence emerges as a negative reaction to psychoanalysts' interference in their patients' sessions, in which the psychoanalysts project their own interpretation onto the patient. Therefore, Dufresne and Brown disagree on patients' ability to contribute to their own treatment. However, the conclusion here is that such questions about the truth, the patient's condition or the validity or otherwise of what the patient's view of reality might amount to are immaterial to the dramatist. What Freudian case studies tell the dramatist is that the human construction of reality, a construction that then governs actions and speech, can only be illuminated through the lens of drama. As mentioned above in Hans's case, Hans was treated by some sort of a theatrical setting suggested by Freud and implemented by the boy's parents. The dramatic effect in Hans's case is given a lot of credit for contributing to his successful treatment. Consequently, the patient can – and should – contribute to his own treatment, merely because if the patient has the ability to narrate his dreams or his past experiences, which he thinks contributed to his illness, then this patient should be considered an active element in his own well-being.

Freud offers explanations for what goes into a human mind, relating everything to the person's past sexual experiences, which start from the day this person is born. Consequently, these past sexual experiences lead Freud to explain a person's own Oedipus complex and his relationship with his mother, father and future significant other. Freud's concept of the Oedipus complex relates to a person's intimacy issues with his mother, which starts at birth and continues throughout life. A mother cares for her child, breastfeeds him, cleans him and provides love and security. Thus, when this child grows up, he 'leave[s] his father and mother

[...] and pursue[s] his wife: affection and sensuality will be reunited. The highest level of sensual passion will imply the highest psychical valuation of the object', as noted by Freud in 'Concerning the Most Universal Debasement in the Erotic Life' ([1912] 2006, p. 252). However, this intimate mother-son relation is always interrupted by the father figure, whose existence threatens the son and acts as a constant reminder of castration.

This thesis connects Freud and Pinter, because they are both controversial in their fields, by bluntly addressing taboos in society. Freud's models are the original psychoanalytical theories, which he *himself* founded, and therefore will help enlighten the analysis of Pinter's plays through a number of key elements, namely elements of shock and sexual references, and ending in elements of violence and tension among the characters. Furthermore, it is apparent that the prevalence of sexual themes in Pinter's plays, particularly those involving either violence or assaults on conventional social mores, points towards his interest in the oedipal as a generator of conflicts and that his dramatic language works to construct characters whose actions and thoughts reflect the internal conflicts from which they suffer. The main conflicts afflicting the characters are the internal struggles between the id, the ego and the superego. Freud defines the id, ego and superego in his essay on 'The Ego and the Id' in *The Freud Reader* ([1923] 1995) saying that: 'from the point of view of instinctual control, control, of morality, it may be said of the id that it is totally non-moral, of the ego that it strives to be moral, and of the superego that it can be super-moral, and then becomes cruel as only the id can be' (p. 655). Therefore, the id is the chaotic, primitive and instinctive component of someone's personality, the ego is the sound of reality and reason and the decision-making component of someone's personality and the superego is the idealistic and conscientious component of someone who is aware of social norms and tries to adhere to them by restraining the id from taking control. The first reason why Freud's psychoanalysis is the only approach followed throughout this thesis is the recurrent element of shock, which Pinter's plays reflect to the audience. The measurement of this shock is related mainly to original 1950s- 1960s reviewers, such as those writing for the *Manchester Guardian* and the *Evening Standard*. One review, quoted by Dukore, suggests that Pinter's writing is 'half-gibberish, whose characters are unable to explain their actions, thoughts, or feelings'. In addition, another critic complained that the works were 'crossword puzzle[s]', which could not be enjoyed unless the viewer 'believe[d] that obscurity is its own reward' (p. 1). The first reviewers were shocked by Pinter's blunt way of tackling dysfunctional relations among families, such as the relationship between Ruth and her husband's male family members in

The Homecoming, which is mentioned briefly above and will be addressed further in the thesis. Secondly, sexual references in the plays encompass various themes, including incest, homosexuality and role-play. The theme of incest occurs frequently amongst the purposefully designed characters in *The Homecoming* and *The Birthday Party*; however, it does not literally have to happen on stage in front of an audience but is mostly either implicit or metaphorical. The characters are consumed by the creativeness of Pinter's mindset when it comes to sexual themes because of his dramatic language, which is constructed by elements of oedipal struggles and the fear of castration. In addition to incest, homosexuality is one of the popular sexual themes. In this thesis, Pinter's *Old Times* is an example in this regard, as it tackles the possibility of lesbianism between the two female characters in the play: Anna and Kate. Kate is married to Deeley, and Anna is Kate's old friend who is visiting her twenty years after they were best friends and roommates. Deeley tries to investigate and reveal the truth about whether or not Kate and Anna were in a lesbian relationship when they were younger. He develops a particular interest in his wife's past, especially when Kate discloses that Anna used to steal her underwear and wear it. The idea of Anna wearing Kate's underwear stirs erotic feelings in Deeley and spikes his interest in their past. He reacts by asking Kate, 'Is that what attracted you to her?' and 'Are you looking forward to seeing her?' (Pinter, [1971] 1997, p. 249). Anna arrives at Kate and Deeley's house and starts reminding Kate of their mutual past, which in turn triggers memories that Kate might have repressed, possibly because they remind her of a lost lesbian love for Anna, and if she kept reminiscing about the past, then she would not have married Deeley. Anna, however, appears to be keen to remind herself, and Kate, of their history. She is also the intruder who entered a house of a married couple to cause sexual tension. At one point in the play, she erotically describes how Kate looks in a towel:

Anna. She floats from the bath. Like a dream. Unaware of anyone standing, with her towel, waiting for her, waiting to wrap it around her. Quite absorbed.

Pause

Until the towel is placed on her shoulders.

Pause (p. 292)

Anna's description shows that Deeley is aroused by the idea that his wife could engage in a lesbian relationship in front of him while he watches and gains pleasure as a result. He makes a proposal to Anna and suggests that she should help Kate dry after her bath:

Deeley. Why don't you dry her in her bath towel?

Anna. Me?

Deeley. You'd do it properly.

Anna. No, no.

Deeley. Surely? I mean, you're a woman, you know how and where and in what density moisture collects on women's bodies.

Anna. No two women are the same.

Deeley. Well, that's true enough.

Pause (pp. 293, 294).

In addition to incest and homosexuality, the theme of role-playing has a great impact on the development of the plot and the characters. Role-playing refers to the shifting in someone's behaviour for the purpose of adopting a persona that is different to his typically assumed one. In Pinter's plays, I noticed that role-playing comes either consciously or unconsciously. On the one hand, we see it consciously in *Old Times*, *The Lover* and *The Birthday Party*. On the other hand, we see unconscious role-play in *The Homecoming*. In *Old Times*, the former is represented when Anna steals Kate's underwear and wears it to parties, knowing the men would gaze up her skirt while she was wearing someone else's underwear. One of these men turned out to be Kate's husband, Deeley, who remembers 'looking up [Anna's] skirt in [Kate's] underwear' (p. 303). When Deeley discovers the truth about the underwear-borrowing incident, he justifies his actions to Kate, saying that:

[Anna] was pretending to be you at the time. Did it pretty well. Wearing your underwear she was too, at the time. Amiable allowed me a gander. Trueblue generosity.' (...) She thought she was you, said little, so little. Maybe she was you. Maybe it was you, having coffee with me, saying little, so little (p. 307).

Anna's conscious act of role-playing and pretending to be someone else, specifically Kate, creates distortion in Deeley's memories about the first time he met her, which leaves him confused about whether he was attracted to Anna or Kate on that day at the party. In addition

to *Old Times*, we also see conscious role-playing in *The Lover* (1963). Although this thesis does not include *The Lover* as one of its foci, this play's main theme is conscious role-playing. It tells the story of a married couple, Sarah and Richard, who decide to have a love affair with each other by creating different personas and performing conscious role-playing. They create the personas of 'Max', Sarah's lover, and Richard's nameless 'whore' lover (Pinter, [1963] 1996, pp. 163, 176). They start their role-playing by giving the impression that they are a married couple who are just being 'frank' with each other about their extra-marital affairs:

Richard. I mean you're utterly frank with me, aren't you?

Sarah. Utterly.

Richard. About your lover. I must follow your example.

Sarah. Thank you.

Pause.

Yes, I have suspected it for some time.

Richard. Have you really?

Sarah. Mmnn.

Richard. Perceptive (p. 156).

The conversation mentioned above confirms the couple settles on a mutual agreement that they need to be honest and open with each other if they are involved in love affairs. However, when Richard shifts into the Max persona, he voices his concerns about the approval of Sarah's husband, Richard, regarding their love affair:

Max. How does he bear it, your husband? How does he bear it? Doesn't he smell me when he comes back in the evenings? What does he *say*? He must be mad. Now – what's the time – half-past four – now when he's sitting in his office, knowing what's going on here, what does he *feel*, how does he bear it?

Sarah. Max –

Max. How?

Sarah. He's happy for me. He appreciates the way I am. He understands (p. 170).

At the start of the role-playing scenes, Richard never names his lover, but he describes her as a 'whore' and says that she is 'just a common or garden slut. Not worth talking about. Handy between trains, nothing more' (p. 155). And so, at the end scene, Richard tells Sarah, 'Change your clothes... *Pause*... You lovely whore', implying his love affair with the nameless woman. In addition to *Old Times* and *The Lover*, we detect signs of conscious role-playing in *The Birthday Party* as well. The first one is seen in the roles of Goldberg and McCann, who present themselves at first as peaceful guests who have pleasant characteristics good enough to become potential father figures to Stanley. However, as the play progresses, we discover that they are playing a role that is the complete opposite to their actual characteristics. They finally switch back to their actual selves and become tormenting to Stanley. The second role-playing act in *The Birthday Party* involves all the characters who take part in Stanley's 'birthday party' towards the end of the play. They take on the roles of blind people, to play 'blind man's bluff', and fulfil some of their fantasies, which could not have been achieved in the light when everyone was gazing at them (p. 55). For example, Goldberg grabs Lulu and 'quenche[s] his ugly thirst; Meg starts to act like a child flaunting her dress; McCann 'breaks Stanley's glasses' to blind him; and Stanley is literally blinded and figuratively castrated by the blindness' (pp. 74, 57). The role-playing in *The Birthday Party* affects the course of the play in its entirety but helps understand the nature of the characters involved in the act. The conscious role-playing in the abovementioned plays has a different format than the other play mentioned here, namely *The Homecoming*. This play has several themes, and they will be addressed further in the thesis, but one of them is unconscious role-playing, which presents itself in the shift in social roles among parents, especially when one of the parents dies and the other parent needs to play both of their roles to keep the family together. This happens in *The Homecoming* when Max's wife, Jessie, dies. He and his brother Sam had to act as a mother by undertaking the household chores and keeping the peace. Max does not even allow himself to bring another woman home in respect for his late wife's memory and for his sons. Sam and he share the 'cooking', 'washing up, 'hoovering', 'scraping the plates', obsessing 'with order and clarity', offering 'a nice cuddle and kiss' and 'keep[ing] [his] family in luxury' (pp. 73, 45, 41, 51, 55). However, in spite of the substantial dissimilarity between conscious and unconscious role-play, Pinter effortlessly manages to create sexually charged scenes out of what might seem an acceptable thing to do but which unconsciously fills a social role, or consciously acts out an adopted role.

These themes above are highly suggestive of Freudian concepts and theories, and so I am at linking them together to unveil the hidden layers of Pinter's pieces selected for this thesis and to demonstrate Pinter's interest in implementing the Freudian concepts in his plays. The third reason for using Freud's psychoanalysis model is the existence of violence and tension among characters. These aggressive acts emerge in human beings as a result of childhood problems and complexes explained by Freud, such as the Oedipus complex and the castration complex. Among the plays selected in this thesis, the play infested most with violence and tension is *The Birthday Party*. Stanley is subjected to verbal and physical violence by the two intruders, Goldberg and McCann, who disguise themselves as peaceful guests at first; however, they transform into aggressive and domineering men. In a lengthy scene, Pinter shows Goldberg and McCann's inexplicable abuse towards Stanley, which leaves him baffled (which will be explained further in section (7.2.e) Aggression)

Subsequently, this thesis aims at shedding light on Pinter's selected plays in relation to Freud's psychoanalytical theories through the four following sections: Literature Review, Methodology and Definition of Terms, Psychoanalysis of the Theatre and Case Studies. In addition, it will also conduct psychoanalysis of the institution of theatre itself, relating to its historical, civil and social roles in creating an interesting relationship between playwrights, characters, audiences and critics. The first section is the Literature Review section, which discusses the previous literature written on Pinter in relation to psychoanalysis. Literature to date does not always relate the psychoanalytical terms used in the analysis to Freud; therefore, this thesis draws attention to Freud's psychoanalytical concepts to use them in analysing Pinter's plays. The second section is the Methodology and Definition of Terms section, which discusses the methods the thesis uses to arrive at the results pursued. The methods involve a close reading of Pinter's plays, a close reading of Freudian material and applying Freud's psychoanalytical concepts to Pinter's plays, using a critical analysis method to conduct psychoanalysis of the plays, defining the main psychoanalytical terms and conducting psychoanalysis of the theatre. In addition, the same section includes the Definition of Terms which offers the definitions of the following: the Oedipus complex, Pinter and the Angry Young Men, the castration complex, the 'uncanny,' aggression and dream analysis. These terms will be mentioned abundantly through the thesis, in order to provide a better understanding of the thesis and to relay its importance. The third section is the Psychoanalysis of the Theatre section which talks about the theatre and how it is perceived as a 'safe environment' for expressing opinions. (Campbell, 2001, p. 11). The

chapter includes four sections: sexual cultural theatre, a psychoanalytical reading of the theatre, subconscious writing and my approach to psychoanalysis. Lastly, the Case Studies section which follows a Freudian approach with a close reading of the following Harold Pinter plays: *Old Times* (1971), *The Homecoming* (1965) and *The Birthday Party* (1957).

This thesis was developed following a number of constraints, due to the limited PhD writing time frame. The first constraint is the number of Pinter plays the thesis covers. Pinter wrote more than thirty plays, but this thesis is limited to only three of them. My original thought as a researcher was to include six plays: the three eventually selected in the thesis in addition to *The Lover*, *The Room* and *The Caretaker*. The six plays originally selected, I believe, are more suitable for consideration through the lens of psychoanalysis than the other Pinter plays and serve the purpose pursued in this thesis. *The Room*, for example, allows researchers to view it as a psychoanalytical material. As a Pinter play, *The Room* is created in a similar setting to the three plays I selected in this thesis: a small womb-like room. It also tells the story of a limited number of characters, Bert Hudd, Rose, Mr Kidd, Mr Sands, Mrs Sands, and Riley; their characteristics; and relationship with each other. It tells a story of a married couple, Rose and Bert. In this play, Bert is portrayed as a man controlled by his wife; she does not let him speak or express his opinion or even answer the question he is asked. Their relationship draws my attention because of the similarities to the other characters Pinter normally created in *The Birthday Party*; for example, Meg and Stanley. Moreover, the possibility of a Freudian-based analysis based on the settings, characters, and their relationship to each other is the most significant element I follow when analysing a Pinter play. The same applies for the other two plays I did not eventually select as a part of my thesis: *The Lover* and *The Caretaker*. *The Lover*, for example, tells the story of a married couple, Sarah and Richard, who share a fondness to the fantasy of role-playing. They create fictional names for themselves and act upon them to satisfy their needs and desires. The success of this couple's role-playing methods as a method of satisfying need is an illustration of some of Freudian psychoanalytical concepts. The final play I was initially considering as a part of my thesis is *The Caretaker*. In this play, tells the story of three men, Aston, his brother Mick, and Davies. Aston invites the homeless man Davies to stay with him for a while; consequently, the play takes a dark turn while Davies is left alone in the house. While Davies is searching through Aston's belongings, Mick enters the place and starts a fight with him which leads the play to uncover themes of betrayal and corruption.

As mentioned earlier, due to time constraints, I found it more feasible to adhere to three plays instead of six, and to adhere to a limited selection of Freudian concepts- as will be mentioned below.

In addition to the limited number of plays, there is also a specific number of Freudian psychoanalytical concepts consulted to assist with the analysis of Pinter plays. Freudian concepts are highly integrated, so it was difficult to choose which ones to focus on. However, I selected the concepts that correspond effectively to Pinter, to Pinter's plays and my reading of the theatrical experience while attending a Pinter play. The third constraint is to concentrate solely on Freud, acknowledging his psychoanalytical concepts and sexual-orientated views while disregarding the other psychoanalysts. To be precise, the key purpose of this thesis is to use a Freudian framework to examine Pinter's plays; therefore, Freud's views are the only views which had to be fully embraced. Although I have considered alternative psychoanalysis, but I will not be using them directly to frame my reading of the plays. I understand that other psychoanalysts such as Jacques Lacan contradict and revise Freudian theories, and that Lacan's detailed insights could create a different approach to Pinter than that of Freud's. However, the focus was on Freud not on the anti-Freudians or even the neo-Freudians.

Another constraint is not focusing on including many feminist voices in this thesis. Feminism, as defined in the Oxford English Dictionary, is 'the advocacy of women's rights on the ground of the equality of the sexes'. It is also defined at the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as 'the theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes'. Based on these definitions mentioned above, the use of feminist ideas could be of significant assistance to my thesis. I started the introduction by stating that I come from a patriarchal culture where the males control most aspects of the female lives. And that my thesis is a reaction to suppression of sexuality and the male-dominated culture. However, I am not an expert on feminism as an independent concept, and I do not claim to have enough knowledge on feminism to form a whole PhD thesis. Therefore, I will briefly mention here some of the examples of how feminist theorists contradict the method of Freudian psychoanalysis which I chose to be my main method in analyzing Pinter's plays. I would also like to emphasize that I am not trying to invalidate their opinions or reasons for not agreeing with Freud. However, this is not the method I personally chose because applying feminist theories to either Freud or Pinter would have destructed the connection this thesis tried to create between the two of them. I chose three feminist theorists to quote in this section as an example of the contradictory

ideas to Freud and, therefore, contradictory to my thesis. I will start with Simone de Beauvoir's contradicting Freud in *The Second Sex* (1949) by addressing the issue of using reproduction organs as sexual symbols. She says: 'the term *phallus*, for example, designating quite exactly that fleshy projection which marks the male; again, they are indefinitely expanded and take on symbolic meaning'. Her view is also contradictory to mine because I am dedicating an extended part of this thesis to examine symbolic meanings of sexual organs and figures and depicting them in Pinter's plays. She resumes criticizing the Freudian psychoanalytical method which is based upon the 'masculine model' of the Oedipus complex. And although he creates a female equivalent to the Oedipus complex and calls it Electra, but she sees that Freud's 'Electra complex is less sharply defined than the Oedipus' because '[Freud] assumes that woman feels that she is a mutilated man', and that she aspires to be a man with a penis. This interpretation of both complexes is also contradictory to my methods of analysis in this thesis. The second feminism theorist I quote here is Helene Cixous who wrote plays related to the psychoanalytical theory, for example, *Portrait of Dora* (1985) and *The Name of Oedipus* (1995). *Portrait of Dora* is an adaptation of Freud's case study Dora. In his case study, Freud 'attempts to impose a patriarchal agenda of desire and identity on Dora' (p. 106). But Dora resists his impositions. Cixous' version presents Dora as both a 'victim and a heroine' (p. 106). She employs Freud's own methods to criticize the Freudian psychological analysis of women. The third feminist theorist is Karen Horney who focuses on Freud's concept of feminine masochism in her essay 'The Problem of Feminine Masochism' (2013). Horney's main defense against Freud's theory of feminine masochism is that it does not provide significance data and supporting evidence. She asks questions 'about the frequency, conditioning, and weight of the observed reactions of the little girl to the discovery of the penis' and finds no answers to these questions (2013, p.177). She resumes to say that women are more 'inclined to masochistic impulses' because of the suppression they face in their social and familial life, however, men also could be inclined to 'become masochistic' if he were to be 'jailed and placed under such close supervision that all sexual outlets are barred' (p. 181). In these example statements, she criticizes a Freudian theory which seemingly puts Freud in a position where he shares sexual views on females as the inferior sex.

The last constraint in this thesis is not focusing on humour and jokes. I chose not to use the Freudian psychoanalytical concept of humour to interpret Pinter's own humour and jokes because this subject would have steered my thesis into another direction. I also did not want

the thesis to mention Pinter's jokes in passing without providing detailed explanation and interpretation which will be inconsiderate for the Jewish culture and history especially that Pinter and Freud are both Jewish. And given the fact that I am a Muslim Arab individual, I will not be able to fully relate to the Jewish humour or be able to interpret it as it should be interpreted. However, I cannot ignore Pinter and Freud's humour completely because I use the concept of aggression as one of the main Freudian concepts used to interpret Pinter's plays, and I have to acknowledge that Pinter and Freud's humour is somehow aggressive as will be discussed later in section 7.2.e Aggression.

The constraints mentioned above correspond solely to this PhD thesis. The ideas proposed in this thesis could be developed in the future by analysing other Pinter plays, such as *The Lover*, *The Room* or *The Caretaker* using Freud's psychoanalysis. The ideas can also be developed by using other Freudian concepts to analyse Pinter plays, such those expressed in *Totem and Taboo*. Moreover, the ideas could be developed by applying other methods of literary analysis, such as feminism, post-structuralism or formalism.

As will be discussed next in detail in the Literature Review section (6.0), I will mention the limited resources I came across that also adopt a Freudian psychoanalytical method to analyse Pinter's plays, and the other resources, which mention the Freudian concepts without referring to Freud in any way, shape or form. The third type of resource uses methods of analysis other than Freudian psychoanalysis, but they do not convince me completely as representing a valid method for analysing these plays. Pinter's work is complex and discusses sensitive personal and sexual material; therefore, it needs an approach that tackles those issues in an explicit manner. Thus, using a Freudian approach will help unravel and decipher their complexity. Freud offers various ways to analyse a work of art via the concepts of the Oedipus complex, the castration complex, the 'uncanny', the interpretation of dreams and the detection of violence and aggression in a work, all of which will be discussed further in the Methodology and Definition of Terms section. In addition to the previously mentioned methods of Freudian psychoanalysis, Freud also practices his famous talking cure method he used during his therapy sessions for the purposes of allowing patients to narrate their dreams, fears, childhood memories, past sexual experiences and familial ties. The talking cure method assists the therapist in knowing how to provide successful treatment for a certain patient and allows the patient to benefit from the treatment, because it is designed solely for him or her, to suit their needs.

6.0. Literature Review

Harold Pinter's plays rely on his characters' unreliable and random memories, their ambiguous relationships with each other and their impulsive actions and reactions. These features have attracted a considerable amount of attention from critics since the plays were first produced. Some of this criticism has been explicitly psychoanalytic in orientation, but most striking is the use of psychoanalytical terms and concepts without directly citing the sources in Freud or other psychoanalysts such as Jung and Adler, Freud's former advocates who diverged from his psychoanalytical concepts and started establishing grounds for their own opposing ideas. In 'Lecture XXIX: Revision of The Theory of Dreams', Freud himself notes that 'much of dream interpretation has been accepted by outsiders – by the many psychiatrists and psychotherapists who warm their pot of soup at our fire (incidentally without being very grateful for our hospitality) [...], by the literary men and by the public at large' ([1933] 1989, p. 9). He condemns the lack of attribution to himself and his theory of dream interpretation by stating the above at the beginning of Lecture XXIX, which represents his comeback to lecturing 'after an interval of more than fifteen years' (p. 8). Freud's statement demands analysts pay tribute to his psychoanalytical theories instead of mentioning them in passing. Consequently, being 'grateful' to Freud's contribution to the world of psychoanalysis is the least a psychoanalyst could do when referring to, for example, the id, the ego, the super-ego, the Oedipus complex, the castration complex and many others.

In order to write this literature review, several books and articles that discuss Pinter's plays and mention psychoanalytical terms simultaneously have been examined and consulted. The result of this research is the following. Lucina Paquet Gabbard is one critic who analyses Pinter's plays (those that had been written up to the date she published her book in 1976), using Freud's psychoanalytical approach. In *The Dream Structure of Pinter's Plays: A Psychoanalytic Approach*, she applies Freud's dream analysis by analysing the characters, staging, the connection between the plays and the relationship between dreams and theatre. Gabbard dedicates a whole book to Pinter and Freud, whereas Peter Buse dedicates one chapter in *Drama + Theory: Critical Approaches to Modern British Drama* (2001) to Pinter's *The Homecoming* and Freud's the 'uncanny' (1919). Buse is another critic who pays tribute to Freud's psychoanalytical theories by detecting the 'uncanny' elements existing in *The Homecoming*. He focuses mainly on the concept of 'absence and return', as 'home' can be either heimlich (homely or canny) or unheimlich (unhomely or 'uncanny') (p. 37). The third publication that proved crucial to the development of this thesis is *Psychoanalysis and*

Performance (2001), which comprises a collection of essays compiled and edited by Patrick Campbell and Adrian Kear. In the preface, Kear says that this book ‘seeks to situate performance and psychoanalysis within a dialogical framework that speaks to the affiliations and correspondences between the two fields’ (2001, p. xiii). He also pays tribute to the ‘distinctive’ authors whose ‘original, commissioned’ essays are compiled in this book, saying that ‘each [essay] attempts to articulate and address problematics and thematics made available by linking together psychoanalysis and performance, and each author stages their own points of departure and arrival accordingly’ (p. xiii).

This research arrived at another result, which is that the majority of critics, whose analysis for Pinter’s plays is discussed in this literature review, do not connect Pinter and Freud despite the fact that they use Freudian psychoanalytical terms in their analysis, which in turn allows this thesis to identify the gap in the scholarly literature and fill it accordingly.

The following review of the literature is in chronological order and begins with a book of essays edited by Arther Ganz.

Arthur Ganz, in *Pinter: A Collection of Critical Essays* (1972), compiles eleven different essays written on Harold Pinter. These essays include an interview that Pinter sat for with Lawrence M. Bensky in 1967, critical essays discussing Pinter’s plays and the techniques he uses in writing them and essays that are based on comparing Pinter’s literary works to other authors’.

Two of the essays in this book mention the blindness theme in Pinter’s *The Birthday Party* and *The Room*. These essays are ‘Harold Pinter: *The Caretaker* and Other Plays’, by James T. Boulton, and ‘Pinter’s Usurpers’, by John Pesta. Although they mention the blindness theme, which is a major concept based on the castration complex and introduced by Freud, Freud himself is not mentioned throughout the essays. In addition, none of the examples given by the authors is attributed to Freud. Moreover, Pesta’s essay also mentions a Freudian concept, i.e. dreams, with a special focus on Davies’ character in *The Caretaker* but without referring to Freud. Pesta says:

Davies insists that he never dreams; a dream is a threat to security. Davies may be unconscious of any night thoughts, but that he does dream and that his nights are not as secure as he would have them is ironically apparent from the amount of tossing and groaning he does every night (p. 130)

Surely, Freud did not invent dreams or the dreaming process. Dreams are formed in the unconscious minds of sleeping individuals; however, Freud drew attention to dreams by creating methods which makes interpreting those dreams easy. Freud, through dream analysis, made the connection between a person's dreams and his reality. The concept of dream analysis is discussed in Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1899), in which he analyses his patients' dreams because of the assumption that '[dreams] are intended as a substitute for some other thought-process, and that we have only to disclose this substitute correctly in order to discover the hidden meaning of the dream' ([1899] 1997, pp. 10- 11). To discover a dream's hidden meaning, Freud uses two methods which I also use in this thesis excessively to support my argument. The first is 'symbolic dream interpretation', which 'envisages the dream content as a whole and seeks to replace it by another content', and the second method is the 'cipher method', which 'treats the dream as a kind of secret code in which every sign is translated into another sign of known meaning, according to an established key' (pp. 12- 13). Pesta, therefore, could have mentioned Freud's two methods of dream interpretation and applied them to his analysis of 'Davies insists that he never dreams' (p. 130).

In addition, in R.F. Storch's 'Harold Pinter's Happy Families', *The Birthday Party* has its fair share of criticism – especially regarding the relationship between Stanley and Meg, as it sometimes resembles a mother-son relationship and yet some other times they give the impression that they are lovers. Meg and Stanley are an obvious example of Freud's Oedipus complex. The essay discusses this relationship in detail by mentioning the events that happen throughout the play, albeit leaving out the most important thing, which is the Freudian concept of the Oedipus complex. The same essay also mentions the father figure, childhood and 'fantasies and infantile terrors' (p. 138). Storch says:

The psychological lever is to make Stanley regress to the infantile state, where the need for security, mother, home and respectability – being "one of us" – becomes so overpowering that he is brainwashed of the last vestiges of an independent spirit. (p. 139)

This quote clearly brings back to mind the Freudian stages of the oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital, especially the oral and anal. Through these two stages, the subject is an infant and in constant need of his mother's help. Stanley's situation during his interrogation by Goldberg

and MacCann resembles his dependence on a mother figure as well as his return to his infancy by not being able to make decisions or even speak.

Pinter: A Collection of Critical Essays contains another essay by the editor Arthur Ganz, namely 'Mixing Memory and Desire: Pinter's Vision'. Ganz mentions one of Freud's concepts, the phallic symbol. He discusses Pinter's *Landscape* and emphasises one particular scene in the play:

The talk of beer barrels produces the images of physical violence: "Spile the bung. Hammer the spile through the centre of the bung. That lets the air through the bung, down the bunghole [...]" Since *bung* is both the hole in the beer barrel and the anus, these images have a strong sexual overtone... (p. 163)

Once again, there is no mention of Freud during this whole essay.

The last essay I wish to address in *Pinter: A Collection of Critical Essays* is Bert O. States' 'Pinter's Homecoming: The Shock of Nonrecognition'. In this essay, States mentions the concept of the 'uncanny' and never explains what it means or stands for, even for *The Homecoming* as a play. The essay does not explain the relationship between Freud's 'uncanny' and Pinter's *The Homecoming*.

Contrary to Ganz' selected essays, which do not mention Freud, Lucina Paquet Gabbard, in *The Dream Structure of Pinter's Plays: A Psychoanalytic Approach* (1976), discusses most of Pinter's plays in relation to dream analysis. They are, says Gabbard, obscure, ambiguous and connected 'in terms of the grouping patterns of a dream series'(p. 16). The series of connected dreams about which Gabbard talks is the foundation to her psychoanalytical approach to tackling Pinter's plays. She takes a detailed psychoanalytical approach to Pinter's plays and discusses 'The oedipal Wish', which she considers the 'Key Dream' (p. 15). For example, she discusses *The Room* (1957), noting that it is 'the most obvious example of condensation' (p. 18). She starts with the title, which 'represents the stage setting itself,' and then continues to the character Rose (p. 18). Gabbard quotes Freud on many occasions, especially his interpretation of some elements that occur frequently in dreams, such as the aforementioned rooms (p. 18).

Gabbard starts her book with a section on The Key Dream: The oedipal Wish, by employing *The Room* as the key play for interpreting the Oedipus complex, the castration complex and

dream analysis. She analyses incidents in *The Room* as examples of these Freudian concepts. For example, Gabbard illuminates Rose's oedipal and castration complexes by saying:

[Rose's] relationship with Bert also springs out of her oedipal fears. She has been unable to establish a wifely relationship. Her fear of her own erotic feelings still lives and presses her into the role of mother to her husband. This fear, in turn, determines her wish to castrate Bert and all male figures. She gives evidence of this castration complex as she spits out to Riley: "You're all deaf and dumb and blind, the lot of you. A bunch of cripples" (p. 29).

Gabbard divides the 17 plays that Pinter wrote between 1957 and 1975 into four groups: Punishment Dreams: For the Wish To Kill, Anxiety Dreams: The Wish To Be Rid of Someone, Anxiety Dreams: The Wish To Have Mother and Punishment Dreams: For the Wish To Have Mother. In each section, there are detailed references to Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*, *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* and other related essays. She attempts to keep each play in its category, but Pinter's plays are interrelated and therefore cannot be disconnected. However, Gabbard's exclusive focus on dreams means that other Freudian concepts are sometimes passed over too quickly. For example, In *Old Times*, Anna says to Deeley: 'You have a wonderful casserole... I mean wife...' (Pinter ([1971]1997), pp. 258-259). In Gabbard's analysis of this dialogue, she argues that the 'repeated reference to Kate's casserole' is a type of inversion, while it could also be read as a Freudian slip of a tongue. The slip can be a result of sexual frustration, repressed desires or even taboo, and the play itself represents all these themes that result in slips of the tongue (Timpanaro (1985), pp. 106-109).

In addition to Buse's acknowledgement of Freud's the 'uncanny' in relation to *The Homecoming* and Gabbard's detailed attribution to Freud's dream analysis, a third publication proved to be significant as an example of how to apply Freud's concepts to Pinter's works, which is *Psychoanalysis and Performance* (2001). *Psychoanalysis and Performance* covers a collection of essays compiled and edited by Patrick Campbell and Adrian Kear. In the preface, Kear says that this book 'seeks to situate performance and psychoanalysis within a dialogical framework that speaks to the affiliations and correspondences between the two fields' (2001, p. xiii). He also pays tribute to the 'distinctive' authors whose 'original, commissioned' essays are compiled in this book, saying that 'each [essay] attempts to articulate and address problematics and thematics made available by linking together psychoanalysis and performance, and each author stages their

own points of departure and arrival accordingly' (p. xiii). *Psychoanalysis and Performance* is divided into three sections that are 'in dialogue with one another' (p. xiii). Section A: 'Thinking through theatre' consists of four essays, titled: 1- 'Rehearsing the impossible: the insane root', 2- 'As if: blocking the Cartesian stage', 3- 'Scanning sublimation: the digital Poles of performance and psychoanalysis', 4- 'Now and then: psychotherapy and the rehearsal process'. Section B: 'Parallel performances' consists of five essays, titled: 5- 'Violence, ventriloquism and the vocalic body', 6- 'Hello Dolly Well Hello Dolly: the double and its theatre', 7- 'Writing home: post-modern melancholia and the uncanny', 8- 'The writer's block: performance, play and the responsibilities of analysis', 9- 'The placebo of performance: psychoanalysis in its place'. Section C: 'History, memory, trauma' consists of five essays: 10- 'Freud, Futurism, and Polly Dick', 11- '(Laughter)', 12- 'Speak whiteness: staging 'race', performing responsibility', 13- 'The Upsilon Project: a post-tragic testimonial', 14- 'Staging social memory: Yuyachkani'. The Introduction, written by Campbell, is divided into two sections whose headings relate significantly to Freudian concepts: 'Umbilical connections' and 'Beyond Blind Oedipus'. The Introduction gives an informative summary of the essays, the essays' connection to each other and the connection between psychoanalysis and performance. Campbell notes:

After all, if performing is a process in which individuals, physically present on stage, think, speak and interact in front of other individuals, then that very activity must throw into relief crucial questions about human behaviour. In making the hidden visible, the latent manifest, in laying bare the interior landscape of the mind and its fears and desires through a range of signifying practices, psychoanalytic processes are endemic to the performing arts. Similarly, the logic of performance infuses psychoanalytic thinking, from the "acting out" of hysteria to the "family romance" of desire' (2001, p. 1).

Campbell's statement raises the question about relating performing on stage to psychoanalysis via the medium of human behaviour. He suggests that real human behaviour requires psychoanalytical studies to be deciphered, which is the reason behind the idea of using a psychoanalytical approach in analysing any type of performance. Whether the performance in question is a live theatrical performance – acting, dancing or singing – or one that has to do with visual arts such as design, painting and sculpting, it will attract

psychoanalysts to analyse the acts themselves, the motives behind creating them and the message they try to convey to the audience.

The main essays from *Psychoanalysis and Performance* which this thesis will use in the sections on Psychoanalysis of the Theatre and Case Studies are all under Section B: 'Parallel performances'. The first essay is Steven Connor's 'Violence, ventriloquism and the vocalic body', and the second essay is Ernst Fischer's 'Writing home: post-modern melancholia and the uncanny space of living-room theatre'. Steven Connor's 'Violence, ventriloquism and the vocalic body', in some parts, adopts Freud's adaptation of the term 'omnipotence of thoughts' in *Totem and Taboo* (Freud, [1913] 1960, p. 85). Connor mentions the Freudian term to construct the relation between the art of ventriloquism, the purposeful primitive infant cries and the child's 'fantasy of soronous omnipotence' – which is Freud's 'magical thinking' (Connor, 2001, p. 76).

The second essay from *Psychoanalysis and Performance* which this thesis will use in the sections on Psychoanalysis of the Theatre and Case Studies is Ernst Fischer's 'Writing home: post-modern melancholia and the uncanny space of living-room theatre' (p. 115). Fischer's essay utilises three of Freud's essays: 'Mourning and Melancholia', 'Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego' and 'The Uncanny' to explain his personal journey asserting himself as a performer and the 'increasingly tenuous task' of locating himself among other performers (p. 115). His essay relates to the sexual and homosexual aspect of the development of British theatre in addition to the homosexual themes in Pinter's plays. Moreover, Fischer's living-room theatre can also be linked to the Kitchen Sink drama theme in Pinter's plays.

Martin Esslin, in *Pinter: A Study of His Plays* (1977), discusses a number of works, focusing on the settings and the relationships between characters. He talks about how the setting is usually 'a room enclosed by a dark, mysterious world outside. Again the people in the room are watching, in dreadful suspense, a door which is certain to open' (p. 69). A closed room, according to Freud, is highly suggestive of the womb image and how it protects the foetus by providing it with safety and warmth. The room/womb interpretation needs to be addressed in Pinter's plays, because the characters are exposed to tensions, evil and interrogation all the time. In addition to Esslin's mentioning of the room, Gabbard says in her interpretation of *The Room*: 'Rose clings inside the womb because, in her view, murder lurks outside' and continues to posit that 'Rose and Bert together hide in the womb. Together they fend off all

intruders' (p. 26). She clearly interprets the room as a mother's womb providing protection from 'murder' and 'intruders' (p. 26).

Esslin also talks about the Oedipus complex, infancy, rape, the mother figure and the father figure in *The Birthday Party*:

That Meg, with her crushing combination of motherliness and senile eroticism, is a mother-image seen from the viewpoint of an Oedipus complex, needs no particular stress. Stanley is reluctant to leave the warm, though seedy, nest that Meg has built for him. He is afraid of the outside world, but also of sexuality outside the cosy mother-son relationship [...] Moreover, if Meg is the mother figure with overtones of subconscious incestuous yearning, then Goldberg, with his exaggerated Jewish family feelings, is a father figure *par excellence* (pp. 84- 85).

Esslin explains the oedipal relationships in *The Birthday Party*, mentioning all the elements that constitute the Oedipus complex, but yet again, in Esslin's explanation, there is no mention of Freud. Instead of mentioning him, Esslin only refers to the Freudian Oedipus complex, saying that it 'needs no particular stress' – as if it were taken for granted that the Meg-Stanley relationship is oedipal, without the need to explain it and refer it to Freud (p. 84).

Esslin also compares *The Birthday Party* to *A Night Out*, as they both represent some sort of a mother figure (p. 93). However, in *A Night Out*, the situation is a bit different because Albert's mother is dominant and she controls her son's life until he finally explodes and hits her repeatedly until he thinks he might have killed her. He seeks a prostitute for comfort, but she turns out to be as dominant and as nagging as his mother. Consequently, he threatens to kill her in a similar manner to the way he thought he had killed his mother. Esslin comments on Albert's actions towards the prostitute, saying that they come from his 'feeling of inferiority, his rage about his inability to approach the prostitute as a sexual object' (p. 94). In 'Concerning the Most Universal Debasement in the Erotic Life', Freud says 'Where they love they do not desire, and where they desire they cannot love', thereby explaining that men choose to avoid sexual encounters with their beloved ones to avoid having incestuous feelings towards these particular people ([1921] 2006, p. 253). Albert, therefore, cannot have his mother as a lover or turn her into a prostitute, and yet he cannot have this prostitute not treat him in a motherly way, either. It is a very confusing situation for Albert.

The Caretaker is also one of the plays that Esslin talks about in *Pinter: A Study of His Plays*. He pays special attention to Aston, who used to be in a mental hospital. Aston's doctors were particularly violent with him, which leads to him being castrated – being punished – for his oedipal desires. He is castrated 'with the consent and connivance of his mother' (p. 110). It seems that Aston's mother approves of her son's castration and the destruction of his manhood. She and Albert's mother share the love of controlling their sons and everything in their lives.

Another aspect that Esslin addresses is 'the notion of erotic wish-fulfilment fantasy' in *The Lover* (p. 133), which is based on role play between a man and his wife and the desire to have sexual encounters with strangers who possess power. For example, Sarah plays the role of a girl being raped while a gentleman comes to her rescue. This man is actually her husband, but he plays the role of a man who is brave enough to rescue a strange woman from her rapist. This is only one of the role-playing scenes Sarah and her husband enjoy. Freud discusses rescue fantasies in his essay 'Concerning a Particular Type of Object-choice in Men' in *The Psychology of Love* ([1910] 2006, pp. 241- 249). The need to rescue the woman a man loves goes back to his infancy as a dependent child who constantly needs rescuing. Freud says:

When the child hears that he owes his life to his parents, that his mother "gave him life" affectionate impulses unite with impulses struggling towards adult manhood, towards independence; these yield the desire to return the gift to the parents, to give them something of equal value [...] The mother has given life to the child and that unique gift cannot easily be replaced with something of equal value [...] the rescue of the mother assumes the meaning: give or make her a child, of course a child as one is oneself (pp. 247- 248).

The quote above is discussed in detail in section (7.2.b) The Oedipus complex, and in section (7.1) as it is applied to Pinter's *The Homecoming* and *The Birthday Party* in this thesis.

So far, Ganz, Gabbard and Esslin have been discussed in this literature review, leaving the following critical readings of Pinter's plays with rich material on which to base their criticism. A brief summary of other critical analyses of Pinter's plays is provided, because they lack the same element in their criticism, namely, as mentioned throughout this thesis, using psychoanalytical terms and references without mentioning Freud.

This summary of critics whose analyses do not mention Freud's or pay tribute to his contribution in psychoanalysis starts with the first critic, Surendra Sahai in *Harold Pinter: A*

Critical Evaluation (1981), who stresses the same points of the room setting, the Oedipus complex at *The Birthday Party*, the dominant mother in *A Night Out*, the blindness theme in *The Room* and the sexual role-play in *The Lover*. The second critic is Bernard Dukore who has a different approach in criticising the plays in *Harold Pinter* (1982). He divides the plays into themes and tries to separate them in categories. Despite the categorisation, the categories overlap sometimes because Pinter's plays share mutual themes and cannot be disconnected from each other (the same happens with Gabbard). Dukore's themes are: Menace and the Absurd, Toward Greater Realism, Struggles for Power, Memory Plays and Recapitulations and Fresh Starts. He talks about the same themes that are the blindness in *The Room*, the relationships in *The Birthday Party*, mental hospitals and how to treat mental illness by castration in *The Caretaker* and even comparing it to *The Hothouse*. The third critic is Ronald Knowles in *Text and Performance: The Birthday Party and The Caretaker* (1988). He talks about the written texts of these two plays and the elements that constitute them. He says, for example, that *The Birthday Party* 'is a particular dramatic amalgam in part and as a whole [...] realism of set and naturalism of character are combined with revue sketch material and comic timing: aspects of gangster thriller are modified by music-hall comedy' (p. 31). Therefore, here we see that Knowles combines different literary terms to describe the play. He then mentions a psychological concept, i.e. substitution, noting that 'Stanley is clearly a substitute for the child Meg has never had' (p. 33). The fourth critic is D. Keith Peacock, in *Harold Pinter and the New British Theatre* (1977), who evaluates Pinter's works and justifies the notion that Pinter was one of the greatest playwrights in that period, especially in relation to the theatre revolution in 1956. Peacock describes Pinter's life, his career, his plays and his relation to politics. The fifth critic is Linda Renton, in *Pinter and the Object of Desire: An Approach through the Screenplays* (2002), who discusses the language and vision Pinter uses in his screenplays to 'engage his spectator' (p. 1). In chapter 6, 'The Object of Desire in the Plays and Other Works', she draws attention to Pinter's plays and addresses them from a Lacanian point of view. For example, she mentions:

Whereas Lacan uses a painted canvas to illustrate an object which has no material form, Pinter's original work provides a character who exemplifies such an object. The exemplary figure occurs in the play *A Slight Ache* (1958) in the form of the unspeaking, invisible Matchseller (p. 133).

Renton continues to talk about the significance of vision in Pinter's plays and its relationship with desire. She stresses Freudian concepts such as blindness and the 'uncanny' in *The Room*

and *The Birthday Party* and many others, but she speaks about them using Lacanian concepts, concentrating particularly on ‘the gaze’. The sixth critic is Dinesh Panwar, in ‘Multidimensional dialogue in Harold Pinter’s *Old Times*’ (2010), who disagrees with Renton (2002) regarding the engagement of Pinter’s spectators in his plays, using language and dialogue. Panwar says that ‘[Pinter] as a dramatist does not involve the audience so much as he imposes a theatrical spectacle on it and this he does primarily through the dialogue’ (p. 2). However, he agrees with Esslin (1977) regarding *Old Times* being a play that ‘introduces an intruder, as do the earlier plays, which threatens the prevailing peaceful mode of life and registers similar battle for territory – for possession of an individual’ (p. 1). Interestingly, he also notes that ‘the dialogue of the three characters raises the question whether the characters tell lies to one another. Can they make the audience aware that they are lying?’ (p. 2). His argument culminates in asking whether the intonation the characters use in the play helps to determine the truth or that the amount of ‘shelved memories [which] start spilling out’ makes it difficult to ‘ascertain the truth’ (p. 7). The last critic is Anshu Pandey, in ‘Harold Pinter’s *Old Times: A Memory Play*’ (2011), who expresses that ‘memory is a weapon’ and has been used in some of his plays, like *No Man’s Land* and *Betrayal* (p. 1). He briefly addresses the issue of lesbianism in the play and the relationship between Kate and Anna and says that mentioning the ‘casserole’ in one of the dialogues is a ‘symbol of bisexuality’ (p. 2). Moreover, he explains the ‘love triangle’ between the characters and arrives at the conclusion that ‘*Old Times* is one of Mr. Pinter’s most satisfying memory plays, with the careful combustion of its language and moments of almost deranged humor’ (p. 5).

In conclusion, the Literature Review provides an understanding of the various ways how critics perceive Pinter’s plays and into the uncertainty of Pinter’s narrative. However, the previous literature provides insufficient material which tackles both Pinter and Freud side by side. Pinter and Freud might seem different in some aspects, but they share a similar complex, shocking and sexual-orientated rationale. In his Nobel Prize 2005 speech, Pinter offers a slight insight into his complex thinking which, as this thesis suggests, could only be deciphered by using Freudian concepts. Pinter describes how he creates his characters; how he interacts with these characters and how he is inspired to use the language he designed specifically for these characters. He says:

It's a strange moment, the moment of creating characters who up to that moment have had no existence. What follows is fitful, uncertain, even hallucinatory, although sometimes it can be an unstoppable avalanche. The author's position is an odd one. In a sense he is not welcomed by the characters. The characters resist him, they are not easy to live with, they are impossible to define. You certainly can't dictate to them. To a certain extent you play a never-ending game with them, cat and mouse, blind man's buff, hide and seek. But finally you find that you have people of flesh and blood on your hands, people with will and an individual sensibility of their own, made out of component parts you are unable to change, manipulate or distort.

So language in art remains a highly ambiguous transaction, a quicksand, a trampoline, a frozen pool which might give way under you, the author, at any time (2005).

The quote above provides an overview of how Pinter thinks and how his characters behave. In addition to Pinter's own words, his wife Lady Antonia Fraser shares her personal insights about Pinter in her book *Must You Go? My Life with Harold Pinter* (2010) and reflects on his writing process saying that she 'always paid special attention to any green shoots where Harold's writing was concerned' because this was a 'consequence of a biographer living with a creative artist' (2010). Fraser also clarifies that Pinter 'behaved exactly like artists behave in books but seldom in real life. He never wrote unless he had a sudden inspiration, an image, as he often used to explain' (2010). Following the publication of her memoir, Fraser is interviewed at the Chicago Humanities Festival and asked in that interview – posted on YouTube – about her history with Pinter, and specifically, about how she portrays him as a different person to what he appears to be as an author. She portrays him as a loving romantic husband who has offered her romantic gestures from the day they first met. She proceeds by reading an excerpt from her memoir describing their first interaction:

Following the fracas at the National Portrait Gallery, love finally blossomed in 1975 after a revival of Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, directed by Fraser's brother-in-law, Kevin Billington. At a dinner party afterwards they didn't speak until the end when Pinter, "with those amazing, extremely black eyes", asked, "Must you go?" "No, it's not absolutely essential," she replied, and after hours of talk she accepted a chauffeur-driven lift with Pinter back to her house where he "stayed with extraordinary recklessness until six o'clock in the morning, but of course the real recklessness was mine (YouTube, 2010, minute 10).

After their first interaction, they reconnected and stayed together for 33 years until the day he passed in 2008. In the same interview Fraser also supports her admired imagery of Pinter as a loving person after an audience member asks:

Q: I imagine a relationship with Harold Pinter would be full of ominous silences. Where there any times in your relationship when you felt you'd strayed into a Pinter play?

A: It is a rather good joke, but people say "you're not really very like your plays", and he says: "my plays are Pinteresque and I'm just Pinter". Which I think was pretty accurate (YouTube, 2010, minutes 51 -52).

Fraser's insights are highly appreciated in explaining the contradiction in Pinter's personality. She clarifies that he separates his personal life from his professional life. She says that:

The Homecoming, which is extremely tough, actually shocking play, if I ever go to it and I am not shocked by it I think that was not a good production, because it is totally shocking, and it was nothing like Harold at all (...) Harold was an only child, of adoring parents, and *The Homecoming* is all about getting the relationship between men, the brothers, the jealousies of brothers. And I used to think how does he know so much about family life, but he didn't actually have it (...) His own home life was nothing –either with me or as a child – like *The Homecoming* (minute 56)

Fraser's articulate comprehension of Pinter's personal and professional relation assists this thesis in creating an argument that Pinter has more layers to be uncovered. One of those layers is the psychoanalytical point of view on his plays. However, there is a scarcity in the psychoanalytical literature in relation to Pinter. Therefore, this thesis offers an interpretation of his work and his connection to psychoanalysis. The said connection is portrayed, firstly, through the following Research Objectives and Research Questions which this thesis aims to answer, and secondly, through the Methodology and Definition of Terms in Section 7:

6.1. Research Objectives

The objectives of this thesis are as follows. A close reading of psychoanalytic and drama texts, to test a series of key psychoanalytical concepts against selected plays in Pinter's oeuvre; namely *Old Times*, *The Homecoming* and *The Birthday Party*; locating the thesis in relation to the existing but limited psychoanalytical criticism of Pinter and, finally, establishing and addressing the specific methodological issues arising from the application of the five selected psychoanalytical terms to drama and theatre while framing my original

contribution as a Literature student coming from the Middle Eastern patriarchal culture to study in the United Kingdom.

6.2. Research Questions

- 1) How do specific psychoanalytical concepts, such as the Oedipus complex, the castration complex, the ‘uncanny’, aggression and dream analysis, help illuminate key plays such as *Old Times*, *The Homecoming* and *The Birthday Party*?
- 2) What are the challenges of taking a psychoanalytical approach to analyse the selected case studies?
- 3) How does a Freudian psychoanalytical reading of Pinter performed by an educated Jordanian Muslim woman challenge the existing approaches to his plays (e.g. Gabbard’s *The Dream Structure of Pinter’s Plays*)?

7.0. Methodology and Definition of Terms

7.1. Methodology

Writing this thesis and answering the questions raised above in (5.2) requires using three methods of critical analysis: conducting psychoanalysis of Pinter’s plays, defining the main psychoanalytical terms and conducting psychoanalysis of the theatre.

Firstly, the psychoanalysis of Pinter’s plays is conducted by reading them closely, as well as closely reading Freudian material and applying his psychoanalytical concepts to Pinter’s plays, using a critical analysis method. Secondly, the terms to be defined are the Oedipus complex, Pinter and the Angry Young Men, the castration complex, the ‘uncanny,’ aggression and dream analysis. These terms facilitate linking together Pinter and Freud’s concepts. Thirdly, the thesis takes a psychoanalytical approach to examining the theatre, by applying Freud’s theories to the theatre itself and discussing sexuality in terms of its relation to performance.

The research included a search for and a reading of secondary criticisms of Harold Pinter, using books, journals and electronic databases provided by the library of the University of Salford. Texts discussing Pinter in relation to psychoanalysis were rare.

I concentrated on reading books and articles about Pinter, Freud's psychoanalysis in general and the material I was recommended to read on psychoanalysis in connection with drama. In addition, I worked my way through Pinter's complete collection of plays, as they form the base for my thesis.

My resources for compiling material on the plays consisted of attending live performances of the selected plays, watching recorded film adaptations and viewing YouTube videos containing interviews with the actors, directors, Pinter himself and his wife Lady Antonia Fraser. I was lucky enough that during my stay in the UK I had the chance to visit the theatre often and attended productions of both *Old Times* (February 2013), in The Harold Pinter Theatre, London, and *The Birthday Party* (June 2013), at The Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester. I unfortunately did not have a chance to attend a live performance of *The Homecoming*, but instead I relied mainly on a recording of the original play in cinematic form, directed by Peter Hall in 1973.

However, I struggled throughout my journey to find books and other resources discussing Freud's psychoanalysis against Pinter's plays, because there is a gap in this field – which this thesis aims at filling. Almost all of the books discussing Pinter's works use Freudian concepts such as the Oedipus complex, the castration complex, dreams, the 'uncanny', daydreaming, fantasies, infancy, oral and anal stages, blindness as a substitute for castration and so on, without mentioning Freud or referring to him directly. The other problem I faced in searching for articles on the same subject is that there is a limited number of recent articles, and even those recent articles I read repeated the original Pinter criticisms written by critics between the 1960s and '70s. I am, therefore, attempting to add a new, original reading of the plays by voicing my own experience as an audience member attending Pinter's plays in the 2000's, bearing in mind that I come originally from a patriarchal Arab Muslim culture with no previous theatre attending experience.

In this thesis, I use mainly male pronouns (he, him, his, himself, etc.) to refer to people in general instead of interchanging between male and female pronouns (he/she, him/her, his/hers, himself/herself, etc.). There are two reasons why I use male pronouns. The first is because they embrace both male and female genders, with no specification. The second

reason is to avoid confusing the reader, since some of the quotes I employ in this thesis are written by female authors, some of Freud's case studies involve female patients and the selected Pinter plays include female characters. Thus, I choose to use female pronouns in accordance with the actual females mentioned in this thesis (authors and fictional characters) instead of using them to refer to unspecified general people.

The literature review mainly includes publications reviewing Pinter's works and publications linking him to Freud. However, each section in this thesis also contains a literature review of previously written works on the related subjects. For example, section (7.2.b), which defines the Oedipus complex, contains a literature review specifically written about Freud's Oedipus complex, related concepts and how it manifests in the plays selected for this research.

The sections in this thesis, including the methodology and the case studies, have all been written and re-written a few times, because of a number of factors and difficulties that were often beyond my control. Changing supervisors was one of the main difficulties I faced. Having five different supervisors set me back somewhat, caused frustration and cost me a lot of time. Several changes to the methodology also occurred, such as the layout of the thesis and the number of plays considered (originally six, now three). I decided to focus more on the three and apply all definitions to them, because this was a new method. After consulting with my supervisors, I decided to make the thesis concise and focus on three key plays instead of six. The second factor was a change in my thinking about Pinter and Freud on how to link them both together, and how to show the influence Freud's concepts had on the creation of Pinter's characters and plays. The more resources I read, the more the sections of the thesis had to be edited to respond to the read material. This thesis is developed from a simple single idea that Pinter is better read through a lens of Freudian concepts and theories, from my personal point of view as an educated woman from the Middle East, and so it had to come to a conclusion that Pinter and Freud can be connected.

7.2. Definition of Terms

This section is concerned with defining the terms that will assist in analysing the selected Pinter plays psychoanalytically. The main terms defined are: Angry Young Men, the Oedipus complex, the castration complex, the 'uncanny,' aggression and dream analysis. I decided to emphasise the importance of Pinter in relation to the 'Angry Young Men', because this

relation builds the foundation and forms the background to Pinter's personality as a playwright. I then define the abovementioned five particular key terms in Freudian psychoanalysis, to show their significant role in linking psychoanalysis to the three selected Pinter plays.

7.2.a Pinter and the Angry Young Men

Harold Pinter was born to Jewish parents on 10 October 1930 in Hackney, in London's East End. At that time, Jews were discriminated against in Britain, which made him, his parents and other families feel threatened. Later, in 1939, Britain declared war on Germany, which resulted in the evacuation of Jewish families from London, including the Pinters. These families went through many challenges during the evacuation and until the time they moved back to London in 1944. Pinter attended Hackney Downs Grammar School from 1942- 1948 and he admired his English teacher, who connected him more to theatre and directed the plays in which Pinter acted, including *Macbeth* and *Romeo and Juliet*. Of all his subjects, he enjoyed literature the most along with debating and sports. In 1948, he received a London County Council grant to study acting at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, but he did not go through with it and quit.

In 1949, he developed an infatuation with Beckett's writings and read extracts from his novel *Watt* before being published later, in 1953, with his novel *Murphy*. Pinter has acknowledged the influence Beckett had on his own writings, especially the early works.

Pinter wrote his first play, *The Room*, in 1957, in four days upon the request of his director friend Henry Woolf. The play was received well, and it was then that Pinter introduced *The Birthday Party* and *The Dumb Waiter*. However, being a new playwright with such a talent for writing plays that presented both comedy and mystery, he received a lot of criticism. Alan Bold, for instance, in *Harold Pinter: You Never Heard Such Silence* notes:

Pinter is playing games with his audience and that this is a disreputable thing for a dramatist to do [...] I do not believe there is anything intrinsically restricting in being "a player's playwright" or an "actor's playwright": surely the precedent of actor-writer Shakespeare is evident of that. Nor do I believe that Pinter is an amoralist obsessed by violence (1984, p. 12).

The Birthday Party, for example, raised conflicting opinions among critics, and even Pinter himself had his own comments about his work. He once said at a speech made at the National Student Drama festival in Bristol:

I've had two full-length plays produced in London. The first ran a week and the second ran a year. Of course, there are differences between the two plays. In *The Birthday Party*, I employed a certain amount of dashes in the text, between phrases. In *The Caretaker* I cut out the dashes and used dots instead [...] You can't fool the critics for long (1962).

In addition to being an example of controversy among critics for its expression of everyday life and routine on the one hand and violence and ambiguity on the other, *The Birthday Party* is also considered an example of the new age in literature that emerged in the 1950s, known as the "New Wave". Topics discussed in the plays involved everyday routines, homely topics, nostalgia and social issues. Stephen Lacey talks about this period in *British Realist Theatre*, stating:

It was a period of full employment, of prosperity and social stability, of the birth of the age of television, of the 'New Elizabethan Age' and the Coronation [...] Theatre's contribution to this cultural moment was the much-mythicized first performance of *Look Back in Anger* – and what followed it – has a strong smell of the barricades about it [...] Even writers with a more critical stance towards the plays and the theatrical and political values of the New Wave accept that this period was crucial and formative (1995, p. 1).

The New Wave movement that emerged in the 1950s included the "kitchen sink" drama, which had many characteristics that distinguished it from the previous kind of pretentious Victorian drama. Dan Rebellato, in 1956 *And All That: the making of Modern British Drama*, starts by explaining:

But on 8 May 1956, everything changed. New youthful audiences flocked to the Royal Court to hear Jimmy Porter express their own hopes and fears [...] A new wave of dramatists sprang up in Osborne's wake; planting their colors on British stages, speaking for a generation who had for so long been silent, they forged a living, adult, vital theatre (1999, pp. 1- 2).

The kitchen sink expression comes from society and how real people live, by presenting their everyday lives and making the kitchen and the living room the centres of attention in the

whole play. We see this clearly in John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*, in which the whole play is set in a living room while the characters are reading the newspaper, ironing and talking about everyday life in addition to their personal problems. In the same play, we see the role of the Angry Young Man, played by Jimmy Porter, who expresses strong opinions against society and the lack of opportunities offered to him, in addition to his resentment of the life he is living at that moment, which reflects on the people around him – the other characters in the play who can clearly feel all the negativity coming towards them from this negative individual. Porter, with this negativity and resentment, might as well represent many British people living in the 1950s, who felt distressed by their own lives and wanted to make changes, yet they could not do so, due to social class restrictions or financial frustration, because, according to Lindsay Anderson in 'Get out and Push', 'the grim truth is that we still live in one of the most class-conscious societies in the world' (1957, p. 157). This society, which Anderson mentions in the late 1950s, still has the same characteristics and still adheres to the same rules, even if the members of the society deny it or pretend that they all belong to the same class.

Raymond Williams, in *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht*, talks about *Look Back in Anger* by discussing its significance in British drama:

A general definition of *Look Back in Anger* is not difficult; it has indeed been widely made. Its details of talk and atmosphere, and through these its expression of an intense feeling – a frustrated anger, a prolonged waiting, which must be broken, at any cost, by a demonstration, a shout – have an authentic power (1968, pp. 318- 319).

Porter is also discussed in Kenneth Tynan's *Tynan on Theatre* and compared to Hamlet:

Jimmy Porter is the completest young pup in our literature since Hamlet, Prince of Denmark. [...] Mr Osborne's picture of a certain kind of modern marriage is hilariously accurate: he shows us two attractive young animals engaged in competitive martyrdom, each reluctant to break the clinch for fear of bleeding to death (1964, p.41).

The Angry Young Man in Porter has a great deal of anger and resentment towards the society, and Osborne portrays this anger in the way his protagonist talks to others. For instance:

I suppose people of our generation aren't able to die for good causes any longer. We had all that done for us, in the thirties and the forties, when we were still kids. (*In his*

familiar, semi-serious mood). There aren't any good, brave causes left. If the big bang does come and we all get killed off, it won't be able in aid of the old-fashioned, grand design. It'll just be for the Brave New-nothing-very-much-thank-you. About as pointless and inglorious as stepping in front of a bus. No, there's nothing left for it, me boy, but to let yourself be butchered by the women (1957, pp. 84- 85).

Osborne, according to Patricia D. Denison in *John Osborne: A Casebook*, 'made the personal concerns of Jimmy and the national concerns of England resonate with larger cultural concerns whose implications have become clearer with the passing of time' (2012, p. 52).

The message behind Osborne's writing in *Look Back in Anger* does not lie in the object of Porter's anger but in the anger itself.

The Angry Young Men movement and its representation in *Look Back in Anger* started a revolution in British literature and began to articulate the themes that Osborne focused on in his play. This led to the emergence of many publications and works of art that had the word 'anger' as a part of the title or had the 'anger' theme hidden within the work itself. Anger here could be the act of anger itself, societal rebellion, sexual issues and even racial topics. One example in this regard is Shelagh Delaney's *A Taste of Honey*, which premiered in 1958. The play is set in Salford and tackles themes such as social class, race, gender and sexual orientation in Britain in the 1950s. It became well-known as a kitchen sink play because of the themes and ideas it presented. *A Taste of Honey* tells the story of a 17-year-old girl, named Jo, and her mother, Helen, the latter of whom is shown as an unsophisticated alcoholic woman who only cares about her sexual desires. Helen, as selfish as she appears, leaves Jo alone after she begins a relationship with Peter, a younger, rich lover. Meanwhile, Jo meets Jimmy, a black sailor, and starts a relationship with him, which results in Jo becoming pregnant. Jimmy proposes to her but then goes away to sea, thereby leaving her alone. She finds a place to live with a homosexual artist, Geoffrey, who wants to take care of her and her unborn child. Her mother returns after leaving her rich lover and wants to start over with Jo.

Obviously, a play like this attracted a good deal of attention and criticism, especially as it was written by a 17-year-old woman who was considered one of the first playwrights to touch upon these themes. All of these themes have been considered controversial and sensitive to address until now. Rebellato says in *1956 And All That* that 'the demand for changes in the laws on censorship and some private sexual acts were both seen as a means of limitation, control and prevention' (1999, p. 208).

These themes are only controversial because of their brutal honesty. To portray a black man and a homosexual man as normal people who have a great impact on the main characters in the play is the point on which Delaney focuses. She presents them without making racist or homophobic comments, as they both exist as an example of larger groups of people – whether they are non-white or homosexual. Moreover, she makes it seem natural for a white teenage girl to be pregnant with a black man’s baby and being supported by a homosexual artist. The characters that are hated the most or looked upon as the villains are in fact white – Helen and her lovers – not the black and the homosexual characters, as expected from the previous era in literature. Delaney was obviously trying to be one of these Angry Young Men – or Women – who do not want to abide by the rules of the theatre or the limitations of censored writing. This is just like Harold Pinter, who had his own ideas on how to write a controversial play without planning on it being this way.

Harold Pinter works such as *The Birthday Party*, *Old Times*, *The Homecoming* and others also portray the same feelings of a homely lifestyle in the beginning, followed by domestic anger as the plays move on. *The Birthday Party*, for example, starts with Petey in the kitchen of a boarding house and Meg serving him his usual breakfast while showering him with the same questions she asks every day about the taste of this breakfast and about the news in the newspaper he always reads at the same time every morning, before he goes to work.

Meg. Is that you, Petey?

Pause.

Petey, is that you?

Pause.

Petey?

Petey. What?

Meg. Is that you?

Petey. Yes, it’s me.

Meg. What? (*Her face appears at the hatch.*) Are you back?

Petey. Yes.

Meg. I’ve got your cornflakes ready. (*She disappears and reappears.*) Here’s your cornflakes.

He rises and takes the plate from her, sits at the table, props up the paper and begins to eat. MEG enters by the kitchen door.

Are they nice?

Petey. Very nice.

Meg. I thought they'd be nice. (*She sits at the table.*) You got your paper?

Petey: Yes.

Meg. Is it good?

Petey. Not bad.

Meg. What does it say?

Petey. Nothing much.

Meg. You read me out some nice bits yesterday.

Petey. Yes, well, I haven't finished this one yet.

Meg. Will you tell me when you come to something good?

Petey. Yes.

Pause. ([1958] 1991, pp. 3- 4)

However, when the play moves on to the following scenes, the anger starts to emerge. Stanley is one of the angry characters in the play, who starts expressing this irritation by criticising his breakfast as 'horrible' (p. 8), Meg who made the breakfast as 'a bad wife' (p. 10) and even the boarding house they all stay in for being unsuccessful and unknown to people. The other two angry characters in *The Birthday Party* are Goldberg and McCann, whose real identity is unknown to everyone in the play. They perform violent acts against Stanley and question him about personal and abstract things just to frustrate and confuse him.

Stephen Lacey comments on *The Birthday Party* and people's reactions to it in *British Realist Theatre: The new wave in its context 1956-1965*, stating:

The Birthday Party was the first of the plays to receive a London production and was therefore the first to be substantially reviewed. Those reviews were uniformly hostile [...] enough to close the play after a few days. However, critical opinion shifted quite quickly. Wardle produced a positive review of the production later in the year in *Encore* [...] By the time *The Caretaker* appeared, Pinter's intensions were (apparently) better understood. (1995, p. 140)

The kitchen sink drama that focused more on everyday routine is embodied in *The Birthday Party*. Williams, in *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht*, discusses it in light of reality in the scenes:

The menace of what they are doing is tangible but unexplained; it is the irruption of a bizarre and arbitrary violence into an ordinary life. The structure of feeling is familiar: the precarious hold on reality, the failures of communication, the inevitability of violence and exploitation. (1987, p. 323)

Moreover, Pinter provokes a sense of unease and imminent violence in most of his plays – feelings that embodied the Angry Young Men movement that was popular at that time. Pinter stated in an interview in December 1988 with Mel Gussow in *Conversations with Pinter*:

Between you and me, the play showed how the bastards[...] how religious forces ruin our lives. But who's going to say that in the play? That would be impossible. I said to Peter Wood, did he want Petey, the old man, to act as a chorus? All Petey says is one of the most important lines I've ever written. As Stan is taken away, Petey says, "Stan, don't let them tell you what to do. I've lived that line all my damn life. Never more than now" (1994, p. 71).

The interview goes on to trace and include the same theme in the other plays. For instance, Pinter talks about Ruth's character in *The Homecoming* as one of the free women who could do and say whatever she wants:

Gussow: That's a theme running through the play. Could you trace it?

Pinter: Ruth in *The Homecoming* – no one can tell her what to do. She is the nearest to a free woman that I've ever written – a free and independent mind. [Pause.] I understand your interest in me as a playwright. But I'm more interested in myself as a citizen. We still say we live in free countries, but we damn well better be able to speak freely. And it's our responsibility to say precisely what we think (pp. 71- 72).

When Pinter says that Ruth 'is the nearest to a free woman that [he's] ever written', he paints a certain picture that Ruth is an individual who is free in her social autonomy. However, I would also interpret his statement as him seeing Ruth as a character who is separate from him as a writer. He probably tries to create distance between him as a playwright and the characters he creates. Ruth, according to the quote mentioned above, is a special case for Pinter; he thinks of her as a 'free and independent mind' and this creates the image of her as being the subject, not the object in *The Homecoming*. Being portrayed by Pinter as 'free' and 'independent' shows that Ruth is someone who is an active character because she is the one to set the rules and control her faith. She controls who touches her and who has sex with her in Max's house although the men in the family explicitly express their plans for Ruth's prostitution. It means that the men try to set the rules for Ruth's future. She might listen, but

she will not make them dictate the rules to her. Pinter's quote clearly demonstrates how Ruth is the subject in this play because she is able to 'speak freely' about sex, and she is also able to listen to the family men's sexual fantasies without showing a sign of offence. This is an example of the author's creative writing which could be defined as a process where the author showcases his narrative skills, the skill of character development, and the use of literary figures of speech depending on his stream of consciousness and on observing his surroundings to finally produce a creative literary work.

Another aspect to creative writing is being influenced by other authors without becoming a replica. Pinter talked about the authors who had influenced his style of writing and the type of movies he used to watch when he was young. He mentioned Beckett, Brecht, Shakespeare and others and explained how he never was theatre-orientated:

Gussow: Do you go to the movies often?

Pinter: Not often [...] You know, American movies meant an awful lot to me. I was brought up on them. I had a very rich cinematic education, much more than the theatre. I never went to the theatre.

Gussow: What movies did you see?

Pinter: I'm talking about the 1940s. I saw all the American black and white gangster films, which were great (p. 137).

'Gangster films', as he describes them, influenced his work the most, as exemplified in the violent scenes and foul language the characters used on stage, which were his own interpretation of the Angry Young Men movement. For example, in (1940's- 1950's) there was an excessive number of gangster and mafia films which expressed violence and foul language. I will mention some of the film titles including short quotations from the films to get an idea of what Pinter refers to. The example quotations I refer to are: 'We're the people that live. They can't wipe us out. They can't lick us. And we'll go on forever, Pa... 'cause... we're the people', *The Grapes of Wrath* (1940); 'Get away from me. Don't touch me, you ape. You hairy ape!' *The Hairy Ape* (1944); 'With all my heart, I still love the man I killed!' *The Letter* (1940); 'The last man who said that to me was Archie Leach just a week before he cut his throat.' *His Girl Friday* (1940); '-He's got a lot of charm -He comes by it naturally. His grandfather was a snake' *His Girl Friday* (1940); 'You're a vile and cheap and deceitful liar. Mustard! You've been eating! And you let me sit here thinking I was going to die!' *The Bride Came C.O.D.* (1941); 'So you're a private detective. I didn't know they existed, except in

books, or else they were greasy little men snooping around hotel corridors' *The Big Sleep* (1946); 'You are protected by the enormity of your stupidity - for a time' *Notorious* (1946); and 'Never apologize, mister. It's a sign of weakness' *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon* (1949) to name a few.

To conclude, Pinter was not one of the original Angry Young Men, yet he was influenced by the movement itself and employed many of its ideas in his pieces. Pinter's plays, therefore, have the same characteristics as the Angry Young Men movement but can be read and interpreted as having their own identities. This is especially relevant, in that not only do they relate to the 1950s and 1960s, but they also relate to a more universal time, because of their topics and Pinter's way of handling these topics.

7.2.b The Oedipus complex

The first definition I seek, in order to assist with understanding Pinter's plays from a Freudian perspective, is the Oedipus complex, which I will start with defining in relation to Freud and other critics, to the literature and to the plays selected herein.

In psychoanalytical theory, the Oedipus complex is associated with children and their relationships with both parents. This relationship develops during the phallic stage (age 3-6) – the third stage of psychosexual development – when a child becomes more independent and starts to be aware of his or her body and other people's bodies, especially the different genitalia. In this stage, a child will also be curious to discover the physical difference between a boy and a girl, as he feels that his genitalia are transforming onto his erogenous zone.

If we look at the history of the Oedipus complex, we see that while growing up, a boy will be fixated on his mother and a girl will be fixated on her father. This unconscious fixation that, according to psychoanalytical theory, develops at a young age might happen due to many reasons, including the child's curiosity towards the opposite sex and the actual relationship between the child's parents. However, Freud states in *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* that a child is erotically aroused by his mother's strokes and kisses, thereby making the child 'a substitute for a complete sexual object.' This shows that 'a child's intercourse with anyone responsible for his care affords him an unending source of sexual excitation and satisfaction from his erotogenic zone' ([1905] 2011, p. 100). Freud explains that a mother

acts towards her children out of love and care and never out of sexual desires. He adds that ‘a mother would probably be horrified if she were made aware that all her marks of affection were arousing her child’s sexual instinct and preparing for its later intensity’ (p. 100).

Freud explains the Oedipus complex in detail and attracts many fellow psychologists who may or may not agree with his interpretations. In *Freud and the Post Freudians*, J.A.C Brown provides different interpretations of psychoanalytic theories, including the Oedipus complex, the origins of which he investigates from the points of view of Jung, Karen Horney, Erich Fromm, Harry Stack Sullivan and others. Although Freud bases his theory on Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* and Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Brown demonstrates the ‘variations and deviations of others who have been influenced by Freud (1994, p. viii).

Brown first talks about Jung and his own interpretation of the Oedipus complex and its history:

The Oedipus complex is said to be founded upon a primitive love for the food-providing mother and only becomes tinged with sexuality during the pre-pubertal phase. The castration complex is seen as a symbolic sacrifice or renunciation of infantile wishes, which has nothing to do with literal castration. Repression plays a little part in Jungian psychology and therefore is not assumed to be important in the causation of neurosis. (p. 49)

Jung bases the Oedipus complex on the person’s past and his ‘primitive’ relationship with his mother, who cares for him and provides him with food. Bearing in mind that food is one of the major instinctual needs for human beings, this need has to be fulfilled – and there is no better person to do it than the mother who had once been attached physically to her foetus and provided him with food, warmth and shelter while he was still in her womb. Otto Rank, however, disagrees with Jung regarding the cause of neurosis and presents his theory that ‘all neurosis originates in the trauma of birth’ (p. 52). The birth trauma, which is the major event that results in a child’s separation from his mother, is in itself an experience that causes anxiety in the individual’s past as an infant and in his later infantile experiences like weaning and symbolic castration. All of these represent the experiences of separation from a loved one and eventually cause anxiety.

After experiencing the traumatising birth experience, a mother tries to compensate for the anxiety she thinks she caused her child and starts teaching him how an affectionate person should be treating him. In addition, when a child grows up, he will look for the same sort of

affection from his partner. While searching for the perfect partner, this grown-up will be unconsciously drawn to people similar to his own mother, who was the first to teach him about sexuality and the first to arouse these feelings and desires. In addition, a mother's excessive affection could prevent a child from becoming independent and could cause him to be spoiled and neurotic. A child's neurotic behaviour eventually manifests when he is in a situation where he cannot possess something in particular, or if he is not able to have the affection of his mother or even the affection of someone who replaces her in the future. As a result of these experiences, a child starts forming an oedipal desire towards his mother, which continues to develop throughout his life.

Although a mother's love for her child is pure and free of sexual desires, a child is sexually attracted to her. A male child is attracted to his mother in the same way that his father is attracted to her, and yet he fears that he will be punished by his own father for having these feelings and be castrated. The fear of castration arises from his awareness of the different genitalia at this age and his observation of the female child's body. He thinks that this female is already castrated for having the same feelings towards her mother, so he keeps his feelings hidden and eventually they become repressed and forgotten until he finds a partner who resembles his mother in one way or another. The same male child will also form feelings of hatred towards his own father, as he thinks his father hurts his mother and that he keeps her for himself all day and night. According to Freud, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*:

Parents play a leading part in the infantile psychology of all persons who subsequently become psychoneurotics. Falling in love with one parent and hating the other forms part of the permanent stock of the psychic impulses which arise in early childhood and are of such importance as the material of the subsequent neurosis ([1899] 1997, p. 155).

Freud, with his view on *Oedipus Rex*, draws attention to the play which tells the legend of King Oedipus, who is destined to kill his father, Laius, King of Thebes, and marry his own mother, Jocasta. After being informed about this destiny by the oracle, his parents decide to kill him, but he is rescued and he lives with King Polybus of Corinth, who raises him as his own child. After he grows up, he is told half the truth about his destiny, without knowing that he is not Polybus's biological son, so he has to escape his fate. On his journey to Thebes, he meets his biological father, Laius, but not knowing his real identity, they quarrel and Oedipus kills him. He continues his journey and solves the riddle of the Sphinx, whose reward is to marry the newly widowed Queen of Thebes, Jocasta – his biological mother. He marries his

mother and takes on her children, who are his brothers and sister as well. The prophecy of the oracle is fulfilled after these two major incidents and there is no turning back. When the truth is revealed many years later, Jocasta kills herself out of disgrace, and when Oedipus finds her body, he blinds himself and banishes himself to the mountains.

Oedipus fulfilled his destiny and every child's repressed wish to be his mother's lover, and 'his fate moves us only because it might have been our own, because the oracle laid upon us before our birth the very curse which rested upon him' (pp. 156- 157). Freud explains that 'like Oedipus, we live in ignorance of the desires that offend morality, the desires that nature has forced upon us, and after their unveiling we may well prefer to advert our gaze from the scenes of our childhood' (p. 157).

Later on, Freud was influenced by Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, which tells the tragedy of Hamlet, the Prince of Denmark, whose calling is to revenge his father's murder and kill his uncle who committed this crime, in order to become the King of Denmark and marry Gertrude, Hamlet's mother. This masterpiece made a great contribution to creating Freud's theories because of the ambiguity of Hamlet as a man and his unconscious desires directed towards his mother. These desires, like Oedipus's, are hidden and unrecognised, which is the reason why Freud sees it as another strong example of the Oedipus complex. Franklin says in *Freud's Literary Culture* that 'there is no doubt that these plays are inextricably bound up with his theory of the complex', adding:

Freud commonly refers to Sophocles' text not to merely for purposes of demonstration, but also as a source of evidence. Jocasta's remark that men commonly dream of incest is, for example, taken as corroboration that the Oedipus myth itself stems from dream material (2000, pp. 31- 32).

According to Brown, in *Freud and the Post-Freudians*, Freud emphasised the importance of sex in explaining the mother-child relationship and the concept of the Oedipus complex, while Suttie emphasised the significance of love. He stated that 'the need for a mother is primarily presented to the child's mind as a need for company and as discomfort in isolation' (p. 64). This statement explicitly denies Freud's theory that a child has incestuous desires towards his mother but has love for her, which arises from his natural need of not wanting to be left alone.

Melanie Klein, on the other hand, agrees with Freud regarding his interpretation of the Oedipus complex but adds the elements of aggression and cannibalism in a mother-child relationship. Brown investigates Klein's theory and notes that these feelings towards the mother arise from the infant's 'innate awareness of parental intercourse and other happenings or objects relating to the processes of birth and sex' (p. 109). He adds that:

Oedipus blinding himself is expressing a deep-seated urge to make reparation. The theories of Melanie Klein help to explain the tales of cannibalism and dismemberment, of matricide and primary aggression in greater detail, since in Kleinian theory aggressive feelings towards the mother arise long before the hate felt towards the father during the Oedipus stage, and that this aggression projected upon the mother is reflected back upon the child in the form of images of a wicked devouring witch with long teeth who eats little children. But it was originally the child who, during the oral stage, wished to devour his mother (p. 115).

In 'Concerning a Particular Type of Object-choice in Men', Freud provides a psychoanalytical explanation of the male object-choice and the 'conditions of love', which demonstrate the relationship between his past with his mother and his future with his partner, with one of the conditions being the need to 'rescue the loved one' ([1910] 2006, p. 244). Due to his repressed feelings and desires towards his mother, a male child grows up over-protective of the significant female in his life; he tries to 'rescue' her from any danger or threat and believes he is her only protector. Furthermore, he tries to provide protection and support because of what he went through in his childhood and the imprecise memories of his father hurting his mother. However, he never reacts against it because of his fear of castration and that he will be left vulnerable without his penis, like his mother and the other females he encountered while growing up. A male, in this case, thinks that the female had the same feelings towards her mother when she was in the 'pre-oedipal phase', but she was castrated by the father and was hurt by him just like her mother. Freud describes this situation in 'On Female Sexuality', declaring that:

On the one hand, the Oedipus complex may be extended to encompass all relations between the child and both parents, while on the other, new discoveries may also be taken into account if we say that the woman enters the normal positive Oedipus situation only after overcoming a previous phase governed by the negative complex. During this phase, the father is not really much to the girl apart from an annoying rival, although hostility towards him never reaches the characteristic pitch that it does for the boy. We long ago abandoned any expectations of close parallelism between male and female sexual development ([1931] 2006, p. 310).

A male's object of love has always been his mother, but the female's love object starts as her mother and remains this way until she is made aware of her father's power, who later on replaces her mother as the object of love and desire. The father has more power and influence over his daughter than his son; therefore, she is castrated early on in her life and has no more desire for her mother.

Karen Horney and Suttie's views on the Oedipus complex are similar in some ways. Horney does not believe in the universality and the innateness of the complex but that it arises from two possible environmental conditions: firstly, the witting or unwitting sexual stimulation of the child by the frustrated father or mother and, secondly, from anxiety on the part of a child looking to compensate for hostile tendencies in a frustrating home situation (p. 138).

This image of Horney's complex might look similar to the Freudian Oedipus complex, in that it contains the elements he suggests, namely an attachment to one parent and jealousy and hate towards the other parent, or anyone trying to take the parent's love away from the child. However, she suggests these environmental situations to justify the reasons behind the emergence of oedipal feelings in the mother-child relationship.

Another critic whose ideas are presented by Brown is Erich Fromm, who creates his own theory of personality based on Freud's theory. Fromm concludes that Freud accepted the traditional beliefs that, firstly, there exists a basic dichotomy between man and society and, secondly, that human nature is 'at the roots evil' (p. 149). His theory eventually concludes that 'man is "naturally" antisocial and it is the function of society to domesticate him' (p. 149). Domesticating a human being can be seen as repressing his sexual desires towards his mother and his death wishes towards his father. Fromm also provides a different interpretation on the personality of Oedipus as an individual, suggesting that Oedipus is a rebel and that the play itself represents the 'rebellion of the son against the authority of the father of the patriarchal family' and that it is a kind of a manifestation of 'the struggle between matriarchal patriarchal forms of society' (p. 163). Therefore, Oedipus fulfils his wishes by marrying Jocasta, which represents his victory over this patriarchal society and eventually leads him to his independence.

Brown also presents the ideas of Harry Stack Sullivan, J.F. Brown and Otto Fenichel. Sullivan, who mainly worked with young schizophrenic patients, proposes a 'self-contained theory' influenced by Freud, though he notes:

All “human performances” may be divided into two categories: the pursuit of satisfactions and the pursuit of security. Satisfactions are the drives or physical needs for sleep, food and drink and sexual fulfilment [...] The pursuits relating to security, on the other hand, are cultural in nature. They are [...] all those movements, actions, speech, thoughts, reveries and so on which pertain more to the culture which has been embedded in a particular individual than to the organization of his tissues and glands’ (p. 166).

J.F. Brown pays tribute to Freudian theory, disclosing that ‘We must say of the Freudian theory that even if it does not have all the answers, it does pose all the questions.’ He explains his own theory by saying that ‘the boy who loves his mother deeply has an Oedipus complex, the boy who does not have an Oedipus complex too which he is said to be repressing.’ Here he suggests that every boy has an Oedipus complex, regardless of whether or not he shows his feelings towards his mother. Fenichel, on the other hand, says that the need for love, food, care and protection is the actual reason why the Oedipus complex is ‘biologically founded’, just like Freud proposed. He also says that ‘the human infant is biologically more helpless than other mammalian offspring and therefore needs prolonged care and love, he observes that at the simplest level.’ He adds to his agreement with Freud and states that ‘the Freudian combination of genital love for the parent of the opposite sex and jealous death wishes for the parent of the same sex is a highly integrated combination of emotional attitudes which is the climax of the long development of infantile sexuality’ (p. 185).

Freud tends to relate everything a person does or says to sex and sexual relations, especially incest, and so he relates the origin and history of the Oedipus complex to ‘primitive’ people and their ‘horror of incest’ in *Totem and Taboo* ([1913] 1960, p. 1). This ‘horror’ dates back to tribal people who wanted, one way or another, to establish the basis of healthy relationships between members of one clan, because they thought that ‘the totem bond is stronger than the bond of blood or family’ (p. 3). The totem is an animal, a plant or a natural phenomenon that is the common ancestor of the clan, the guardian spirit, the helper and protector against dangers.

Freud explains the totem and shares an example demonstrating the long lived horror of a son and a daughter committing an incestuous act with their mother:

Where, for instance, descent is through the female line, if a man of the Kangaroo totem marries a woman of the Emu totem, all the children, both boys and girls, belong to the Emu clan. The totem regulation will therefore make it impossible for a son of this marriage to have incestuous intercourse with his mother or sisters, who are Emus

like him. On the other hand, at all events, so far as this prohibition is concerned, the father, who is a Kangaroo, is free to commit incest with his daughters, who are Emus. If the totem descended through the *male* line, however, the Kangaroo father would be prohibited from incest with his daughters (since all his children would be Kangaroos, whereas the son would be free to commit incest with his mother). These implications of totem prohibitions suggest that descent through the female line is older than that through the male, since there are grounds for thinking that totem prohibitions were principally directed against the incestuous desires of the son (p. 5).

This ‘horror of incest’ has always connected a son and mother and the eternal struggle to prohibit this forbidden relationship. Furthermore, as mentioned above in Freud’s example, all children belong to their mother’s totem, if only to prevent them from incest. However, the relationship between a father and his children is looked at later in totem prohibitions, because a father apparently is never thought of by his children as an attractive object with which to commit incest. He is the father who possesses the power, and he is not the vulnerable creature who needs affection or rescuing, unlike the mother. He therefore does not provide his children with the love and care like the mother does, and he does not perform acts that could arouse a child’s sexual desires, such as the gentle strokes or cleaning of a child’s genitals. As a result, a mother becomes the person with whom the child will most likely to commit incest, as she unwillingly arouses the child’s desires, unlike the father, who keeps a distance between himself and his children. However, the father’s power results in the son struggling constantly over whether to hate him for hurting his mother or to be his rival in receiving her affection, whereas the daughter will be drawn to him because of this power, which eventually results in penis envy and her desire to have this kind of authority over her mother and other people she thinks are affected by her father’s supremacy. Her envy is also associated with her brother and other males around her, especially when she is in the phallic stage, where she becomes aware of the different genitalia. She wonders why she lacks this organ, which reflects power over women, and she knows that she is prevented from having it or has been literally castrated by her own father. Later on, when she becomes aware that she will never have this power, and her fear reflects onto her brother, who will also fear being castrated. Freud mentions a case of a boy called Hans:

[Hans] admired his father as possessing a big penis and feared him as threatening his own. The same part is played by the father alike in the Oedipus and the castration complexes – the part of a dreaded enemy to the sexual interests of childhood. The punishment which he threatens is castration, or its substitute, blinding (1960, p. 130).

Based on Freud's analysis, castration has always been connected to blinding because of Oedipus's self-punishment. He blinds himself for fulfilling the universal, repressed desire of marrying the mother and killing the father; therefore, he breaks the totem prohibitions and commits incest and murder at the same time. Furthermore, because Freud relates everything to sex, he relates sex to guilt, rudeness, remorse and most negative feelings which eventually make the person committing the sexual act regret it and punish himself via the same extreme punishment of Oedipus, which is represented in blinding or symbolic castration, or he will regret it and block his mind from thinking about sex. The third thing he could do is act neurotically, due to the lack of a substitute for the sexual act he regrets doing.

7.2.c The Castration Complex

The second definition that will assist in understanding Pinter's plays from a Freudian perspective is the castration complex. In this section, I will start by defining it in relation to Freud and other critics, to the literature and to the Pinter plays selected herein.

The castration complex is defined by Freud as the early male childhood fear of castration, which 'aims at putting a stop to [a child's] early sexual activities attributed to his father' (1908). The castration complex is mainly related to the Oedipus complex, as they are both essential in developing the child's sexuality. As mentioned earlier in the previous section, the Oedipus complex emerges in the phallic stage, when a male child develops genital curiosity in regard to his own body and the opposite sex. As a result of this initial curiosity, which Freud explains 'does not awaken spontaneously, but is aroused by the impressions made by some important event – by the actual birth of a little brother or sister, or by a fear of it based on external experiences – in which the child perceives a threat to his selfish interests', a child develops a sort of obsession with the form and function of the different genitalia, especially when he observes a female child's genitalia (Freud [1910] 1990, p. 168). This observation of different genitalia leads a male child to identify with his father and question sexual differences – whether a person has male genitalia or does not have them. Therefore, the notion of castration, or a literal lack of male genitalia, is the main concern in the child's mind, since he thinks constantly of reasons why females do not possess this organ. Later on in this male child's life, the notion of a literal lack of male genitalia in females will transform into a metaphoric one, because this child will develop an understanding of why he could lose his

own genitalia, albeit metaphorically, which could have the same effect on him as if he were to lose them in a literal sense.

The importance of the castration complex for Bates in her book is that it ‘intervenes at a critical point within infantile sexual development’, by being situated at the end of the child’s sexual development phases, because the castration complex ‘refers to the terminal collapse of this infantile misconception, the moment at which a series of childhood experiences [...] come together to bring home to the child in a catastrophic way the fact that the penis is something that might be absent’ (Bates 1998, p. 101).

In literature, the castration complex is also associated with blindness, which in this context is a metaphorical substitute for losing one’s genitals after succumbing to the threat of castration. The obvious example of blindness is Oedipus, who blinded himself after fulfilling his desires by sleeping with his mother and having her children. Another example is Hoffman’s *The Sandman* (1816), in which Nathanael’s childhood terror is having his eyes stolen by the Sandman, whose job is to terrify children who do not go to sleep, steal their eyes and then feed them to his children. Nathanael’s mother contributed in creating his fear:

“Eh, Natty,” said she, “don’t you know that yet? He is a wicked man, who comes to children when they won’t go to bed, and throws a handful of sand into their eyes, so that they start out bleeding from their heads. He puts their eyes in a bag and carries them to the crescent moon to feed his own children, who sit in the nest up there. They have crooked beaks like owls so that they can pick up the eyes of naughty human children (p. 2)

Nathanael grew up obsessed with eyes, sight, glasses, telescopes and gazing.

A third example from the literature is Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (1608), in which the theme of blindness is at first metaphorical, in that the ruler cannot see which of his daughters truly loves him, but later on, the theme of blindness becomes physical and costs the King the life of the only daughter who did actually love him dearly, Cordelia. The theme of blindness in *King Lear* is a symbol of castration resulting from poor judgment. He strips himself of his power as a man, a father and a king and leads himself to this castration, which he causes by asking his daughters to voice their love to him, dividing the country between his offspring and failing to see the truth behind the flattery they offer.

Freud, in 'Infantile Sexuality', investigates the relationship between infantile sexuality and its effect on an adult's sexuality: 'there seems no doubt that germs of sexual impulses are already present in the new-born child and that these continue to develop for a time, but are then overtaken by a progressive process of suppression' ([1905] 2011, p. 55). Freud continues to explain that what the child observes at the age of three or four is what determines his sexual behaviour. Through childhood experiences, which include a comparison of male and female genitalia along with the fear of punishment by parents and of the ultimate punishment, represented in literal or metaphorical castration, the child thinks that this female, whose genitalia he has observed, has already been castrated for expressing primitive, incestuous feelings towards her mother. His experiences result in him keeping his own incestuous feelings repressed, to avoid losing his penis as a punishment. The castration complex is therefore connected to the Oedipus complex and is a phase that a child is obliged to experience, in order for his psychology, sexuality and personality to be constructed. In 'Do We Still Have Anything To Do With the Old Blind Man?', Saroldi explains the relationship between the Oedipus complex, castration complex and the formation of an individual's super-ego. She states:

It is important to observe that the dissolution of the problems caused by the Oedipus complex is related to castration anxiety and with the building of the super-ego of the individual. This is a fundamental step in which the introjections of the father's authority take place in the ego of the child when he transforms his hate for the rival-father by identifying with him (2002, p. 212).

Saroldi also stresses the fact that not only the existence of the father figure is important for the child's development, but also the relationship with the mother, because 'the exclusive love for the mother yields to a model of masculinity that opens, in time, the way to other women' (p. 212). Therefore, the incestuous feelings a male child is supposed to repress, as a result of his fear of castration, are necessary to occur, because they contribute to the purposes of developing even though they 'evoke jealous hostility and threats of "castration" from the father, which in turn provoke anxiety and further hostility to the father' (Daly and Wilson 1990, p. 164).

Freud's first case study is an application of the fear of castration complex on a five-year-old boy called Hans in 1909. In 'Analysis of a Phobia in a Five-Year-Old Boy', Freud, with the help of Hans's father, follows the development of the boy's castration complex during his

early childhood years (3-5 years of age). Hans started to take noticeable interest in his penis, his “widdler” as he called it, and tried to spot the same organ in other people, animals and even inanimate objects like a table (p. 7). He was not shy about asking his father and mother about the existence and the size of their own widdlers:

Hans: ‘Mummy, have you got a widdler too?’

Mother: ‘Of course. Why?’

Hans: ‘I was only just thinking.’ (p. 7)

The conversations have a theatrical feel to them, and they give the impression that they are the sort of conversations the characters would have in a play.

The way the parents dealt with their little son’s questions and the entire conversation might appear as if it were designed or fabricated because of how theatrical and rehearsed it seems. However, a boy asking his parents about his ‘widdler’ is a Freudian topic relating to both the Oedipus complex and the castration complex, which were originally linked to myths in ancient literary history. Freud brings Oedipus to life with every case he treats as a means of interpreting the motives and intentions behind the patient’s behaviours. According to Freud, in Hans’s case, the boys apparently envied his father for having the ability to have intercourse with his mother and wanted to experience the same himself. Hans’s relationship with his parents is intense and it displays theatrical oedipal elements. Moreover, Freud says that Hans’s wish to marry his mother and have children with her originated during the summer holiday, when his father was occasionally absent, and this absence ‘had drawn Hans’s attention to the condition upon which depended the intimacy with his mother which he longed for’ (p. 111). He felt that the absence of his father made his relationship with his mother grow deeper, as if they were a married couple, not a mother and her son. Freud also describes Hans as being ‘a little Oedipus who wanted to have his father “out of the way,” to get rid of him, so that he might be alone with his beautiful mother and sleep with her’ (p. 111). A comparison between Hans’s reaction to an absent father and the reaction of the males in Ruth’s husband’s family in *The Homecoming* is apparent here. Hans is a son whose father was absent for a relatively long time. He tried to replace his father physically and mentally by acting as the person in charge; acting like a father who has a bigger ‘widdler’ than a child or a woman. Hans unconsciously thought that he could in fact be a replacement for his father;

however, he was yet to discover that his connection with his mother was oedipal and that she was the person in control of his sexual fantasies and his future relationships with women. The growing interest Hans had with widdlers ‘impelled him to *touch* his member’ when he was three and a half (p. 7). His mother caught him touching his widdler and threatened him in these words: ‘If you do that, I shall send for Dr. A. to cut off your widdler. Furthermore, then what’ll you widdle with?’ Hans simply replied that he would widdle with his ‘bottom’ (p. 7-8). He knew he had another part of the body that could give him a similar amount of pleasure to the pleasure he achieved from touching his penis. Freud comments on this incident and says that it shows that Hans ‘made this reply without having any sense of guilt as yet. But this was the occasion of his acquiring the “castration complex”, the presence of which we are so often obliged to infer in analyzing neurotics’ (p. 8). Freud’s later comment on this particular incident is that the guilt-free reply Hans made ‘would be the most completely typical procedure if the threat of castration were to have a *deferred* effect and if he were now, a year and a quarter later, oppressed by the fear of having to lose this precious piece of his ego’ (author’s italics p. 35). Freud remarks that Hans’s reaction to cutting off his penis at the age of 3 is different to his reaction towards the same threat at the age of 4 because of the ‘*deferred* effect’ of the castration complex, which was triggered by Hans’s new observation that his mother never possessed a penis in the first place.

Another incident was reported by Hans’s father regarding his increasing curiosity in relation to the existence of penises. Hans asked his father about his penis and observed his mother undressing, in order to validate she was telling the truth earlier about having one:

Hans: (aged three and three-quarters): ‘Daddy, have you got a widdler too?’

Father: ‘Yes, of course.’

Hans: ‘But I’ve never seen it when you were undressing.’

Another time he was looking on intently while his mother undressed before going to bed. ‘What are you staring like that for?’ she asked.

Hans: ‘I was only looking to see if you’d got a widdler too.’

Mother: ‘Of course. Didn’t you know that?’

Hans: ‘No. I thought you were so big you’d have a widdler like a horse’ (p. 9- 10).

Hans associated the sizes of his parents with the sizes of their penises– the bigger you are, the bigger your penis. The notion of penis sizes consumed his thinking, even when his little sister

was born, exemplified by his remark that ‘her widdler’s still quite small,’ before adding that ‘when she grows up, it’ll get bigger all right’ (p. 11). Hans’s confusion regarding size was eventually resolved when he finally understood his mother, sister and female neighbours’ lack of a penis, which therefore led to his entering the castration complex phase. Freud comments accordingly:

The piece of enlightenment which Hans had been given a short time before to the effect that women really do not possess a widdler was bound to have had a shattering effect upon his self-confidence and to have aroused his castration complex. For this reason he resisted the information for this reason it had no therapeutic results. Could it be that living beings really did exist which did not possess widdlers? If so, it would no longer be so incredible that they could take his own widdler away, and, as it were, make him into a woman! (p. 36)

Hans’s anxiety and over-thinking the widdler ‘had two constituents: there was fear *of* his father and fear *for* his father. The former was derived from his hostility towards his father, and the latter from the conflict between his affection, which was exaggerated at this point by way of compensation, and his hostility’ (p. 45). Hans started to be hostile towards his father after realising he was the only parent with a penis, while his mother was castrated. On the one hand, he feared the idea of facing the same destiny as his mother, if he gave in to his father’s penis-castrating acts. On the other hand, he also feared that he would castrate his father to prevent him from castrating him and his mother, because Hans expressed his wishes to marry his own mother and replace his father in this relationship. His father reported the incident where Hans, without hesitation, stated that he wanted to marry his mother and have her bear his children:

I: “You’d like to be Daddy and married to Mummy; you’d like to be as big as me and have a moustache; and you’d like Mummy to have a baby.”

Hans: “And, Daddy, when I’m married I’ll only have one if I want to, when I’m married to Mummy, and if I don’t want a baby, God won’t want it either, when I’m married.”

I: “Would you like to be married to Mummy?”

Hans: “Oh yes.” (p. 92)

According to Freud, Hans’s wish to marry his mother and have children with her originated during the summer holiday when his father was occasionally absent, and this absence of his

father ‘had drawn Hans’s attention to the condition upon which depended the intimacy with his mother which he longed for’ (p. 111). He felt that the absence of his father made his relationship with his mother grow deeper, as if they were a married couple, not a mother and her son. Freud also describes Hans as being ‘a little Oedipus who wanted to have his father “out of the way,” to get rid of him, so that he might be alone with his beautiful mother and sleep with her’ (p. 111) (see section 7.2 for a full explanation of *Totem and Taboo*). Therefore, ‘oedipal fantasies become associated with castration anxiety, or the fear of the forbidden oedipal desires will lead to punishment in the form of loss of or injury to one’s genitals’ (Auchincloss and Samberg 2012, p. 30).

Later on, in ‘The Transformation of Puberty’, Freud explains the relationship between the development of the castration complex throughout a child’s life, the child’s relationship with his parents and his choice of a sexual partner in the future:

In view of the importance of a child’s relations to his parents in determining his later choice of a sexual object, it can easily be understood that any disturbance of those relations will produce the gravest effects upon his adult sexual life. Jealousy in a lover is never without an infantile root or at least an infantile reinforcement’ ([1910] 2011, p. 106)

The existence on ‘an infantile root’ of jealousy is associated with the Oedipus complex as well as the castration complex, because this jealousy is repressed by the child due to his fear of castration.

The fear of castration is explained by Freud in ‘A Child is Being Beaten’, by demonstrating that the notion is gender-specific and by conducting a comparison between how beating a male and a female child, or posing a threat to his or her genitals, affects these children’s sexual lives and fantasies, which are connected to their primitive sexual impulses towards their parents. He notes that ‘In both cases the beating fantasy is derived from the incestuous connection to the father’ ([1919] 2006, p. 300). Freud continues with his explanation of what occurs in a child’s mind during the process of being beaten:

It will help our overall understanding if at this point I add the other points of agreement and differences between the beating fantasies of both sexes. In the girl, the unconscious masochistic fantasy arises out of the normal oedipal attitude; in the boy, from the inverted attitude, taking the father as its love object. In the girl, the fantasy has a preliminary stage (the first phase) in which the beating appears in its indifferent meaning and is applied to a jealously hated person; both of these are absent in the case

of the boy, but that very difference could be removed by more successful observation (p. 300).

Being beaten, therefore, is a form of symbolic castration performed on both the male and female child by their father. The father in this case is another male who possesses a penis, which denotes power over his children. Through his act of beating them, he evokes feelings of hatred towards him; however, these feelings might transform into jealousy of the power he has over the children. While they are being beaten, the children might also consider their father's relationship with their mother, namely how he acts towards her in the bedroom, how and to what level he oppresses her and how dependent she is on him. All these thoughts will trigger the fear of castration by this powerful figure. As a result, the female child will initially identify with her mother for owning the same organ, i.e. a castrated penis, whilst a male child will initially identify with his father for owning a fully functioning penis. In *New Introductory Lectures* Lecture XXXIII 'Femininity', Freud mentions that 'you may take it as an instance of male injustice if I assert that envy and jealousy play an even greater part in the mental life of women than of men' ([1933] 1989, p. 156). The feelings of envy and jealousy lead to penis envy, whereby a female is aware of her organ's inferiority and the power of the penis, and then try to upgrade all aspects of her life to be equal with a penis-owning male. Freud also stresses the fact that 'the discovery that she is castrated is a turning-point in a girl's growth', which leads to 'three possible lines of development' in this female's life: 'one leads to sexual inhibition or to neurosis, the second to change of character in the sense of a masculinity complex, the third, finally, to normal femininity' (p. 156).

Freud's explanation of female inferiority, by lacking male genitalia, has proven to be thought-provoking for feminist thinkers and writers in the modern age, as they do not accept that the lack of a penis is a reason why females could feel inferior to males. Feminists' constant war against Freudian theories caused Freud's approach to become unacceptable as a means of psychoanalysing a patient or any work of art. For example, in *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Judith Butler interprets the Oedipus complex in terms of the male child's heterosexuality, whereby he chooses to show love and affection to the parent of the opposite sex and hatred towards the parent of the same sex (1990, p. 59). Butler then suggests a relationship between the male child's heterosexuality, homosexuality and the fear of castration, positing that 'the boy usually chooses the heterosexual would, then, be the result, not of the fear of castration by the father, but of the fear of castration – that is,

the fear of “feminization” associated within heterosexual cultures with male homosexuality’ (p. 59). This is only one example of how feminists interpret Freud’s work (please refer to the Introduction for further explanation and examples on how feminist contradict and criticise Freud). As a woman, I see that feminists present Freud negatively by showing his psychoanalytical approach as an unacceptable method of analysing patients. I personally do not agree with these feminists, however, I have to acknowledge the fact that I am a woman myself and that I am expected to adopt a feminist approach because of my sex and because of my background coming from a patriarchal society where women grew up demanding having the right to speak freely, live peacefully, and have the ability to say ‘no’ to undesired sexual advances forced on them even by their husbands. I understand that using a feminist voice would help in interpreting Freud to a certain extent, but that does not mean that I must focus on the feminist voice in my thesis because although I agree that women and men should have equal rights, however, I disagree with the extremism some feminists demonstrate in order to gain these equal rights. In addition, I am more fascinated by Freud’s ideas which present females as ‘inferior’ creatures to men than the futile process to demolish this idea of ‘female inferiority’. Henceforth, feminism is rejected in this thesis.

In ‘The Riddle of Castration Anxiety’, Verhaeghe explains the role of biology in determining the effect of the castration complex, saying that in 1996 ‘biology is also held responsible for the two different forms, neatly distributed along the gender line: castration anxiety for the male, penis envy for the female’ (1996, p. 44). Verhaeghe continues by saying that ‘the father is obviously the necessary central figure’, because fathers are the origin of their children’s castration anxiety (p. 46). He also explains that although the ‘threats of castration are formulated by women, mostly by the mother’ in the first place, the real threat is not minded by the child unless his father is involved (p. 46).

7.2.d The ‘Uncanny’

The ‘uncanny’ is related to new and unfamiliar situations that must possess an extra element to make them “uncanny.” The extra element is what creates the fear factor that distances someone from a certain situation and therefore makes this situation strange. The ‘uncanny’ is defined by Freud as a subject ‘undoubtedly related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror’ ([1919] 1990, p. 339). It is not the unfamiliarity of a situation that makes it ‘uncanny’ but the feeling this situation awakens in a person. An ‘uncanny’ feeling might

awaken a past experience, which could have been either horrifying or satisfying to the person. Furthermore, because of such situations, the person senses an inexplicable feeling or both familiarity and unfamiliarity.

Freud suggests two methods to detect the meaning of the ‘uncanny’: we can either infer its meaning ‘in the course of its history’, by finding its attachments, or we can infer its meaning from our own collective experiences (p. 340). He follows the first method at first to define the word ‘uncanny’ by consulting many languages such as Latin, Greek, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Hebrew and German. Freud stresses the German meaning and explains it in detail:

Heimlich, adj., subst. *Heimlichkeit* (pl. *Heimlichkeiten*):

I. Also *heimlich*, *heimelig*, belonging to the house, not strange, familiar, tame, intimate friendly, etc.

(Obsolete) belonging to the house or the family, or regarded as so belonging (cf. Latin *familiaris*, familiar): *Die Heimlichen*, the members of the household.

Of animals: tame, companionable to man. As opposed to wild.

Intimate, friendly comfortable; the enjoyment of quiet content, etc., arousing a sense of agreeable restfulness and security as in one within the four walls of his house.

Especially in Silesia: gay, cheerful; also of the weather.

II. Concealed, kept from sight, so that others do not get to know of or about it, withheld from others [...] (pp. 342- 344)

Freud’s definition aims at explaining that ‘uncanny’ and ‘canny’ are two identical opposites and that “*heimlich*” belongs to two sets of ideas, which, without being contradictory, are yet very different: on the one hand it means what is familiar and agreeable, and on the other, what is concealed and kept out of sight (p. 345).

Freud also mentions an ‘uncanny’ experience he faced on a train in an autobiographical note on the ‘uncanny’:

I was sitting alone in my *wagon-lit* compartment when a more than usually violent jolt of the train swung back the door of the adjoining washing-cabinet and an elderly gentleman in a dressing-gown and a travelling cap came in. I assumed that in leaving the washing-cabinet, which lay between the two compartments, he had taken the wrong direction and come into my compartment by mistake. Jumping up with intention of putting him right, I at once realized to my dismay that the intruder was

nothing but my own reflection in the looking-glass on the open door ([1919] 1990, p. 371).

Freud's personal experience caused him to have an 'uncanny' feeling towards his own reflection in the mirror. He describes his reflection as an 'intruder' before realising that it is a reflection of himself and that it is in fact his own face, which he did not recognise at first glance.

In *Freud's Uncanny Narratives*, Robin Lydenberg explains the notion of 'the 'uncanny' through his reading of Hoffman's short story 'The Sandman' (see section 7.2.c), 'to illustrate the uncanny psychic effects of oedipal conflict and castration anxiety' (1997, p. 1073). She comments on Freud's different interpretations of the 'uncanny,' noting that 'what is most intimately known and familiar, then, is always already divided within by something potentially alien and threatening' (p. 1073). Lydenberg agrees with Freud regarding the fact that the term has two opposite meanings, and she also mentions similar examples to Freud's 'uncanny' situations, such as 'animism, magic and sorcery, the omnipotence of thoughts, a man's attitude to death, involuntary repetition and the castration complex' (p. 1073). However, she disagrees with Freud's approach to 'The Sandman', pointing out that he 'reduce[s] "The Sandman" to its themes (or to his own themes)' and that he 'ignores the complexity of the narrative framework and obscures the elements that constitute the story's literariness' (p. 1073).

The 'uncanny' is not only related to the concepts mentioned above by Lydenberg, but also to five other concepts: dolls, literal meaning of words, the double, dreams and narcissism. The first concept is the uncanniness of dolls in Eva-Maria Simms' 'Uncanny Dolls: Images of Death in Rilke and Freud' (1996). Simms investigates dolls in literature because of the lack of interest given to them by academics and psychoanalysts. She says that 'Freud dismissed the doll in his discussion of the 'uncanny' because she did not symbolise oedipal issues very well' and that the doll 'is taken for granted as a symbol within the oedipal struggle of the preschooler' (1996, p. 663). She also suggests that female children use a doll as a 'substitute for an absent penis', and male children use them as their 'pathological identification with the mother' (p. 663). The uncanniness of the doll emerges from it being 'anatomically correct', which draws children's attention to the difference between male and female genitalia, allows them to 'enact sexual relationships symbolically' and helps therapists to recognise 'precocious and disturbed sexual knowledge' among children (p. 664). Simms addresses the

uncanniness of Olympia in Hoffman's 'The Sandman', because Olympia appears to be a human being, but in fact she is a doll. Her appearance causes the uncanniness, as it makes Nathaniel fall in love with her and leave his human fiancée, Clara.

The second concept is the literal understanding of words such as 'castration' and 'death' and their 'uncanny' effect on people in Adam Bresnick's 'Prosopoetic Compulsion: Reading the Uncanny in Freud and Hoffman' (1996). Bresnick says that 'Freud insists that the uncanny has nothing to do with intellectual uncertainty', so he argues that Freud presents 'uncanny' examples in his essays that are 'invariably attended by a measure of doubt' and that 'intellectual uncertainty is in fact essential to the experience of the uncanny' (1996, p. 114). Bresnick agrees with Freud that the 'repressed paternal threat of castration' is the reason why the 'uncanny' element exists in 'The Sandman'. However, he says that 'The Sandman' requires a reading to 'view castration less as a matter of the body *per se* than as a problem of signification' (p. 114). For Freud, the repressed anxiety or threat of castration is the initial source of the 'uncanny' in 'The Sandman', in which castration is represented in the form of the Sandman who blinds young children as a punishment for not going to sleep early. Castration is also represented in the form of Coppelius, who blinds children by throwing fire into their eyes, and Coppola, who sells lenses and spectacles by offering them as 'pretty eyes'. Freud mentions that 'The state of affairs is different when the uncanny proceeds from repressed infantile complexes, from the castration complex, womb fantasies, etc.; but experiences which arouse this kind of uncanny feeling are not of very frequent occurrence in real life' [1919] 1990 (p. 371). The 'uncanny', as Freud suggests, is an experience that occurs in works of art, but not necessarily in real life situations:

The contrast between what has been repressed and what has been surmounted cannot be transported on to the uncanny in fiction without profound modification; for the realm of phantasy depends for its effect on the fact that its content is not submitted to reality-testing' (p. 372-3).

Bresnick adds that 'the uncanny would be the moment in which the reader's imaginary identification with the artwork is made manifest as the very motor of aesthetic fantasy' (p. 118).

The third concept is the double and the mirror reflection in Philippe Rochat and Dan Zahavi's 'The Uncanny Mirror: A Re-framing of Mirror Self-experience' (2011). Rochat and Zahavi declare that 'mirrors are peculiar objects associated with peculiar, uncanny experiences', and

they investigate the ‘unsettling encounter with one’s specular double’ while also mentioning that whenever someone looks at his reflection in the mirror, he sees his double and sometimes does not recognise it, especially at an early age (2011, p. 204). Reflection and the double are two of the concepts discussed in Freud’s ‘uncanny’ in his personal experience on the train mentioned above that can provoke ‘uncanny’ feelings.

The fourth concept is the uncanniness of the dream experience in Eugene J. Mahon’s ‘The Uncanny in a Dream’ (2012). Mahon discusses the significance of dreams in connection to real-life incidents and to the memories they revive, because of their connection to the person’s ‘repressed genetic memories’ (2012, p. 713). According to Mahon, ‘the whole dreaming process could be considered uncanny’ (p. 713). He starts by explaining the etymology of the word followed by his application of the ‘uncanny’ to a study case, Phillip, who dreamt about a name that turned out to be a real person connected to his repressed childhood memories. Phillip dreamt about the name Thomas B. Costain, who was in fact a real person – an author whose book *The Silver Chalice* had been repressed in Phillip’s subconscious for its connection to the silver chalice his own father made him when he was a child. The ‘uncanny’, in Phillip’s dream, ‘retrieved at least two significant repressed components from the past: silver chalices offered as playthings by the father, and the fictitious name that turned out to be real’ (p. 714). Mahon elaborates on the ‘uncanny’ experience of Phillip’s dream by saying that the dreamer is not supposed to remember his dream, which is why a person’s dream is often a result of repressed memories, many of which include names and past experiences (p. 721).

The last concept is the connection between the ‘uncanny’ and narcissism in James Pearson’s ‘Total Narcissism and The Uncanny: A New Interpretation of E.T.A. Hoffman’s “The Sandman”’ (2013). Pearson says that ‘there is at least one facet of the uncanny which *can* be informatively mapped out: its connection with the concept of narcissism’ (2013, p. 17). He starts his paper by explaining the theory of “total narcissism” by stating Freud’s definition thereof, namely ‘the universal and original state of things [...] the blissful isolation on intra-uterine life’ (p. 18). Freud’s narcissism ‘would appear to precede not only libidinal object-cathexis, but also the formation of a unified ego’ (p. 18). Therefore, a child proves to be born with traits of total narcissism until he recognises there are other love choices existing in his life: his mother, his father and his future partner. Pearson investigates Freud’s two types of ‘object-choice: the masculine, anaclitic type – where the individual chooses a love-object modelled on their love for their mother; and the feminine, narcissistic type – where the

individual chooses a love-object modelled on their own self' (p.18). The uncanniness of the narcissistic type of object-choice suggests a connection to the concept of the double and the double's connection to the ego.

A child grows up to find he is not the only creature who has this kind of love for himself. His ego starts 'exercising a censorship within [his] mind', and then he begins noticing his own doubles, starting with his reflection in the mirror in what Lacan calls 'the mirror stage' (1953. p. 14). In *Some reflections on the Ego*, Lacan says 'In the first place, it has historical value as it marks a decisive turning-point in the mental development of the child. In the second place, it typifies an essential libidinal relationship with the body-image' (p. 14). Consequently, a child grows to search for a love-object which resembles him physically and mentally, in order to fulfil his narcissism and his ego. Death narcissism is also mentioned in Pearson's paper in relation to 'The Sandman'. He mentions the 'repeated re-arrival of the Sandman in the form of various "doubles", which arise in Nathaniel the fear of symbolic castration by losing his eyes; in addition to the repeated linguistic content of his two breakdowns ("spin, spin," "puppet," and "circle of fire")' (p. 21). Pearson comments on Nathaniel's case, noting that 'at a certain point in its trajectory, total narcissism necessarily transmogrifies into death narcissism – namely, when the subject realizes that the goal of self-enclosure is exclusively phantasmic and certainly cannot be attained in relation to an object' (p. 21). Therefore, this connection between total narcissism and death narcissism is raised by the 'uncertain and internally contradictory narcissistic phantasies' (p. 21) that cause the 'uncanny' feeling to emerge.

7.2.e Aggression

Aggression is a form of behaviour that causes harm to animate and inanimate objects. It can also be harmful with or without the existing intention of causing harm. An aggressive person tends to be questioned behaviourally, psychologically and mentally on the reasons behind his aggressiveness, which could be sourced from his past childhood or adolescent experiences, especially his upbringing and his parents' behaviour towards him.

Freud pointed to aggression and aggressive behaviour in many essays, the first of which, 'Mourning and Melancholia (1914), discusses aggression in relation to sadism and masochism. In the essay, Freud does not mention aggression *per se*; however, he describes

how mourning the death of a loved one could evoke conflicting feelings of love and hate towards living loved ones. This love-hate conflict is the reason behind expressing sadism and masochism towards loved “objects.” Freud explains:

If the love for the object – a love which cannot be given up though the object itself is given up – takes refuge in narcissistic identification, then the hate comes into operation on this substitutive object, abusing it, debasing it, making it suffer and deriving sadistic satisfaction from its suffering. The self-tormenting in melancholia, which is without doubt enjoyable, signifies just like the corresponding phenomenon in obsessional neurosis, a satisfaction of trends of sadism and hate which relate to an object, and which have been turned round upon the subject’s own self in the ways we have been discussing (p. 251).

Although Freud’s explanation clearly describes a type of aggressive sexual behaviour – sadism and masochism –, what is missing is the reason behind these actions or what drives an individual to have the need to perform these aggressive actions by ‘abusing’, ‘debasing’ and ‘making [the affected individual] suffer’ (p. 251). It is obvious that the idea of aggression had not really developed in Freud’s mind in 1914, when he wrote ‘Mourning and Melancholia’. However, in the ensuing years, he developed the idea behind aggression, relating it first to the death instinct in ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’ (1920).

In ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’ (1920), Freud discusses the origin of aggressiveness in relation to death instincts, but again without mentioning the word “aggression” per se. In ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’, he discusses Eros and Thanatos: life and death instincts and the relationship between these instincts and the principles of pleasure and “unpleasure.” He opens his essay as follows:

In the theory of psychoanalysis, we have no hesitation in assuming that the course taken by mental events is automatically regulated by the pleasure principle. We believe, that is to say, that the course of those events is invariably set in motion by an unpleasurable tension, and that it takes a direction such that its final outcome coincides with a lowering of that tension – that is, with an avoidance of unpleasure or a production of pleasure (p. 7).

Freud’s opening statement introduces a form of ‘unpleasurable tension’, which causes behavioural deviations such as aggression, because of the person’s need to self-destruct that results from the death instinct:

We have decided to relate pleasure and unpleasure to the quantity of excitation that is present in the mind but is not in any way “bound”; and to relate them in such a manner that unpleasure corresponds to an *increase* in the quantity of excitation and pleasure to a diminution (pp. 7- 8).

‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’, therefore, denotes the conflict between the two opposing instincts of life and death. The life instinct is connected to the individual’s need to create, love, reproduce and be satisfied, while the death instinct is connected to self-destruction, depression, aggression and repetition. Anyone, according to Freud, is in fact drawn towards the pleasure principle – the life instinct because ‘there exists in the mind a strong *tendency* towards the pleasure principle, but that tendency is opposed by certain other forces or circumstance, so that the final outcome cannot always be in harmony with the tendency towards pleasure’ (pp. 9- 10). Nevertheless, what draws the same person away from achieving “pleasure” to the opposite direction and a move towards “unpleasure”? Freud suggests:

Most of the unpleasure that we experience is *perceptual* unpleasure. It may be perception or pressure by unsatisfied instincts; or it may be external perception which is either distressing in itself or which excites unpleasurable expectations in the mental apparatus – that is, which is recognized by it as a “danger” (p. 11).

Freud suggests that the source of unpleasure is ‘perceptual’ or ‘external’ and that ‘the reaction to these instinctual demands and threats to danger [...] can then be directed in a correct manner by the pleasure principle’ (p. 11). Moreover, in ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’, he also discusses two major reactions to external “danger,” leading eventually to pleasure: ‘traumatic neurosis’ and repetition or ‘perpetual recurrence of the same thing’ (pp. 12- 22). According to Freud, ‘traumatic neurosis’ occurs after being subjected to ‘accidents involving a risk to life’ and resembles the symptoms of ‘hysteria’, ‘hypochondria’ and ‘melancholia’ which include ‘fright’, ‘fear’ and ‘anxiety’ (p. 12). He also suggests that a solution to ‘traumatic neurosis’ could be found eventually through ‘the study of dreams’, which he calls ‘the most trustworthy method of investigating deep mental process’ (p. 13). Dreams serve as a tool to analyse certain incidents and memories that people bury deep in their subconscious because of how these incidents could affect their waking lives and cause the symptoms of “neurosis” mentioned above.

The other major reaction to external “danger” Freud discusses is ‘repetition’ (p. 15). He investigates a game of ‘disappearance and return’ invented by a one-and-a-half-year-old boy that helps him cope with his mother leaving him for a few hours. The boy used to have the habit of throwing small objects away into a corner and keeping himself busy finding that object. The boy performs two major reactions during his game of ‘disappearance and return’. The object’s “disappearance” is represented by the boy’s ‘loud, long-drawn-out “o-o-o-o”’, which denotes the ‘German word “*fort*” [“gone”]’, while the object’s reappearance is represented by ‘a joyful “da” [“there”]’ (pp. 14- 15). Freud explains the boy’s game of ‘disappearance and return’ in relation to the pleasure principle, suggesting:

[The mother’s] departure had to be enacted as a necessary preliminary to her joyful return, and that it was in the latter that lay the true purpose of the game. But against this must be counted the observed fact that the first act, that of departure, was staged as a game in itself and far more frequently than the episode in its entirety, with its pleasurable ending (pp. 15- 16).

The boy’s case is an example of repetition for young individuals who ‘repeat everything that has made a great impression on them in real life’ (p. 17). In comparison, the previous section (7.2.c The Castration Complex) follows the case of Hans who is occupied with repeating the word ‘widdler’. Hans’ parents chose to treat him, in cooperation with Freud, using the theatrical element of the talking cure method. Freud’s theatrical methods of therapy are derived from the connection he creates between his theories on both dreams and humour. Freud links these two concepts and argues in *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious* (1905) that like dreams, humour provides psychological relief for painful emotion, repressed ideas – these emerge in theatrical and symbolic forms, out of context so that they can be processed by people who could otherwise not process unconscious and repressed ideas and emotions. This theatrical method proved to have been successful with Freud’s psychotherapeutic sessions performed on children who show fixation with certain word and keep repeating it. (Refer to the following section for further explanation on dreams and dream analysis and its relation to theatre).

Moreover, I must wonder about repetition for adults and the role of the talking cure therapy in their case. I reckon that the adults will be more aware than children if their therapist tries to manipulate them to voice their concealed thoughts. So, Freud suggests another form of

therapy which is attending theatrical performance because of the therapeutic experience the theatre might offer to them, regardless of the type of the play: comedy or tragedy. The theatre can be read as a psychoanalytic space – not a therapy, not a cure, and as a safe space for subconscious images and repressed drives to be expressed. Comedy is derived from the incongruity of different symbols put together in the same theatre. Furthermore, comedy is derived from the pleasure of watching others fail: which is the superiority theory of humour proposed by Thomas Hobbes in *Human Nature* (1640). Hobbes says: ‘Laughter, is a kind of sudden glory, then adds that ‘we laugh at the misfortunes or infirmities of others, at our own past follies, provided that we are conscious of having now surmounted them, and also at unexpected successes of our own’. Tragedy, on the other hand, is discussed in Freud’s *Psychopathic Characters on the Stage* saying that ‘pleasure may be said to derive, through masochistic gratification and the direct enjoyment of the personage whose greatness nevertheless the drama emphasizes’ through attending a tragic play where suffering and demolishing of the once invincible hero is portrayed (p. 123). Freud suggests that adults’ ‘artistic play and artistic imitation [...] are aimed at an audience’ and that they ‘do not spare the spectators (for instance, in tragedy) the most painful experiences and can yet be felt by them as highly enjoyable’ (p. 17). Adults, therefore, consciously perform their “painful experiences” for the audience’s entertainment, unlike children who act unconsciously by recreating an event that affects them deeply in real life. Freud also relates the loss of a loved one and failure to achieve life goals to the adult’s repetition of ‘unwanted situations and painful emotions’ (p. 20). This repetition aims at camouflaging the adult’s “unpleasure” by portraying tragedy to the audience, because the latter is unaware that the tragic performances result from the adult’s “unpleasure”. Freud relates this to several elements in his childhood, including ‘the lessening amount of affection he receives, the increased demands of education, hard words and an occasional punishment – these show him at last the full extent to which he has been scorned’ (p. 21).

A few years later, the concepts of “unpleasure” or “death instinct” develop from the ideas Freud explains in ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’ into a wider concept, namely aggressiveness in human relations. In ‘Beyond the Pleasure Principle’, he talks about underlying aggression, although he never mentions the word specifically, but in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1929) he talks about “aggressive instinct” instead of “death instinct” for the first time.

In *Civilization and its Discontents* ([1929] 1962), Freud delivers a detailed explanation of the relationship between a person and his society; it is the need to be an independent individual versus society's request for conformity. In order to civilise a society, each person should discard his personal needs, especially the ego and primitive aggressiveness. Freud begins the book by demonstrating that the 'process of development' forms the person's ego and shapes his character through his existence in society (p. 13). He posits:

An infant at the breast does not as yet distinguish his ego from his external world as the source of the sensations flowing upon him. He gradually learns to do so, in response to various promptings. He must be very strongly impressed by the fact that some sources of excitation, which he will later recognize as his own bodily organs, can provide him with sensations at any moments, whereas other sources evade him from time to time – among them what he desires the most of all, his mother's breast – and only reappear as a result of his screaming for help (pp. 13- 14).

An infant is therefore only interested in fulfilling his instinctual needs of hunger, security and protection provided for him by his 'mother's breasts'. He will eventually pass through the infancy phase to become an adult with a distinguishable ego, which appears as a distinguishable type of sensation as a result of 'recognition of an "outside", an external world', showing the person the difference between pleasure and unpleasure instincts (p. 14). Freud also explains that 'a tendency arises to separate from the ego anything that can become a source of such unpleasure, to throw it outside and to create a pure pleasure-ego which is confronted by a strange and threatening outside' (p. 14). Accordingly, the primitive pleasure-seeking ego is 'unwilling to give up' some existing objects or actions, 'because they give pleasure'. On the other hand, the pleasure-seeking ego tries to 'expel' some 'sufferings' but they 'turn out to be inseparable from the ego in virtue of their internal origin' (p. 14). The balance created by the existence of both the pleasure and unpleasure inside this individual is what civilises him and distinguishes him from other creatures. Consequently, others, who do not have balance, are dominated by either the pleasure instinct, which causes them to seek satisfaction in everything they do despite the consequences, or the unpleasure instinct – the aggression instinct –, which is harmful to others and at the same time self-destructive.

Civilization and its Discontents is where Freud investigates the connection between many concepts, including civilization, primitive behaviours, ego, pleasure, sex and aggression. However, the origin of aggression and its effects can be considered the common denominator between the previously mentioned concepts. Freud mentions aggression excessively in this

book and dedicates two chapters to explaining it and its connection to the individual's actions. Chapters V and VI in particular discuss the aggressive instinct in detail. In Chapter V, Freud opens with a similar concept of neurosis that he tackled earlier in 'Beyond the Pleasure Principle', expressing that 'the neurotic creates substitutive satisfactions for himself in his symptoms, and these either cause him suffering in themselves or become sources of suffering for him by raising difficulties in his relations with the environment and the society he belongs to' (p. 55). Neurotics inflict self-destruction while searching for ways to fulfil their pleasure instinct, but a person who does not suffer from neurosis will find balance between pleasure and unpleasure.

Aggression is a harmful act that causes distress and breaks social bonds among people and countries. Freud explains how these bonds are broken as a result of aggression. He starts by mentioning examples of the forms of aggression neighbours act out, and their role in creating an unsafe environment for each other:

Their neighbour is for them not only a potential helper or sexual object, but also someone who tempts them to satisfy their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without compensation, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and to kill him (p. 58).

Freud extends his explanation on neighbours to include neighbouring countries, to show how acts of aggression can and will create war, which is a result of 'primary mutual hostility of human beings' and causes 'harm to people, animals, historical sites, political relations, religious monuments and more' (p. 59). 'Civilization', says Freud, 'has to use its utmost efforts in order to set limits to man's aggressive instincts and to hold the manifestations of them in check by psychical reaction-formations', which is achieved by using 'methods intended to incite people into identifications and aim-inhibited relationships of love, hence the restriction upon sexual life and hence too the ideal's commandments to love one's neighbour as oneself' (p. 59). If these 'restrictions' were forced on people, aggressive behaviour would be prevented, or at least limited to a minimum. Freud then stresses the fact that 'sexual relations' are in fact the main reason behind some of the crudest acts of aggression (p. 60). He explains that men tend to be hostile, rebellious and primal when it comes to sexual relations and that 'complete freedom of sexual life' should not be allowed, although a man's happiness and satisfaction will be compromised under these restrictions

because of the existence of his instinctual primal need to be hostile and possessive over what he considers his own (pp. 61- 62).

In *Civilization and its Discontents*, Freud continues to investigate the root of aggression and dedicates Chapter VI to the subject. He begins by referring to the love (Eros) and death instincts, citing that ‘the phenomena of life could be explained from the concurrent of mutually opposing action of these two instincts’. He continues his explanation, saying:

The manifestations of Eros were conspicuous and noisy enough. It might be assumed that the death instinct operated silently within the organism towards its dissolution, but that, of course, was no proof. A more fruitful idea was that a portion of the instinct is diverted towards the external world and comes to light as an instinct of aggressiveness and destructiveness (p. 66).

Freud’s statement proves that instinct death/aggressiveness is related to destruction, especially self-destruction; therefore, if restrictions are imposed on people seeking aggressiveness, the self-destruction will be greater. On the other hand, seeking Eros, or life or pleasure, is not self-destructive but instead destroys other, ‘whether animate or inanimate’, objects (p. 66). Freud relates these instincts to sexual preferences regarding sadism and masochism in the same way he relates them in his earlier work in ‘Mourning and Melancholia’ (1914). He states that ‘in sadism [...] we should have before us a particularly strong alloy of this kind between trends of love and the destructive instinct; while its counterpart, masochism, would be a union between destructiveness directed inwards and sexuality’ (p. 66). Both sexual acts are destructive in their own sense through the destruction of either others or one’s self: ‘It is in sadism, where the death instinct twists the erotic aim in its own sense and yet at the same time fully satisfies the erotic urge, that we succeed in obtaining the clearest insight into its nature and its relation to Eros’ (p. 68). Sadism and masochism, therefore, are ‘accompanied by an extraordinarily high degree of narcissistic enjoyment’, fulfilling the desires of the ego to control human nature and draw the person back to his original primitive, uncontrollable and aggressive nature (pp .68- 69).

Freud finally arrives at two major results. The first is that there is no doubt ‘the aggressive instinct is the derivative and the main representative of the death instinct which we have found alongside of Eros and which shares world-dominion with it’ (p. 69). The second result

is that there is a 'struggle between Eros and Death, between the instinct of life and the instinct of destruction, as it works itself out in the human species' (p. 69).

One of the major examples of aggression in the selected Pinter plays in this thesis is Stanley being subjected to verbal and physical abuse in the lengthy scene mentioned below:

McCann snatches his glasses and as Stanley rises, reaching for them, takes his chair downstage centre, below the table, Stanley stumbling as he follows. Stanley clutches the chair and stays bent over it.

[...]

Goldberg. Where is your wife?

Stanley. In –

Goldberg. Answer.

Stanley (*turning, crouched*). What wife?

Goldberg. What have you done with your wife?

McCann. He's killed his wife

Goldberg. Why did you kill your wife?

Stanley (*sitting, his back to the audience*). What wife?

McCann. How did he kill her?

Goldberg. How did you kill her?

McCann. You throttled her.

Goldberg. With arsenic.

McCann. There's your man!

Goldberg. Where's your mum?

Stanley. In the sanatorium.

McCann. Yes!

Goldberg. Why did you never get married?

McCann. She was waiting at the porch.

Goldberg. You skeddadled from the wedding.

McCann. He left her in the lurch.

Goldberg. You left her in the pudding club.

McCann. She was waiting at the church.

[...]

Goldberg. What makes you think you exist?

McCann. You're dead.

Goldberg. You're dead. You can't live, you can't think, you can't love. You're dead. You're a plague gone bad. There's no juice in you. You're nothing but an odour!

Silence. They stand over him. He is crouched in the chair. He looks up slowly and kicks Goldberg in the stomach. Goldberg falls. Stanley stands. McCann seizes a chair and lifts it above his head. Stanley seizes a chair and covers his head with it. McCann and Stanley circle.

Goldberg. Steady McCann.

Stanley (*circling*). Uuuuuuhhhhh!

McCann. Right, Judas.

Goldberg (*rising*). Steady, McCann.

McCann. Come on!

Stanley. Uuuuuuhhhhh!

McCann. He's sweating.

Stanley. Uuuuuuhhhhh!

Goldberg. Easy, McCann.

Goldberg. The bastard sweatpig is sweating.

A loud drumbeat off left, descending the stairs. Goldberg takes the chair from Stanley. They put the chairs down. They stop still (pp. 43, 44, 46, 47).

As clarified in the scene above, *The Birthday Party* is an example of Pinter's use of aggression. He uses verbal aggression in most of the characters: Meg, Stanley, Goldberg, McCann, and Lulu, in addition to physical aggression towards Stanley. Moreover, Stanley was also subjected to mental abuse and was accused by Goldberg and McCann of killing a fictional wife whom Stanley never mentions once in the play. And aggression is one of the main themes investigated by Freud when treating cases. Pinter's interest in this aspect of the human being's psyche is generated by the Freudian concepts of aggression, which he uses as a theme in many other plays, such as *The Homecoming*, *A Night Out*, *The Lover*, *The Dumb Waiter*, *Mountain Language* and others. And as (Prentice, 2000) comments on the issue of aggression and verbal abuse, she describes that 'nobody will dissent from the central purpose,

which is to show what an unspeakable horror it is when one human being has unrestrained power over another' (Prentice, 2000, p. 286). Her quote clarifies that Pinter tends to create characters who use language to verbally abuse other characters. This happened in Stanley's scene above, and the abuse finally broke him.

7.2.f Dream Analysis

This section deals with dreams and dream interpretation according to Freud. Dreams usually connect the person's subconscious and his waking life by using life events as dream material. To learn about this connection, and how interpreters decipher the symbols which appear in dreams, we will have a look at Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams* ([1900] 1997) and connect it to other psychoanalysts, the Oedipus complex, literature and drama, Lucina Paquet Gabbard's *The Dream Structure of Pinter Plays* (1976) and a selection of Pinter's plays approached in this thesis.

Freud dedicates his *The Interpretation of Dreams* ([1900] 1997) to the notion of dream analysis, which he practices as a method of analysing patients' psychological disorders by listening to them narrate their dreams, or the parts they remember, and then relating components of these dreams to other elements. He investigated patients' individual lives and their history, or relates their dreams to the general collective memory or general elements related to sexuality and the relationship with one's parents. Freud says in *The Interpretation of Dreams* that he:

Shall demonstrate that there is a psychological technique which makes it possible to interpret dreams and that on the application of this technique, every dream will reveal itself as a psychological structure, full of significance, and one which may be assigned to a specific place in the psychic activities of the waking state. [1900] 1997, p. 5)

The Interpretation of Dreams is a platform from which to 'demonstrate' how dream analysis works, to 'elucidate the processes which underlie the strangeness and obscurity of dreams, and to deduce from these processes the nature of the psychic forces whose conflict or co-operation is responsible for our dreams' [1900] 1997, p. 5).

Freud's most famous method involves relating dreams to the Oedipus complex and hidden sexual or incestuous desires towards one's mother. Stephen Wilson says in the introduction to *The Interpretation of Dreams* that the book is presented as 'an exposition of a model of the mind (Freud's first "topography", which divided the mind into unconscious, preconscious and conscious domains, [...], an investigation of imaginative processes and a personal confession' (pp.VII-VIII). Wilson continues to illuminate the importance of the Oedipus complex in forming the basis for *The Interpretation of Dreams* and calls it 'the still controversial claim that there exists in all men an (infantile) unconscious disposition towards maternal incest and patricide' (p.VIII). Freud's psychoanalytical methods are the tools that decipher dreams through either 'latent content' or 'dream work'. 'Latent content' is the hidden psychological meaning of the dream that has a subtle influence on the dreamer; however, the dreamer may not recognise the nature of his dream unless a psychoanalyst investigates it. The 'dream work', or the 'manifest content', on the other hand, is the literal meaning of the dream which is analysed via one of the factors participating in dream-formation: 'condensation', 'the work of displacement', 'the means of representation in dreams' and 'the secondary elaboration', which will be addressed later in this section.

In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud proposes two methods of dream interpretation: symbolic dream interpretation and the cipher method. According to Freud, dreams have meanings, some of which are hidden because 'they are intended as a substitute for some other thought-process and that we have only to disclose this substitute correctly in order to discover the hidden meaning of the dream' (pp. 10- 11). The first method of dream interpretation is symbolic, which 'envisages the dream content as a whole and seeks to replace it by another content, which is intelligible and in certain respects analogous' (p. 11).

The other method of dream interpretation is the cipher method, which 'treats the dream as a kind of a secret code in which every sign is translated into another sign of known meaning, according to an established key' (p. 12). The example Freud proposes is his own dream of 'a letter' and 'a funeral'. Freud later discovers that 'letter' is translated to 'vexation' and 'funeral' to 'engagement' after he 'consult[s] [Artimedoros of Daldis's] "dream-book"' to decipher the 'secret code' (p. 12). However, he admits that this method is 'limited in its application' and is 'not susceptible of a general exposition', because it depends solely on a certain 'key' that exists in a dream-book and is used to interpret dreams (p. 12). He agrees with Artimedoros of Daldis, an ancient Roman dream interpreter, who says that 'the personality and the position of the dreamer are taken into consideration' when interpreting

dreams, not only the dream content itself. Furthermore, the dreamer is partly responsible for the content of his dreams, and so he is one of the 'keys' which should be used while interpreting his own reveries. Freud's method of interpreting dreams combines listening to his patients talk about their dreams while allowing them to recall memories from the past, including their 'ideas and thoughts which occurred to them in connection with a given theme' and by 'noting and communicating everything that passes through [their] mind[s]' (pp. 14-15). He also encourages his patients not to 'suppress' their ideas, because these ideas must have some sort of significance if they keep occurring to them (p. 15). In fact, 'self-observation' is a major key in solving or deciphering the dreamer's dream; therefore, 'when the work of interpretation has been completed, the dream can be recognized as a wish-fulfilment' (pp. 15, 33). Wish-fulfilment dreams, according to Freud, are 'often undisguised and easy to recognize' (p. 35). They are simple dreams that relate to events occurring in the dreamer's life. For example, he notes that 'if, in the evening, I eat anchovies, olives, or other strongly salted food, I am thirsty at night and therefore I wake. The waking, however, is preceded by a dream, which has always the same content, namely, that I am drinking' (p. 35). The wish or the desire to drink is only fulfilled if the dreamer wakes up and drinks – nothing complicated about a simple sensation of thirst after a salty meal. The same happens with children whose dreams are 'often simple fulfilments of wishes' and 'they present no problem to be solved' (p. 38). Freud mentions an example of a child's dream, his daughter Anna's. Anna fell ill as a result of the 'over-plentiful consumption of strawberries', and all she could think about, and therefore dream about, were strawberries (p. 41). She talks in her sleep and says 'Anna F(r)eud, st'awbewy, wild st'awbewy, om'lette', with emphasis on 'strawberry' being the cause of her illness, in addition to being the wish she seeks to fulfill in the wish-fulfillment dream (p. 41). Wish-fulfilment dreams are straightforward and mostly satisfying, but not all dreams are so. Freud says some frequent dreams 'present the most painful content', and these do not fall under the wish-fulfilment category (p. 45) but under 'anxiety-dreams', which are described as absurd, painful, stressful, uncomfortable and sometimes proposing the opposite to what a dreamer wishes to happen in real life (pp. 46, 51).

Freud elaborates on the different sources that stimulate the dreams. He suggests four different sources, which vary between 'recent', 'significant' events, a 'subjective experience' or 'recollection of a psychologically significant event' (p. 83).

His suggested sources of dreams are:

A recent and psychologically significant event, which is directly represented in the dream.

Several recent and significant events, which are combined by the dream into a single whole.

One or more recent and significant events, which are represented in the dream content by allusion to a contemporary by indifferent event.

A subjectively significant experience (recollection, train of thought), which is *constantly* represented in the dream by allusion to a recent but indifferent impression' (p. 83)

Notably, the sources of Freud's dreams mentioned above all share the adjectives 'recent' and 'significant' in describing events which stimulate and influence dreams. To explain the reasoning behind the use of 'recent', Freud indicates that 'the very freshness of an impression gives it a certain psychological value for a dream', which is a major factor in determining the connection between the dreamer and the elements in a dream (p. 83). The second adjective Freud uses is 'significant', due to the subjectivity of human beings. The 'significant' event that stimulates a certain type of dream for one person might not be as significant to another person. Someone might be affected terribly by a 'recent' event of mass-killing he sees on the news, for example, so it becomes 'significant' to this particular person and affects his dreams, while another person might see the same 'recent' event of mass-killing but does not consider it 'significant' to him; therefore, his dreams are not affected.

In addition to these 'recent' and 'significant' sources that stimulate and influence dreams, there is another major influence, namely the Oedipus complex. Oedipus, as explained previously in section (7.2.b) in this thesis, fulfilled his destiny by killing his father, marrying his mother and having children with his mother. As a result of fulfilling his destiny, Oedipus blinded himself, causing metaphorical castration, and banished himself to the mountains to distance himself physically from the places and people which stimulated the erotic feelings he had for his mother/wife. According to Freud, the Oedipus complex revolves around 'falling in love with one parent and hating the other, [which] forms part of the permanent stock of the psychic impulses which arise in early childhood' (p. 155). Consequently, dreams are highly connected to the oedipal connections between parents and children, as the former are the first people to have physical connection with the child, although these connections or interactions are not meant to be sexual. Parents care for their children instinctually by feeding

them, providing warmth, providing clothes, giving baths, teaching basic skills (talking, walking, etc.) and much more. Children's dreams, therefore, are associated highly with the people who provide means of survival, namely their parents. Freud also says that 'like Oedipus, we live in ignorance of the desires that offend morality, the desires that nature has forced upon us, and after their unveiling we may well prefer to avert our gaze from the scene of our childhood' (p. 157). Adults are more aware of the significance of their dreams than children; consequently, adults consciously choose not to interpret these dreams in relation to sexual fantasies. Moreover, they also choose to "avert" from remembering their childhood memories of alleged erotic physical interaction between them and their parents. Choosing to ignore the meaning behind dreams is one way of not arriving at the wish-fulfilment of the dream, especially the 'oedipal wish' and the 'wish to be rid of someone'. Freud explains that 'the dream of having sexual intercourse with one's mother was as common then as it is today with many people, who tell it with indignation and astonishment [...] it is the key to the tragedy and the complement to the dream of the death of the father' (p. 157). Freud insists on describing incestuous relations as the 'key to the tragedy', because incestuous relations are the origin of the tragedy of Oedipus and the reason why the Oedipus complex emerged in the first place. Therefore, incestuous dreams have similar oedipal effects on the dreamer and could lead the dreamer to pursue them in real life for the purposes of fulfilling a wish. A similar case to Oedipus is Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (1603), which, according to Freud, is 'rooted in the same soil as *Oedipus Rex*' (p. 158). Nevertheless, Hamlet does not express his incestuous emotions towards his mother during the timeframe of the play; instead, he represses his desires and starts seeing his father's ghost. The ghost stimulates Hamlet and gives him the liberty, one way or another, to express his desires and fulfil his wish to kill his uncle Claudius, who marries Hamlet's mother after his father is killed. Shakespeare makes the ghost appear on stage, but no one knows if the ghost was in actual contact with Hamlet or if Hamlet were dreaming of his father's ethereal presence. If it were all a dream, then Hamlet dreams of getting rid of his uncle and achieves it by fulfilling his wish to be rid of someone. The only wish that 'remains repressed' in Hamlet is his oedipal wish to have sexual intercourse with his mother, though 'we [do] learn of its existence' (p. 158). In conclusion, the difference between Hamlet and Oedipus is whose wish is fulfilled by the end of the play.

Dreams are complicated if the dreamer ignores the signs that appear in his dream. Freud equates the complexity of dreams with 'rebus' puzzles, which use pictures, characters and numbers to represent words and phrases to send a certain message (p.170). These signs are

supposed to make interpreting dreams easier for psychiatrists, because a professional psychiatrist is supposed to decipher the encrypted messages the ‘rebus’ puzzle is sending the dreamer (p. 170). On the contrary, Freud says that ‘our predecessors in the art of dream interpretation have made the mistake of judging the rebus as an artistic composition’ instead of deciphering the symbols individually and then connecting them to each other and to the dreamer himself. The method Freud’s ‘predecessors’ used in interpreting dreams made this ‘artistic composition’ appear ‘nonsensical and worthless’ and consequently not related to the dreamer’s wishes which need to be fulfilled (p. 170).

Freud summarises four factors that control the formation of dreams and help solve the ‘rebus’ or interpret the dream. He explains these four factors in detail in the Dream-Work chapter in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, naming them “condensation,” “the work of displacement,” “the means of representation in dreams” and “the secondary elaboration” (pp. 169, 352).

The first factor, ‘condensation’, contributes to the formation of dreams by offering condensed and brief dreams, which could be told in a minute but need an hour or more to analyse. The dream, according to Freud, is ‘meagre, paltry and laconic in comparison with the range and copiousness of the dream thoughts’ (p. 170). This type of dream might contain different symbols, images, numbers, names, events and more, which need to be deciphered exactly like the “rebus” needs to be unravelled. Deciphering dreams that contain an amount of condensation takes a good deal of time and effort by the interpreter to solve the puzzle and eventually arrive at the results related to the dreamer. Dream content, therefore, contains a great amount of different and random ideas combined into one concise vision. The second factor is “the work of displacement,” which happens when ‘the essential content of the dream thoughts need not be represented at all in the dream’ (p. 190). The dream’s ‘content is arranged about elements which do not constitute the central point of the dream thoughts’ (p. 190). A dreamer dreams about an item that is not directly related to his personal life, though it does have a connection to something else not represented in this particular dream. Freud mentions himself dreaming of “botanical” elements when he has no interest in ‘botany’ in real life (p. 190). However, he interprets the existence of these “botanical” elements in his dreams by connecting them to his real lifestyle, saying that he is ‘in the habit of sacrificing too much time for [his] hobbies’ (p. 190). He interprets his dream content, botany, as a representation of the fact that he is ‘concerned with the complications and conflicts resulting from services rendered between colleagues’ (p. 190). Dream-displacement happens when ‘the dream content no longer has any likeness to the nucleus of the dream thoughts, and the dream

reproduces only a distorted form of the dream-wish in the unconscious' (p. 193). Therefore, if a dreamer wishes to fulfil his dream, in this case dream-displacement, he should not take the dream content literally but instead think about the dream's interpretation in association with his life and his potential thought content that caused this dream. According to Freud, '*dream-displacement* and *dream-condensation* are the two craftsmen to whom we may chiefly ascribe the structure of the dream', because both of these factors contribute to explaining the hidden truth behind the dream content (p. 193). The third factor that controls the formation of dreams is 'the means of representation in dreams' (p. 194). The means of representation in dreams affects the selection of the 'material that eventually appears in the dream', or what is called 'the dream content' (p. 194). Moreover, dream material 'consists of the essential dream thoughts' and dream content, which are usually 'a complex of thoughts and memories', albeit these thoughts need dream censorship. Freud states that he 'does not set any value on the assertion that all these thoughts have participated in the formation of the dream; on the contrary, they may include notions which are associated with experiences that have occurred subsequently to the dream, between the dream and the interpretation' (p. 195). Freud's statement declares that dream thoughts are important in the process of dream interpretation, although it is not essential that all dream thoughts are included in the dream content. Furthermore, that is the reason why dream censorship is needed, in order to uncover the connection between dream thoughts and dream contents, and it also clarifies why particular thoughts appear in the content while others do not. Moreover, there is one type of dream that always creates tension for the dreamer and challenges the interpreter to decipher, namely the sexual dream. Psychiatrists are familiar with sexual dreams. They have the knowledge and experience gained from their previous studies, the amount of patients they treat and the extensive amount of dreams to which they listen. Some of the symbols are considered common knowledge and do not need a tremendous amount of effort to interpret, such as the symbols found in 'folklore, myths, legends, idiomatic phrases, proverbs and the current witticisms of a people than in dreams we should have' (p. 231). Freud elaborates on symbols in sexual dream, suggesting that 'all complicated machines and appliances are very probably the genitals – as a rule the male genitals' (p. 235). He mentions examples of symbols that are interpreted as male sexual organs, such as 'ploughshare, hammer, gun, revolver, dagger, sword, [...] many of the landscapes seen in dreams, especially those that contain bridges or wooded mountains' and 'helmet, cloaks', while 'hollow objects (chest, box, etc.)' and 'church or chapel' are interpreted as symbols of female sexual organs (pp. 236, 238, 244). Freud expands on symbols in sexual dreams and notes that both the female and the male

organ could be symbolised in dreams by ‘other parts of the body: the male member by the hand or the foot, the female genital orifice by the mouth, the ear, or even the eye’, while ‘the secretions of the human body – mucus, tears, urine, semen, etc. – may be used in dreams interchangeably’ (p. 238). Moreover, symbols that represent sexual acts include ‘steps leading to chapel’, symbolising ‘coitus’, and ‘flowers’, symbolising ‘virginity’ (pp. 244, 247).

Symbols have been discussed by many scholars, especially their origins, i.e. whether they are conscious – can be seen and touched in the waking state – or unconscious – in dreams. Freud focuses more on the unconscious symbols and then relates them to the real life of the dreamers. On the other hand, we have Ernest Jones, Melanie Klein and Hanna Segal, who examine the origin of conscious symbols and then relate them to the unconscious state of the mind. Jones, in ‘The Theory of Symbolism’ ([1916] 1918), explains how symbols connect together different unrelated things. Jones defines symbols through six points:

1-A symbol is a representative or substitute of some other idea. 2- It represents the primary element through having something in common with it. 3- The symbol thus tends to be shorter and more condensed than the idea represented. 4- Symbolic modes of thought are the more primitive [...] [particularly] in dreams, where conscious mental life reduced almost to a minimum. 5- In most uses of the word, a symbol is a manifest expression for an idea that is more or less hidden, secret, or kept in reserve. Most typically of all, the person employing the symbol is not even conscious of what it actually represents. 6 - Symbols [...] resemble wit in being made spontaneously, automatically and [...] unconsciously (([1916] 1918) pp. 183- 184).

Jones agrees with Freud regarding the significance of unconscious symbols. He somehow rephrases the four Freudian factors that control the formation of dreams Freud states in the Dream-Work chapter in *The Interpretation of Dreams*: ‘condensation’, ‘the work of displacement’, ‘the means of representation in dreams’ and ‘the secondary elaboration’ (Freud, pp. 169- 352). He states that ‘typical forms of symbols’ are ‘visual’, ‘concrete’ or originate in ‘childhood memories’ (p. 223). A dreamer dreams about the figures that induce a sense of significance to him, mainly by previously seeing, touching or doing in the waking state.

Jones proceeds with an observation of symbols, noting that ‘there are probably more symbols of the male organ itself than all other symbols put together’ (p. 194). He then mentions

examples of symbols of male genitalia, some of which originated in relation to animals, erect monuments, nature, weapons and other non-genital body organs. He mentions the 'eagle', 'bull', 'devil', 'cock', 'serpent', 'goat', 'ape', 'ass', 'nose', 'beak', 'dagger', 'church tower', 'eye', 'most charms', 'talismans' and 'amulets' (pp. 187, 190, 202, 203, 215). He also mentions a few symbols of female genitalia: 'garden', 'meadow', 'field', 'wedding ring', 'bracelets' and 'brooches' (pp. 200, 214). In addition to the previous symbols, bodily discharge and fluids also have symbols: while 'excrement' is symbolised mainly by gold 'metal coins', 'lightening' and 'mistletoe' symbolise 'semen' (pp. 215, 220).

Klein, in 'The Importance of Symbol-Formation in the Development of the Ego' (1930), agrees with Freud on the significance of the Oedipus complex in relation to symbols. She relates symbols to a person's childhood Oedipus complex and to the child's internal conflict: does he kill his father and have his mother for himself, or does he have an incestuous relationship with his mother and risk being castrated by his father? The symbols a child first notices and dreams about, Klein says, are his parents' genitalia and the act of 'parental coitus', both of which lead him to imagine the parents being 'bitten, torn, cut or stamped to bits' (Klein, (1930) p. 24). These fantasies turn into anxieties that transfer to the child's unconscious and manifest themselves in his dreams. Klein states that symbolism is not only related to fantasy, but it also 'buil[ds] up the subject's relation to the outside world and to reality in general' (p. 25). She demonstrates this issue by examining a case study of a four-year-old boy named Dick, who functions at the level of a 14-18-month-old child. Dick is the subject of Klein's experiment to prove that even at his age and in his particular mental state, he has observations of coitus, signs of the Oedipus complex and that he fantasises about his mother. She uses toy trains, symbols of male genitalia, to examine Dick's understanding of the sexual acts. She supplies two trains, a big train 'Daddy-train' and a small train 'Dick-train', to examine his reactions (p. 29). The result is that Dick 'picked up the train [Klein] called "Dick" and made it roll to the window and said "Station". [Klein] explained: "The station is mummy; Dick is going into mummy" (p. 29). Here we learn that another symbol of female genitalia, as a result of the experiment with Dick, is "station." Although 'Dick cut[s] himself off from reality' and immerses in fantasies about his parents' genitalia and coitus, he creates his own symbols and relates them to the visual and concrete items that surround him at home or in the clinic. For example, he connects 'cupboard' and 'station' with female genitalia and 'wash-basin', 'electric radiator', 'spoon', 'knife' and 'train' with male genitalia (pp. 29, 32, 33).

Segal, in 'Notes on Symbol Formation' (1957), posits that symbol formation is created as a result of 'understanding and interpretation of unconscious symbolism, [which] is one of the main tools of the psychologist' (1957, p. 391). Primarily, Segal is restating what Freud says about dream interpretation and how a psychologist must have knowledge of symbols before attempting the process of dream interpretation. She also agrees with Klein and says that 'symbolism would be a relation between the ego, the object, and the symbol' and that 'symbol formation is an activity of the ego attempting to deal with the anxieties stirred by its relation to the object' (p. 392). Segal also points to a few symbols related to genitalia and sexual acts. For example, the 'violin' is a symbol of male genitalia, 'playing the violin' is the symbol of masturbation and 'fairy tales' symbolises the 'child's early anxieties and wishes' (pp. 391, 396). Moreover, in another essay by Segal, 'The Importance of Symbol-Formation in the Development of the Ego' - in Context' (1998), she put Klein's 'The Importance of Symbol-Formation in the Development of the Ego' (1930) into practice, relating Klein's essay to Jones (1916) and Freud. Segal says that 'whilst Freud and Jones considered that it is the libidinal link allows the child to symbolize his own and the parents' bodies by objects in the external world, Melanie Klein added the role played by anxiety as a major spur in symbol-formation' (1998, pp. 351, 352). Referring to Dick's case study and his fantasies about destroying his father and getting his 'Dick train' into his mother, Segal says 'anxiety spurs the development of symbolism' (p. 352). Segal's view of analysing dreams is similar to Freud's, as she says, 'we take into account the level of symbolization and the degree of concrete acting-out in the dream', or in the person's waking state 'whether it is child's play, dream, association or general behavior' (p. 356).

Afterwards, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud explains the dream interpretation process, saying that 'one may go so far as to say that the dream-work makes use of all the means accessible to it for the visual representation of the dream thoughts [...] and thus exposes itself to the doubt as well as the derision of all those who have only hearsay knowledge of dream interpretation' ([1899] 1997, p. 270).

The fourth factor that controls the formation of dreams is 'the secondary elaboration' (p. 336), which helps make 'an entirely new assumption' about interpreting dreams (p. 336). Freud states that some dreams:

Seem faultlessly logical and correct; they start from a possible situation, continue it by means of consistent changes and bring it – although this is rare – to a not unnatural conclusion. These dreams have been subjected to the most searching elaboration by a

psychic function similar to our waking thought; they seem to have a meaning, but this meaning is very far removed from the real meaning of the dream (p. 338).

This type of dream occurs in the person's waking life and could have real meaning relating to the person's life. These dreams connect dream thoughts and dream content and are represented in daydreams or fantasies. The connection is made, although 'some of these fantasies are conscious', whilst some of them are 'superabundance of unconscious fantasies, which must perforce remain unconscious on account of their content and their origin in repressed material' (p. 339). Consequently, Freud says that this fourth factor will 'seek to construct *something* like a daydream from the material which offers itself', thereby connecting the conscious with the unconscious and dream thoughts with dream content (p. 340).

The definition of dream analysis explained above is a one of the methods I emphasise in analysing selected Pinter plays, namely *The Birthday Party* (1957), *The Homecoming* (1965) and *Old Times* (1971). The connection between Freud and Pinter is not examined as much as it should be, except in one particular book called *The Dream Structure of Pinter's Plays: A Psychoanalytical Approach* (1976) by Lucina Paquet Gabbard, who discusses most of Pinter's play in relation to dream analysis. Pinter's plays, says Gabbard, are obscure, ambiguous and connected 'in terms of the grouping patterns of a dream series' (1976, p. 16). The series of connected dreams Gabbard talks about is the foundation to her psychoanalytical approach to tackling Pinter's plays, through which she discusses 'The oedipal Wish', which she considers the 'Key Dream' (p. 15). Pinter's plays, says Gabbard, share similar themes, i.e. 'the oral, the anal, and oedipal fantasies or anxieties that appear in one form or another' (p. 17). For example, she views Pinter's *The Room* (1957) as a provider of the 'basis for explaining the mechanisms of the dream', and she notes that it is 'the most obvious example of condensation' (p. 17- 18). The title of *The Room* symbolises the female genitals, namely vaginas and wombs, because of its shape, function and the feeling of security and warmth it evokes when a person is inside it. Gabbard chiefly applies the interpretation of the Oedipus complex, the castration complex and dream analysis to most of Pinter's plays. Moreover, she analyses incidents in these plays as examples of these Freudian concepts. Gabbard divides the 17 plays written between 1957 and 1975 into four groups: punishment dreams (the wish to kill), anxiety dreams (the wish to be rid of someone), anxiety dreams (the wish to have a mother) and punishment dreams (the wish to have a mother). She refers mainly to Freud's

Interpretation of Dreams, because his theories are the main theories she follows to interpret Pinter's plays.

Having chosen *The Birthday Party* (1957), *The Homecoming* (1965) and *Old Times* (1971) as the main focus of this thesis, I will elaborate more on the plays in section 9 (Case Studies). Nevertheless, for now, a short explanation is provided in this section.

Pinter's *The Birthday Party* ([1957] 1996) is a representation of the punishment dreams resulting from wish fulfilment. It is also a representation of 'fear of dispossession [which] seems to spring from the repressed oedipal guilt embodied in the intruder' (Gabbard, 1976 p. 38). The intruders who disturb the flow of events in *The Birthday Party* are Goldberg and McCann, who dominate the owners and guest of the house. The play is centred around the themes of fear, violence and symbolic castration, which are explained above in sections 7.2.c and 7.2.f defining aggression and the castration complex.

Furthermore, *The Birthday Party* channels condensation regarding the father figure. Three characters represent Stanley's father figure in the play as well as representing condensation: Goldberg, McCann and Petey. Goldberg and McCann are two different characters, both of whom call themselves two different names: Goldberg calls himself "Nat" and "Simey," while McCann calls himself "Dermot" and "Seamus" (Pinter [1957] 1996, pp. 22, 37, 66, 72). The third father figure is Petey, a passive character representing the indifferent side of fathers. He does not participate in the punishment of his child but instead lets other people do it – in this case, he lets Goldberg and McCann punish the child and gain the bad reputation instead of himself. Therefore, condensation here has three different father figures who have five different names between them, though they are all condensed into one father figure.

Pinter's plays share many themes, one of which is settings. *The Birthday Party* takes place in the living room, which is a similar setting to *The Homecoming* and *Old Times*. It is the room where Meg cares for her husband, a long-time guest (Stanley, the son figure) and other guests, and it also represents the mother and her womb, in that it provides food, security and warmth. As the play proceeds, the significance of the living room appears more as a trigger for 'separation anxiety' and a 'fear of expulsion from the womb' (Gabbard, pp. 50, 51). 'Separation' and 'expulsion' are forms of punishment for Stanley's sinful wish to have a mother, and the means to perform the punishment is the presence of the intruders. Goldberg and McCann's existence symbolises the obstacles coming between Stanley and his sinful oedipal wish. However, Stanley does not wish to be punished for the sinful wish alone; he

also wishes to punish Meg. The wish to punish his mother figure acts as a reaction for her acceptance to be involved in a relationship with her son figure. Stanley starts punishing Meg by verbally abusing her and insulting her 'horrible' food and the way she cleans the 'pigsty' (Pinter, pp. 8, 13). As the play progresses, he tries to strangle her, after he steps into the 'drum' she gave him as a present for his birthday party and breaks it (Pinter, p. 57). He was blindfolded for a game of blind man's buff he and the guests played at his birthday party (Pinter, p. 55). The drum symbolises female genitalia, in this case Meg's vagina. Stanley punishes himself for this symbolical sexual act of inserting his foot, a symbol of male genitalia, into his mother's vagina. He sins and she sins as well, and both need punishment. The punishers, as mentioned above, are Goldberg and McCann, who perform their roles as the tough side of the father figure who physically and psychologically punishes his children. They first abuse Stanley verbally, in a lengthy scene, and then blind him, thus symbolising castration: 'McCann (to Stanley). I'll take your glasses'. He takes them then he '*breaks Stanley's glasses, snapping the frames*' (Pinter, p. 57). The last stage of the punishment is ejecting Stanley from the house/womb violently.

The second play is *The Homecoming* ([1965] 1997), in which 'women move about among the roles of mother, wife and whore, while men shift among the roles of father, husband, son and lover' (Gabbard p. 143). In *The Homecoming*, the oedipal wish to have a mother, Ruth, is fulfilled. The play also suggests that Max and his family of men change the status of a woman who resembles a mother into an actual mother – a symbolic mother into a literal one. Ruth symbolises the mother by being the only woman around a family of men, the wife of one of them and the fact that she takes care of her own three male children. She shares characteristics with their late mother, whom Max calls a 'slutbitch of a wife', and she was originally a prostitute who called herself 'a model for the body' (Pinter, pp. 55, 65). The men want to take care of Ruth because she is now not just any woman – she is their mother and they want to make her happy by providing a place to stay, money, servants and intimacy, similar to a child's intimate actions with his mother. Similar to *The Birthday Party*, the play takes place in a living room, a room that symbolises the womb, warmth and security. However, this room is slightly different, because the walls were demolished after the biological mother died, which resulted in the children and their father escaping the womb once in the past. However, it is apparent that they wish to have a mother figure in their lives again, to regress back into the womb, which is why they try to find a replacement for their biological mother by shifting Ruth's role from a prostitute and a wife to a mother.

The play represents ‘the progressive fulfillment of the wish to have a mother. In other words, the struggle to purge her, along with the father, is reversed into a struggle to possess her. However, mother is disguised, recognizable only in the latent content’ (Gabbard, p. 141). She shifts from prostitute or wife, to mother. The shocking element in *The Homecoming* is the fact that the men and Ruth accept the change in the relationships between themselves as if it were a normal act. The family accepts it without struggling, denying, or stating, the need to be punished for their sinful wishes. In *The Homecoming* ‘repressed wishes are allowed to surface and they carry Teddy and Ruth home where each can examine his desires in a well-lighted room. For Ruth, physical desires are acknowledged and no longer denied. For Teddy, the open-end still applies’ (Gabbard, p. 204).

The third play is *Old Times* ([1971] 1997), which represents ‘punishment dreams in consequence of the fulfilment of the sinful wish to have a mother’ (Gabbard, p. 39). There are two women punishing Deeley, the male figure, by refusing to accept his pursuit of affection towards them. One of these women is his wife Kate and the other is her old friend Anna. *Old Times* is different from the two plays above in the sense that Kate, Anna and Deeley do not expect to receive any positive or negative reaction from each other. They just dwell in their past and try to form a connection between this and the present, albeit with no success. They let their anxiety be hidden in the past, but they ‘linger in the effects of their losses – effects that amount to incompatibility, isolation, alienation and finally self-destruction’ (Gabbard, p. 39, 40). The play portrays a sort of threesome happening between three incompatible people whose desires and expectations do not match. Deeley loves Kate, while Anna is torn between Deeley and Kate, but Kate is shown as the selfish, narcissistic person who only loves herself. The three of them still suffer from the choices they made in the past. Their past actions, desires, anxiety, distorted memory of past events and unusual fantasies affect them unconsciously, which leads them to have this complex relationship. As mentioned above, Freud considers ‘significant’ and ‘recent’ events the sources that ‘stimulate the dreams’ (Freud [1899] 1997, p. 83). Consequently, the whole play is a dream that contains ‘significant’ events in the lives of these characters. They meet in the past, have a ‘significant’ effect on one another and consequences of that effect still influence their present lives. Although they do not act out their feelings/ fantasies/ anxiety, they treat these feelings comically by making fun of each other. It is in fact a punishment dream that occurs as a result of wishing to have a mother. In *Old Times*, the characters wish to have mother figures, but they never pursue it; therefore, their wishes are not fulfilled. Nonetheless, they are punished

for wishing. The latent dream content is deep and symbolic in this play and will never manifest itself as an actual sexual act between the characters. The setting is similar to the other two plays. *Old Times* starts with two people, Deeley and Kate, in one room, which again symbolises a mother's womb by providing security and warmth. Then a third person, Anna, appears in the room and disturbs the safety of this womb. Disturbing the womb in this case is different from Goldberg and McCann's method of disturbing, as they are aggressive with everyone, especially Stanley, while Anna only disturbs the household by sharing her side of the memories she created in the past with Kate and Deeley. The three characters share their personal side of the memories, and these are thrown into creating a 'casserole' of fantasies, past relations, past and current feelings, along with lies (Pinter ([1971]1997), pp. 258- 259).

Deeley tries to prove himself as the man of the house, and thus creating a father figure, by displaying himself as a world traveller who is 'associated with substantial numbers of articulate and sensitive people, mainly prostitutes of all kinds' (Pinter, p. 280). All he can do is talk, he cannot prove anything from his past and cannot express his current desires for fear of punishment. Deeley's personality indicates that his claims of dealing with prostitutes are doubtful, so he is at a stage where he only looks at an object, including women, to gaze and fantasise about sexual situations that will never happen. He is a gazer/voyeur who cannot move past the looking phase. Pinter repeats the word 'gaze' a few times to describe Deeley's actions (Pinter p. 289). He has desires to love and have sexual relations with the women he gazes at, but his fear of punishment is greater than his desires. Gabbard describes *Old Times* as a 'mixture of homosexual and heterosexual relationships', a 'mixture of fantasies and lies about past events', 'jealous combat over a sexual partner' and 'unknowability of the truth' (p. 238).

Old Times also has a connection to daydreaming. Anna says that Kate 'was always a dreamer', but she would not have known this fact unless Kate had shared her daytime fantasies with her (Pinter ([1971]1997), pp. 261). As mentioned previously, Freud explains that daydreaming happens in the person's waking state and relates mainly to the person's life. Daydreams link together dream thoughts and dream content and represent fantasies, the latter of which are either 'conscious' or 'superabundance of unconscious fantasies' (Freud, [1899] 1997. p. 339). Anna used to steal Kate's underwear, another symbol for female genitalia, causing Kate to daydream about the underwear touching Anna's genitals, which in turn creates fantasies of homosexual relations between Kate and Anna (Pinter, p. 248). Those

homosexual fantasies are in the past, but the situation is different in the present. Anna says that she 'live[s] on a volcanic island', which is a phallic symbol, suggesting that she is no longer interested in being Kate's lover because she has a man in her life (Pinter p. 260). Anna represents the mother figure, because the idea of having sexual relations with her or defiling her frightens Deeley. He fears punishment for his sexual fantasies and for his sinful wish to have a mother.

Pinter tends to connect his plays with common themes. As mentioned previously, one of these is the setting of the room, where the plays take place. Another common theme shared by the three plays I selected is the 'cigarette', which symbolises male genitalia. 'Cigarettes', 'cigarette case', 'cigarette box', 'cigars', 'smoking' and 'fag' appear several times in *The Birthday Party*, *The Homecoming* and *Old Times*, representing the father figure authority and imposing patriarchy. In *The Birthday Party*, 'cigarette' is mentioned a few times. Stanley lights a 'cigarette' and refuses to give Meg one (Pinter, p. 13). He prevents her from the pleasure of smoking and protects her from the dangers of a 'cigarette' or male genitalia. Goldberg offers Petey a 'cigarette', but Petey refuses to take it, handing over all the responsibility of a father figure to Goldberg by giving him the power (Pinter, p. 66). In *The Homecoming*, it is a family of men competing over the possession of the power, which makes sense of 'cigarette', 'cigar' and 'fag' being mentioned several times throughout the play. From the beginning of the play, Max tries to impose his power as a father figure by demanding he be given a 'fag' (Pinter, p. 16). Later on, his brother Sam 'takes a box of cigars from his pocket', but Max is the one who initiated it by taking a cigar and smoking it (Pinter, p. 20). Towards the end of the play, Teddy's 'cigar has gone out' and he does not 'want a light' to revive it (Pinter, p. 59). Teddy's power is gone with the ashes of the 'cigar' when he starts losing control over his wife, Ruth, therefore losing his power. Lastly, in *Old Times*, Deeley controls the 'cigarette box' because he tries to force a father figure image on the two women. 'Deeley stands, goes to cigarette box, picks it up, smiles at Kate. Kate looks at him, watches him light a cigarette, takes the box from him, crosses to Anna, offers her a cigarette. Anna takes one (Pinter p. 273).

8.0. Psychoanalysis of the Theatre

When I started researching Freudian psychoanalytical concepts and their potential associations with Pinter's plays, I found a gap in the previous literature, which is what I am

attempting to fill in this PhD thesis. Locating this gap sparked my attention to research more and limit the previously published literature tackling this gap to three publications, to my personal knowledge and research. The previous literature linking psychoanalysis and Pinter's plays will be mentioned in the following section in detail. However, I will briefly mention here the three major publications I am taking into consideration, to provide an overview of the nature of this section. The first publication I consult profoundly in writing my thesis is Lucina Paquet Gabbard's *The Dream Structure of Pinter's Plays: A Psychoanalytic Approach* (1976). Gabbard relies mostly on Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* in her application of his dream analysis to Pinter's plays. She analyses Pinter's characters and the plays' staging but also applies Freud's dream analysis to assist her in uncovering the connections between the plays. In addition, Gabbard is also, in the same way as me, interested in finding the connection between dreams and theatre, which will help significantly with my research. The second publication, which was in fact the first piece to draw my attention to the possibility of relating Freud's psychoanalysis to Pinter, is Peter Buse's chapter in *Drama + Theory: Critical Approaches to Modern British Drama* (2001). This chapter inspired my research, strongly motivated me to write a short PhD proposal on the same topic and finally led me to apply for my Postgraduate Research degree. I was fortunate enough to have Buse as my first main supervisor when I started this journey at Salford University. He guided my research during my first year as a Postgraduate research student and set the grounds for this thesis. Although numerous components have been changed, added or omitted in this thesis, the grounds and the essence of this work remain the same as the initially proposed idea of approaching Pinter's plays in a Freudian psychoanalytical way. I apply several Freudian concepts to three major plays created by Pinter, while Buse solely concentrates on the connection between Pinter's *The Homecoming* and Freud's 'The Uncanny', presented in one chapter in *Drama + Theory: Critical Approaches to Modern British Drama* (2001). He focuses mainly on the concept of 'absence and return', as 'home' can be either heimlich (homely or canny) or unheimlich (unhomely or 'uncanny') (Buse, 2001, p. 37). The third publication I found crucial is *Psychoanalysis and Performance* (2001), which comprises a collection of essays compiled and edited by Patrick Campbell and Adrian Kear. In the preface, Kear says that this book 'seeks to situate performance and psychoanalysis within a dialogical framework that speaks to the affiliations and correspondences between the two fields' (2001, p. xiii). He also pays tribute to the 'distinctive' authors whose 'original, commissioned' essays are compiled in this book, saying that 'each [essay] attempts to articulate and address problematics and thematics made

available by linking together psychoanalysis and performance, and each author stages their own points of departure and arrival accordingly' (p. xiii). The Introduction gives an informative summary of the essays, their connection to each other and the connection between psychoanalysis and performance. Campbell notes:

After all, if performing is a process in which individuals, physically present on stage, think, speak and interact in front of other individuals, then that very activity must throw into relief crucial questions about human behaviour. In making the hidden visible, the latent manifest, in laying bare the interior landscape of the mind and its fears and desires through a range of signifying practices, psychoanalytic processes are endemic to the performing arts. Similarly, the logic of performance infuses psychoanalytic thinking, from the "acting out" of hysteria to the "family romance" of desire' (2001, p. 1).

Campbell's statement raises the question about relating performing on stage to psychoanalysis via the medium of human behaviour. He suggests that real human behaviour requires psychoanalytical studies to be deciphered, which is the reason behind the idea of using a psychoanalytical approach in analysing any type of performance. Whether it is a live theatrical performance – acting, dancing or singing – or one that has to do with visual arts such as design, painting and sculpting, it will attract psychoanalysts to analyse the acts themselves, the motives behind creating them and the message they try to convey to the audience.

The last line of the above quoted statement reminds me first and foremost of Pinter's *The Homecoming*, which is mainly themed around a family whose relationship shifts between 'the "acting out" of hysteria' and 'the "family romance" of desire'. The most crucial part of the play is the confusingly sexually charged relationship between Ruth and the family men. The men start the play by being the seemingly normal family of a man, his brother and his sons; however, as events start unfolding, the family converts into prostitutes, pimps and perverts.

Campbell continues in his introduction in *Psychoanalysis and Performance* saying that

Staged activities not only provide a link with quotidian life, but also with the cloistered environment of the consulting room (...) Thus in the talking cure, the consulting room becomes a theatre in which the patient may be given the opportunity to revisit past conflicts, "transferring" those repressed feelings for parent or sibling on to the supposedly detached figure of the analyst. In this process the notion of "playing" or "acting out" becomes crucial, since the analyst is required to assume a

role and to “play it badly so that the patient may be freed from the compulsion to repeat the script of childhood (p. 3)

The quote above clearly explains the similarity between the experiences of the ‘consulting room’ and the theatre, which will be explored further in this section.

This section is associated with my attempt to take a psychoanalytical approach to theatre, specifically Pinter’s selected plays: *Old Times*, *The Homecoming* and *The Birthday Party*. Therefore, the following sub-sections are designated to determine the significance of this section in relation to the rest of the thesis, and its significance to filling the gap relating Freudian psychoanalytical concepts to Harold Pinter’s selected plays.

Starting with this section will be clarified further using the selected sub-sections are defined and drawn properly. The first sub-section is titled ‘Sexual Cultural Theatre’, because Pinter is known for producing shocking, sexually charged plays defying norms and cultural appropriations. Consequently, I found it significant to start this section with a brief historical preview of the relationship between theatre overall and the development of its association with sexuality in general and homosexuality specifically, in addition to a brief history of theatrical censorship in the United Kingdom. The second sub-section is titled ‘A psychoanalytical Reading of the Theatre’ because it illuminates the theatrical experiences and connects them to the therapeutic sessions. The third sub-section is titled ‘Subconscious Writing’ because it focuses mainly on the writer’s creative writing process resulting from his subconscious ideas and memories. The last sub-section is titled ‘My Approach to Psychoanalysis’ because I explain how this thesis – and this section – form an entity which supports the existing connection between theatre and psychoanalysis by applying Freudian psychoanalysis to Pinter’s plays.

8.1. Sexual Cultural Theatre

In this section, I discuss the idea of sexual cultural theatre and how it is formed especially that sexual acts and homosexuality are usually considered taboo. So, I try to track the history of performing these taboo scenes on stage in UK considering the fact that stage performances often follow the guidelines of censorship committees, or they will be cancelled. I am aware that the history of theatre in UK and its connection to censorship could be different from

other countries. In UK, for example, theatre performances started in the 6th century by the Romans. They built auditoriums in the country for the purpose of telling and performing old folk tales. A few centuries later in the Medieval ages, performing Biblical stories on stage became popular because missionaries aimed at spreading Christianity. As time progressed and the Renaissance theatre was created, Shakespearian plays became popular, so were the European influenced plays, especially French and Italian drama. The censorship regarding performing sexually charged scenes was enforced especially that female actors were not allowed to perform alongside male actors on stage, and this was one of the taboos at that time. Censorship was most present in the 19th century, and it was demonstrated by a critic using the pseudonym Dramaticus who published a pamphlet titled 'The stage as it is' in 1847. Dramaticus described the state of British theatre stating that 'production of serious plays was restricted to the patent theatres, and new plays were subjected to censorship by the Lord Chamberlain's Office'. It is however, in the 20th century is when the modern theatre started to emerge breaking the taboos gradually. Pinter was one of the playwrights who broke some social and sexual taboos, but he was not the only one. Edward Bond, for example, produced a play titled *Saved* (1965) at the Royal Court in London. The 'horrible', 'troubling' scene which 'set out a shock' to the initial reviewers is when 'three young men were trying to get to grips with a troubling scene in which they lark about with a baby in its pram, poking it, pulling off its nappy, goading each other until they stone it to death' (an interview with *The Guardian* 2011). According to the same article, *Saved* is considered 'a masterpiece', because it is 'celebrated for its role in the fight to abolish theatre censorship (which finally happened in 1968)', and is also considered 'as a prime influence on modern playwrights'. The article continues by stating Peter Lewis' commentary as a theatre critic for the *Daily Mail* that the present audience at the Royal Court in 1965 were 'less sure' about the actual significance of the play because 'it is not often in that hardened audience you hear the cry 'Revolting' and 'Dreadful' and the smack of seats vacated, but you did last night'. Another initial reviewer of the play was RB Marriott of the *Stage* who found the play's 'depiction of working-class Londoners leading desperate, dead-end lives sensitive and tinged with compassion'. Consequently, *Saved* paved the road for more plays of the same genre to be performed on stage and created a platform where such plays became more acceptable to the masses.

As will be discussed later in this section, the theatre in UK started breaking taboos regarding sexual and homosexual scenes. In addition, theatre started to be considered a place where all sorts of new and creative ideas are welcome to be performed and heard, although the

performances might be censored if the performance is not appropriate for the age group that would be attending the plays. In this case, any performance should be advertised mentioning the age suitability.

Following the above paragraph, I would say that theatre is considered a place that allows the expression of limitless ideas and encourages individuals to be themselves. Whether these individuals are playwrights, actor, or members of the audience, the theatre 'offers a safe environment for intimate encounters with the ambiguous [...] while simultaneously expose[ing] the familiar to the play of the imagination' (Campbell, 2001. p. 11). The 'safe environment' provided by the theatre formed a new cultural experience for performers and audiences by defying the norms of sexuality and introducing a homosexual approach. In *Queer London* (2006), Matt Houlbrook investigates gay British history by showcasing a number of letters, photos, incidents and attacks against homosexuals in London. Houlbrook says that 'the formal technology of surveillance institutionalised and embodied by the law suggested that the British state was unwilling to tolerate any expressions of male same-sex desire, physical contact, or social encounter' (p. 20). In addition, he states that homosexuality was illegal in London 'until the 1967 Sexual Offences Act', which allowed homosexual acts between two consenting adults in the privacy of their homes (p. 19). However, legalising private acts of homosexuality in 1967 led homosexuals to demand more – to be decriminalised in public as well as in private. One way of achieving complete legalisation was by expressing their sexuality through theatre: a place where an actor can impersonate any character, including a homosexual, and convey a message to the public through the performances. Judith Butler, in 'Sexual politics, torture and secular time' (2008), argues that time is crucial in 'consideration of sexual politics', because 'there can be no consideration of sexual politics without a critical consideration of the time of the now' (p. 2). Butler's argument supports the idea that homosexuality is a constituent of sexual politics and is connected to 'the time of the now' (p. 2). 'The now' on which this section of the thesis focuses is 1967, a year crucial to homosexuality history because of the promulgation of the Sexual Offences Act.

When theatrical performances started in United Kingdom, the theatre was a safe haven for homosexuals who wanted to express their performance abilities without being judged for their sexual orientation. Therefore, theatre and homosexual studies are 'explored together' in Alan Sinfield's *Out on Stage: Lesbian and Gay Theatre in the Twentieth Century* (1999, p. 1). Sinfield argues that theatricality and homosexuality are entwined and cannot be separated

because of the mutual aspects they share. He relates theatre and homosexuality together, because ‘theatre has been a powerful institution [...] attract[ing] censorship and sponsorship from the State, the Church, political organisations and big business’ and because ‘theatre and theatricality have been experienced throughout the twentieth century as queer’ (p. 1). Conversely, Sinfield quotes *Time Magazine* (1966), which declares that ‘the notion that the arts are dominated by a kind of homosexual mafia [...] is sometimes exaggerated’ (p.8), thereby shedding light on a different matter, i.e. the contradictory perceptions of theatre and its relationship with sexual orientation. For example, Sinfield relates theatre and homosexuality together while, according to *Time Magazine*, Edward Stainbrook thinks that ‘homosexuals are failed artists and their special creative gift a myth’ (p. 8). This relation is perceived and criticised subjectively depending on the person perceiving it because of the different views on homosexuality in addition to its effect on dramatists’ artistic output.

Sexual orientation is not the only reason why performers are engaged in theatre – there is also the controversy surrounding sexual issues and exposing these issues to the audience, because sex has been one of the taboos that no one addresses bluntly in public. The expression of sexuality started to appear when the Living Theatre, which was founded in 1947, ‘sought coherence, unity, and transcendent meaning through their work’ (Solomon, 2009, p. 57). In *Restaging the Sixties* (2009), The Living Theatre is described as ‘the most openly anarchistic in its political expression, a revolutionary challenge to the existing hierarchies of Western political authority echoes through every group’ (p. 5). Therefore, The Living Theatre’s anarchy helped its patrons express the repressed sexual desires haunting society at that time by creating sexually charged performances – a method that addresses sexuality openly. Since the 1960s, The Living Theatre has influenced the theatre industry worldwide and ‘[has] had a major impact on our understanding of political theatre today’ (p. 1). As a result, it has familiarised theatre critics and audiences with repressed sexual issues stored in their unconscious. In addition, audiences have also been made to realise that it is normal and healthy to express repressed desires, although expressing them will subject both the theatre and the audience to psychoanalytical analysis – given the fact that Freud’s theories are concerned mainly with repressed sexual desires. The influence of Freud’s theories on sexuality during the 1920s was dominant to the extent that his followers ‘fixed homosexuality as a clinical entity, presented it as a problem of gender identity [...] related it to narcissism and attributed it to an arrested resolution of the “Oedipus complex”’ (Sinfield, 1999, p. 74). This comprehension of the effect of the relationship between homosexuality and Freud’s

theories changed the perception of the relationship between homosexuality and the theatre. As a result, the need to express homosexual emotions on stage emerged, in addition to the need to avoid scrutiny by psychoanalysts, who related homosexuality as a mental illness at that time.

Another example of homosexuality related psychoanalysis Ernst Fischer's 'Writing home: post-modern melancholia and the uncanny space of living-room theatre' in *Psychoanalysis and Performance* (2000, p. 115). Fischer's essay utilises three of Freud's essays: 'Mourning and Melancholia', 'Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego' and 'The Uncanny' to explain his personal journey as a performer while he undergoes an 'increasingly tenuous task' of locating himself among other performers (p. 115). His essay relates to the sexual and homosexual aspect of the development of British theatre in addition to the homosexual themes in Pinter's plays. Moreover, Fischer's living-room theatre can also be linked to the Kitchen Sink drama and the 'uncanny' theme in Pinter's plays. He starts the essay talking about his past struggles with language and cultural barriers as a German teenager living in London. In addition, he relates Freud's notions of 'melancholia' and the 'uncanny' to his 'budding' homosexuality, his coming out as a homosexual and his feelings of 'fear' and 'uncertainty' (pp. 115- 116). According to Campbell's introduction in *Psychoanalysis and Performance*, 'Fischer's adolescent behaviour assume[d] a manic dimension' after experiencing symptoms of 'melancholia', which 'is a pathological condition resulting from the inability to mourn an unidentified – or insufficiently identified – loss' (2000, p. 11, 116). The melancholic experience Fischer endured resulted in a feeling of the 'uncanny' regarding his public appearance as a performer and his personal life. He appears to have overcome the feelings of melancholy and the 'uncanny' and have progressed towards a certain type of theatre which offers him a 'safe environment' to perform his works of art; i.e. the living-room theatre (p. 11). Handling the stage as a house, or a home, is one of the most popular themes in most Pinter plays. According to Fischer, creating the home effect on stage generates an 'uncanny' experience to the audience, which eases the audience into feeling that they are taking part in the 'sphere of domesticity' (p. 120). Fischer explains that 'imagined an oscillating relationship' between 'the theatrical and the everyday' manifestation (p. 120). To an extent, Fischer shares the same theatrical principles with Pinter. And as will be addressed further in the Case Studies section, the three selected Pinter plays share a similar theme of the homely environment whose peace is disturbed by intruders. These disturbing intruders prove that they either trigger or cause the occurring conflicts at the characters' homes. However, as

it is often the case with Pinter, the audience are not certain that the homes were peaceful safe environments before the intruders appeared. The following examples are based on an assumption that the homes portrayed on stage have been – in fact – peaceful and safe environments before the intruders disturb the peace.

The first example is *Old Times*. *Old Times* takes place at Kate and Deeley's home which seems peaceful and quiet until the intruder Anna makes an appearance. Anna causes disturbance by recalling memories from her and Kate's past friendship. And as will be clarified later in this thesis, these memories create sexual tension between Anna and Kate, and between Anna and Deeley. The second example is *The Homecoming*. *The Homecoming* takes place at Max's family house which consisted of him, his brother and his two sons until his third son Teddy appeared on stage with his wife Ruth. The appearance of Teddy and Ruth triggers mixed emotions at the family home. The men in Max's family have been living in an all-male environment since their Max's late wife Jessie died. Therefore, having a new woman, Ruth, living with the men creates disturbance and sexual tension among them. Ruth's existence also triggers the image of a mother-turned-prostitute, which is discussed further in the Case Studies. The last example is *The Birthday Party*. *The Birthday Party* takes place at a boarding-house which consists of the owners Meg and Petey and their only guest/ resident Stanley. The disturbance of the peace and the family-like dynamics is created when two mysterious intruders, Goldberg and McCann appear and try to manipulate Stanley aggressively. As well be explained further in the thesis, these intruders trigger Stanley's fear of having his concealed past exposed and his fear of 'castration'. They also create general disturbance among the other characters on stage while playing 'blind man's buff' during Stanley's 'birthday party' (Pinter [1957] 1996, p. 55). In conclusion, Fischer contributes to the perception of the homosexual theatre by employing his insecurity about his homosexuality in an 'uncanny' method. He illustrates how the uncanniness of the home image on stage makes the theatrical environment safer and more calming for the psyche.

8.2. A Psychoanalytical Reading of the Theatre

The purpose of establishing theatre in its current form is related to culture and society. To explain further, I will highlight my own experience attending theatrical performances in UK, given the fact that I have personally experienced the contrast between the culture I come from in the Middle East and the opposing culture I found myself immersed in while living in UK. I

found that the existence of theatrical experiences takes audiences, myself included, to another level of self-awareness, because these audiences can see and experience things they repressed earlier in their lives, especially when these experiments are related to sexuality and sexual tension. As mentioned earlier in the thesis, the male dominated culture I refer to is the Middle Eastern Arab Muslim culture which does not allow women to express their opinions or sexual desires the way they aspire to. Therefore, expressing opinions publicly on stage is considered taboo and is subjected to extreme censorship. In Jordan, for example, attending plays or theatrical performances, in general, becomes redundant and eventually boring because there are only two major genres that are allowed to be performed on stage. The first major genre is children's theatre which consists mainly of puppet shows, marionettes, and clowns to capture children's attention with their narrations of folktales. And I would say that the age group this genre targets is children younger than 10 years old, because I remember vividly being on school trips to attend these performances once or twice a year when I was in year two up to year four. A few years later, I learnt that my school lost interest in these types of 'school trips' and switched trips to the theatre with trips to the zoo! The second major genre that is popular in Jordan is satirical theatre. Playwrights write satirical material criticising and comically mock local political figures in addition to the economic and cultural aspects to living in Jordan. Having satire as the most popular genre in Jordan might sound that playwrights are allowed to mock the country and the authority; however, it is common knowledge among Jordanians that not a single performance can escape censorship, and that only a few playwrights are allowed to mock the leaders. Among whom are the most popular comedians and playwrights of more than 40 years Nabil Sawalha and Hisham Yanis who casually mock the political figures including the Jordanian Royal Family. When I expressed my wishes to attend some of these plays when they were massively advertised on television, my father did not allow me to do so. He said that I was too young to understand the underlying meaning of the play and that attending these types of plays might be unsafe for a young lady for containing foul language and innuendos. I was about 15 or 16 of age and I was curious to learn more about theatre especially local one, but I was banned from the theatre by my own family. This experience, and many other similar experiences, caused my curiosity about the theatre to grow more as I became older, and eventually led me to focus on writing my PhD thesis focusing on drama. Exposure to repressed thoughts via theatre makes it easier for individuals to relate to these particular experiences without stating frankly that they relate to them; therefore, they do not expose themselves to judgmental opinions about their personality, behaviour, thoughts and choices. For example, when I attended Pinter's

play in UK, I related to them especially the scenes where women like Ruth in *The Homecoming* and Meg in *The Birthday Party* are degraded by the men in their families. I would sit through a play reflecting on my own experience growing up in an Arab country controlled by men in the society and how it relates to the original audiences who attended the performances in 1950's, which would be different to the modern audiences of the 2000's Britain. Attending those plays, I would resist admitting and confronting the fact that women, myself included, are portrayed as a degraded sex and as an inferior sex to males, and that portraying women in this way is still considered amusing to watch on stage even in this day and age. In *Old Times*, for example, even though the female presence on stage with Anna and Kate is dominating the male presence on stage, it is apparent throughout the play that Deeley, the male, is the one in control most of the time, especially that both Anna and Kate narrate completely different versions of their story and past encounters. So, it seems that both women are portrayed as liars while Deeley is the honest person who is being affected by the lying women who distort the truth.

Another purpose of the theatre is proposed by Walter A. Davis in *Art and Politics: Psychoanalysis, Ideology, Theatre*, in which he says that 'the purpose of theatre is to move an audience from the comfort of secondary emotions to the *agon* of primary emotions' (2007, p. 35). Davis argues that theatre takes the audience away from their comfort zone and allows them to experience more of the thoughts they have repressed throughout their lives. He suggests that secondary emotions, which include pity, fear and contentment, 'constitute the defences that the ego has developed to displace and discharge anxiety' (p. 35). Consequently, secondary emotions protect the person experiencing the theatre from experimenting with higher level of emotions that may lead to anxiety and eventually to the primary emotions: 'anxiety, humiliation, envy, cruelty, and melancholia [which] in contrast, burden the subject with an *agon* in which it finds its being existentially at issue and at risk' (p. 35). These primary emotions act as a tool to destroy the ego of the individual, which is the reason why theatregoers build a wall between them and their primary emotions and prefer to feel secondary emotions instead. Shattering the ego leads individuals to lose their self-confidence and the ability to separate the performance they watch on stage from what is happening with their own personal lives. Davis explains the process as follows:

The ego is the system of defences whereby an illusory identity is maintained through vigorous opposition in two things: reality and the inner world. *Psyche* is the *agon* that is joined whenever that system breaks down and the subject is forced to engage the

conflicts of its inner world. Secondary emotion is the system of feelings we construct in order to deliver us from that process (p. 36).

Davis here is giving a particular perspective on catharsis as he explains how the audience release their repressed emotions through theatre, in addition to how they are freeing themselves from the restrictions they face in real life only by sitting through a play they relate to. As mentioned above I positioned myself and my life experiences among the female characters in Pinter's plays like Ruth, Meg, Anna, and Kate as they are portrayed inferior to the male characters which Pinter created. I, however, argue that Pinter refreshes ideas by allowing space for the *agon*. I personally did not mind watching these female characters being treated in discrimination because I saw this treatment as a true representation of life in the Middle East. So, the theatre is representational, whether or not it represents real life issues or fictional issues, it is subjective to the individual who attends the play. I could also say that the theatre is a safe space because of its representational, or allegorical nature. What happens on stage is not real, and therefore, the theatricality of the situation protects the audience from crisis. And they are intelligent enough to distinguish between representation and self.

It is demonstrated in this thesis that that Pinter's plays tackle realistic domestic matters and employ elements of fantasy in addition to creating a sense of ambiguity and horror to the audience. Pinter's themes, therefore, causes the critics to criticise his plays for having no obvious theme or purpose. Consequently, Freud's psychoanalytical theory is applied to Pinter's plays in this thesis, for the purposes of finding an explanation to how they act like therapeutic experiences but without the audience's awareness. The audience is being unknowingly treated psychologically by these comic or even tragic performances because of emotions, memories, past sexual experiences, oedipal affections, anger, and insecurity these plays trigger in their minds. Therefore, the process of going to the theatre and experiencing performances on stage affects the audience in different ways, depending on the individuals themselves and their own self-confidence and past experiences.

Davis also comments on this idea, saying that the author of any play or theatrical performance should cast the audience and know how to affect them using the performance itself. He says 'when in casting them we seek out the *agons* that will engage what is buried most deeply within them we create a theatre that shimmers with existential possibility' (p. 37). Casting the audience, as proposed by Davis, gives the playwright ideas related to the rationality and power of his writing regarding the level of effectiveness it has on the

audience. It is important to know how the audience perceive a play while attending, and how their prejudices and the archetypes around them could affect their perception of a certain play and their views on it afterwards. I agree with Davis that the author should know or 'cast' his audience. Casting could happen through the playwright's experience as he is the person receiving both the positive and negative critique regarding the stage settings, the script, and even the choice of actors. Consequently, his experience will grow vastly to include casting the audience members as a part of his creative writing process. Therefore, the playwright can guess, based on experience, the reviewer can report, based on sitting in the audience, the academic can analyse the play and it affects through a psychoanalytic framework. Triangulated, these three perspectives explain how the blueprint of the text is activated under direction and in live performance.

Actors, likewise, are affected by the roles they portray on stage. When they are connected with the characters they play, they gain more power over the script and therefore affect the audience's primary emotions rather than their secondary ones. The function of the actors in this case is to allow the audience to experience the concealed repressed emotions they have never allowed themselves to express before. By acting in a genuinely dedicated way, actors create an unforgettable experience that will sit in the unconscious minds of the audience and create a great effect on their future lives, because in their subconscious there is a hidden thought on how actors should perform, and therefore these actors are setting the standards for what great acting constitutes. As Adrian Heathfield explains in 'Dramaturgy without a Dramaturg' that 'the dramaturg comes closer to the function of the analysand in psychoanalysis or the witness in history, or the midwife at the birth. The dramaturg knows that there is no ownership of a work of art, just as there is no possession of ideas; the dramaturg is then content to act as the invigilator and attendant of the showing, the steward on the journey of a thought' (2016, p. 3). Therefore, the person who studies and practices dramatic composition is the vessel which delivers the meaning and the purpose behind a performance. Heathfield adds that 'the dramaturg is first and foremost a conversationalist' who conveys his message through creating conversations between characters on stage.

More important is the playwright who knows how to cast both actors and audience, to create the maximum effect and to create the best theatrical experiences a theatregoer can expect. A playwright might provoke an audience only for the purpose of having an impact that will last a lifetime. Even if the individual does not feel this impact right away, he will still be affected in the long run, but only because the provocative experience shattered his ego and made him

aware of the primary emotions by making him realise that life is not a superficial through which a person travels but a place to suffer and agonise over deep thoughts and emotions. Davis comments on these thoughts:

In destroying those structures of feeling that protect us from ourselves, drama opens the psyche to an order of self-mediation that becomes possible only when traumatic conflicts are sustained in *agons* equal to them (p. 43).

As mentioned above, these *agons* are subjective to the individuals attending the plays. Moreover, we need to recognise the audience's intelligence, individuality, and the different personal experiences they face in real life. Sitting in the theatre to attend a play is a choice, and regarding the outcomes of this choice, the theatrical experience itself should not result in anything but satisfaction which is usually similar to the satisfaction achieved after a therapeutic session. Whether or not the individual relates personally to the plot and the characters, it is an experience which will leave some sort of impact on their personality and will also leave a sense of revelation in their minds. As I would always relate the audience's experience to mine, I would say that attending Pinter's plays revealed to me that my state of mind regarding women being inferior to men is still stuck in 1950's because this is the reality I faced growing up in Jordan and that this is the norm, to be inferior to men. This epiphany also revealed to me that I might have chosen Freud's psychoanalytical methods to use in my thesis based on my past experiences, because Freud's ideas are mostly masculine with little to no considering of women. However, having disclosed this epiphany which subjects women, I stand by Freud and by his ideas even though they might sound contradictory to my personal state as a woman.

8.3. Subconscious Writing

In the 1950s-1960s, playwrights started to adopt the ideas of the Theatre of the Absurd and created plays that, according to Martin Esslin in 'The Theatre of the Absurd' 'often unclear' whether they are 'meant to represent a dream world of nightmares or real happenings' (1960, p. 3). Esslin defines the Theatre of the Absurd in association with the works of three dramatists: Beckett, Adamov and Ionesco. He clarifies that these three dramatists create works that have the 'element of the absurd' and that 'they share the same deep sense of human isolation and of the irremediable character of the human condition' although each of

them has 'his own special type of absurdity' (p. 4). Furthermore, Esslin clarifies the different types of absurdity saying that

In Beckett it is melancholic, colored by a feeling of futility born from the disillusionment of old age and chronic hopelessness; Adamov's is more active, aggressive, earthy, and tinged with social and political overtones; while Ionesco's absurdity has its own fantastic knock-about flavor of tragical clowning (p. 4)

The quote above demonstrates the difference between the three types of absurdity which Esslin came across in that period of time. However, he proceeds to explain that these different types share a common denominator which is connected with how the audience perceives the plays. He says that

The Theatre of the Absurd shows the world as an incomprehensible place. The spectators see the happenings on the stage entirely from the outside, without ever understanding the full meaning of these strange patterns of events, as newly arrived visitors might watch life in a country of which they have not yet mastered the language (p. 5)

In my opinion, I agree with Esslin on using the term 'incomprehensible' to describe the world as seen via the audience attending a Theatre of the Absurd type play. Although these plays might have a purpose and a theme, they still possess some sort of 'alienation effect' because 'It is impossible to identify oneself with characters one does not understand or whose motives remain a closed book, and so the distance between the public and the happenings on the stage can be maintained' (p. 5). Pinter's plays, however, could vary between the 'alienation effect' and canniness- uncanniness effects. For example, on the one hand we have the 'alienation effect' embodied in the controversy regarding Anna's existence on stage in the first scene of *Old Times*. Is Anna actually there on stage or is she just a memory. This scene might create the 'alienation effect' and create 'distance between the public and the happenings' because this particular scene can be interpreted as a reality or as a dream. On the other hand, we have *The Birthday Party* which opens with a scene introducing three main characters and the audience witnesses their everyday morning routine eating breakfast and reading the newspaper. This scene is more familiar or un/canny for the audience because it simply

represents a daily action which requires little to no contemplating. These two examples mentioned briefly will be discussed further in the Case Studies section in this thesis.

In regard to Pinter and his position in the Theatre of the Absurd type of plays, he always mentions that one of his major influences is Samuel Beckett, as he influenced Pinter's style of playwrighting. And as mentioned above, Esslin describes Beckett's Absurd theatre as 'melancholic, colored by a feeling of futility born from the disillusionment of old age and chronic hopelessness'. Esslin's description of Beckett's Absurd theatre could also be major in describing Pinter's style especially the violent and sexually charged scenes which Pinter's plays most known for. For example, the 'melanchol[y]' and 'chronic hopelessness' Stanley suffers from toward the end of *The Birthday Party* where he is brutally questioned and tortured mentally and physically by two men he does not know. Another example is the 'futility' presented in *The Homecoming* regarding Max's family men and the way they are planning a future prostitution career for Ruth among themselves. Whether or not Pinter leans unconsciously towards using element of the Theatre of the Absurd, he does not admit how he writes his plays. Pinter does not even admit how they his plays are formed in his mind and consequently, written on paper to be performed on stage. He tries to please critics, who insist on knowing his creative process, and provides them with a brief explanation. Rustin and Rustin, in *Mirror to Nature: Drama, Psychoanalysis, and Society*, address this issue accordingly:

[Pinter] declined to provide explanatory commentary or interpretation of his plays in any terms that belonged outside the work itself. "I start off with people, who come into a particular situation. I certainly don't write from any kind of abstract idea. Furthermore, I wouldn't know a symbol if I saw one" (Pinter, 1991). Pinter set out to create an experience for his audiences in the theatre and he did not wish to dilute or contain his experience within any frame of rational explanation. This would have the effect, he thought, of keeping the audiences at a distance from what the play had to offer them [...] In this refusal of commentary on his work Pinter is, of course, close to Beckett (2002, p. 240).

An example of subconscious writing is Pinter's interview with Mel Gussow, the latter asks about the 'genesis of *Old Times*', to which Pinter replies that the idea 'flashed in [his] mind' when he was 'lying on the sofa' at his London house, and that it might have 'something to do with the sofa' (1971, p. 26). The 'sofa' is a significant element in creating and later presenting *Old Times*. Pinter's lying on one resembles a therapist's session when a patient's

thoughts, dreams and concerns are being analysed in relation to his real-life events. The relation between Pinter, the sofa, and Freud will be explored further in the Case Studies section.

8.4. My Approach to Psychoanalysis

In this thesis, I shed light on Freud's psychoanalytical concepts to create an analysis of the theatre and Harold Pinter's plays. The basis of Freud's analysis is the Oedipus complex, which has been a reference point for most Freudian analyses, including dream analysis, oedipal relations, the castration complex and many others. This thesis uses Freud in relation to theatre, because Pinter's plays in particular reference oedipal and sexual relations between their characters and show the effect they have on the audience. I attempt herein to relate the plays and Freud to the period the plays were written and performed. Pinter wrote his plays at a time when exposing what happens behind closed doors with British families was taboo and a time when the Theatre of the Absurd was still being established. Freud's psychoanalysis helps the person understand his seemingly incomprehensible emotions and be aware of the fact that these emotions are made to exist for a specific purpose, namely confronting psychological issues, past experiences and sexually-related problems.

Confronting a person's issues and recognise them is half the battle, and the other half is diagnosis and treatment. Freud's concepts and psychoanalysis of the theatre will help discover the issues and lead to the solution so that the person affected is able to recognise his problem and talk about it openly in a way similar to how a playwright proposes the ideas in his writings and performances.

9.0. Case Studies

This section is concerned with the analysis of Pinter's selected plays in relation to Freud's psychoanalytical theories. The plays are *Old Times* (1971), *The Homecoming* (1965) and *The Birthday Party* (1957).

9.1. *Old Times* (1971)

In this section, I shall attempt to answer the research questions that are asked in this thesis in accordance with *Old Times*. My emphasis here will be on answering the questions about two specific psychoanalytical concepts – the ‘uncanny’ and dream analysis – and how they help illuminate Pinter’s *Old Times*. This section will also contain a description of the play, the creative process in which the play was written, its original cast, first reviews, interviews with Pinter and my personal experience attending one of the latest *Old Times* productions.

Old Times (1971) is categorised as one of Pinter’s three memory plays, which also include *No Man’s Land* (1975) and *Betrayal* (1978). *Old Times* was first performed on stage by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Aldwych Theatre in London in 1971. The cast featured three characters: Deeley, a man in his forties, played by Colin Blakely, Kate, Deeley’s wife, a woman in her forties, played by Dorothy Tutin, and Anna, Kate’s old friend, who is also a woman in her forties, played by Pinter’s then-wife Vivien Merchant. The play was directed by Peter Hall, who also directed production of Pinter’s *The Collection* (1962), *The Homecoming* (1965), *Landscape* (1969) and *Silence* (1969). Hall also sat for a number of interviews discussing Pinter and the process of directing his plays, and these offer a unique insight into Pinter’s mindset during his writing process, casting actors and directing his own works. In this introductory section on *Old Times*, the insights of Hall and other directors and actors will be consulted to illuminate Pinter and his relationship to the plays he writes. First, however, let us go back to the debut of *Old Times* in 1971.

The setting is an autumn night in a dark, small, womb-like room, consisting of two sofas and an armchair (Pinter, [1971] 1997, pp. 244- 245). The first scene starts with lighting on the married couple, Deeley and Kate, who are smoking cigarettes, and Anna’s still figure by the room’s window. This staging of the armchair, sofas and characters, and the fact that the characters smoke on stage, resembles a typical Pinter play: a few individuals in a small room talking about the past and having food, drinks or cigarettes. In *Old Times*, the characters share different and inconsistent memories of the same past events, and the dialogue overflows with sexual innuendos and symbols. This play stirred different opinions and critiques when it first opened, and even today it is still a controversial play. In 1971, after *Old Times*’ debut night, conflicting opinions on the production emerged. One of the first reviews was by Ronald Bryden, who wrote in the *Observer* on 6 June 1971 that the characters ‘reminisce about the past’ while eating a casserole. Bryden mentions this simple act of sharing memories and

having dinner as one of the Pinter's typical scenes, which is closely followed by the 'battle'. In *Old Times*, according to Bryden, 'the battleground is Kate: which of the two, Deeley or Anna, has possessed more of her?' If we see *The Homecoming*, *The Birthday Party* and other Pinter's plays, we will notice that there is usually a 'battle' among characters, which often revolves around winning a certain person. In *The Homecoming*, for example, the 'battleground' is Ruth, as each of the other characters, Max and his sons, wants to win her affection either as a new mother figure or as a prostitute. Furthermore, in *The Birthday Party*, the 'battleground' is Stanley, as we have two parties fighting to possess him: Meg and Petey on one side, and Goldberg and McCann on the other. In every 'battle' there are weapons used: 'the weapons, as usual, are sex and language: the language of innuendo, cultural discomfiture, the slight verbal excess staking an emotional claim'. Bryden's review hints at a 'battle' or a struggle to gain the possession, or maybe the love, of Kate.

I attended the *Old Times* 2012- 2013 production at The Harold Pinter Theatre in London, directed by Ian Rickson. It was my first experience in the British theatre. After experiencing The Harold Pinter Theatre and attending this intriguing play, I fully agree with the reactions and critiques, which were mostly positive. The main reason for the positive reactions was director Ian Rickson's method of alternating the roles of Anna and Kate between Kristin Scott Thomas and Lia Williams. In Michael Billington's review for *The Guardian*, he describes Ian Rickson's *Old Times* as a 'fascinating' production. The idea of alternating the actresses 'shows how two actors can take wildly different routes to the same destination and how every line is susceptible to multiple readings' (2013). Other reviews of the same production describe the cast and the performance as 'compulsive' (*The Sunday Times*, 2013), 'erotically charged' (*The Guardian*, 2013), 'classy revival' (*Evening Standard*, 2013), 'stunning' (*Daily Express*, 2013), 'dazzling' and 'truly arresting' (*The Observer*, 2013), 'richly intriguing' (*Independent on Sunday*, 2013), 'beautifully modulated production' (*Financial Times*, 2013), 'memorable' (*The Times*, 2013), 'compelling' (*The Independent*, 2013), 'passionate' and 'deeply unnerving' (*The Sunday Telegraph*, 2013), 'hauntingly brilliant' (*Time Out*, 2013), 'mesmerizing' (*Art's Desk*, 2013), 'convincing sexual tension' (*Sunday Mirror*, 2013), 'outstanding' and 'captivating' (*Curtain Up*, 2013).

To help understand the play, director Peter Hall was interviewed by Catherine Itzin and Simon Trussler in *Theatre Quarterly*. He is asked about his own interpretation of *Old Times* and other Pinter plays, especially the struggle or the battle between characters. Hall says that Pinter makes 'plays that depend on the strong dramatic conflicts which underlie' his plays

([1974] 2005, p. 135). Hall also says that Pinter writes enigmatic plays that make the audience wonder about the reality of what is happening on stage, or ‘who was in love with whom’ in *Old Times* (p. 135). No one will know the exact answer to the questions raised after attending Pinter plays, because there is no correct answer and all interpreters are ‘accurate within [their] own obsessions’ (p. 135). The dominance of past events is the controlling factor in *Old Times* in spite of the fact that the audience do not know whether these past events narrated by Deeley, Anna and Kate are the truth or not. Anna’s ‘ambiguous presence’ at the beginning of the play is one of the factors that creates the gothic element, which is discussed later in this section. The audience is presented with the complexity of the relationship between the characters and how their present is affected by their past. Which memories actually happened and which did not is a substantial topic in determining the present situation. Pinter does not allow the audience to make assumptions or ‘find enigmas’ regarding what actually happened in the past with Anna, Kate and Deeley. However, when he is asked in an interview with Gussow to talk about people enjoying finding non-existent ‘enigmas’ in plays and people saying ‘did it happen or didn’t it happen?’ he states that ‘It happens. It all happens’ with no further explanation (p. 43).

The elements mentioned above can be understood as the core of a typical Pinter play, so linking them to the terms I defined previously in section 7 will be the aim of this section.

Pinter is a creative playwright who managed to create a unique method of writing by using pauses, stops, dots, dashes, and silences. His unique method is therefore defined as Pinteresque. Many definitions of the term ‘Pinteresque’ have been detected and published although I found it unclear who defined it or who used it first. *Brewer’s Theatre*, for example, defines it as: ‘Pinteresque: Resembling the work or style of Harold Pinter. It is used especially of dialogue that resembles Pinter’s in being oblique, repetitive, interspersed with lengthy pauses..., menacing, and loaded with hidden meanings” (1994, p.357). We can also detect Pinteresque elements by observing the stage settings which are very similar in most of his plays; a small dark room, in addition to the small number of characters on stage, which is also a common element in most of his plays. The first Pinteresque element that draws my attention as a spectator while attending Harold Pinter’s *Old Times* 2012-13 London production is the setting. It is slightly different to the written blueprint, in that there is one armchair and only one sofa instead of two sofas. However, as expected from Pinter, the place is a small, womb-like room suggesting protection, warmth and safety. In addition to the common Pinter settings, his small rooms are normally crowded with people in conflict with

each other. These people/characters either share similar pasts and interests or are the complete opposite of each other. As a result of having the characters trapped in small rooms, conflicts happen and cause aggression, or they act as triggers for the Oedipus and the castration complexes to surface. Similar settings, types of characters and forms of conflict occur in the three main plays in this thesis: *Old Times* (1971), *The Homecoming* (1965) and *The Birthday Party* (1957), thus making the connection between them logical. In *Old Times* in particular, there is an addition to this expected staging, a voiceless body, another person whose existence is not explained until later. She is a woman, Anna, 'standing at the window, looking out' while the other two characters on stage are discussing this Anna and talking in detail about her body, her life and her past, as if she were not there listening to them (Pinter, [1971] 1997, p. 245). Penelope Prentice, in *The Pinter Ethic: The Erotic Aesthetics*, talks about the ambiguity of past events and the reality of the characters themselves. She explains 'Anna's ambiguous presence at the beginning (she is both there and not there) opens the play out beyond the four walls of the house and breaks a time barrier as well, thrusting the audience into both past and future' (2000, p. 183). The ambiguity of Anna's presence on stage creates controversial material for directors, critics and audiences alike. Peter Hall discusses Anna in *Pinter in The Theatre*, wondering about Anna in reality and where she stands emotionally and physically in relation to the other two characters. In his interview with Catherine Itzin and Simon Trussler, he says 'you don't know whether she's actually there or what' (p. 147). Hall explains Anna's existence, in order to unravel the ambiguity behind it: 'She is not there, in actual, naturalistic terms, but she is there, because she's been there for twenty years, in each of their heads' (p. 147). According to Hall, the 'obsession' of Anna, and therefore her existence in Deeley and Kate's heads, affects their relationship with each other. He says 'she's never left either of their heads, and she never will. She can't leave the room at the end. She tried to, it is impossible. Actually, the two of them would not stay married, they wouldn't stay related, they wouldn't almost exist, without the obsession of that third person in their heads' (p. 147). In *Old Times*, Pinter, whether knowingly or unknowingly, forces the audience to think about the reality of the characters, their actual existence and their past. He denies on many occasions that he is aware of how the events evolve and how the characters build their relationships with each other. However, I think that he wants to create this type of controversial mystery around his plays, to provoke the critics, actors, directors and the audience. In Pinter's interview with Mel Gussow, the latter asks about the 'genesis of *Old Times*', to which Pinter replies that the idea 'flashed in [his] mind' when he was 'lying on the sofa' at his London house, and that it might have 'something to do with the sofa' (1971, p.

26). The 'sofa' is a significant element in creating and later presenting *Old Times*. Pinter's lying on one resembles a therapist's session when a patient's thoughts, dreams and concerns are being analysed in relation to his real-life events. The sofa is also significant in *Old Times* for being a part of the set; in fact, in this play, two sofas are used on set: one for Kate and the other for Anna. The first scene begins with 'Kate curled on a sofa, still', and further on in the same scene Anna sits on the second sofa (pp. 245- 255). If the play itself starts as a revelation while lying on a sofa, then the events could be interpreted as a dream of Pinter's coming to life. The dream is of three characters on stage, two women and a man, competing for each other's affection. Pinter has not declared who is chasing whom in this awkward three-way relationship. In *Pinter The Playwright* Martin Esslin raises three questions regarding the reality of Anna's existence and asks whether the audience should perceive Anna's 'sudden participation in the dialogue' as an element of reality, a representation of 'a cinematic cut' for stage purposes and restrictions. Esslin's second question also contemplates the reality of Anna and if she is in fact 'present during the opening dialogue in which she was being discussed'. However, his third question (1992, p. 172) diverges from the question of reality and asks if Anna's 'sudden inclusion in the action indicate[s] that the action itself proceeds with the jerkiness of a dream?' In my opinion, reality and dream in *Old Times* appear to be entwined. Separating them in this particular play creates a missing link between the reality of the characters' physical existence on stage and their dream-like fantasies and memories of past events. Moreover, linking the dreams of the characters to their reality is what makes this play's content seem enigmatic. The spiritual or physical existence of Anna on stage is debatable primarily for the reasons of Pinter's creative writing process and his own thoughts on his work. The sense of a dream-like reality in *Old Times* could possibly be interpreted in two ways: Pinter's own revelation of the idea of the play while he was lying on a sofa, or the whole play is a dream of Deeley representing his fantasy of a threesome. If it is the first interpretation, then we should consider Pinter's own thoughts on his creative writing process and see whether he intends to create a play as complicated as *Old Times* sometimes seems. For Pinter to create *Old Times*, he has to surrender to his subconscious and allow the ideas to flow uninterrupted. A writer's subconscious is a mix of repressed desires and prohibited thoughts that are sometimes considered taboo. Venting through art serves the purpose of discussing many taboos, without having the need to mention their source – that is, the writer's "twisted" mind. A writer in this case is granted permission to put pen to paper and express his ideas, no matter how deranged they might appear to the public, who may not agree explicitly with the performance they attend, but they secretly long to hear this kind of

taboo talk. Although the writer's ideas might also appear to be merely subconscious thoughts that come flowing continuously but from nowhere specific, the issues they discuss touch on the repressed taboo thoughts hidden in the subconscious of the public audience. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud says that 'we live in ignorance of the desires that offend morality, the desires that nature has forced upon us' ([1900] 1997, p. 157). The desire to speak publicly about taboos is ignored by everyone except for writers like Pinter, who could easily say 'I really don't know where [the ideas] come from' and get away with it (1966, p. 46). Pinter is a controversial writer, because whether we approach his plays in the written form only or as a performance, there is always something intriguing and enigmatic. Following his statement that the idea behind *Old Times* was revealed to him while lying on a sofa, and his other contradicted statement that he does not know where the play came from. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, in section (7.2.f) Dream Analysis, Freud explains that daydreaming occurs in the person's waking state and relates mainly to the person's actual life events. Daydreams also work as a link between dream thoughts and dream content to create fantasies, which are either 'conscious' or a 'superabundance of unconscious fantasies' (Freud, [1899] 1997. p. 339). Pinter's daydreaming about three people in a small room, talking about their memories and sharing their feelings about past events, which may or may not have happened in reality, can be seen as a result of his interpretation of his own dreams that manifest themselves in him writing *Old Times*, a play that includes the elements of a dream, daydream, symbols, the 'uncanny' and memories. Furthermore, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud explains the dream interpretation process, saying that 'one may go so far as to say that the dream-work makes use of all the means accessible to it for the visual representation of the dream thoughts [...] and thus exposes itself to the doubt as well as the derision of all those who have only hearsay knowledge of dream interpretation' (p. 270). Consequently, Pinter's inner thoughts and dreams are exposed in the form of his creative play-writing process, which manifests itself in a conscious yet spontaneous dynamic process that manages to create an immense amount of controversy around it, whether intended or not.

In an interview with Gussow, Pinter is asked questions about his writing process and the methods he follows to develop his plays. Pinter answers, saying 'I've written probably 15 plays, including short plays obviously, and I really don't know where they come from and how I managed to write any of them at all. I really don't. It's almost odd. I can't think how I did all that work' (p. 46). Talking to Gussow, Pinter denied knowing from where the ideas for his plays come; however, while being interviewed by Lawrence M. Bensky in *Pinter in The*

Theatre, Bensky asks if he outlines the plays before he starts to write them. Pinter replies ‘Not at all. I don’t know what kind of characters my plays will have until they [...] well, until they *are*. I don’t conceptualize in any way. Once I’ve got the clues, I follow them – that’s my job, really, to follow the clues’ (1966, p. 56). The ‘clues’ Pinter talks about here do not follow one simple procedure in the plays’ development process, as he cannot recall how they develop in his mind:

I think what happens is that I write in a very high state of excitement and frustration. I follow what I see on the paper in front of me – one sentence after another. That doesn’t mean I don’t give a dim, possible overall idea – the image that starts off doesn’t just engender what happens immediately, it engenders the possibility of an overall happening, that carries me through. I’ve got an idea of what *might* happen – sometimes I’m absolutely right, but on many occasions I’m proved wrong by what does actually happen. Sometimes I’m going along and I find myself writing “C. comes in” when I didn’t know that he was going to come in; he *had* to come in at that point, that’s all (1966, p. 56).

While reading Pinter’s interviews, I was searching for a statement that could visibly connect him to Freudian psychoanalysis. None of the interviewers asks Pinter about his connection to psychology or psychoanalysis, except for Bensky, who tries to associate psychology with Aston’s character from *The Caretaker*. Aston claims that he was admitted to a mental hospital and was given electric shock therapy. His story is the reason why Bensky asks Pinter about his “interest” in psychology, and it was the only question of the sort I came across while reading Pinter’s interviews. Pinter clearly states in this interview that he has ‘no particular interest in psychology’, not even when he created *The Caretaker*, which discusses one of the character’s, Aston’s, experiences as a patient in a mental hospital. Pinter confirms the lack of interest in psychology by saying that he has ‘no axe to grind there. Furthermore, the one thing that people have missed is that it isn’t necessary to conclude that everything Aston says about his experiences in the mental hospital is true’. So are the lines Pinter writes true to him or to the characters only? In his creative writing process, the characters take the lead in what seems similar to a long, distorted dream of a play. Distortion originates in Pinter’s mind while writing the play and manifests itself on paper first and then during the actors’ performances. As mentioned earlier, he thought about *Old Times* while lying on a sofa, which makes the play a result of a dreamlike setting, and a dream is usually a distortion of reality. Dreams appear to be complicated and distorted to the dreamer because of his lack of dream interpretation techniques and lack of symbol knowledge. Freud, however, equates

the complexity of dreams with 'rebus' puzzles, which use pictures, characters and numbers to represent words and phrases that send a certain message ([1899] 1997, p. 170). All of these puzzles and symbols that appear in dreams need to be interpreted and deciphered before the dreamer unveils the purpose of his dreams. However, if the dreams lack that sort of symbolism that could be interrupted, then the dreams are distorted. In *Old Times*, Pinter's dream about the play is a result of the state of his 'excitement and frustration', which causes these specific characters to emerge and then events to happen. Therefore, the distorted, dreamlike reality in the play is a result of the contradictory narration of past events and the mixed reactions these memories have on the three characters on stage. Therefore, Pinter created the form of distorted dreamlike reality in *Old Times* and put the ideas in the characters' minds purposefully to avert the public's attention away from his personal issues at the time, especially his deteriorating relationship with his ex-wife Vivien Merchant.

The characters' present and past is the determining factor in whether or not the events make sense to the audience and whether they are true to the characters. However, is it possible to prove that how the characters interact onstage is related to what really happened in the past off-stage in *Old Times*? Usually, characters appear onstage with a certain attitude, and they interact in a certain way amongst each other. These characters are only acting in the present time, however, for any broadly naturalistic play, the audience would never know the characters' past or future lives unless this is mentioned or implied onstage during the performance. We might 'know' the characters' background information if the author himself publishes it before the play is performed. Pinter's characters, however, are a different story. Finding the reality about Pinter's characters is quite difficult because Pinter creates mysterious characters who have ambiguous pasts and an uncertain present. His characters are difficult to interpret even if they mention their past onstage, they could be lying about it. Therefore, it is nearly impossible to determine what is intended as truth and what is deception or evasion when it comes to Pinter's characters. As we see in *Old Times*, the characters as supposed to share the same past memories of how they met; however, each one of them remembers the events differently. So, no one can determine who is telling the truth and who is lying among Kate, Anna, and Deeley, which makes the play and the characters subject to multiple interpretations. According to Hooti, in 'The Impossibility of Verifying Reality in Harold Pinter's *Old Times*', 'the play, underlining the subtle struggle for psychological power, [is] steeped in an atmosphere which blends everyday reality with dream-images' (2011, p. 556). I agree with Hooti's interpretation of *Old Times* for her use of a combination

of psychology, 'everyday reality' and 'dream-images' as the components of its framework. *Old Times* also deals with past memories to create the present, which is the main point on which the play is built. Consequently, if the reality of past memories clashes with the reality of the present events, then the past did not happen despite Pinter's statement that 'It all happens'. Hooti also says that because 'Pinter finds people enigmatic', he tends to represent them 'as an absurdist' and they therefore remain enigmatic. Consequently, 'all the meanings of the play must be guessed only with the help of the clues which the dialogue provides' (p. 561).

This opening scene of *Old Times* suggests some 'uncanny' or 'unheimlich' elements. The 'uncanny', as Freud describes it, is 'related to what is frightening – to what arouses dread and horror [...] it tends to coincide with what excites fear in general' ([1919] 1990, p. 339). During the first few minutes of the production, the audience, including myself while attending the 2012- 2013 London production, may be wondering what gothic elements are contained therein, along with the existence of ghosts or spirits on stage. The existence of this voiceless, motionless body, or Anna as we learn later, hints at the conventions of gothic literature, as Pinter sometimes uses them to spread unease among the spectators. For example, he uses them in Stanley's interrogation scene in *The Birthday Party* (1957) (see section 9. 2), during which Stanley is brutally showered with questions by two strange men, who finally take him somewhere unknown. Sally Ledger, in *The Handbook to Gothic Drama*, discusses spiritualism and the possibility of a human being able to 'contact and communicate' with these spirits (1998, p. 285). The existence of Anna as a shadow or a spirit at the beginning of the play is not only a gothic element, but also an experience of the 'uncanny'. She quietly stands still at the window, listening to the other characters – Kate and Deeley – talking about her and discussing her personal and professional life. She does not respond to them or defend herself and her life choices, and she does not even interrupt these people in any manner. In addition to her silence, her standing position at the window suggests that the window is significant to the play and to the characters. Windows are mentioned more than once in the play, also indicating their significance in relation to the development of events. Moreover, both Anna and Kate have their moments looking out the window, but are they doing this or treating it as a mirror? Mirrors can be understood as one of the play's 'uncanny' elements, because the window is more than a transparent mirror. Looking through the window can be an outlet into another dimension or another world full of possibilities.

According to Freud, looking at a mirror and seeing one's reflection is itself an 'uncanny' experience. He explains his personal 'uncanny' experience, namely catching his reflection in a mirror, while 'sitting alone in [his] *wagon-lit* compartment, in an autobiographical note in the 'uncanny,' (1990, p.371). Freud experiences an 'uncanny' encounter with an anonymous reflection in the 'looking-glass' on a train, which triggers the stimulation of 'dread', 'horror' and 'fear' (Freud [1919] 1990, p. 339). Seeing this reflection causes him to flinch, before realising it is his own likeness. This situation is an example of how a simple reflection of oneself can stimulate familiar feelings of 'horror', and yet the same reflection can relieve this person once he realises that it is his own. Both gothic and 'uncanny' elements are detected solely by experiencing a person's own reflection in a mirror or any reflecting surface.

In *Old Times*, windows create the same 'uncanny' effect that mirrors create. However, one might argue that they are not real mirrors or that they do not provide a clear reflection of the person looking at them. Windows certainly provide enough reflection, though, to trigger the person's curiosity to discover more about the reflection and about the real object whose figure is reflected in the window. In 'The uncanny mirror: A re-framing of mirror self-experience', Philippe Rochat and Dan Zahavi define mirrors as 'peculiar objects associated with peculiar, uncanny experiences' (2011, p. 204). Rochat and Zahavi also examine the 'unsettling encounter with one's specular double', stating that when someone looks at his reflection in the mirror, he sees his double and sometimes does not recognise it, especially at an early age (2011, p. 204). The early age of a child's life is represented as being from 0-1, which Freud calls the 'oral stage'. At this stage, a child is dependent on his mother for nourishment, warmth and protection, simply because these feelings are the same as what he was experiencing in the womb. Although the child starts to experience the outside world after the birthing process, which includes cutting the umbilical cord, he is not completely separated from his mother on the emotional attachment level. A child in the 'oral stage' is fixated on attaching himself to his mother by sucking her breasts, which leads him later to sucking his thumb and putting any object he finds in his mouth. The sucking experience also precedes the development of individual taste in food and the development of speech, both of which lead to the child's independence from mother-child attachment and breast-sucking during the weaning process in the next stages of development, which Freud calls the 'anal' and the 'phallic' stages.

Reflection and the double are two of the concepts discussed in Freud's the 'uncanny' in his analysis of Hoffman's 'The Sandman'. Freud refers to Otto Rank's analysis (1914), since 'he

has gone into the connections which the 'double' has with the reflections in mirrors, with shadows, with guardian spirits, with the belief in the soul and with the fear of death', and therefore it can provoke 'uncanny' feelings ([1919] 1990. p. 356). 'The Sandman' is a significant example of 'uncanny' experiences, because the events and the characters evoke the feelings of 'dread', 'horror' and 'fear' Freud discusses in the 'uncanny' ([1919] 1990, p. 339). These feelings arise from the similarities between some of the characters, namely in this instance Coppelius and Coppola. Coppelius, whose job is to blind children by throwing fire into their eyes, and Coppola, who sells lenses and spectacles as replacements for the eyes, share similar names and similar interests in children's eyes. Their shared interest suggests the uncanniness of the eyes, which Freud constantly connects to the castration complex. Freud tends to connect losing the eyes, i.e. blindness, to metaphorical rather than actual physical castration.

Moreover, there are other psychoanalytical concepts that Freud associates with eyes. Accordingly, when a child sees his own reflection in the mirror, his separation and independence from his mother start developing. Following the child's recognition of his image, his sense of narcissism develops rapidly, because narcissism controls the minds of children and helps develop a sense of self-love, thereby separating him from his mother's breast. Nevertheless, later on, when this child grows, he finds that he is not the only creature who has this kind of love for himself. His ego starts 'exercising a censorship within [his] mind', and then he begins noticing his own doubles, starting with his reflection in the mirror – in what Lacan calls the 'mirror stage' in *Some reflections on the Ego*:

The theory I there advanced [...] deals with a phenomenon to that I assign a twofold value. In the first place, it has historical value as it marks a decisive turning point in the mental development of the child. In the second place, it typifies an essential libidinal relationship with the body image. For these two reasons, the phenomenon demonstrates clearly the passing of the individual to a stage where the earliest formation of the ego can be observed (1953. p. 14).

Lacan's theory on the 'mirror stage' tests the development of the child's independence when he starts recognising his image in the mirror. According to Lacan, the 'mirror stage' develops between the ages of 6-18 months, which overlaps the Freudian 'oral' and 'anal' stages.

Barbara Freedman, in *Staging the Gaze*, comments on Lacan's mirror stage by saying that it 'has broader implications, especially because the mirror stage need not rely on a physical

mirror per se' (1991, p. 53). Lacan's narcissistic views of the 'mirror stage' apply to Anna and her first appearance in *Old Times*. She is fascinated by her reflection in the window/mirror, to the extent that she stares at it for a long time while other characters are conversing on stage. She sees her double in the window, which in turn pricks her curiosity and forces her to examine her image thoroughly. In my opinion, curiosity is not egoistic, since a curious person will be eager to ask others and learn from their experiences instead of acting individually despite the advice of others. In *Old Times*, we see Anna, whose ego lets her spend her time looking through the mirror and seeing her double represented in her reflection. However, she does not act egoistically, regardless of the way her ego pushes her to act, through spending time with her reflection. When someone sees his reflection, he forgets his social status, ignores his position and indulges in his reflection curiously. This person believes that ignoring his ego is the only way he can see how other people see him and what they see in him, thereby resulting in his curiosity. The ego functions as an observer and a critic of a person's mind, it controls the person's behaviour, but it lets Anna be as curious as she can be; therefore, she is not egoistic, and the ego loses its typical characteristics when confronted with curiosity. As mentioned earlier in the thesis while discussing the reality of Pinter's characters and the possibility of them lying about their past, Anna is an example of these ambiguous characters. Above I say that Anna is staring at her reflection in the mirror while Kate and Deeley speak about her. The reality of Anna's existence in this room with the other characters cannot be determined because of the difficulty of interpreting Pinter's characters and their onstage presence. The question whether she is actually present on stage or not could be answered by stating multiple interpretations. The first interpretation is that Anna is present and both Kate and Deeley can see her, but they do not consider her or her feelings while they speak negatively about her. The second interpretation is that she is present but none of the other two could see her, and that is why they speak freely about her. The third interpretation is that she is not there yet, however, Kate and Deeley are just speaking about her and their past interactions because they know she is on her way to meet them. The fourth interpretation is that Anna used to be in their past, but she does not exist in their present because she is dead or missing, and they are trying to revive her through their mutual memories as she appears as a shadow in the play. The last interpretation is that Anna does not exist at all, and that Kate and Deeley created her in their minds by recalling distorted memories about the day they met and fell in love with each other. All these interpretations came to mind while reading the play and this illusory temporality and use of simultaneity of space and time was verified when I attended the 2012 London production. I choose to adhere

to the third interpretation which is that she is not present at their house, but she is on her way to meet with them. Following this particular interpretation, I think that Anna is staring at herself in a mirror admiring her reflection, but she is not necessarily at the same room as they are in. In my view, she is most likely portrayed to be staring at her reflection in her own home before she started her journey to meet with them, or maybe she is staring at her reflection while she is in/on a means of transportation while she is on her way to their place.

In the same opening scene, Kate and Deeley are talking amongst themselves, not including Anna, as previously stated. Kate and Deeley are discussing Kate's friend, Anna, whom she has not seen in 20 years. Deeley has an interest in Anna's figure, and he even asks if she is 'fat or thin?' (p. 245). Deeley's personal and provocative questions are not met with any reaction by Anna, as she is standing by the window/mirror, although any woman would be furious and might overreact to this sort of question. Anna continues to look at her reflection in the window and is occupied by it wholly. She ignores her ego, the urge to defend the way her body looks and the urge to interrupt Kate and Deeley's conversation. She keeps looking at her reflection curiously, to discover more about her image/reflection/double.

However, the inclination for curiosity is not applied to everyone, as in this play, Anna is represented differently to Kate. Gabbard describes Anna by relating her to other significant Pinter characters, suggesting that 'Anna opposes Kate's passivity with the same restlessness that Bates provided in contrast to Ellen [in *Silence* (1969)]. Anna also opposes Deeley with the same strength and will to power that Ruth employed against Lenny' (Gabbard, (1973), p. 235). Anna, therefore, is a powerful figure in this play and she holds the key that could decipher the symbolism of dreamlike reality the three characters are living on stage. She is an active character who appears to have sexual feelings for Kate but who is being pursued by Kate's husband at the same time. She creates the controversy solely by existing in the background at the beginning of the play, unlike Kate, whose existence in the play is based on a clear relationship, i.e. being married to Deeley. Kate has a moment where she goes through a similar and yet different experience to Anna's concerning the window/mirror experience. Kate gets out of the shower, wearing her bathrobe, and 'walks to the window and looks out into the night' (p. 295). She looks at the window briefly, because she is distracted by the voices around her that disturb her and stop her from gazing at her reflection. The reflection, which is also her double, is interrupted by the verbal and physical activities that are happening in the same room. Anna and Deeley are singing and Kate is easily distracted by them. She trusts her image enough not to be as curious as Anna is while looking at her own

image in the window. Kate leaves the window abruptly and walks towards them, smiling as if she has nothing about which to worry. She appears to be more secure than Anna, especially when it comes to her reflection, which indicates the controlling position she holds and the strong ego she does not ignore. She controls everyone in the play, although she might seem like a quiet woman who wants her friends to have fun while she acts as a voyeur and watches them from afar:

Anna: I'm so delighted to be here.

Deeley: It's nice I know for Katy to see you. She hasn't many friends.

Anna: She has you.

Deeley: She hasn't many friends, although there's been every opportunity for her to do so.

Anna: Perhaps she has all she wants.

Deeley: She lacks curiosity.

Anna: Perhaps she's happy.

Pause

Kate: Are you talking about me?

Deeley: Yes.

Anna: She was always a dreamer (p. 261).

Kate's lack of curiosity and friends implies her independence – she does not need to be curious about anything, because she is self-sufficient. She can live easily without friends, and if she had the chance to get rid of her husband, she would do so. Her ego drives her away from other people and even from her own reflection in the window/mirror, as she has enough confidence not to be looking at her reflection for a long period of time. Kate could also be daydreaming while looking through the window/mirror, in the sense that she daydreams about her relationship with her old 'friend' Anna and how their lesbianism could have been taken to another level to develop into a serious relationship that could have caused her not to marry Deeley in the first place. The window could be a symbol to Kate for creating a new perspective. She is looking out of it to see a new life from a new point of view. However, she is living in another reality at the same time, which could be symbolised by the reflective aspect of the window, the mirror. The reflective feature of the mirror gives it a new significance in Kate's life, because she can see her reality through the reflection. Kate can

also gaze back at herself, to think deeply about her life choices through this mirror. Her conscious gazing at herself and her unconscious search for a new perspective, while looking out of the window, are both linked together to bring us this daydreaming Kate whose past life was packed with choices of sexual partners, and yet she stays with Deeley.

Even after coming back to Kate, Anna's memories appear to be not only selective, but also sometimes imagined: 'There are some things one remembers even though they may never have happened. There are things I remember which may never have happened but as I recall them so they take place' (p. 269). This quote could be read as a clue that the drama plays between reliability and perception in recall and reality, especially that the three characters are always recalling their memories, but these memories might seem inaccurate or untrue. Creating images and eventually believing in them originates from Anna's childhood or even her teenage years, when she was insecure and in need of friends with which to share everything. Furthermore, here we see the insecurity she suffers from, which led her finally to the one person who is more secure than her: Kate.

In his analysis of the characters in *Old Times*, D. Keith Peacock says that there is 'an intellectual contest' and 'the prize is possession of Kate and the contestants' strategy is the appropriation of the past. Deeley is hostile and defensive, Anna gregarious and Kate reserved and, for most of the play, passive' (p. 110). Right from the start of the play, Deeley tries to recall the past by asking Kate about her past life and her relationship with Anna: 'Fat or thin?', 'Was she your best friend?', 'Why would she be coming here tonight?' And then, when she tells him that Anna used to steal her underwear, he reacts by asking 'Is that what attracted you to her?' and 'Are you looking forward to seeing her?' (pp. 245, 246, 249). In addition, he wants to know recent details about Anna and if she is married or if her husband will be joining them. Peacock says that:

Deeley appears to view the recollection of Anna and Kate's intimacy as implying a lesbian relationship, which, although having taken place in the past, poses a threat to his marriage and his possession of Kate's affection. If Deeley is to feel secure, the past must be erased. The pattern of the conflict between Deeley and Anna takes the form of professed evocation of the past, in which each tries to appropriate the other's recollections (p. 111).

Both Anna and Deeley try to win Kate over as if she were the mother, and her son and daughter were around her trying to be her only love. Anna comes back to visit Kate after 20

years of not seeing her. She comes to her house and starts reminding her of their mutual past, triggering memories that Kate might have repressed because, one way or another, they remind her of a lost lesbian love for Anna. In William Baker and Stephen Ely Tabachnick's *Harold Pinter* (1973), Kate and Anna's homosexuality is interpreted from a biblical point of view. Baker and Tabachnick emphasise the fact that Pinter 'has concentrated maximum pressure on every word, even bits of clothing become emblems of sexual struggle' (p. 138). Kate's underwear gets most of the attention at the beginning in *Old Times*, merely because Deeley gazed up Anna's skirt at a club 20 years previously, not knowing that the underwear was actually Kate's. Anna borrowing Kate's underwear and wearing it stirred erotic feelings with Deeley, which leads Baker and Tabachnick to compare this 'intimate exchange [which] raises the question of latent homosexuality in the relationship of Kate and Anna' to 'David and Jonathan's trading of clothes in the Bible' (p. 139). Although I do not agree with inserting the Bible or any biblical figure into my analysis of the play, Baker and Tabachnick's point of view is worth mentioning, even if it does not seem to me similar to the explicit content of Kate and Anna's exchange of underwear. In the new international version of the Bible, it says 'Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic and even his sword, his bow and his belt' (1 Samuel 18:4), which, to me, suggests brotherly love and care but not erotic behaviour.

Anna begins with a long speech full of past events and questions about specific details: 'Do you remember?', 'What did we eat?', 'You haven't forgotten?', 'Who cooked?' and other questions (pp. 255- 256). Kate is not as excited as Anna by the memories, or at least she tries not to show Anna that she cares or that she ever cared, even when she was her 'one and only friend' (p. 247). Kate says one sentence only after Anna finishes her long speech: 'Yes, I remember' (p. 256), thereby demonstrating to Anna that she does not care, by uttering just a few words instead of expressing nostalgia. However, she fails to repress her knowledge of Anna's coffee, as she adds milk and sugar without asking her, and even Anna does not comment on Kate's action, because it seems to her like a normal daily routine; a mother knows her child's preferences and fulfils this child's wishes. Anshu Pandey, in 'Harold Pinter's *Old Times*: A Memory Play', says that 'memory is a weapon' and has been used in some of his plays such as *No Man's Land* and *Betrayal* (2011, p. 1).

Anna and Deeley compliment Kate and talk about her while she is listening and even when she leaves the stage:

Anna: You have a wonderful casserole.

Deeley: What?

Anna: I mean wife. So sorry. A wonderful wife.

Deeley: Ah.

Anna: I was referring to the casserole. I was referring to your wife's cooking. (pp. 258- 259)

Lucina Paquet Gabbard relates this dialogue and the reference to Kate's casserole by defining a casserole as 'a mixture of various kinds of food all cooked together in one pot' (1976. p. 241). Furthermore, she then says that a casserole is just like Kate, i.e. full of variety. In looking at Gabbard's interpretation, we can see Kate as a concoction, a group of people and personalities inside one person who does not show as much as she hides. In Gabbard's analysis of this dialogue, she argues that the 'repeated reference to Kate's casserole' is a type of inversion, while Pandey briefly addresses the issue of lesbianism in the play and says that mentioning the 'casserole' is a 'symbol of bisexuality' (p. 2). It could also be read as a Freudian slip of the tongue, which could be a result of sexual frustration, repressed desires or even taboo. The play itself represents all these themes that result in slips of the tongue.

Kate might have shared a great deal with Anna in the past, and it shows that she trusted her even with her own belongings, but now she does not even trust her husband. Her relationship with Deeley is not convincing. They do not act like a married couple. He is more curious about her estranged friend and remembering looking up her skirt and her 'thighs that kissed' and her past relationship with his wife (p. 289).

Kate, one more time, appears like a mother, especially since she serves food and drinks to her husband and friend. Deeley acts like a boy who wants his mother to be his own and to abandon her other child, Anna. Obviously, there is a reference to the Oedipus complex here, where a son unknowingly kills his father and marries his mother. As a result of their actions, Oedipus' mother Jocasta kills herself and when Oedipus finds her body, he blinds himself and banishes himself to the mountains. Oedipus punishes himself by taking his own sight and that is, according to Freud, a substitution for genital castration. Freud demonstrates this fear of castration or the 'castration complex' in 'The Uncanny' saying:

The fear of damaging or losing one's eyes is a terrible one in children. Many adults retain their apprehensiveness in this respect and no physical injury is so much dreaded

by them as an injury to the eye [...] A study of dreams, phantasies and myths has taught us that anxiety about one's eyes, the fear of going blind, is often enough a substitute for the dread of being castrated (1990, p. 352).

Freud therefore connects fear of blindness with fear of castration, basing his analysis on Hoffmann's *The Sandman* in 'The Uncanny' where he first 'makes a lexicological pilgrimage' and explores the meaning thereof by consulting dictionaries in a number of languages and then arriving at a conclusion that the 'uncanny' can mean both homely and unhomely and they are not opposites (Royle, 2003, p. 9).

What follows is a thorough analysis of Hoffmann's *The Sandman*, which talks about a young man called Nathaniel and his fear of losing his eyes or genitals if he approaches his true love. Nathaniel is engaged to Clara, a human being, but his true love is reserved for Olympia, an automaton. His fear goes back to his childhood, a time when his mother would tell him frightening stories about the Sandman.

The Sandman is in Nathaniel's memory, but he sees someone in real life who resembles that image: the lawyer Coppelius. A year after Nathaniel meets Coppelius, his father dies in an explosion and Coppelius disappears. A few years later, Nathaniel meets Giuseppe Coppola, an optician whose name uncannily resembles the lawyer's. The optician has created an automaton called Olympia, and Nathaniel finds himself in love with her, although he is engaged. The Sandman's job, throwing sand into little children's eyes, and the passing of Nathaniel's father are what induced Nathaniel's fear of castration, represented in a fear of blindness. Having many father figures in this story makes it difficult for Nathaniel to get rid of them and eventually win Olympia, contrary to Deeley and his situation with Kate. In *Old Times*, there is no father figure to threaten Deeley with castration if he desires his mother. Therefore, killing the father in Deeley's case is much easier than killing the father in Hoffman's *The Sandman*. Refer to section 7.2.c for more explanation regarding the castration complex.

Let us look at the situation and try to determine who will win Kate. Deeley, who is unlikely to be castrated by a father figure, is currently her husband, so he probably thinks he has already won this competition. Furthermore, there is Anna, who is already castrated for the lack of a penis, the 'one and only friend' who has recently found her way back into Kate's life, or as Esslin describes her 'the intruder who disturbs the peace of a home and a safe

relationship' (p. 183). According to Esslin, Anna thinks that she is the winner, albeit only by disturbing Kate's seemingly peaceful marriage. However, the idea of Deeley expressing the slightest interest in Anna is an indicator of a dissatisfied husband who does not have a strong marriage and does not bond well with his wife. Esslin refers to this theme as 'one of Pinter's earlier themes', which can be detected in many of his plays such as *The Homecoming*. There is definitely a 'homecoming' in *Old Times*, namely the 'homecoming' of Anna, who comes back to Kate, even though she might not have returned to the same home or neighbourhood or even the same city where they first met and created all these memories. Peter Buse, in *Drama Plus Theory*, suggests:

A homecoming implies both an absence and a return. [...] Homecomings are opportunities for renewing acquaintances with a locale and with the people who inhabit that locale [...] If "home" has changed since it was left, the term "homecoming" is literally inaccurate, because the place is not identical to the home that was left. In this case then, a homecoming can be a moment for reminiscence and nostalgic reflection on the way things were (2001, p. 37).

Buse's interpretation of the word "homecoming" describes the Anna/Kate situation and particularly that Anna has come home mentally by recalling memories she shared with Kate, but not physically, because she did not come back to her own "home" after an absence.

Is Deeley a part of Anna's "homecoming"? Peacock addresses this issue by saying that 'If Deeley is to feel secure, that past must be erased. The pattern of the conflict between Deeley and Anna takes the form of professed evocation of the past, in that each tries to appropriate the other's recollections' (p. 111). Nonetheless, it shows in the play that Deeley is still trying to win both of the women, or at least one of them, to prevent them from getting together. If Kate and Anna become an item, then Deeley will lose his battle and appear to be the weak link in this alleged threesome.

Deeley tries to recall a particular image he has in his mind that might keep Anna and Kate apart, help him win Kate and prevent Anna from her coming home to Kate. He recalls the image of a young Anna sitting on a 'very low sofa' wearing a skirt and black stockings (p. 289). Deeley sat across her and 'gazed up [her] skirt', with her being aware of his gaze and finding it 'perfectly acceptable'. Freedman comments on Lacan's explanation of 'the gaze' and says that '[it] may be correlated with the awareness that we can never see ourselves seeing' (p. 63). In addition, in different sections of *Staging the Gaze*, she emphasises that the

person gazing at something is unaware of what he is seeing and that ‘since theatre privileges the gaze over the look, it privileges the return look that acknowledges how we are embedded in a network of signifiers that are also object of desire’ (p. 64). So, if we assume that Deeley was unaware of his gaze, then how could he remember it or how could seeing Anna 20 years later trigger in him a feeling that was concealed all those years? However, there was another girl sitting there not aware of his gaze. That girl was Kate, who was not the receiver of Deeley’s gaze, and yet she was the woman whom he finally married.

The ‘gaze’ is described in Jane Marie Todd’s article ‘The Veiled Woman in Freud’s “Das Unheimliche”’: ‘The gaze appears here as the female’s power to give life (and “life” is synonymous with “possessing the phallus”...)’ (1986, p. 526). Consequently, Anna’s approval of Deeley’s gaze gave him his “phallus” and power over her and her other friend. Todd argues that if a woman gazes at a man, the situation will be reversed and he will feel ‘threatened by the fear of castration, confirmed by his view of the female genitals’, while the female is considered ‘a mutilated double’ (p. 527). After Anna’s reappearance and her attempt to take his place in Kate’s life, his past experience of having power over Anna gives Deeley the confidence to revive the same event now, so that he might gain his ‘phallus’ back. According to Lacan (1977), the ‘phallus’ is a signifier of patriarchal power and privilege – not the anatomical organ, the penis. Therefore, a woman can possess a ‘phallus’ – which indicates power and authority – without having a penis. In Kate’s case, she is the one with this kind of power and she has control over the other two characters despite the fact that one of them is male. As mentioned earlier in section (7.2.f) Dream Analysis, symbols have origins, whether they are conscious or unconscious, and Freud focuses more on the unconscious symbols that exist in dreams, before then relating them to the real life of the dreamers. Kate has previously gone through a window/mirror daydreaming experience to look at her life from a different perspective through the window or to reflect upon her current life through the mirror. After going through this experience, she should be finally reaching the realisation that she has power over both Anna and Deeley. She could simply leave Anna to travel back to her husband, or she could leave Deeley by himself and live her life as she pleases. However, Kate chooses not to leave. She stays through her own will, to incite both Anna and Deeley to try to win her, to their benefit.

Anna appears to be a girl who likes to experience new things and befriend new people, which is an aspect of her insecure personality. She likes to go out and be involved in other people’s lives, leaving her own life behind, and that scares Deeley, because she is involved in *his*

private life and shares intimate memories with Kate. Memories, or what happened previously to the characters offstage, are more powerful and influential than what is currently happening. Beliz Güçbilmez, in 'An Uncanny Theatricality: the Representation of the Offstage', says that in modern plays:

The proportion of action and story, of onstage and offstage, has been tilted in favour of the latter: the present of the story that is represented onstage becomes relatively weak and secondary when compared to the "then and there" archive of the whole fiction. What happens onstage becomes simply an extension of the offstage (2007, p. 153).

Offstage actions and past memories are essential in drama, because the spectator does not see anything that happened before the play starts. The spectator, in the ancient days, usually depends fully on the characters to inform him about past actions and memories, for example when *Oedipus Rex* was acted on stage, there was a chorus reciting actions happening offstage. Stage limitations of the three unities, i.e. time, place and action, have existed since Aristotle stated the Aristotelian rules of these unities. Firstly, the unity of time limits the time-span of the play to one day only; secondly, the unity of space limits the location to one place only; and lastly, the unity of action limits the actions to one set of related incidents.

However, Aristotelian stage limitations do not seem to have the same significance and the same impact in modern drama as they did in the ancient days. According to Martin Esslin in *An Anatomy of Drama*, in modern drama, which is comprised mainly of plays written in the 19th and 20th century, 'the dramatic form of expression leaves the spectator free to make up his own mind about the sub-text concealed behind the overt text' (1976, p. 18). Therefore, the 'spectator' has the upper hand in interpreting the plays he attends, and he has first-hand experience with the characters and the action on stage. Esslin also clarifies that

Drama is the most concrete form in which art can recreate human situations, human relationships. And this concreteness is derived from the fact that, whereas any narrative form of communication will tend to relate events that have happened in the past and are now finished, the concreteness of drama is happening in an eternal present tense, not there and then, but here and now (p. 18).

Having stated the quote mentioned above, Esslin also clarifies that although drama has the 'qualities of the real world, the real situations we meet in life', it is very different from real life. He says that that 'reality is irreversible, while in play it is possible to start again from scratch. Play is a simulation of reality' (p. 19). I completely agree with Esslin's interpretation of the spectators' relation to the plays especially that I personally experienced attending Pinter's *Old Times*, for example, and had multiple interpretations in my mind regarding the characters, the stage settings and the scenes. I also agree with him regarding stating the difference between reality and drama. We live our reality as mortal people and our lives are affected by our decisions, so nothing is reversible. But in drama, a play can be performed multiple times a day, and if an actor forgets a word or a line, he could easily correct his mistakes while acting in the following performances.

In *Old Times*, Pinter somehow adheres to the 'ancient' stage limitations such as the unity of time which is apparent while Deeley acts as the chorus reciting what Kate is doing offstage, thereby giving Anna detailed explanations. Kate is having a shower, covered in soap, rubbing herself down:

Deeley: Really soaps herself all over and then washes the soap off, sud by sud. Meticulously. She's both thorough and, I must say it, sensuous. Gives herself a comprehensive going over, and apart from everything else she does emerge as clean as a new pin. Don't you think?

Anna: Very clean.

Deeley: Truly so. Not a speck. Not a tidemark. Shiny as a balloon (pp. 291- 292).

Both of them also discuss, in 'erotic overtones', the best way to dry her off (Esslin, p. 186). Should they use a 'bath towel' or 'powder'? Is it 'common' or 'uncommon to be powdered'? At last, Deeley comes to the conclusion that he will 'do the whole lot'. He says 'After all, I am her husband. But you can supervise the whole thing. Furthermore, give me some hot tips while you're at it' (p. 294). In this dialogue, Deeley appears to be the one in charge: he decides who does what to whom, claiming that it will 'kill two birds with one stone.' He decides to win Kate and get rid of Anna, as she will be the one watching but not doing anything to (or with) Anna physically. Therefore, winning Kate is the one metaphorical bird and the other is making Anna suffer her loss for a lost love. Deeley makes all of these arrangements without consulting Kate, although she does not need them to dry her, as she is an independent woman who does not need any help. She is the one in charge, after all, not

Deeley – and definitely not Anna. She does not even give them the chance to dry her; she comes out from the bathroom completely dry. Kate wins and ‘[kills] two birds with one stone’.

Having lost the drying competition, Deeley and Anna have to compete over something else to win Kate – in this case, her underwear; who wore it and who looked at it, who allowed whom to wear it, was it underwear theft or borrowing? Two different versions of the story are told by Anna and Kate. The play starts with Kate saying that Anna used to steal her underwear, but towards the end, Anna says that Kate ‘insisted, from time to time, that [she] borrow her underwear’ (pp. 248, 303). Kate is still a winner, no matter which of these stories is correct. In Kate’s version, she is a victim of theft, and surely the audience listening to her story will sympathise with her being stripped of her underwear by force. Moreover, in Anna’s version, Kate appears as a desperate woman who needs her underwear to be worn by someone more outgoing and more appealing than she is, and this may also make people sympathise with her desperation and abjection. Furthermore, if Deeley tries to push his luck to win Kate, she remains a winner. He finally recognises that he was looking up a girl’s skirt without being aware that she was wearing his wife’s underwear. Kate wins by not letting him cheat on her and by being the only one controlling him, even in his past and his fantasies about her past image with the thighs and the underwear he has been fantasising about for the last 20 years. Deeley starts mingling his fantasy with the truth and tells Kate ‘she thought she was you, said little, so little (p. 307). Maybe she was you. Maybe it was you, having coffee with me, saying little, so little.’ After listening to him, Anna says ‘coldly’, realising that they both lost to Kate, ‘Oh, it was my skirt. It was me. I remember your look... very well. I remember you well’ (p. 309). The play ends with Kate stating that Anna and her ‘dirty’ face have been dead to her all these years (p. 311). Kate kills Anna symbolically and never thinks about her or visits her symbolic grave, the home they once shared, because Anna tainted that home and their bed by cheating with a man. This man is the one Kate married later, to take revenge and so that she could be the first one to appear as a winner in finding a husband.

It is a story about the past, love, revenge, cheating and “homecoming.” Almost all struggles happened in the past when they were young, but the memory is what lives on and continues to annoy them. Finally, Peacock summarises the outcome by saying ‘Kate, whom others thought they could control, finally dominates the situation’ (p. 111). Additionally, by exploring all the evidence in their past and present life, we can definitely say that although

Kate is not competing with anyone here, she remains the winner by ensuring both competitors lose.

9.2. *The Homecoming* (1965)

Introduction

In this section, I will attempt to open up the research questions that are asked in this thesis in relation to *The Homecoming* (1965). My emphasis here will be on pursuing the questions about two specific psychoanalytical concepts: the Oedipus complex and the castration complex. I will also emphasise how these particular Freudian concepts will help to illuminate Pinter's *The Homecoming* as well as recall Gabbard and her approach to Pinter via Freudian dream structure. In addition to the previously mentioned Freudian concepts, I will also use Freud's essays written on the mother-son relationship, which will assist in clarifying the unconventional relationship between Ruth and the other men in the family. In addition to Freudian concepts, in my analysis of *The Homecoming*, I will attempt to connect the play to the movements that Pinter is associated with and influenced by the most, namely the Angry Young Men and the kitchen sink drama. These movements are selected to analyse *The Homecoming* because of the nature of the play, which I attempt to relate to the concept of dysfunctional families, because the play in itself is the manifestation of a rather dysfunctional family – Max's family – where the reader or the viewer will notice the anger, violence, mundane lifestyle and sexual tension among the family members. This section will also investigate how the initial audiences and critics reacted to this type of play in the 1960s, when Pinter's work was considered shocking and provocative to perform on stage.

Pinter's career soared after writing and producing *The Homecoming*. Although the play 'seemed so much coarser and less musical than his previous work', it was welcomed by a vast number of viewers and critics compared to the initial cold reception of his previously produced work *The Birthday Party* (1957) (Wardle, [1971] 1986, p. 169). Consequently, this section will discuss the significance of *The Homecoming* in establishing Pinter's name in the theatrical world.

Furthermore, following a close reading of *The Homecoming*, this section will contain a detailed description of the play, mentioning the settings, the arrangement of the stage and performance props, the relationship between the characters and the reactions of the audience.

Moreover, I will address another topic at the beginning of this play's analysis, which is Pinter's particular creative writing process that led to the birth of *The Homecoming* and other controversial plays that positioned themselves amidst earlier great works like Shakespeare's and Kafka's. On the one hand, his creativity in creating such psychoanalyse-able plays generates a sense of discomfort and doubt in the reader and the audience, while on the other hand, his creativity generates a sense of acceptability of human nature, mundane acts and sexual desires. Pinter, knowingly or unknowingly, shows contradictory façades of the one human being. He exposes concealed desires and cravings that no one would like to show in public. The other topic I shall address herein is the play's original cast, the initial critics' reviews, interviews with Pinter explaining the choice of certain characters, actors and directors and the different, later, productions of *The Homecoming*.

I would have liked to add my personal experience of attending one of the latest productions of *The Homecoming*, but unfortunately, I did not have the chance to attend a live performance of the play like I did with both *The Birthday Party* and *Old Times*. Instead, I watched a recorded film starring Pinter's wife, Vivien Merchant, as Ruth and directed by Peter Hall in 1973. Therefore, my main resource for *The Homecoming* is the previously mentioned recording. If I had happened to attend a live performance of the play, it would definitely enrich my experience of this play, which, in my opinion, is particularly interesting to attend and react to on stage.

As mentioned previously in section (9.1), Pinter was asked about the 'genesis of *Old Times*' and said that the idea 'flashed in [his] mind' when he was 'lying on the sofa' at his London house and that it might have 'something to do with the sofa' (Gussow, 1971, p. 26). However, this is not the case for *The Homecoming*. His creative writing process takes a more structured approach in this play than *Old Times*, with the exception of a few scenes and characters' actions, especially Sam's character. In Pinter's interview with Lawrence M. Benskey (1966), he mentions several times and confirms that he 'can't remember exactly how a given play developed in [his] mind.' Pinter also says that he 'think[s] what happens is that [he] write[s] in a very high state of excitement and frustration' (Benskey, [1966] 2005, p. 56). Benskey specifically asks Pinter about a scene in *The Homecoming* where Sam, Max's brother, 'suddenly cries out and collapses several minutes from the end of the play', describing Sam's action as 'abrupt' (p. 56). Sam, for most of the play, is a passive person who does not actively behave in a way that affects the other characters. His sudden cries at the end might not be logical or of any significance to the reader or the audience. However,

Sam's action 'suddenly seemed to [Pinter] right. It just came. [Pinter] knew [Sam]'d have to say something at one time in this section and this is what happened, that's what he said' (p. 56). Pinter also reveals that he does not let the characters develop uncontrollably, because he is 'ultimately holding the ropes' (p. 57). He goes on to describe *The Homecoming* as the most satisfying of his plays as a 'structural entity', although he does not follow a method of planned writing; instead, 'the words come as [he's] writing the characters, not before' (p. 57). Although Pinter's words come out unplanned while writing, they must be inspired by something. He was asked on many occasions about being inspired by the surrounding people and daily interactions with his acquaintances, friends and family and if he took the exact words uttered by these people and placed them into his work. He replied he never eavesdrops, but he 'occasionally' hears some things that could be useful to use in outlining the characters (p. 57). He is also influenced by his background as a Jewish Londoner from Hackney, especially with his word choice and character names. As Pinter's old friend, Mick Goldstein says in his letter to Billington, Pinter's official biographer, that living in Hackney and 'Hackney Downs School was a decisive factor in the nature and quality of its teaching staff and the natural acceptance of the non-Jews of its large and undoubtedly talented Jewish content. This is not to say that Pinter would not have become a force in literature even without these factors. I'm sure he would. But *The Homecoming* and *The Dwarfs* could hardly have been written' (Goldstein, [1984], 2005, p. 121). Later on in this section, we will see that Hackney was one of the factors influencing his choice of words, characters and plot, while other factors will be the significant movements with which Pinter's name is associated, namely the kitchen sink drama and the Angry Young Men movements.

Moreover, Pinter has a history in acting and writing poetry. He also reads a great amount of other authors' work that could have influenced his writing style. In an interview with Miriam Cross in *The Observer* (1980), he briefly mentions a love theme inspired by Proust's romantic writings:

There is a good deal of love about in some of my plays. But love can very easily go down the wrong path and be distorted as the result of frustration in all kinds of different ways. In *The Homecoming*, for example, the violence of the family towards their own rage or spleen or whatever, comes about because they don't know what to do with it' (Cross, [1980], 2005, pp. 73, 74).

The “love” between family members in *The Homecoming*, as will be mentioned later in this section, results in verbal and physical aggression towards one another. In addition to aggression, their familial “love” turns into incest when almost every man in the family tries to have sexual contact with Ruth and, consequently, it then turns into a business opportunity when the family men suggest that Ruth become a prostitute, to support herself and them financially. The real concern is the approval, or perhaps the indifference, that Teddy, Ruth’s husband, shows towards his family members and their future plans for his wife. Teddy’s lack of reaction towards his family members could also suggest his immense “love” for his father and brothers that extends beyond conventions and traditional family values. Furthermore, he might not want to jeopardise his relationship with them for the sake of a woman, even if she is his wife – he would not want to disappoint them and cut familial ties.

Another influence, Billington, argues that Pinter’s writings were tremendously inspired by his then-wife Vivien Merchant, as if the women’s roles he wrote were tailored specifically for her. He says that Vivien’s roles in Pinter plays ‘have so much in common – in particular, a mixture of external gentility with inner passion – you inevitably wonder how much Pinter is trying to appease Vivien, how much his vision of women is determined by her qualities as an actress and a person, and how much he is subconsciously exploring his own marital tensions through drama’ (p. 133). As his official biographer, Billington clearly has more insights on Pinter than others, so he probably knows how much Vivien influences Pinter’s choices, whether by influencing his conscious writing state or his subconscious creative writing. Vivien is, again, chosen to play another female main character, and this time it is Ruth, at the first production of the play.

Peter Hall directed the first production of the play, presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company at the Aldwych Theatre on June 3rd, 1965. Hall cast Paul Rogers as Max, a man of 70, Ian Holm as Lenny, a man in his early 30s, John Normington as Sam, a man of 63, Terence Rigby as Joey, a man in his middle 20s, Michael Bryant as Teddy, a man in his middle 30s and Vivien Merchant as Ruth, a woman in her early 30s (Pinter, [1997], 1965, p. 14). Although Hall was a friend of Pinter’s, the playwright was always tough on him while directing his plays, especially *The Homecoming*. Pinter kept saying ‘That’s not quite right’ to Hall, but he would not mention what was wrong. It could be something wrong with the directing or the casting or the staging, but no one knew what was not ‘quite right’ (Hall, [1974], 2005, p. 136). In Hall’s interview by Catherine Itzin and Simon Trussler in *Theatre Quarterly* 1974, he explains his approach to directing a Pinter play, saying that the first step

is ‘to try and expose the underlying melodrama of the text’. Hall tries also to ‘find out who does hate who and who loves who and who’s doing what to whom and in the first stage of rehearsal play it very crudely’ ([1974], 2005, p. 137). Hall’s explanation of his approach to directing *The Homecoming* displays his vast knowledge of Pinter and his writing style. He says that Pinter’s work is mostly based on ‘the cockney game of taking the piss: and part of that game is that you should not be quite sure whether the piss is being taken or not. In fact, if you know I’m taking the piss, I’m not really doing it very well: and a good deal of Harold’s tone has to do with that very veiled kind of mockery’ ([1974], 2005, p. 137). Hall also explains the difficulties the actors face while playing Pinter, due to their uncertainty of the facts and the realness of events. He says that ‘actors can’t play veiling until they know what they’re veiling, so we play mockery, we play hatred, we play animosity, we play the extreme black-and-white terms of a character’ (p. 137). The rehearsal stage is very important for the actors to develop a connection with the characters and the feelings they need to convey through the ambiguous Pinteresque texts, ‘because unless the actor understands what game he is playing, what his actual underlying motivations are, the ambiguity of the text will mean nothing’ (p. 137). And as Pinter says in his Nobel Prize speech ‘So language in art remains a highly ambiguous transaction, a quicksand, a trampoline, a frozen pool which might give way under you, the author, at any time’ (2005).

I have not had the chance to attend a recent production of *The Homecoming*; however, I watched the film adaptation which was directed by Peter Hall in 1973. The film, in my opinion, is a literal adaptation of the play. After watching the film, I had the same feeling I usually have after I attend a play at a theatre because the film was theatrically portrayed, like a play. The cast was almost identical to that of the play and it was directed by the same director as well. The acting cast was Cyril Cusack as Sam, Ian Holm as Lenny, Michael Jayston as Teddy, Vivien Merchant as Ruth, Terence Rigby as Joey and Paul Rogers as Max. The reviews describe the cast and the performance as ‘stagy’ and ‘claustrophobic’ (*rogerebert.com*, 1973), ‘rabid comedy’, ‘tumultuous’, ‘menacing’, ‘mysterious’, ‘wild’, ‘beautifully integrated’ (*NY Times*, 1973), ‘haunting’ (*Columbia College*, 1973), ‘domestic purgatory’, ‘powerful’ (*letterbox.com*, 1073). I agree with some of the initial descriptions of the film adaptation, mainly because I watched the same one that they watched in 1973, not a recent version of the play. When I first watched it, I thought the play was indeed claustrophobic, menacing and even disturbing. I come from a different Arab Muslim culture where familial relations are sacred and parents are idolised. So, watching *The Homecoming*

was shocking to me because it portrays numerous contradictions to my cultural background. As will be explained further in this section, subjects such as incest and prostitution are considered taboo and will not be discussed among people in public. However, Pinter's plays are notorious for using these topics as main themes.

Pinter wrote *The Homecoming* (1965) following *The Birthday Party* (1957), which was the play that launched his writing career. Pinter soon became known for writing plays that would usually contain a shock element for viewers and critics by touching upon sensitive issues related to socially unacceptable sexual relations like incest and homosexuality. When *The Homecoming* was produced, it 'took one by surprise because it seemed so much coarser and less musical than his previous work,' says Irving Wardle in 'The Territorial Struggle', explaining how Pinter 'remove[d] the conventional mask and show[ed] the naked animal' (1986 [1971], p. 169). How would Pinter show the 'naked animal' in a play? Pinter created *The Homecoming*, revealing human nature and concentrating on making the characters appear 'naked' due to the aggression they impose upon each other in this 'family of predators' (p. 169). The early reviewers of *The Homecoming* in 1965 are as shocked as Wardle. In a newspaper article titled 'Look at life, The Pinter way' by Beata Lipman she expresses how '[Pinter] has chosen the most brutal, the most bizarre, and withal a superbly sophisticated way of saying it; what her husband politely discusses love-play techniques'. And she describes Ruth as 'self-possessed' and 'genteel' although she is given the instructions to 'eat, drink, fornicate, and be damned to you all.' Pinter's wife Lady Antonia Fraser comments on *The Homecoming* defending the element of shock and says that: '*The Homecoming*, which is extremely tough, actually shocking play, if I ever go to it and I am not shocked by it I think that was not a good production, because it is totally shocking, and it was nothing like Harold at all (2010, minute 56).

On the surface, it appears that *The Homecoming* represents a family consisting of a father called Max, his brother Sam, Max's three sons Teddy, Lenny and Joey, in addition to Ruth, who is Teddy's wife. The play features the homecoming of Teddy, who has spent a few years in the United States away from the family home in London, getting married, having children and gaining a PhD. After coming back home, both Teddy and Ruth are welcomed warmly by Teddy's family, especially Ruth, who represents a wife/mother figure to Max and his sons. The play also represents the members of this family as animalistic creatures whose lives revolve around the thought of sex and incest – a 'family of predators' (p. 169).

Ruth's impact on Teddy's family is seen as an oedipal influence by Esslin (1970), Gabbard (1976), Prentice (1980) and Rowe (1991). In 'A Case for *The Homecoming*' (1986 [1970-1982], p. 172), Esslin comments on *The Homecoming* and the shock element and categorises it into two parts: 'the casual and matter-of-fact way in which sex and prostitution are discussed in it' and 'the apparently inexplicable motivations of its main characters.' Esslin, after categorising the shock element in the play, questions the motives behind Ruth's actions and Teddy's reactions, asking 'why should a woman, the mother of three children and the wife of an American college professor, calmly accept an offer to have herself set up as a prostitute; how could a husband not only consent to such an arrangement but actually put the proposition to his wife?' (p. 172). Ruth and Teddy, and their reaction to the offer his family make her to be their prostitute, are mentioned by Esslin in the same essay, in which he relates prostitution to the history of Teddy's family and, later on, to oedipal desires. At first, Esslin says that the 'family had been living from prostitution for decades,' and as a result thereof, it would be 'the most natural thing in the world' to ask Ruth to be their prostitute, given the fact that she mentions her old profession as a 'nude photographic model', which Esslin describes as 'a euphemism for a prostitute' (pp. 173- 174). The second theme Esslin points out is oedipal relations. However, he only mentions it in passing, noting 'Indeed it deals with the themes of both *Oedipus* and *Lear*: the desolation of old age and the sons' desire for the sexual conquest of the mother' (p. 175). Also, Esslin does not provide a detailed answer to his own question in which he wonders about Ruth's motives towards the men in Teddy's family, albeit he does set guidelines for his interpretation of Ruth's motives and points out her family's history and her past as a 'nude model'.

Gabbard adds to Esslin's interpretation and provides a detailed analysis of selected Pinter plays using Freud's dream analysis. Within her analysis, she also comments on the oedipal relationship between a man and his mother, suggesting:

On the surface she is a girlfriend or a wife, but the male who would possess her transfers to her the attitudes and inadequacies associated with mother. Thus ambivalence creeps in and the relationship is colored by a wish to have a change of lover (p.142).

The previous quote talks about how a man perceives a woman and how this woman is always turned into a mother image in this man's mind. He wants to possess her and take her as a lover. By doing this, he returns to the state of being attached to this mother image, to the

extent that he wants to be back inside her womb, to be closer to her than the other men who possibly exist in her life. Therefore, 'their regression to the womb' in this case represents his return to his original home to the state where he is attached to his mother sharing the umbilical cord (p. 197).

The Homecoming represents Teddy and Ruth's attachment to their old neighbourhood, which they left a long time ago to live in the United States. It also represents Teddy's attachment to his family home and his family, including his dead mother, whose presence still affects them all, especially when Ruth joins the family as the new mother/lover/prostitute and reminds them of the past.

At the end of her analysis, Gabbard arrives at a result:

The ultimate homecoming for this family is their regression to the womb [...] *The Homecoming* is a return to the nostalgic past. [...] *The Homecoming* shows man's wish to go backward in time, to return from whence he came (p. 197).

In addition to Esslin and Gabbard, M.W. Rowe bases his interpretation of *The Homecoming* on Esslin's question regarding Ruth and her approval to stay in Britain to be a prostitute. Rowe proposes his critical opinion in 'Pinter's Freudian Homecoming' (1991), talking about incest and using Freud's essay 'The Most Prevalent Form of Degradation in Erotic Life' (1912) in which 'Freud identifies two separate currents of feeling – the tender and the sensual – that have to come together for the formation of mature sexual relationships'. Rowe does not provide an oedipal Freudian analysis to the play; however, he does explain the contrast between these tender and sensual feelings, saying that tender instincts are 'directed towards members of the family who care for and protect the child' and the other erotic instincts are 'deflected from their sexual aims' (p. 191). The tender feelings develop the moment a child is born and cared for by the adults who are most likely to be his parents. These feelings, however, develop into erotic feelings, as children are attached to their mothers during the early stages of their lives, namely Freud's oral and anal stages. Such attachment to the mother causes fear of the father and eventually results in fear of castration by the father. Rowe argues that:

The incest barriers forbids objects of sexual attraction from resembling the revered mother figure and therefore such men can feel a kind of Platonic tenderness towards women they value highly – indeed, they are often exceptionally awed and deferential towards them – but their sexual lives are adversely affected. In serious cases this can

mean complete psychological impotence; in less serious cases sexual activity is severely inhibited, easily upset, clumsy and not very pleasurable (p. 191).

Rowe starts his paper by arguing that ‘anybody who thinks that drama provides psychological insights, and that *The Homecoming* is particularly rich in them, would have been disappointed by Peter’s Hall’s recent production at the Comedy Theatre’ (p. 189). Rowe expresses his own disappointment as well comparing Hall’s original production in addition to his film with this production that he attended, saying that they were ‘left with something domestic, superficial and fast-moving’ (p. 189). He criticises the characters, dialogue and staging by describing them with different negative descriptions like ‘halting’, ‘jokey’, ‘blatant’ and many others. He also speaks about what the audience expects when they walk into a Pinter play, and the ‘first reaction [which] was not to verbal virtuosity, jokes or stage business, but to character and action’ (p. 190). Rowe mentions the efforts made by Trussler in describing Pinter’s *The Homecoming* as ‘modishly intellectualized melodrama, its violence modulated by its vagueness, its emotional stereotyping disguised by carefully planted oddities of juxtaposition and expression’ (p. 190). In addition, he criticises Hall’s new production and accuses it of being ‘symptomatic of a critical and theatrical trend that glides over the issues that so absorbed and disturbed Pinter’s first audience’ (p. 190) as he spots the difference between the two productions and the modification made by Hall to accommodate the new audience, who would not have handled the original production. He, however, praises Esslin’s efforts in trying to figure out characters, noting:

The question, “Who are these people and why are they behaving in this way?” cried out for an answer. There have been serious attempts to answer it (Esslin’s for example) but they have been relatively unsuccessful and many critics have simply thrown in the towel, either by declaring that one should not expect psychological coherence in a work of this kind, or that one should expect such coherence and that his play fails to provide it (p. 190).

Rowe suggests that many critics who try to come up with an interpretation of Pinter’s plays ‘throw in the towel’ and admit defeat. He argues that critics cannot explain if ‘psychological coherence’ exists or not in such plays, due to the controversy surrounding Pinter himself and the characters he creates. Furthermore, he never explains how he creates the characters and how he chooses their appearances and names, which means that critics must necessarily

interpret his plays according to what they understand from them. In *The Homecoming*, for example, the choice Pinter makes regarding the appearance, past, mindset and name of the character Ruth, leads Esslin to question this character in particular. His question sets the foundation for Rowe's argument, mentioned above, in addition to Penelope Prentice's argument in 'Ruth: Pinter's *The Homecoming* Revisited' (1980), in which Prentice describes Ruth as 'the most misunderstood' character of Pinter's and that she is 'generally condemned as a shocking, licentious woman, even a nymphomaniac, and it is unanimously assumed by her critics that in the end she agrees to become a prostitute' (1980, p. 458). She however dismisses the 'unsupported assumption' by Esslin that 'Ruth was a prostitute even before she married Teddy', because this assumption was only made based on her past as a nude model (p. 458). Instead, Prentice quotes Pinter while explaining about Ruth: 'At the end of the play she is in possession of a certain kind of freedom. She can do what she wants, and it is not at all certain she will go off to Greek Street.' In his interpretation, Pinter suggests that Ruth does not become a prostitute, because she has the choice of leaving and that she does not agree to stay at Teddy's family house by the end of the play. The play, therefore, is open-ended, in that Ruth does not arrive at a decision whether to stay or not, whether to become the family's prostitute or not (p. 458). Prentice also defends Ruth and her mentality as the only woman in that family who understands the men's needs and 'contrives to assert her superiority, which leaves them unfulfilled, defeated, baffled' (p. 460). Ruth has the power over the men because of her position as the person with choice. She has control over the men who all want her for either sexual purposes or motherly affections, because 'no one in the play can equal or match her in strength or wisdom. She returns attack with understanding and tempers her assertion of dominance with compassion and some affection' (p. 475).

Prentice's analysis of Ruth's character and strength brings us on to examining the origin of Ruth's name the reason behind Pinter's choice thereof. "Ruth" is a biblical name. In Ruth 1 – 4, 'Ruth was the woman who clung to her destiny. She inherited a family by marriage [...] God granted her wisdom and favour. These two ingredients can turn any hopeless situation around. A godly character gave her both.' These verses confirm the argument made by Prentice that Ruth is a strong and wise character, due to the history of the name and the power it reflects on the women holding the name. Bernard F. Dukore investigates names in Pinter's plays in 'What's in a Name?: An Approach to *The Homecoming*'. He mentions the names that have 'referential meanings' such as Rose in *The Room*, Flora in *A Slight Ache*, Horne in *The Collection* and Ruth in *The Homecoming* (1982, pp. 173- 174). Dukore argues

that Pinter chose the name because it ‘evokes the Biblical Ruth, whose husband’s people become her people.’ However, Pinter himself refutes Dukore’s statement by saying that ‘I have never been conscious of allegorical significance in my plays’ (p. 174). Nonetheless, and unperturbed, Dukore continues with his analysis of the name: ‘By contrast with Ruth, the men’s names in *The Homecoming* have no immediately comprehensible referents’. Through this statement, Dukore confirms that he will resume with his analysis concerning the characters ‘in an attempt to elucidate the characterizations, concerns, actions and situations’ of the play (p. 174). He arrives at the conclusion that Ruth has a clear biblical reference and the other characters have names related to other people in previous plays written by Pinter.

To conclude, Esslin mentions the Oedipus complex in passing and talks in brief about the mother-son relationship. Gabbard uses Freud’s dream analysis in detail to interpret selected plays, yet she does not perform an oedipal analysis. Rowe, also, does not provide an oedipal analysis and admits that many critics have ‘thrown in the towel’ while trying to analyse Pinter’s plays (p. 190). Prentice focuses on analysing Ruth as a character, while Dukore focuses on relating the names in Pinter’s plays to each other. However, both of them never use Freudian concepts to explain the relationship between Ruth and the men.

The Title and Its Significance

Although the titles Pinter chooses might sound simple, such as *The Room*, *The Birthday Party*, *The Basement*, *The Lover* and so on, they all hold more than one meaning and are interpreted differently throughout their performance. *The Homecoming*, for instance, hides more than it reveals. In general, a homecoming suggests coming back to where it all started, to the place of origin and to one’s family. Peter Buse, in *Drama Plus Theory*, says that ‘A homecoming implies both an absence and a return. [...] Homecomings are opportunities for renewing acquaintances with a locale and with the people who inhabit that locale [...]’ (p. 37). Buse employs the ‘uncanny’ to analyse Pinter’s *The Homecoming* and says that ‘a “home” can be either heimlich (homely) or unheimlich (unhomely) (p. 37). Using the ‘uncanny’ is one way of describing the mystery behind one’s homecoming, while the other one is the Oedipus complex, which suggests that it involves going back to a foetal state in a mother’s womb and experiencing affectionate motherly care. The return to a womb is also discussed by Lucina Paquet Gabbard in *The Dream Structure of Pinter’s Plays: A Psychoanalytic Approach* (1976) along with her own analysis of Pinter’s plays, using yet another one of

Freud's concepts, namely the interpretation of dreams. She says that *The Homecoming* represents 'the progressive fulfilment of the wish to have a mother' and stresses the significance of wish fulfilment dreams in Pinter's plays in general (p. 141). Gabbard also comments on the oedipal relationship between a man and his mother, describing the mother as a mix between 'a girlfriend or a wife' (p. 142). She concludes that 'the ultimate homecoming for this family is their regression to the womb' (p.197). This result is what clarifies the hidden meaning behind Teddy and Ruth's homecoming and their return to the womb.

Social Class and Dysfunctional Family

The Homecoming is perceived as a shocking play because it deals with a dysfunctional family from the British working class that existed in the 1950s and 1960s. The working class is defined in The Cambridge English Dictionary as 'belonging to a social group that consists of people who earn less than other groups, often being paid only for the hours or days that they work, and who usually do physical work rather than work for which you need an advanced education'.

John Kirk, in *Twentieth Century Writing and the Working Class* (2003), says that 'the prejudices and privileges which go along with class leave marks' (p. 7). He adds that 'we view class not simply as an objective entity [...] but as an issue of affinity and identification' (p. 7). Kirk's statements suggest that 'prejudices and privileges' divided British citizens into two categories related to class: firstly, the working class, which, at that time, handled blue-collar jobs and earned a minimum wage, giving them less opportunity to have a lavish lifestyle and higher education, and secondly, the upper and middle classes, which owned properties and provided jobs for the working class. Due to these 'prejudices and privileges', the working class was not given rights to live well, benefit from health insurance or be well-educated. Moreover, they were labelled as dysfunctional families, whether or not this label actually applied. As a result of the class system, each class was – and still is – branded by adjectives that would not allow it to move on and become a one-class society. However, when I was researching and reading about the history of the working class and whether or not it still possessed the same characteristics in the modern days, I found that many aspects have developed nowadays to the best especially the National Health Service (NHS) and the educational system. The first main aspect is the NHS, which is the publicly funded national

healthcare system for England, and it was established in July 1948 after the Second World War to provide healthcare for everyone in the country. According to the Working Class Movement Library website entry titled 'Birth of the NHS', after the NHS was established, '1143 voluntary hospitals and 1545 municipal hospitals were taken over by the NHS in England and Wales.' This is a great number of medical facilities which were willing to participate in improving the health system, but what was an even greater step in the road to improvement is the change in 'the way in which people could get and pay for care. Now people didn't pay for medical attention when they needed it, and instead paid as taxpayers, collectively.' This payment plan creates ease for the patients because according to 1949 Ministry of Health Report, 'from now on the "family doctor" was a person whose advice could be sought freely without incurring the previously dreaded expense'. The second main aspect is the educational system. According to the previously quoted dictionary definition of the Working Class, this class works mainly in physically demanding jobs which does not require advanced education. However, according to the BBC Bitesize website entry titled 'Everyday life in the 20th century':

In the early 1900s working class children often worked half the day and then went to school for half the day to learn the '3 Rs' - reading, writing and arithmetic. After 1945, all children got a good education and by the 1960s children had full-time education, free milk and more leisure time. In the 1960s, the number of students going to university doubled.

The quote mentioned above indicates the development in the educational system after the Second World War. It is also an indication that the British nation was heading towards providing mandatory education for everyone in the upcoming years. These two main aspects, receiving healthcare and education, form the basis to reaching the goal of achieving equality among different classes eventually. Yet, there are other aspects which need to be constantly developing, such as social national and international relationships. Addressing this matter is Lindsay Anderson, in 'Get out and Push', who comments on the social situation in British society, noting:

Fundamentally, our problems today are all problems of adjustment: we have somehow to evolve new social relationships within the nation and the new relationship altogether with the world outside. Britain-an industrial imperialist country that has lost its economic superiority and its empire, has yet to find, or to accept, its new identity (p. 163).

Anderson's suggestion, to 'evolve new social relationships within the nation', is a solution to the problems society has in terms of the British class system. He suggests his idea as a result of Britain losing 'its economic superiority and its empire', which might lead ultimately to creating a country with a more cohesive society consisting of one class only. This fictional cohesive, classless society might be the solution to having families at the same level of intellect, education and finances and result in functional families with a clear purpose in life.

A family is an entity that contains different individuals, some of whom sometimes fail to live up to their parents' expectations. However, some parents are clueless about their own identities, and as a result, they try to create a version of their "perfect" child by directing this child to do and say certain things that may or may not actually agree with his own mindset. A child, in this case, will grow up to be dysfunctional and reflect this malaise on his own children because, according to Freud in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, 'parents play a leading part in the infantile psychology of all persons who subsequently become psychoneurotics' ([1899] 1997, p. 155). Once this child begins to manifest his dysfunctional behaviours, it is often too late to turn him around. The main reason for a child growing up dysfunctionally is parents who perform all kinds of repression and control over their children to imprint their points of view forever in their children's minds. In *The Homecoming*, Max and Jessie are the parents who acted as if their lifestyle were the best. Working as a pimp and a prostitute created an unhealthy atmosphere for their children, who were definitely exposed to a world of exploitation and dishonesty. Therefore, these children grew up to be in a position where they were drowning in this lifestyle and could not escape from it, no matter how hard they tried.

Teddy, Lenny and Joey were all raised in an environment that degrades women by using them as prostitutes and by violating their safety and using violence against them. Lenny tells Ruth about an incident that happened to him in which he killed a woman who 'was very insistent and started taking liberties with [him]' (p. 38). He blames this woman for her own murder and tells the story as a proud man who perpetrated an interesting deed – in this case, the murder of a woman. The main problem in this family is not just men degrading women, but women degrading themselves as well. Jessie and Ruth are the mother figures who also have a second label, i.e. 'prostitutes'. From the very beginning of the play, the male characters have plenty of opportunities to call both Jessie and Ruth prostitutes, saying this word as if it were taken for granted, because it is their profession that pays the bills. These

thoughts could have an offensive impact on the original 1960's audience who willingly chose to attend the play whether or not they had read the printed script beforehand. I cannot generalise and speak on behalf of all audience members, but I can relate their experience to my personal experience attending Pinter's plays. I specifically recall how *The Homecoming* had shocked me even though it was not a live performance. I was watching a 1973 film adaptation taped on a VHS tape at the university library in the year 2013. The play created atrocious and irritating thoughts in my mind because of the topics it discussed especially incest and prostitution. As a grown woman, I know that incest and prostitution exists in reality, and that there are actual people who consider prostitution a career. However, as a grown woman from the Middle East, I know that these topics need to be concealed at the back of my mind, forgotten, or maybe not allowed to be remembered solely for the common belief that these are cultural and religious taboos.

Freud, in 'Psychopathic Characters on the Stage' ([1905-6] 1990), suggests that:

The spectator is the person who experiences too little, who feels that he is a "poor wretch to whom nothing of importance can happen," who has long been obliged to damp down, or rather displaces, his ambition to stand in his own person at the hub of world affairs; he longs to feel and to act and to arrange things according to his desires – in short, to be a hero. Furthermore, the playwright and actor enable him to do this by allowing him to *identify himself* with a hero (pp. 121- 122).

Freud defines the hero according to ancient Greek drama where 'the hero is at first a rebel against God or the divine; and it is from the feeling of misery of the weaker creature pitted against the divine might that pleasure may be said to derive' (p. 123). However, we are discussing *The Homecoming*, which is not an ancient Greek play. Therefore, if we link *The Homecoming* to Freud's definition, the hero in this modern play needs to have an exceptional power which allows him to defy the higher authority. This higher authority could be social, psychological, familial, or anything which tries to take control of this hero's actions, tries to set moral boundaries and tries to limit the hero's power. Therefore, identification with this hero in *The Homecoming* might be based upon the social or moral connection which the characters create with the audience members. In addition, Freud states that 'drama seeks to explore emotional possibilities' (p. 122). Consequently, the audience attend the play, and their subconscious allows the suppressed knowledge and awareness of the issue to come through and be remembered, because the plays act like a trigger to these suppressed memories. Their 'enjoyment is based on an illusion' – the illusion of memories and past

experiences (p. 122), which cause the person either to revolt or to embrace the concept of prostitution and the degradation of these women who work in similar professions. This realisation of reality leads to thinking about the fact that Max's family members are all exposed to a dishonourable lifestyle that results in them being a dysfunctional family. Whether or not there is a hero in *The Homecoming*, however, is completely subjective to the individuals attending the play. I, personally, believe that each character could be interpreted as a hero in this play depending on the viewer and the way this viewer identifies with a certain character. Let us examine Ruth, for example, because she is a major character in the play, and because she could be interpreted in different ways. On the one hand, Ruth could be perceived as a hero if she were to defy the family men's sexual desires towards her and destroy their plans concerning her future prostitution career. These men in this case are the 'God' which Freud mentions in his definition of a hero. These men are the higher power in this family, and she is the stranger who needs to defy and destroy them. On the other hand, she could be perceived as a weaker creature who is satisfied by being a subject to these men. This interpretation might arise when Ruth is lured by these men to start prostitution, and then she demands more money and a bigger house. In this interpretation, she shows signs of weakness towards material objects and does not defy the men; therefore, she is not a hero, but she is a victim of male-controlled society, norms and culture which could destroy the acts of heroism which she tries to achieve. And as Freud adds: 'the next struggle, that of the hero against the social community, becomes the social tragedy' (p. 123). In other words, if the character, Ruth in this scenario, fails to defy the higher power, tragedy strikes, and the potential heroism acts are demolished and the family, Max's family, stays as dysfunctional as it is portrayed.

Martin and Martin in 'Understanding dysfunctional and functional family behaviours for the at-risk adolescent', explain:

Many adolescents are growing into adulthood alienated from others and with low expectations of themselves. There is greater likelihood that they will become unhealthy, addicted, violent and chronically poor. Equally disturbing is that adolescents from the more affluent communities are displaying similar problems. [...] Affluent parents seem to extent mixed messages – that their lives are too demanding and at the same time, because of their affluence, they do not see the needs of their troubled teenagers. When these problems do hit home, parents' reaction is often shock or dismay (2000, p. 787).

What children learn at a young age is imprinted in their minds and shows in their personalities throughout their life. Their reaction to certain events, such as news on prostitution, murder or violence of any sort, will reflect the way they are raised. Furthermore, the more disturbing their reaction, the more likely they will belong to a dysfunctional family.

Some critics relate *The Homecoming* to disturbed behaviour and share their own view of the play, as Gabbard noted in *The Dream Structure of Pinter's Plays*. She quotes some of the early critiques of the play, citing:

Bert O. States says: "The reaction one has to the play comes nowhere near Pity and Fear, [...] but is better described as *astonishment at the elaboration*." Margaret Croyden, in an article entitled, "Pinter's Hideous Comedy," calls the play a blend of "primitive ritual" and "comedy of manners" (p. 185).

Gabbard also mentions Esslin's opinion on the play, quoting his interpretation of *The Homecoming*, where he explains that Max's family 'has always been in the business of prostitution. Jessie was a whore, Max was a pimp and Sam was a driver for prostitutes' (p. 187). Furthermore, this interpretation clarifies why Max's sons have turned out as disturbed, offensive and as violent as he is.

In addition to the previous critics, Martin S. Regal writes in *Harold Pinter: A Question of Timing* (1995) that *The Homecoming* reveals 'a much darker view of human behaviour and motivation' (p. 61). He continues his commentary by proposing a comparison between the views of Harold Hobson and Simon Trussler on *The Homecoming* when it first opened, noting:

When it opened at the Aldwych in London on 3 June 1965, Harold Hobson was among a number of reviewers disturbed by its lack of moral focus and its distance from "normal" experience.

We have no idea what Mr. Pinter thinks of Ruth or Teddy or what value their existence has. They have no relation to life outside themselves. They live, their universe lives: but not the universe.

Several years later, Simon Trussler phrased his criticism of the play in similar, though more negative, terms:

The Homecoming is, in short, a modishly intellectual melodrama, its violence modulated by its vagueness, its emotional stereotyping disguised by carefully planted oddities of juxtaposition and expression. To suspend disbelief in this play is to call a temporary halt to one's humanity (pp. 61- 62).

Regal's comparison reflects how critics and audiences viewed the play in the 1960s, agreeing that 'both attack the disparity between structure and content and conclude that there is something "inhuman" about the play' (p. 62). He also points out that Hobson considers the play to be 'misleadingly clever'; however, Trussler criticises it for being technical and says: 'Pinter's purely technical expertise has taken over and made such theatrical interest as remains a matter of imposing a formula upon a form' (p. 62).

Moreover, Regal mentions Peter Hall, who directed some of Pinter's plays including *The Homecoming*:

Hall admits that it is "abrasive and uncomfortable," but sees no dichotomy of subject and form. He records that *The Homecoming* seemed "a complete play on first reading" and this sense of "completeness" is endorsed by the playwright in a rare comparative comment on his work (p. 62).

On another level, Bernard F. Dukore, in *Harold Pinter* (1982), talks about the first productions of *The Homecoming* and the staging, by comparing between the productions by John Bury, Eileen Diss and Richard Hornby. He says:

John Bury's set for Peter Hall's production was selectively realistic, not naturalistic [...] By contrast Eileen Diss's setting for Kevin Billington's production was naturalistic [...] In the University of Calgary production Richard Hornby suggestively visualized this by placing Ruth on a sofa and Lenny on a footstool facing her (pp. 82-83).

Moreover, Alan Bold includes Peter Hall's 'Directing Pinter' in his collection of essays *Harold Pinter: You Never Heard Such Silence* (1985). Hall describes the main problem in *The Homecoming* as being 'the biggest bastard in a house full of bastards is actually the man who at first sight appears to be the victim – that is, Teddy [...] It's very easy for an actor to fall into "martyred" role in that part, because Teddy says so little – just sits there while all the other characters are speculating about his wife's qualities in bed (pp. 19- 20). He also talks about his experience directing Pinter's plays:

You have to direct two plays each time you direct a Pinter play. Furthermore, I think the achievement of a Pinter production must be that the two plays meet. Because what stirs the audience is not the mask, not the control, but what is underneath it; that's what upsets them, that's what terrifies and moves them (p. 24).

Hall suggests that the audience needs to see vulnerable characters on stage who represent real people in real-life situations, because they can relate to the characters' vulnerability and try to resolve the issues presented on stage by the author.

In this part of the thesis, I take a Freudian psychoanalytical approach to analysing Pinter's *The Homecoming*. The specific approach involves the Oedipus complex and its significance in analysing literary works of art, especially Pinter's plays, which contain hidden layers. I believe that an oedipal overview to the play will give a new understanding of what is happening in this family's household. *The Homecoming*, since its first production, has employed shocking elements by touching upon the sensitive issues of dysfunctional families in addition to blunt discussions of sexuality. Critics and the way they respond to *The Homecoming* and its shock element makes others wonder whether they are attacking it because they see themselves in one, or more, of the characters and never want to admit it, or because they are actually appalled by the whole concept behind the family in the play. Plays cause 'suffering of every kind' especially 'mental suffering' to catch the audience's attention (p. 123). Freud suggests that when plays cause suffering, the audience can recover through 'the removal of the inhibition on the play of phantasy which had pampered [them] into deriving enjoyment even from [their] own suffering' (p. 123).

The Homecoming acts to trigger the subconscious thoughts that are repressed and the memories these people in the audience have forgotten about, including the 'suffering' that Freud talked about in 'Psychopathic Characters on the Stage'. The play also acts to trigger the audience to create their own interpretation of the characters and lets them think whether or not a certain character is a hero and whether or not they identify with a certain character (see the example on Ruth above). Pinter seems to aim at manifesting these triggers to evoke the audience's minds, especially the critics. However, this method might not always be in his favour, which shows in the aggressive criticism he receives from critics such as Bert O. States, Margaret Croyden, Trussler, Hall and others (whose opinions are mentioned above).

The Homecoming

At the beginning of the play, we see signs of a dysfunctional family in which a father and a son sit together and insult each other and other members of the family. Lenny and Max start talking and remembering a man, MacGregor, who was 'very fond' of Max's deceased mother, the woman who obviously had an effect on her husband and her sons ([1965] 1997, p. 17). Max starts bad-mouthing his late wife as soon as he starts talking about her, calling her a 'bitch' and describing her as a person who had a 'rotten stinking face' (p. 17). Lenny replies to his father's insults and calls him a 'stupid sod' and 'demented' (p. 17).

Clearly, a conversation packed with insults like this one cannot come out of a healthy household. As mentioned in the previous section, Max's children are raised in an unhealthy environment that leads them eventually to be so offensive and aggressive with each other – and with everyone who stands in their way. If the audience, when the play was first produced, were expecting to watch a family-friendly play, then their expectations were definitely not met. However, Pinter's loyal audience would have been satisfied with the play and how it develops in a similar way to his previous works *The Room*, *The Lover* and *The Birthday Party*. Pinter's plays are proven to be an acquired taste, depending on the individuals themselves and their own backgrounds. Evidence of this point is prevalent in earlier critics, who described Pinter's plays as 'half gibberish', 'crossword puzzle[s]' and 'obscure'.

Max continues talking insultingly about not only his late wife, but also about females in general, especially in relation to horses. He compares his wife to 'fillies', as they are both untrustworthy and can be treacherous to the person taking care of them:

Because the fillies are more highly strung than the colts, they're more unreliable, did you know that? No, what do you know? Nothing. But I was always able to tell a good filly by one particular trick. I'd look her in the eye. You see? I'd stand in front of her and look her straight in the eye, it was a kind of hypnotism, and by the look deep down in her eye I could tell whether she was a stayer or not. It was a gift. I had a gift (p. 18).

He sounds bitter and expresses a great deal of anger in his treatment of his sons, even using the word 'bitch' again to insult Lenny (p. 19). He does not just swear at his son, but he also holds his 'stick' and threatens him while the son begs him not to strike out:

Oh, Daddy, you're not going to use your stick on me, are you? Eh? Don't use your stick on me, Daddy. No, please. It wasn't my fault, it was one of the others. I haven't done anything wrong, Dad, honest. Don't clout me with that stick, Dad (p. 19).

Like most scenes written by Pinter, the 'stick' scene is prone to multiple interpretations. But because I am focusing on the oedipal and castration complexes in this thesis, I will adhere to the most relatable interpretation to the focus points of my thesis. I am interpreting the 'stick' in this scene as a representative of the father's authority. And I perceive it as a symbol which stands for a penis that the father possesses and his children envy. According to Lacan, the 'phallus' is a signifier of patriarchal power and privilege (1977). The stick is also representative of punishment that leads to castration, and this is the fear of every child who has erotic feelings for his mother. Freud, in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, explains that 'like Oedipus, we live in ignorance of the desires that offend morality, the desires that nature has forced upon us, and after their unveiling we may well prefer to avert our gaze from the scenes of our childhood' (p. 157). Freud states that nature encourages a person to have incestuous feelings towards his parents, but this nature should be ignored so that this person is not punished in the same way Oedipus was punished.

The Homecoming contains many sexually charged conversations between the characters, most of which degrade women and indicate a lack of penis along with lack of authority over the men exiting in their lives. Max's brother, Sam, emerges and the conversations are automatically directed towards sexual acts:

Max. It's funny you never got married, isn't it? A man with all your gifts.

[...]

Sam. You'd be surprised.

Max. What you been doing, banging away at your lady customer, have you?

Sam. Not me.

Max. In the back of the Snipe? Been having a few crafty reefs in a layby, have you?

Sam. Not me.

Max. On the back seat? What about the armrest, was it up or down?

[...]

Max. When you find the right girl, Sam, let you family know, don't forget, we'll give you a number one send-off, I promise you. You can bring her to live here, she can keep us all happy. We'd take it in turns to give her a walk in the park.

[...]

Sam. I haven't got a bride.

[...]

Never get a bride like you had, anyway. Nothing like your bride ... going about these days. Like Jessie.

Pause

After all, I escorted her once or twice, didn't I? Drove her round once or twice in my cab. She was a charming woman.

Pause

All the same, she was your wife. But still ... they were some of the most delightful evenings I've ever had. Used to drive her about. It was my pleasure (pp. 22- 24).

This conversation helps us understand why Max would call his wife a 'bitch' and have no remorse about doing so. The lack of respect he has for this woman, who was pleasantly driven about by Sam, is apparent, and his lack of trust in his own brother is stated clearly. Max, being the father with the patriarchal power and privilege of the 'phallus', emasculates Sam by patronising him for not having a wife. Max also treats him like a castrated woman being punished by her father for having an infatuation with her mother. Sam is also punished for his apparent infatuation with Jessie, with the punishment being not allowed to get married. Freud explains fathers' castration of children in 'The Uncanny', describing that 'a study of dreams, phantasies and myths has taught us that anxiety about one's eyes, the fear of going blind, is often enough a substitute for the dread of being castrated' (1990, p. 352).

Max acts violently towards his youngest son Joey as well. Joey acts like a child in the anal stage, i.e. is the second stage in Freud's theory of psychosexual development (age 18 months to 3 years), who wants to be independent and separated from his mother and yet still feels the urge to be by her side. Joey and Sam express hunger, and Max bursts with anger and tells them to find themselves a mother to care for them and fulfil their needs. Regardless of whether the hunger is for actual food or for motherly affection, Max makes it clear that he will never offer any kind of help in the kitchen, as these are female duties and he is not the mother. He needs them to be as independent as he is, without the need for a mother, a wife or

any kind of female presence in their lives. However, some contradictions regarding this issue keep emerging in the play through the other characters. Lenny, for example, talks about Max's 'special brand of cooking' and his 'special understanding of food' along with him 'tucking up his sons' (p. 25). These acts indicate motherly affection hidden by Max's violence and external bitter expressions.

Subconsciously, Max is unwilling to admit that he has any kind of feelings towards his sons, brother or dead wife except for his feelings of resentment, because, for him, this is the way a man should conduct himself. A man should box, as it is 'a gentleman's game', and know how to defend and how to attack – unlike Joey, who fails to show his violent, manly persona to his father (p. 25). Joey is portrayed as a young child who still needs his mother to attack others and to protect him, which is why Max finds him useless and not masculine enough to be independent.

Another contradiction in Max's personality is his refusal to leave his parents' house. He tells Sam to leave, though he does not think about leaving the house himself. He only remembers his childhood and how his father cared for him:

Max. Our father! I remember him. Don't worry. You kid yourself. He used to come over to me and look down at me. My old man did. He'd bend right over me, then he'd pick me up. I was only that big. Then he'd dandle me. Give me the bottle. Wipe me clean. Give me a smile. Pat me on the bum. Pass me around, pass me from hand to hand. Toss me up in the air. Catch me coming down. I remember my father (p. 27).

The dilemma of Pinter's ambiguity is apparent in Max's memories in the quote above. His memories appear to be perceived from a child's point of view. So, there are many interpretations to this scene. Max could have been either distorting the truth about how he remembers his father, or simply not remembering these memories the way they happened in reality. He could also be suppressing memories of abuse by creating a cliché of memories and a happy family. Another interpretation is that these memories were reality, and that Max's father actually cared for him and was his safe haven. A father should be a role model, a person to look up to and aspire to be like. Max, however, is swearing at everyone and acting violently towards his own sons and brother. Max grew up to be a bitter man, though he represents his memories of his father as a good man who left him with happy and warm memories of caring and nurturing.

Ruth and Jessie often have been the focus of comparison in this play, as critics draw attention to them and their influence on the men in the household. Gabbard suggests that 'In *The Homecoming* the parallel between Ruth and mother is clearly drawn and here wish fulfilment is most complete' (p. 142). In addition, Rowe explains that this family suffers from 'neurosis' and continues to say that 'Because of the veneration in which Max holds Jessie's memory, and in line with his explanation later in the play, any woman in the house must, *ipso facto*, be a whore; but for Max, as for Lenny, this is not degradation enough and she must also be dirty and diseased as well' (pp. 195- 196).

Teddy and Ruth are back from the United States to Teddy's family home. Everyone seems to be asleep and the place looks cosy, dark and warm, just like a mother's womb. This place represents their homecoming after all the years spent abroad, as it resembles going back to a foetal position inside the loving, protective womb of a mother who keeps nurturing her foetus until it is born and separated from her. Teddy comments that 'they haven't changed the lock' and the key he has still works, which indicates an expected return to the family home or the womb (p. 28). His father has not changed the locks throughout the years, and Teddy himself does not hesitate to try the keys he has in his possession, hoping that he will be granted entrance and eventually be welcomed back. He finds his empty room, which no one has used, as if they were expecting him to return.

Teddy describes his room to Ruth:

Teddy. What do you think of the room? Big, isn't it? It's a big house. I mean, it's a fine room, don't you think? Actually there was a wall, across there [...] with a door. We knocked it down [...] years ago [...] to make an open living area. The structure wasn't affected, you see. My mother was dead (p. 29).

The wall in that room is an obstacle that has to be removed by the time the mother dies. Knocking down the wall represents the metaphorical birth the whole family goes through when the mother dies. After her death, they are independent, cut from all the motherly support. The birth of a child is the first and most shocking experience a human being goes through, and so a child grows attached to his mother to compensate for losing her thereafter. The child's attachment to his mother is explained in Freud's 'Concerning a Particular Type of Object-choice in Men' (see section 7.2.b for further explanation on Freud's essay).

Teddy justifies his attachment to the place, claiming ‘I was born here, do you realise that?’ All he wants at this point is to return to the place he considers the most intimate in his life, the safe haven that is his room (p. 30). Teddy wants to share his room with his wife, asking ‘shall I show you the room?’ (p. 31). This question shows his eagerness to share the one place he considers the origin of everything and the place that revives all memories he had as a child especially memories of his mother.

Gabbard quotes Freud and comments on the incident of knocking down the wall after Jessie’s death, using the dream structure approach. She notes:

Freud’s comments on the dream symbolism of such renovations: (on the wall being removed):

We find an interesting link with the sexual researches of childhood when a dreamer dreams of two rooms that were originally one, or when he sees a familiar room divided into two in the dream or vice versa. In childhood the female genitals and the anus are regarded as a single area – the “bottom” (in accordance with the infantile “cloaca theory”); and it is not until later that the discovery is made that this region of the body comprises two separate cavities and orifices.

Changing two rooms into one seems then to indicate return to a body that must utilize the orifice for both birth and defecation – a male body. Max has taken Jessie’s place as mother of the household (pp. 191- 192).

Gabbard also comments on Teddy’s explanation to Ruth that ‘[his] mother was dead’ (p. 29), asking ‘What other reason could there be for connection this renovation with his mother’s death? After this renovation, these animals no longer live in the *bosom* of the family. The house reflects its absence of a nurturing mother.’ (p. 192). Moreover, she explains the final scene of the play as a wish fulfilment to have a mother, when ‘Max crawls around her [Ruth], returned to infancy. Lenny watches; a new satisfaction has been added to his share – the powerful father has been bested as well as the favored sibling. The tableau is the concretization of wish fulfilment – the wish to have a mother’ (p. 195).

In addition to Gabbard’s commentary on removing the wall, Regal also commented on it, relating the wall’s removal to Ted’s memory of his mother: ‘[The wall] specifically relates to Teddy’s memory of his mother, Jessie [...] What does matter is that she was once part of that family and that her presence was strong enough for the “structure” not to be affected even after her death’ (p. 64).

Regal also adds a comment by Peter Hall, the director of the play, who has an opinion on the significance of the wall that was removed and the significance of concealing its original location. He declares ‘when they talk about the wall being knocked down and the audience looks, then they should understand why the wall is like it is; but when the curtain goes up they shouldn’t look and say, “Ah, a wall has been knocked down and a beam has been put in”’ (p. 64).

Furthermore, the wall is significant to the family, because it represents merging two parts of the house together. This also indicates the merging together of a new family – one that includes Ruth instead of Jessie. In addition, the trace of that wall is a reminder of the memories they share with Jessie, the mother/prostitute, who is replaced by a father figure who is exactly like her. Therefore, Ruth’s existence allows the family to create new, and yet familiar, memories.

Teddy aims not to disturb anyone at the house and tells Ruth not to ‘make too much noise’, as he does not want to disturb the peace at home (p. 31). Is it the peace at home or at the womb that he does not dare disturb? His room is significant, since it is the place he was born, the place his mother fed and nurtured him, the place that provided warmth and love all his infant and childhood years. He will not let anyone disturb these memories that he has always cherished, whether it is consciously or unconsciously. He talks affectionately about his family, before Ruth meets them by saying that ‘they’re very warm people, really. Very warm. They’re my family. They’re not ogres’ (p. 31). The way he speaks prepares his wife to meet his family and not be afraid of the fact that they are all unfamiliar men to her. Teddy tries to familiarise Ruth with the fact that he has a ‘warm’, loving family, even though they turn out to be ‘warm’ but in a negative and offensive way, as they all try to sleep with Ruth or be her pimp. However, Ruth still does not warm to the idea of meeting them at night. She gasps for ‘a breath of air’ and wants to get out of the room. She is not comfortable in that position of being a mother and caring for others, and she wants to break free and have some fresh air away from all the motherly acts. Ruth wants to breathe like a child at the very first moment of birth. She leaves the room/ womb and breathes deeply, to feel alive and change the surroundings from the darkness and warmth of the womb to the liveliness and freshness of the outside:

Ruth. I just feel like some air.

Teddy. But I’m going to bed.

Ruth. That's all right.

Teddy. But what am I going to do?

Pause

The last thing I want is a breath of air. Why do you want a breath of air?

Ruth. I just do. (p. 31)

Ruth breaks out of the room, and yet she wants the key. She asks 'Can I have the key?' when she is about to go outside to take a breath (p. 32). She takes control of the room/womb by having control over the key – a mother's key. Does she really want to go out – be born out of the room – and never come back, or does she want to take control over this room and allow whoever she wants to be born/get out? Holding the key allows Ruth not only to control who gets out of the room, but also who gets in. She wants to be in control of the person who sleeps with her, given the fact that she is the only female there surrounded by five men. As a result, she acts both as a mother, by allowing people to leave the room/womb, and as a prostitute, by allowing the same people to enter the room/womb.

Pinter addresses the mother/prostitute theme in other plays like *The Birthday Party* and *A Night Out*, because this is a common theme running throughout his works. In *The Birthday Party*, for instance, we find Meg, who sometimes acts like a father figure to her husband and Stanley, the young, mysterious tenant; alternatively, she acts like a lover who expresses her affection and lust for Stanley, both physically and verbally. In *A Night Out*, Mrs. Stokes acts like both a mother and a lover to her son, Albert, who eventually tries to kill her and then goes out to seek solace at a prostitute's place. The prostitute tries to mother him and tell him what to do, but he is fed up with motherly acts and treats her violently, leaving her in a horrible situation before going back to his mother.

A few hours later, Ruth comes home and has her first encounter with Teddy's family members. She finds Lenny, who immediately starts talking to her as if he has known her for a long time. He suddenly asks 'Do you mind if I hold your hand? [...] Just a touch [...] Just a tickle' (p. 38). He tells her a story of how he was once offered 'a proposal' by a lady who 'was very insistent and started taking liberties with [him] down under this arch, liberties that by any criterion [he] couldn't be expected to tolerate' (pp.38-39). He continues that he killed the lady after rejecting her offer and did not bother to bury her body or even make sure that she had died before he left.

Ruth. How did you know she was diseased?

Lenny. How did I know?

Pause

I decided she was.

Silence (p. 39)

Apparently, Lenny thinks that he was subjected to abuse by a woman who offered him 'a proposal' and as a result, he killed her in real life, just like he had metaphorically killed his mother earlier for being a 'whore' (as his father describes her). He cannot kill his mother, so he kills another woman. He shows Ruth that she cannot be in charge of this family and the room they are in by holding the key and being the new mother.

Moreover, Lenny wants to convey the sense of responsibility he and his father share. Max has an obsession with cleaning and arranging things around the house, and he likes things to be in the correct place all the time. Lenny expresses this to Ruth and regains the authority over which she is trying to take control:

Lenny. [...] Excuse me, shall I take this ashtray out of your way?

Ruth. It's not in my way.

Lenny. It seems to be in the way of your glass. The glass was about to fall. Or the ashtray. I'm rather worried about the carpet. It's not me, it's my father. He's obsessed with order and clarity. He doesn't like mess. So, as I don't believe you're smoking at the moment, I'm sure you won't object if I move the ashtray.

He does so.

And now perhaps I'll relieve you of your glass.

Ruth. I haven't quite finished.

Lenny. You've consumed quite enough, in my opinion.

Ruth. No, I haven't.

Lenny. Quite sufficient, in my opinion.

Ruth. Not in mine, Leonard (p. 41).

Lenny assumes that Ruth will not smoke, that she has had enough to drink and that she has no opinion on what she can do at their house. He tries to be authoritative by taking control over

this mother figure. He is weak and indicates this by mentioning both his father and mother at the same time. Lenny's father is tough – he is the one who gives orders to his children – while the mother is a sensitive topic about which to talk. By categorising his parents in this way, Lenny appears to be a little child following his parents' way of life and not having an opinion of his own. However, he wants to appear opinionated in front of Ruth and strip her of her own opinion, exactly as his parents do to him. Mothers are usually the ones who care for, clean and create an organised house for their families, but in this case, the father holds that position. Max, being the father, takes control of the motherly acts and keeps everything in order. He presents himself as an independent man who is able to care for the children and the house all at once. He disregards the need for a woman around him and his children, because her presence would lure them away from the father's care.

Ruth is considered by Pinter as a 'free and independent mind' which makes her more of a subject not an object, and it also makes her appear as a person with free will who would never be forced into sexual acts or be sexually objectified by the men in her husband's family. In one of the scenes, Ruth takes charge and makes 'some kind of proposal' to Lenny by turning the conversation and creating sexual tension between herself and Lenny. She tries to regain control and be a mother/prostitute to him. However, all he can do is try to resist temptation, keep her grounded, remind her that she is married to his brother and pull away:

Ruth. If you take the glass ... I'll take you.

Pause

Lenny. How about me taking the glass without you taking me?

Ruth. Why don't I just take you?

Pause

Lenny. You're joking.

Pause

You're in love, anyway, with another man. You've had a secret liaison with another man. His family didn't even know. Then you come here without a word of warning and start to make trouble.

She Picks up the glass and lifts it towards him.

Ruth. Have a sip. Go on. Have a sip from my glass.

He is still.

Sit on my lap. Take a long cool sip.

She pats her lap. Pause.

She stands, moves to him with the glass.

Put your head back and open your mouth

Lenny. Take that glass away from me.

Ruth. Lie on the floor. Go on. I'll pour it down your throat.

Lenny. What are you doing, making me some kind of proposal?

She laughs shortly, drains the glass.

Ruth. Oh, I was thirsty (pp. 42- 43).

The scene above is only one piece of evidence demonstrating the awkward, sexually charged atmosphere Ruth creates with the men surrounding her. This particular scene appears close to the beginning of the play, when her husband's family are getting to know her, which makes the scene even more bizarre. However, as the play progresses, so do the sexual advances and 'proposals'. The family men find themselves, for some reason, comfortable enough around Ruth, asking her to be a prostitute and suggesting that they would be her pimps.

Lenny thinks that she is making 'a proposal', like the one made previously by the woman he killed (p. 42). If this 'proposal' is exactly the same, will he kill her, too? Starting with his mother, he seems to be insecure about his past experiences with women.

Lenny and Ruth argue loudly enough to wake Max up and expose his aggressive, offensive character. He offends Ruth without knowing who she is or why she is there. However, Lenny turns out to be more offensive than his own father, though his offensiveness is represented in his curiosity about his father's sex life, especially the night he himself was conceived. A child, according to Freud, develops curiosity about his parents and their sex life, and the eternal dilemma of 'where do babies come from?' In this scene, we see a grown-up man ask his father these questions about his conception and admit that 'it's a question long overdue' (p. 44).

Freud, in 'Concerning a Particular Type of Object-choice in Men', investigates the connection between the sexual information a child possesses and how he connects it with his parents' sexual experience, calling it 'sexual enlightenment' ([1910] 2006, p. 246). He says

that a child rejects this information, which indicates that his parents have sex and starts telling himself 'Maybe your parents and other people do things like that with each other, but with my parent it's quite impossible' (p. 246). However, when a child reaches a point where he is 'aware' those prostitutes exist, and that they are being paid to have sex with other 'grown-ups', he starts thinking that his parents have sex too, albeit in a different way to prostitutes, because of 'the obstacle of the barrier against incest' that Freud discusses in 'Contributions to the Psychology of Erotic Life' ([1912] 2006, p. 252). This 'obstacle' prevents a child from thinking about his parents having sex, for fear of committing incest that then leads to castration. However, how would a child start to have incestuous feelings towards his mother? Freud suggests that a child, after being exposed to all this, experiences the following:

The explanations have in fact awoken trace memories of the impressions and desires of his early childhood and have reactivated certain psychical impulses on the basis of those traces. The boy begins to desire his mother in a new way and begins to hate his father again, as a rival standing in the way of his desire; he comes, as we say, under the control of the Oedipus complex (p. 246).

Lenny starts talking about this topic in front of the newest member of the family – Ruth – who is trying to be substitute for their mother by taking charge of the room and the keys. It is possible that when Lenny talks to Ruth, he feels like a young child who is in need of a mother. Lenny talks as honestly as he can do, by telling Ruth his dark secret of killing a woman for proposing a sexual act and forcing him to do carry out the crime. He is a 3-year-old child during the anal stage, where he keeps talking and asking never-ending questions, most of which are either meaningless or project sexual curiosity. The need to ask this question at this point in his life is a projection of the situation in which he finds himself as well as a projection of the people sitting with him in this particular place. Lenny had explicit questions about the day he was conceived, as if it were the only thing that was on his mind for some time. He insists on asking his father about it in front of Ruth – the new mother/prostitute figure in their life:

Lenny. [...] That night [...] you know [...] the night you got me [...] that night with Mum, what was is like? Eh? When I was just a glint in your eye. What was it like? What was the background to it? [...]

Pause

I'm only asking this in a spirit of inquiry, you understand that, don't you? I'm curious. Furthermore, there's lots of people of my age share that curiosity, you know that, Dad? They often ruminate, sometimes singly, sometimes in groups, about the true facts of that particular night – the night they were made in the image of those two people at it (p. 44).

Max is not happy with his son questioning the night of conception and the truth behind his existence. He literally spits at his son and disrespects him for wondering about such a thing. The act of spitting is an immature thing to do, especially when it comes from a parent who is being portrayed in some scenes as someone who has been taking care of his children for a long time, including cooking and cleaning. Seemingly, Max is also turning into a child around Ruth. He longs to be taken care of like a helpless child. Here we see that Lenny takes Max's role in being the carer and the father: 'Now look what you've done. I'll have to Hoover that in the morning, you know?' (p. 45).

Moreover, Max expresses his hatred of the room in which they find themselves, reflecting his abhorrence of women and their role in controlling the household. Max states it clearly: 'I hate this room'. Teddy, on the other hand, loves the room and shows this by providing a detailed explanation of its history (p. 45). This opposition portrays two different sides to the significance of the same place, as one family member loves the room while the other hates it. Teddy talks about it with love and nostalgia, while Max creates a negative vibe whenever he mentions it; yet, he contradicts himself again and expresses his fondness for the kitchen, which represents mothers in particular because of their stereotypical role around the house of doing all the chores, including cooking, cleaning and taking care of the husband and children's needs. Max appears as a man who likes the 'cosy' kitchen and therefore likes to do womanly chores. The way he expresses this love-hate relationship with this house reveals a lot about his conflicted personality and confusing past with women. He was married to one, whom he still calls 'whore', even after her death, and his marriage is apparently a sensitive topic to discuss with his children and with strangers (p. 50).

However, his problems with his late wife could be the result of an unhealthy oedipal relationship between him and his own mother. Although he never mentions her, he acts towards women in his life the same way his father did with his mother. Max grew attached to the strength and control of his own father – and he wanted to be the same. He seems to be unaware of the fact that his father was, like him, a man who wants to have control over his household, and his wife in particular, by calling her names and making her his own prostitute.

Later, Max mentions to Sam the exact words their father said when he was dying: ‘Max, look after your brothers,’ and these words make him feel responsible for his brother Sam and his own children (p. 47). The significance of these words lies behind his attachment to his mother’s position in that family and the notion that, after his parents die, he is the mother. He used to see what she did and how she cared for him and his father, and he wants to replace her, just like his dying father asked him to do. Max also remembers how his mother was a caretaker and a prostitute at the same time. He expresses ‘resentment’ towards Sam but accuses Sam of being the one having these feelings (p. 47): ‘I want you to get rid of these feelings of resentment you’ve got towards me. I wish I could understand them. Honestly, have I ever given you cause? Never’ (p. 47).

Max has great respect for his father, talks about him with admiration and lives by his example. He praises his father while disrespecting his brother, who is not married and does not have children like him. He says:

I respected my father not only as a man but as a number one butcher! And to prove it I followed him into the shop. I learned to carve a carcass at his knee. I commemorated his name in blood. I gave birth to three grown men! All on my own bat. What have you done?

Pause

What have you done? You tit! (p. 48)

Max’s statement that he ‘gave birth to three grown men’ shows his pride in being a father and in possessing a penis that works. Metaphorically, he gave birth by contributing to the making of these children using his penis, the symbol of his masculinity and authority in the household.

He claims to have given life to his sons, and yet he despises the fact that his son Teddy has come back from the States and that he has brought home his wife, the ‘tart’ (49). He questions his son’s taste in women, asking ‘Who asked you to bring dirty tarts into this house? [...] We’ve had a smelly scrubber in my house all night. We’ve had a stinking pox-ridden slut in my house all night.’ (p.49). Max degrades Teddy and Ruth by expressing all the negative thoughts he has always had about women. His own wife was a mother and a ‘whore’, and so all women are whores, especially mothers. He finds out they are married and exclaims:

I've never had a whore under this roof before. Ever since your mother died. My word of honour. (*To Joey.*) Have you ever had a whore here? Has Lenny ever had a whore here? They come back from America, they bring the slop bucket with them. They bring the bedpan with them. (*To Teddy.*) Take that disease away from me. Get her away from me (p. 50).

Max's insults not only revolve around Ruth and her image as a 'whore', but also around Teddy and his Doctor of Philosophy degree. He questions the integrity of his son and humiliates him in front of his wife. This act shows his other side: the aggressive, non-maternal side that he hides behind every time he bursts into an offensive fit. On the other hand, everything changes, and he goes back to being maternal and loving when he finds out that Ruth is actually a mother who has given birth to three men, just like him. He suddenly turns into an affectionate man – or maybe sarcastic – when he discovers that Teddy is the father of all Ruth's children. He currently thinks highly of Teddy and considers him a virile man like himself: 'Teddy, why don't we have a nice cuddle and kiss, eh? [...] You want to kiss your old father? Want a cuddle with your old father?' (p. 51).

Is the new interaction between Max and Teddy in fact affection or sarcasm? They both react in the same way to the idea of being friendly with each other, which indicates an agreement to similar future collaborations.

Max. You still love your old Dad, eh?

They face each other.

Teddy. Come on, Dad. I'm ready for the cuddle.

Max begins to chuckle, gurgling.

He turns to the family and addresses them.

Max. He still loves his father. (p. 52)

Act two opens with Max, Teddy, Lenny and Sam lighting their cigars and sharing this manly ritual of smoking while Joey and Ruth take the role of the woman or mother who makes coffee, holds the tray and serves it. '*Ruth hands coffee to all men,*' including Teddy, who sits with his father and brothers whilst watching his wife serve them all (p. 53). Max starts the conversation with Ruth by talking about the lunch they had, which, apparently, he cooked himself, putting his 'heart and soul' into it (p. 53). Furthermore, later on, he asks if she can cook. This scene shows the change in the role of a mother among the family. Sometimes Max

acts like a caring mother and sometimes the others take that role. His asking Ruth about her ability to cook indicates his yearning to draw comparisons between her and his late wife. He keeps asking Teddy about her domestic roles as well, as if he wants to make sure she satisfies his son by doing household chores along with her wifely duties. He talks about his late Jessie and how she would have been proud of her ‘three fine, grown-up lads’ and their off-spring (p. 53). He turns to Ruth and tells her what Jessie taught their children and how they developed to be the way they are now:

Mind you, she taught them all the morality they know. I’m telling you. Every single bit of the moral code they live by – was taught to them by their mother. Furthermore, she had a heart to go with it. What a heart. Eh, Sam? Listen, what’s the use of beating around the bush? That woman was the backbone to this family (p. 54).

What morals is he talking about? The morals of being suppressive to wives or the morals of being unfaithful and pimping wives out to other people? He starts praising himself, remembering the past and how he used to help Jessie with the boys. This means that he is showing his maternal side in front of Ruth, which he does in order to draw her attention to a mutual interest between them, namely the raising of children, or to try to make her feel homesick and go back to her own brood, in order to care for them instead of disturbing his peace.

He explains: ‘I gave Lenny a bath, then Teddy a bath, then Joey a bath. What fun we used to have in the bath, eh, boys? Then I came downstairs and I made Jessie put her feet up on a pouffe [...]’ (p. 54). Their father gives them baths and unintentionally causes the arousal of their sexual feelings by rubbing their genitals and cleaning them. Whether he intends on doing this or not, these feelings will arise in children and will be the beginning of their sexual self-awareness.

All of these emotions lead to Freud’s essay, ‘The Sources of Infantile Sexuality’, in which he explains ‘the origins of the sexual instinct’:

Sexual excitation arises (a) as a reproduction of the satisfaction experienced in connection with other organic processes, (b) through appropriate peripheral stimulation of erotogenic zones and (c) as an expression of certain “instincts” (such as the scopophilic instinct and the instinct of cruelty) of that the origin is not yet completely intelligible ([1910] 2011, p. 78).

Later on, Max goes back to showing his aggressive side, which he has tried to hide before, but he furiously defends his role as a father while his children were growing up. He worked as a butcher and was a mother, a father, a brother and a provider to his family. Furthermore, when eventually he got married, he had the exact same role with his wife and sons. The first reaction Max displays on this topic is to destroy the 'lousy cigar' he is smoking. Destroying the cigar symbolises destroying the phallic figure which controlled his life in the past. He therefore empowers himself by destroying the cigar and assures himself that he is the person who possesses this power (p. 55). Based on what Max says, he considers himself the most important person to both his families – the one that raised him and the one he raised. He proceeds with a long speech describing how he has always been both the father and the mother figures and describing the difficulties he has faced:

(To Ruth.) I worked as a butcher all my life, using the chopper and the slab, the slab, you know what I mean, the chopper and the slab! To keep my family in luxury. Two families! My mother was bedridden, my brothers were all invalids. I had to earn the money for the leading psychiatrists. I had to read books! I had to study the disease, so that I could cope with an emergency at every stage. A crippled family, there bastard sons, a slutbitch of a wife –don't talk to me about the pain of childbirth – I suffered the pain, I've still got the pangs – when I give a little cough my back collapses – and there I've got a lazy idle bugger of a brother won't even get to work on time (p. 55).

His job as butcher is, by itself, an indication of his personality. By butchering animals, he fulfils the need to kill and be violent, because he cannot physically kill his father, his mother, his brother, his wife or his sons. Apparently, he considers himself the victim in all aspects of his life and that everything is oppressing him except for his job. He needs to be in control of everything, and he obsesses about the laziness and carelessness of his family members. Furthermore, to add insult to injury, he has always considered his wife to be a prostitute and never fails to call her a 'whore' or a 'slutbitch' every time he mentions her. He even includes his sons in this fit he throws every now, and then calls them 'bastards' (p. 55).

In addition, Max compares childbirth to the physical and mental pain he had to endure growing up, although it is arguable that giving birth is the worst of all pains a human being can go through. He makes this comparison unconsciously out of his hatred for women and especially for his 'bedridden' mother and his 'slutbitch' wife. He never imagines how they became mothers in the first place, as he keeps saying that he himself gave birth to his three

sons. He sometimes portrays himself as a poor old man who needs caring for, but other times he appears as a strong man whose ego reflects the pride he takes in himself, his past and his job. Max also takes pride in ‘giving birth’ to and raising three sons. Although he considers them ‘bastard’ sons, and he never stops calling them his sons, as if deep in his subconscious he knows that they are his own and that he is man enough to father these children and provide for them, no matter how he might express his hatred for their mother.

Once again, Max changes his tone and becomes friendly with Ruth, to convince her that he is fond of her and the idea of his son’s marriage: ‘I’ve been begging my two youngsters for years to find a nice feminine girl with proper credentials – it makes life worth living’ (p. 57). However, what credentials are considered proper by Max? None of his family members could possibly know what he thinks about when he speaks, because of the many contradictions to his character. Firstly, he condemns his late wife for being a ‘slutbitch’, and yet essentially, he wants a wife for his sons who is like the only wife he knew and who made his life ‘worth living’. Being a ‘feminine girl’ is one of the credentials Max is looking for in his daughter-in-law. He makes a long, abusive speech on how being a woman and giving birth is easier than having a job. According to him, a ‘feminine’ wife has better credentials, yet her husband will always undermine her nature as a female who gives birth and raises a child no matter how she looks like.

The problem is that the family members are liars, and none of them can figure out the truth. Max’s personality is contradictory: one minute he hates, insults and undermines people, while the next minute he expresses his fondness and acceptance. In addition, Ruth is a character who is eager to please Max and his sons by complimenting them and showing them how thrilled she and Teddy are to be there as a part of the family: ‘I’m sure Teddy’s very happy [...] to know that you’re pleased with me. *Pause.* I think he wondered whether you would be pleased with me’ (p. 57). In Ruth’s statement, Teddy appears like a young child who needs his father’s approval in choosing his own soulmate. This need comes from his subconscious fear of castration, which will be performed by his father if he does something unworthy. An example of fear of castration is Freud’s analysis of the case of a little boy named ‘Hans’, in *The Interpretation of Dreams* which is explained further in section (7.2.c) The Castration Complex:

Teddy is perceived as a child whose ability to get Ruth pregnant three times fascinates his father and makes him proud to have given birth to a man. Moreover, the fact that Max

considers Ruth and Jessie to be the same kind of ‘tarts’ gives the act of impregnating Ruth another oedipal dimension (p. 49). Teddy is drawn to a woman who resembles his mother in her acts and in the fact that his own father and brother are attracted to her in the same way. It means that she reminds them of someone. This person is their mother.

The Homecoming revives the memory of Jessie through Ruth, though Max keeps contradicting himself and talks about forgetting the past, albeit only when it comes to Ruth’s past. He asks ‘Who cares? Listen, live in the present, what are you worrying about? I mean, don’t forget the earth’s about five thousand million years old, at least. Who can afford to live in the past?’ (p. 58). Previously, he had talked in detail about his own past life and how he used to work and care for his families. Additionally, Teddy is following in his father’s steps and convinces himself and his family that ‘she’s a wonderful life and mother, she’s a very popular woman’ as an unconscious comparison to Jessie (p. 58). This indicates that Teddy, like his father, still remembers the memories of his mother being ‘popular’ with other people, regardless of whether or not this popularity came from the fact that Max considers her a whore or from the fact that Teddy remembers her as being a great person.

Max fills his conversation with Ruth with sexual connotations, and everything he says turns out to be a description of how he wants to enjoy her company sexually and how he would be successful from a sexual performance point of view. He describes his house as ‘a very stimulating environment’ and ‘[his] department [as] highly successful’, giving away the fact that he and his wife have three sons (p. 58). He directs the sexually charged conversation towards Joey and Ruth and tries to set them up by speaking highly of Joey and his profession as a boxer. Max also praises Joey, because ‘he speaks so easily to his sister-in-law’, but he switches his tone for the purposes of drawing Ruth’s attention to himself, by praising her for being ‘an intelligent and sympathetic woman’ (p. 59). Max flirts in the presence of Ruth’s husband, which causes Teddy to be emasculated by the actions of his father. At one point, Teddy loses his masculinity, symbolised by the cigar he is smoking. His cigar – the phallic symbol – has ‘gone out’ (p. 59). However, he acts as if he is not aware of the cigar’s going out at first, and after Lenny draws his attention to it, he refuses to light it again. Despite the fact that Ruth is his wife, and no one should be allowed to flirt with her or have sexual conversations with her, Teddy allows his father to do so and this shows his fear of castration. His cigar becomes smaller and smaller until it is completely destroyed, similar to his phallus, which is damaged by the powerful presence of Max – the father who could punish his son by castrating him and leaving him unfit to be a man.

A cigar also symbolises the mother's nipple, which a child sucks as a source of food and nourishment. However, adults need nourishment, too, so they find anything they can suck on to replace this nipple, with the cigarette being the closest alternative. Freud explains how cigars symbolise both a father's penis and a mother's breasts at the same time:

Cigarettes and cigars can symbolise the penis. They are cylindrical and tubular. They have a hot, red end. They emit smoke that is fragrant (= flatus = semen). ...

I refer to the reason, or at least one of the reasons, why people start smoking (and, of course, why they go on), that is the phallic significance of the cigarette, cigar and pipe. It is thus a substitute for the penis (mother's breast) of that they have been deprived (castrated, weaned) (1922, pp. 477 – 480).

The previous quote appears in *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis* (1922), which also published Eric Hiller's article 'Communications: Some Remarks on Tobacco'. Hiller discusses the symbolism of cigarettes, cigars and pipes and supports his argument through direct quotes from Freud. In addition, the article also clarifies that the phallic symbolism of smoking was established by the 1920s. As a result of Freud's statement, the cigar is interpreted as both a phallic object, 'penis', and a yonic object, 'mother's breast' (p. 480).

Pinter uses the cigar scene another time in *The Birthday Party* and shows how a man and a woman react to a cigarette (see *The Birthday Party* section for further explanation).

Apparently, castrating Teddy is not enough to satisfy Max's need to be in charge of the family, and the women in particular, and Lenny also has to take part in the castration process. Being Teddy's uncle, Lenny might have the same effect on him as Max possesses. He starts asking him about his 'Doctorship of Philosophy' and starts to question his integrity as a person holding a PhD. This is another way to castrate a person, by invading his thoughts and questioning his abilities. Teddy, after all, is subjected to two types of symbolic castration in this short period: firstly, by being castrated physically by his father, and, secondly, by being mentally castrated by his uncle. The deeds of both old men indicate their yearning to show their power over the younger men in the family, starting with the one who presents the greatest threat – Teddy. For both of them, Teddy is a married man who has had three children and has a PhD, and so he is a threat by possessing a penis and a PhD that represent authority

and power. As a result, Max and Lenny feel that they have to take both away from him by castrating him.

After Teddy's symbolic castration, Ruth directs everyone's attention to herself and revives all the oedipal passions they hold for her:

Ruth. [...] Look at me. I ... move my leg. That's all it is. But I wear ... underwear ... that moves with me ... it ... captures your attention. Perhaps you misinterpret. The action is simple. It's a leg ... moving. My lips move. Why don't you restrict ... your observation to that? Perhaps the fact that they move is more significant ... than the words that come through them. You must bear that ... possibility ... in mind. (p. 61)

Ruth's lips move, and she expresses her views on how she can seduce them, without doing anything. Her views revolve around men's mentality and how, if a man sees a woman speak or move, he will only be thinking about what is underneath her clothes. She also suggests that the slightest move a woman makes can be highly seductive to men, even if it is only her lips moving without her speaking. Furthermore, no matter what she says, it is her moving parts that seduce them and the thought that she is wearing underwear underneath her clothes. According to Freud, these feelings men hold are an indication of their previous 'attachment to [their] mothers' (p. 314). Infants follow their mothers everywhere they go and imitate their moves, without understanding the words they utter. In addition, infants are also interested in what lies beneath their mothers' clothes, especially her breasts that provide food. A man, therefore, grows attached to a woman's body, as it reminds him of his mother's own affectionate moves, gestures and touches.

Teddy, as previously mentioned, is emasculated by Max and Sam, who keep flirting with his wife. He feels this attachment to Ruth and the connection to their house in the United States, because he feels the need to be a man again and leave the country with his wife, to keep her for himself only. He does not want to share her with his family, who are already acting like children around her and getting attached to her. He begins to convince her to go back to the United States with him, first by making her feel guilty for leaving their own children alone, and then by commenting about the family house they are visiting in London.

Teddy. [...] Think of it. Morning over there. Sun. We'll go anyway, mmnn? It's so clean there.

Ruth. Clean.

Teddy. Yes.

Ruth. Is it dirty here?

Teddy. No, of course not. But it's cleaner there.

Pause

Look, I just brought you back to meet the family, didn't I? You've met them, we can go. The fall semester will be starting soon.

Ruth. You find it dirty here?

Teddy. I didn't say I found it dirty here.

Pause

I didn't say that.

Pause

Look. I'll go and pack. You rest for a while. Will you? They won't be back for at least an hour. You can sleep. Rest. Please.

She looks at him.

You can help me with my lectures when we get back. I'd love that. I'd be so grateful for it, really. We can bathe till October. You know that. Here, there's nowhere to bathe, except the swimming bath down the road. You know what it's like? It's like a urinal. A filthy urinal! (pp. 62- 63)

Teddy's jealousy and possessiveness take over all the emotions he has for his father and brothers. He is pushing Ruth to go back with him to the United States, but she apparently needs him to convince her more and provide a good reason why they should leave his family house and go back. He begins by touching upon the motherly emotions she is supposed to have towards her sons, and yet she is not convinced to leave. He continues with the convincing and compares the two places, hoping that she will understand how jealous he is and how he loathes sharing her with all the men in his family. Teddy also tries to show his protective side by taking her away from this 'dirty' environment that is filled with predators (p. 63). He feels protective because, according to Freud, a man protects his wife like his mother protected him when he was a child ([1910] 2006, p. 244). A child chooses to perform the act of protection also to fulfil his ego and to satisfy his nature as a male who always has the need to be physically and mentally stronger than the females in his life.

As previously mentioned in the thesis, Freud states in his essay 'Concerning a Particular Type of Object-choice in Men' that one of the 'conditions of love' is that a man tends to

‘rescue’ the person he loves ([1910] 2006, p. 244). A man protects his wife because of the ‘parent complex’, and there is a significant difference between the need to save the father and the need to save the mother. Freud states:

When the child hears that he *owes* his life to his parents, that his mother “*gave him life*” affectionate impulses unite with impulses struggling towards adult manhood, towards independence; they yield the desire to return this gift to the parents, to give them something of equal value. It is as though the boy wished to say in defiance: I need my nothing from my father, I want to give him back everything I have cost him [...] The mother has given life to the child and that unique gift cannot easily be replaced with something of equal value. With one of those changes of meaning facilitated in the unconscious – and that we might, for example, equate with the flowing of one concept into another in the consciousness – the rescue of the mother assumes the meaning: give or make her a child, of course a child as one is oneself [...] One’s mother has given one a life, one’s own and in return one is giving her another life, that of a child, highly similar to one’s own self. The son proves his gratitude by wishing to have a son with his mother, who is equal to himself; in the rescue fantasy, that is to say, he identifies completely with his father (pp. 247- 248).

Freud, in the quote above, describes how Teddy feels about Ruth and how he feels the need to ‘rescue’ her from prostitution. For Teddy, Ruth has been a mother and a wife, but for the men in his family, she is an image of their dead mother and a potential source of income through a future prostitution career. Teddy represents a son who ‘proves his gratitude by wishing to have a son with his mother’, or with the woman who symbolises his mother – his wife (p. 248). Ruth and Teddy say they already have three sons, which leads Teddy to be more interested in her safety and in rescuing her from his family’s plan to solicit her.

Ruth, however, is not aware of Teddy’s need to ‘rescue’ her, and she is not convinced about leaving London. She starts chatting to Lenny while her husband is packing his luggage. Their conversation starts by discussing clothes in relation to whether Lenny likes them or not. Throughout the bizarre conversation, Ruth tries to keep her opinions about everything to herself while she lets Lenny express and explain his likings in detail. She aims at being mysterious and avoids being in the spotlight to keep the men’s imagination alive. In addition, she might think that her being mysterious will draw more attention to her from people who will try to unfold her thoughts and discover what she is hiding. With Lenny, she acts as a mother caring for her child by asking him about his preferences. She boosts his ego and

suggests to him that a woman who resembles his late mother in her personality will be interested in him. Ruth has a tendency to show her caring nature, and attention is drawn to her because she is considered a whore by Teddy's family from the moment they meet her. In addition, she is always compared to another whore, Jessie, by Max and Sam. However, the only things she shares about her with her husband's family are those that demonstrate her love for her previous life before she got married, and other things that confirm the assumption that she is a prostitute.

Ruth. [...] I was a model before I went away.

Lenny. Hats? [...]

Ruth. No ...I was a model for the body. A photographic model for the body.

Lenny. Indoor work?

Ruth. That was before I had ... all my children.

Pause.

No, not always indoors. (p. 65)

Ruth noticeably pauses and hesitates before saying 'all my children'. These stops and pauses indicate either hesitation in telling the truth or difficulties in searching for a lie to tell. Generally, in Pinter's plays, the audience does not know the background of the characters or if these characters are telling the truth or lying to each other. That is the reason behind having different interpretations for characters like Ruth, who has a hazy background and unknown past, for both the audience and the other characters on stage. She tries to remember a working day back when she presumably was a model:

Once or twice we went to a place in the country, by train. Oh, six or seven times. We used to pass a ... a large white water tower. This place ... this house ... was very big ... the trees ... there was a lake, you see ... we used to change and walk down towards the lake ... we went down a path. Oh, just ... wait ... yes ... when we changed in the house we had a drink. There was a cold buffet.

Pause.

Sometimes we stayed in the house but ... most often ... we walked down to the lake ... and did our modelling there (p. 65).

Ruth's story could, in fact, be about modelling and be a reflection of something else that she wants to hide, namely her career as a prostitute. The whole scene she describes can be interpreted sexually. She is somehow describing sexual encounters with her previous partners. She recalls how many times she had sex with her partners, noting 'once or twice' and 'six or seven times' (p. 65). She adds that every time she has sex, she goes through 'a place', passing by 'a large white water tower', i.e. a phallic symbol. Throughout this speech, Ruth indicates that intercourse is boring and unexciting, because she and her partners do the exact same things every time. She indicates that they visit the same 'place', although this 'place' is 'very big' and there are 'trees'. All of these are phallic symbols. She sugar-coats her sexual experiences to impart a normal story to Lenny. In so doing, she acts like a mother who needs to protect her children from sexual experiences until they are old enough to handle the truth. As a mother, she does not intend to abuse her children sexually but treats them with affection and not sexual desire. This is why a child feels left out of the sexual tension between his mother and father and what leads to Freud's idea of the third injured party in 'Concerning a Particular Type of Object-choice in Men' ([1910] 2006).

Freud's essay mainly discusses four 'conditions of love', which will be explained in this section in section (9.3) *The Birthday Party* (p. 242). The first condition is the existence of 'a damaged third' that can be jealous of the relationship between two people and is never attracted to single women – all he wants is to be with a woman who is in a relationship with another man. The second condition of love is 'love of a whore', in that a man loves to chase a woman who has a bad sexual reputation, as she is the one that will perform the acts that satisfy man. The third condition of love is 'love objects of the highest value', where a man loves and appreciates women who behave like prostitutes and treats them as if they were the most valuable people. Finally, the fourth condition of love is that of being attracted to a woman who is in need of being 'rescued' by a particular man, who will do everything he can to keep her safe.

These four conditions form the essence of a child's love for his mother and, later on, his mature love for women. As Freud said in his paper, 'the loved one is the only one, she is irreplaceable. For, no one has more than one mother, and the relationship with the mother is based on an unrepeatable event that is beyond any doubt' (p. 245). The bond between a mother and her child, therefore, does not break after the umbilical cord is cut, for a man looks forward to living his whole life with a woman resembling his mother, or at least one as nurturing and caring as her. This whole concept is widely represented in the literature. As

mentioned earlier, Oedipus married his biological mother and had children with her. This was an action that required the punishment of blinding and preventing himself from seeing what he had committed (see section 7.2.b). Whether he was terrified of the past or afraid of the future, or even his biological father's spirit coming back to haunt him, as usually happens in myths, Oedipus relates blinding himself to self-punishment and performs it on himself in order to repent his sins. On the other hand, in modern literature like *The Homecoming*, actions like that might be celebrated, not punished. For instance, Ruth is welcomed into Max's household and everyone wants to please her and attract her in many ways, in order to get her to stay with them and celebrate her existence. Furthermore, she is the new replacement for their dead mother, and having sexual relations with her would be similar to incest, which would be punished in old literature like *Oedipus Rex*.

Her speech also tells the story of how once (or more times) she and her partner might plan to have sex and go down the same 'path', but then they have 'a drink' instead and are served 'a cold buffet'. The sexual encounter does not happen, and she is left wanting more than she gets as a result of her partner being 'cold' and unable to perform sexually (p. 65). These men's 'cold' behaviour goes back to their relationships with their own mothers, and they probably see Ruth as a mother figure – sometimes they fulfil their oedipal desires and sleep with her, and sometimes they cannot perform sexually in her presence and leave her instead with her 'cold buffet' (p. 65).

Consequently, talking about Ruth's previous sexual experiences with Lenny makes him more courageous in asking her to dance with him, before she is supposed to go home with Teddy:

Lenny bends to her.

Madam?

Ruth stands. They dance, slowly.

Teddy stands, with Ruth's coat.

Max and Joey come in the front door and into the room.

They stand.

Lenny kisses Ruth. They stand, kissing (p. 66).

Lenny wants to be with Ruth just once, before she leaves and never comes back; he wants a portion of his brother's possessions. In addition, she has a role in encouraging him to do so,

as she expresses her sexual past and desires, thinking that he would not understand the hidden meaning behind her words. In his eyes, she is easy to seduce because she has experienced all kinds of sexual partners and would not mind one more added to her previous conquests. She does not turn him down, even in the presence of her husband, who previously revealed his jealousy, his attachment and his unwillingness to share her with his family members. However, Teddy observes her dance with Lenny and the reaction of both Joey and Max to the situation:

Joey. Christ, she's wide open.

Pause.

She's a tart.

Pause.

Old Lenny's got a tart in here.

Joey goes to them. He takes Ruth's arm. He smiles at Lenny. He sits with Ruth on the sofa, embraces and kisses her.

He looks up at Lenny.

Just up my street.

He leans her back until she lies beneath him. He kisses her.

He looks up at Teddy and Max.

It's better than a rub down, this.

Lenny sits on the arm of the sofa. He caresses Ruth's hair as Joey embraces her (p. 67).

The situation is getting out of control. Both Lenny and Joey want a share in Ruth. They realise that they might lose her forever, and with her gone, they will miss a mother figure seeking the love of a family and the company of a lover at the same time. They want to spend the last moment with her while her husband allows them to do so and seems to be enjoying watching his wife being caressed and kissed by his brothers. This scene brings back memories of his family, when his brothers were children and they used to be attached to their mother and would kiss her and express their emotions to her physically.

Max also wants a share in Ruth, but he might be more reserved in suggesting any kind of interaction between the two of them. He talks to Teddy instead of Ruth and blames him for

not telling them about his being married. He also takes his time to talk to Teddy about his future visits to the family house. Max indicates that Teddy should leave Ruth behind, so that Max and his other sons can start their prostitution business:

Max. [...] Well, when you coming over again, eh? Look, next time you come over, don't forget to let us know beforehand whether you're married or not. I'll always be glad to meet the wife. Honest. I'm telling you.

Joey lies heavily on Ruth.

They are almost still.

Lenny caresses her hair.

Listen, you think I don't know why you didn't tell me you were married? I know why. You were ashamed. You thought I'd be annoyed because you married a woman beneath you. You should have known me better. I'm broadminded. I'm a broadminded man.

He peers to see Ruth's face under Joey, turns back to Teddy.

Mind you, she's a lovely girl. A beautiful woman. Furthermore, a mother too. A mother of three. You've made a happy woman out of her. It's something to be proud of. I mean, we're talking about a woman of quality. We're talking about a woman of feeling (pp. 67- 68).

Later on, Ruth acts exactly like the previous sexual partners she talked about with Lenny – the ones serving her 'a drink' and 'a cold buffet' (p. 65). She '*suddenly pushes Joey away*' serving him 'a cold buffet' and then asks Lenny for 'a drink'. This makes the situation more familiar for her (p.68). She has probably realised that they consider her a prostitute rather than a mother. She is no longer wanted by them for motherly affection but, rather, for their sexual pleasure, and they will share her with their father as well.

Ruth. I'd like something to eat. (*To Lenny.*) I'd like a drink. Did you get any drink?

Lenny. We've got drink (p. 68).

As the day progresses, Sam appears and talks to Teddy about the past and how he used to be his 'mother's favourite' and that he had always been 'the main object of her love' (p.71). Sam's statement comes at a time when Teddy is preparing to leave the country. He reminds him of his mother and her attachment to her 'favourite' son, although Teddy does not need to

be reminded of this, given the fact that he is on the verge of losing his wife, the other woman in his life, to his father and brothers – just as he lost his mother before.

Meanwhile, Ruth is in a room upstairs with Joey, and everyone is waiting for him in excitement to tell them how good the sex is with Ruth, the professional woman. They think that they are having sex, due to the flirting and kissing that was taking place a while ago. He tries to lie and say it was ‘not bad’, thereby indicating that his sexual performance was satisfying for both him and her (p. 73). He also tries to conceal the fact that they did not have sex at all, in order to show how accomplished he is for sleeping with someone who is considered a mother figure, thereby fulfilling his oedipal desires. Under pressure from his brother Lenny, who is the other man who wants to sleep with this mother figure to fulfil his own desires, Joey finally admits what really happened.

Joey. I didn’t get all the way.

Lenny. You didn’t go all the way?

Pause.

(With emphasis.) You didn’t get all the way?

But you’ve had her up there for two hours.

Joey. Well?

Lenny. You didn’t get all the way and you’ve had her up there for two hours!

Joey. What about it?

Lenny moves closer to him.

Lenny. What are you telling me?

Joey. What do you mean?

Lenny. Are you telling me she’s a tease?

Pause.

She’s a tease!

Pause. (p. 74)

Apparently, Ruth does not feel the need to go ‘all the way’ with Joey and gives him nothing to talk about (p. 74). Her actions with Joey make everyone in the family wonder if she does the same thing with Teddy. They wonder if she is an emotionally drained person who gives

all of herself to other people while being a prostitute while leaving her husband untouched and serving him a 'cold buffet' (p. 65). Teddy is also under scrutiny by his brothers and father, and Lenny starts with the questioning

Lenny. [...] What do you think of that, Ted? Your wife turns out to be a tease. He's had her up there for two hours and he didn't go the whole hog.

Joey. I didn't say she was a tease.

Lenny. Are you joking? It sounds like a tease to me, don't it to you, Ted?

Teddy. Perhaps he hasn't got the right touch.

Lenny. Joey? Not the right touch? Don't be ridiculous. He's had more dolly than you've had cream cakes. He's irresistible. He's one of the few and far between [...] (p. 75).

Teddy does not want to share his sexual encounters with the family and blames Joey for not having 'the right touch' to seduce Ruth to go all the way (p. 75). He indicates that his brother has the problem, not Ruth. By blaming Ruth for this particular unsuccessful attempt, he would be shedding light on his own sexual life with her, and this would make them wonder how he deals with such a cold woman and how he fulfils his desires, particularly his desire for Ruth, who is portrayed as the image of his mother.

Joey comments on his failure with Ruth and justifies the situation by saying 'I've been the whole hog plenty of times. Sometimes ... you can be happy ... and not go the whole hog. Now and again ... you can be happy ... without going any hog' (p. 76). He claims to have been in this situation before and that he does not mind it. However, Ruth is the woman to be desired in this family, and they all try to either have sex with her or facilitate the procedure for the others to do so. The only one who seems to understand that Ruth might have been doing the same to Teddy is Max. Max is a man who has had a similar relation with Jessie, his dead 'slutbitch' of a wife, and he knows how a woman like Ruth, who is filling Jessie's place, would react to a man's desires (p. 55):

Max. Where is the whore? Still in bed? She'll make us all animals.

Lenny. The girl's a tease.

Max. What?

Lenny. She's had Joey on a string.

Max. What do you mean?

Teddy. He had her up there for two hours and he didn't go the whole hog.

Pause.

Max. My Joey? She did this to my boy?

Pause.

To my youngest son? Tch, tch, tch, tch. How you feeling, son? Are you all right?

Joey. Sure I'm all right.

Max (*To Teddy*). Does she do that to you, too?

Teddy. No.

Lenny. He gets the gravy.

Max. You think so?

Joey. No he don't.

Pause.

Sam. He's her lawful husband. She's his lawful wife.

Joey. No he don't! He don't get no gravy! I'm telling you. I'm telling all of you. I'll kill the next man who says he gets the gravy (pp. 76- 77).

Max's family wants Ruth to be a part of the family, at any expense. She is welcome to stay with them and to cover all the motherly duties in addition to her career in prostitution. By soliciting Ruth, Teddy's family treats her like a real prostitute and begin to ignore the mother-son emotions that they have for her. Everyone in this family has an opinion concerning Ruth and they share these with each other so that they can decide on her future with them, without listening to what she might say.

Max. Well, how much is she worth? What are we talking about, three figures? [...] We'll pass the hat round. We'll make a donation. We're all grown-up people, we've got a sense of responsibility. We'll all put a little in the hat. It's democratic (p.78).

[...]

Lenny. She'll bring in a good sum for four hours a night.

Max. Well, you should know. After all, it's true, the last thing we want to do is wear the girl out. She's going to have her obligations this end as well.

Joey. [...] I don't want to share her (p. 80).

Although Ruth does not need convincing to stay and take care of their needs, Max insists on justifying the need they have for her. He is sarcastic when he admits how they all are attached to her and how she resembles Jessie in being a mother and a prostitute, 'because their mother's image was so dear any other woman would have... tarnished it. [...] you're not only lovely and beautiful, but you're kin. You're kith. You belong here' (p. 83). His tone changes when he speaks to Ruth and asks her to do the things Jessie used to do. He compliments and demeans her at the same time while confirming the contradiction that is shown from the first scene of the play. Max's personality changes throughout the play, shifting from a tough father to a nice man and then shifting again. The shifting in Max's personality suggests that he is a contradictory man. The other contradiction that shows here is Ruth's, as she wants to be both a mother and a prostitute, and she is compromising her husband and three children for this 'workable arrangement' (p. 85). However, she will not be missing out on any motherly affection if she stays and cares for her new children at Max's house.

Max. And you'd have the whole of your daytime free, of course. You could do a bit of cooking here if you wanted to.

Lenny. Make the bed.

Max. Scrub the place out a bit.

Teddy. Keep everyone company (pp. 85- 86).

The final scene is one of the most powerful in the play, as it summarises the whole case of regression to the womb. It is all about the men's silence, their intimate contact and their wish to be as close to Ruth as possible.

Teddy goes, shuts the front door.

Silence.

The three men stand.

Ruth sits relaxed on her chair.

Sam lies still.

Joey walks slowly across the room.

He kneels at her chair.

She touches his head, lightly.

He puts his head in her lap.

Max begins to move above them, backwards and forwards.

Lenny stands still.

Max turns to Lenny.

Max. (To Ruth) [...] You understand what I mean? Listen, I've got a funny idea she'll do the dirty on us, you want to bet? She'll use us, she'll make use of us, I can tell you! I can smell it! You want to bet?

Pause.

She won't ... be adaptable!

He begins to groan, clutches his stick, falls on to his knees by the side of her chair. His body sags. The groaning stops. His body straightens. He looks at her, still kneeling.

I'm an old man.

Pause.

Do you hear me?

He raises his face to her.

Kiss me.

She continues to touch Joey's head, lightly.

Lenny stands watching (pp. 88- 90).

Gabbard continues with the interpretation of the final scene and the regression of the men:

'Max, Lenny and Joey, in their acquiescence to mother, have returned to infancy. Thus, the play as wish fulfilment links with the play as a dramatization of regression. [...] Sam has returned to nothingness. Max is a crawling infant. Lenny and Joey are children snuggled close to mother. This tableau of regression concretized is one of the homecomings the play celebrates – the return to mother's lap and love. This return to oral security is the resolution of the son's earlier expressions of hunger. The tableau also represents the regression from patriarchy to matriarchy. Mother/Ruth sits in father's chair – dominant over the family (p. 195).

To sum up, I have used Freud's psychoanalytical approach to analyse Pinter's *The Homecoming*, and the Oedipus complex in particular. In my analysis, I tried to uncover the layers of which the play consists. I related the play to dysfunctional families, and then I continued with the analysis consulting critics' views on the work itself. They either criticised it or tried to analyse it themselves, using other psychoanalytical approaches such as the dream structure and Freud's essays written on the mother-son relationship, in order to clarify the

association between Ruth and the other men in the family. Other critics also related Pinter's plays to others, such as *The Birthday Party*, *The Room* and *A Night Out*, because of the similar theme they all propose.

9.3. *The Birthday Party* (1957)

In this section on *The Birthday Party*, I will attempt to analyse the selected play in relation to Freud's Oedipus complex, castration complex and the notion of aggression. I will clarify how these particular Freudian concepts will help illuminate Pinter's *The Birthday Party* and give it an in-depth analysis. Similar to the previous sections, 9.1 and 9.2, this section will contain a description of *The Birthday Party*, the creative process through which the play was written, the play's original cast, first reviews, interviews with Pinter and my personal experience attending one of the latest productions in 2013 at The Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester.

The Birthday Party (1957) was described by Irvin Wardle in 1958 as a comedy of menace, along with Pinter's *The Dumb Waiter* (1960) and *The Caretaker* (1960). The initial 'comedy of menace' description is based on the conception that Pinter is a playwright who writes with limited theatrical themes and a limited number of images in his mind. Wardle, and later Susan Hollis Merritt, agreed that Pinter has the habit of portraying a small, dark room as a womb while ridiculing traditional familial relations. Pinter's 'menace' usually creates a feeling of ambiguity surrounding the events of the play, because they are open to many interpretations. Ambiguity is statement that indicates more than one meaning, which leads to vagueness, confusion and probably humour. Ambiguity arises from the fact that what Pinter portrays might not be what he intends the audience to understand, which in turn causes a misunderstanding of his intentions.

Pinter also tends to write controversial scenes that may be understood as comical, but in fact, they hide a dark, horrific intention behind this façade. For example, in *The Birthday Party*, Stanley is forced to play a game called 'blind man's buff' on his 'birthday'. This is a game in which someone has to be blindfolded and the other people have to move around the room and then freeze until the blindfolded person touches one of them. It is a party game that could have no time limits, because the person who is touched becomes the 'blind man', and so the game can go on and on for a long time (Pinter [1957] 1991, pp. 55- 58). The dark intention hidden in this particular scene is the blinding, or, as will be explained later in this section, the

metaphorical and literal castration theme that pervades the play. Three actions of blinding/castrating happen during ‘blind man’s buff’. The first action happens when McCann initially blinds Stanley by taking his glasses away, which results in weakening his eyesight. The following action is Meg blinding him with the blindfold, covering his already weakened eyes (p. 57). Furthermore, the third action, which symbolises the point of no return for Stanley’s eyesight, is McCann ‘break[ing] Stanley’s glasses, snapping the frames’ (p. 57). This could be seen as a humorous scene, but in fact, it has more than one layer to it. The psychoanalytical layer of the castration complex is the main concept I am attempting to explore in this section. While *The Birthday Party* is considered a ‘menace’ by Wardle, it is also described by Martin Esslin as an example of the Theatre of the Absurd movement that Esslin introduced to the literary world in his book *The Theatre of The Absurd* in ([1961] 2001). As detailed further in section (8.3 Subconscious Writing), *The Theatre of The Absurd* introduces the term ‘absurd’ and links it mainly to the works of Samuel Beckett, Arthur Adamov, Eugène Ionesco, Jean Genet and Pinter. Esslin chooses to develop the theatrical ‘absurdity’ by concept using the names of these particular writers, because he perceives each one of them as an ‘individual who regards himself as a lone outsider, cut off and isolated in his private world’ (Esslin, [1961] 2001, p. 22). Esslin sees that these writers have a lot in common, because ‘their work most sensitively mirrors and reflects the preoccupation and anxieties, the emotions and thinking of many of their contemporaries in the Western world’ (p. 22). Esslin also connects the Theatre of the Absurd to ‘abstract painting’ that refuses to conform to and imitate the previous styles of painting ‘with its reliance on the description of objects and its rejection of empathy and anthropomorphism’ (p. 26). To define the term ‘absurd’, Esslin firstly refers to the musical definition thereof, which means something “out of harmony”. He secondly refers to the dictionary definition of the term ‘absurd’, which means “‘out of harmony with reason or propriety; incongruous, unreasonable, illogical’”. Lastly, he consults Ionesco’s definition in ‘*Dans les armes de le ville*’ in 1957, saying that the ‘absurd is that which is devoid of purpose [...] cut off from his religious, metaphysical and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless’ (p. 23). Esslin dedicates a chapter in *The Theatre of the Absurd* to Pinter and calls it ‘Certainties and uncertainties’. Pinter’s ‘absurdity’ began with his first performed play *The Room* (1957). According to Esslin, *The Room* contains Pinter’s ‘basic themes’, consisting of ‘his very personal style and idiom’ in addition to ‘the uncannily cruel accuracy of his reproduction of the inflections and rambling irrelevancy of everyday speech’ (p. 235). Pinter’s writing style also consists of elements of ‘menace, dread and mystery; the deliberate omission of an

explanation or a motivation for the action' (p. 235). Esslin stresses the significance of one of the 'recurring motifs' in Pinter's plays, namely a room that hosts two or more people inside it, haunted with a fear of the outside. Esslin quotes Pinter, stating that 'obviously they are scared of what is outside the room. Outside the room there is a world bearing upon them that is frightening. I am sure it is frightening to you and me as well' (p. 235). This fear of the outside is demonstrated to a great extent in most of Pinter's plays. For example, in *The Birthday Party*, Stanley stays at a house where all his needs and demands are met by either Petey or Meg. His stay is uninterrupted by outings, because he does not leave the house that hosts him. He might have, as Pinter states, a fear of the outside and the unknown and think he might be in danger, though he does not vocalise his fear of the outside in particular at the beginning of the play. However, as the play progresses, we see that Stanley is in fact in danger. We see that he was not facing this danger before the house's door was open to strangers, Goldberg and McCann, who entered it from the scary outside. These strangers, Goldberg and McCann, perform a form of physical and mental torture on Stanley that leads him to lose his mind, sight and, probably, his life. No one actually knows what happened to Stanley when Goldberg and McCann took him away from his safe haven, the house. He could be dead or in severe trauma following the horrific experience he has undergone. *The Birthday Party*, Esslin says, manages to deliver elements of 'mystery' and 'horror' despite 'omitting the melodramatic, supernatural element' (p. 239). Esslin's statement is validated by Stanley's struggle with his mysterious past, his unsettling present and his vague future. According to Esslin, absurdity in Pinter comes from the horror and the arbitrariness of life's events.

The first performance of *The Birthday Party* was produced by Michael Cordon and David Hall and directed by Peter Wood. It was performed on stage on 28th April 1958 at the Arts Theatre in Cambridge. The play was presented successively at the Lyric Opera House in Hammersmith by the same directors and the same acting cast. The original acting cast consisted of Willoughby Gray, as Petey, a man in his 60s; Beatrix Lehmann as Meg, a woman in her 60s; Richard Pearson as Stanley, a man in his late 30s; Wendy Hutchinson as Lulu, a girl in her 20s; John Slater as Goldberg, a man in his 50s; and John Stratton as McCann, a man in his 30s. When *The Birthday Party* was first performed, the critics and the audience did not receive it well. The play proved to be controversial and difficult to understand at that time. In my opinion, there are several elements that contributed to the play's initial failure.

The first reason is Pinter himself. At that stage in his life, he was not the well-known playwright he is today; he was still a new playwright struggling to get his voice heard and his plays performed. He could have given up when his play closed after eight performances at the Lyric Opera House, but he came back with other productions of *The Birthday Party* and more new plays.

The second reason is *The Birthday Party*'s progressive way in portraying the lifestyle of the characters. For example, Stanley is supposed to be a guest at Meg and Petey's house, but instead of staying there temporarily, like a normal guest, he has been living there for a long time. Stanley is not only a permanent guest, but he is also being treated and cared for by the mother and father figures in the play, as if he were a child. Stanley, a 30-something-year old man, throws fits like a toddler when he is presented with food he does not like. He describes the 'cornflakes' Meg fixes him as 'horrible', and he insults Meg herself by describing her as a 'bad wife' and a 'succulent old washing bag' (Pinter, [1957] 1997, pp. 8, 10, 12). Stanley's behaviour towards Meg is rude and demeaning, especially when it is portrayed on stage for the audience to see. I think it was courageous for Pinter to write this play to be performed in the 1950s, when many issues were taboo and not discussed openly in public, such as sex and violence. The characters in *The Birthday Party* have a special bond, especially Stanley and Meg, who, as will be addressed in detail later in this section, represent an oedipal relationship that only a mother and her son could have. Furthermore, Stanley is shown as a young boy who needs a mother figure, but most importantly, he needs a father figure to allow him to get over his hatred of his biological father. Therefore, Pinter gives Stanley the choice of three father figures instead of one: Petey, Goldberg or McCann. Each one of these characters has certain attributes that could help Stanley in his quest to find a father figure. The play also tackles subjects like metaphorical castration, blindness, insults, verbal and physical abuse and rape. The third element I think contributed to the play's initial failure is the director's way of interpreting and presenting it.

Billington, Pinter's official biographer, clarifies that '[*The Birthday Party*] may have sent out the wrong signals. Looking back, without a trace of anger, Pinter now admits that the play posed all kinds of problems for a director' (1997, p. 86). Pinter admitted he did not reveal the truth behind the characters or from where they hailed. Later on in an interview with Gussow, however, he says that he 'knew who [Goldberg and McCann] were and what they were up to'. He answered Gussow's question as to whether the critics and the audience knew who Goldberg and McCann were, saying 'No. Nor did I, as it were, tell them. I didn't ever say. I

sort of denied it generally' (Gussow, 1994, pp. 113- 114). The approach Pinter followed in the first production, along with his attitude to the director, set the basis for his future interactions in future productions. However, Billington defends Pinter, saying that 'Pinter's comment about the production is both practical and revealing. It suggests that *The Birthday Party* is a work whose larger metaphorical meaning grows out of an observed reality' (p. 86). Apparently, Billington is justifying Pinter's lack of communication with Wood regarding directing the play, saying that the amount of information Pinter revealed is enough to produce a great work of art. He also quotes Irving Wardle's description of *The Birthday Party*, expressing that the play represents 'a banal living-room [which] opens up to the horrors of modern history' (p. 86).

As mentioned above, this play was written in the 50s, when several topics like sex, homosexuality, and incest were considered taboo and never discussed at a public platform. And, as Billington says, '[it] is a mixture of the real and the imaginatively heightened [which] was not easily grasped in 1958 when plays tended to be judged either by their social accuracy or nonsensical inventiveness' (p. 86). Consequently, the struggle to 'grasp' this 'mixture' has contributed to the play's initial failure and lack of initial positive reviews. The initial failure of the first production of *The Birthday Party*, says Billington, 'bred a fierce backlash and stiffened Pinter's own spirit of resistance' (pp. 86- 87). Moreover, it seems that Pinter was not completely satisfied with the original director Peter Wood. Pinter refers to his correspondence with Peter Wood in his interview with Mel Gussow, noting that Wood asked him to 'clarify, to put a final message into the play so that everyone would know what it is about' (Gussow, 1994, p. 71). Wood's letter was followed by a refusal letter by Pinter, because Pinter's intention, as he clarifies to Gussow, was to present a play that 'showed how the bastards... how religious forces ruin our lives. But who is going to say that in the play? That would be impossible. I said to Peter Wood, did he want Petey, the old man, to act as a chorus? All Petey says is, "Stan, don't let them tell you what to do." I've lived that line all my damn life. Never more than now' (p. 71).

When the director is denied background information on characters, as in Wood's case, he has to have the ability to read between the lines. Wood had to infer information to arrive at a complete understanding of the hidden meaning behind the play, the motive for writing it and the type of audience it would attract. Directing *The Birthday Party*, Wood had to conclude the history and the emotional states of the characters successfully, in order to entice the audience to attend the play. Although Pinter's explanation did not assist the director in any

way, he had to find a way for the play itself to deliver its message to the audience. Probably, Wood did not grasp Pinter's intentions of making *The Birthday Party* a political play. When Gussow asked Pinter about the 'secretive quality' his work and he himself allegedly possess, Pinter explained to Gussow that '[he knew perfectly well that *The Birthday Party* and *The Dumb Waiter*, in [his] understanding then, were to do with states of affairs that could certainly be termed political, without any question; not to mention *The Hothouse*' (p. 113). We conclude that Pinter knows the message behind his work but never announces it to the critics, audience or even directors.

Billington says that critics at that time were expecting to attend plays that would 'provide rational solutions to explicit problems' (p. 86); however, this expectation was not met at first when *The Birthday Party* was produced, since it posed more problems with the critics than the problems it solved. Pinter admits to Gussow that the element of controversy exists in his play, after the interviewer noticed the 'secretive quality about the work and about [him]' (p. 113). He hides all the information necessary for the director to interpret the play, and yet he requires it to have certain characteristics. Wood did not deliver what Pinter was expecting, which meant it received negative reviews from critics. *The Birthday Party* was especially affected by Tynan's critique, or, as Pinter suggested, 'massacre'. Pinter addresses the Tynan situation in his interview with Gussow (1993), saying that '[Tynan] was not very enthusiastic about it' and that Tynan said in *The Sunday* that 'there have been plays about this before – the artist in society, the artist as poor victim – and he dismissed it on those grounds, that it was a play about an artist in society, and who cares about that? So the play closed' (p. 132). Pinter was expecting a positive review from Harold Hobson; however, Hobson could not attend the first show and his reviews were not heard until the following week. Hobson 'produced one of the great lyric paeans in modern criticism' in the *Sunday Times*, which rescued the play and revived the shows (Billington, 1997, p. 85). Billington quotes Hobson's critique and clarifies that it focuses on the terror and panic themes running through the play:

It breathes in the air. It cannot be seen but it enters the room every time the door is opened. There is something in your past – it does not matter what – that will catch up with you. Though you go to the uttermost parts of the earth and hide yourself in the most obscure lodgings in the least popular of towns, one day there is a possibility that two men will appear. They will be looking for you and you cannot get away. Furthermore, someone will be looking for *them* too. There is terror everywhere (p. 85).

Hobson's critique proposes a great depth to the play that the first few shows did not deliver successfully. He understands Pinter's sense of mystery and the need not to reveal all the details about the characters' past. Apparently, Hobson also sees that mystery and lack of information make Pinter's plays interesting, in that they encourage the audience to unravel the mystery themselves. After Hobson's critique was published, Pinter seized control of *The Birthday Party* and decided to direct it himself in the Royal Shakespeare Company revival at the Aldwych Theatre in London on 18th June 1964. His acting cast was also different to that chosen by Wood. He cast Newton Blick as Petey, Doris Hare as Meg, Bryan Pringle as Stanley, Janet Suzman as Lulu, Brewster Mason as Goldberg and Patrick Magee as McCann. In my opinion, both the author and the director should have the expertise and the intelligence which allows them to imagine, and eventually determine, how a certain character is supposed to look and behave on stage. Thus, it is an added bonus that in Pinter's case he is the author and the director. The creativity in choosing which actor resembles which character could have a great impact on the quality of the performance. He knows which actor would resemble his image of Meg, for example, and so on. And so when the author/ director chooses the cast, he asserts his point of view and the direction the play is taking.

Pinter, as mentioned earlier, is a multi-talented person. He is an author, a director and an actor. So, he decides to take place and act in *The Birthday Party* and play Goldberg in the 1987 BBC production of the play. His wife Lady Antonia Fraser comments on Pinter's role in her interview at the Chicago Humanities Festival – posted on YouTube – saying that 'Harold played the part of Goldberg (...) one of the two appalling people', 'he was brilliant; he grew a moustache for it', and he called Goldberg 'Uncle Cuddles'. (YouTube, 2010, minutes 50 - 51). He clearly is dedicated to his work to the extent that he wants to take part and act in his own plays.

I had the privilege to attend *The Birthday Party* 2013 production at the Royal Exchange Theatre, Manchester. It was my first time experiencing the Royal Exchange Theatre. The theatre was round, small, intimate and dark, and its smaller size corresponded well with the play's themes: the 'uncanny' domesticated aspect of the setting, the 'blind man's buff' game and the aggression on Stanley. The acting cast comprised of Paul McCleary as Petey, Maggie Steed as Meg, Danusia Samal as Lulu, Desmond Barrit as Goldberg, Keith Dunphy as McCann and Ed Gaughan as Stanley. In my opinion, the characters suited the actors very

well and they were portrayed amicably under the management of the director Blanche McIntyre. McIntyre's interview about her experience in directing Pinter clarifies the creative process she had to undergo in order for her to create such a great production. She says: 'I read as many other Pinter plays as I could get my hands on. This is my first production of a Pinter play and so I thought it would be a good idea to get a sense of him as a writer, his wider concerns and interests' (2013). Her approach to knowing Pinter is analytical approach which is similar to the approach of this thesis. She also explains that *The Birthday Party* is still relevant at this time 'because this kind of thing is happening all over the world still, and hasn't stopped happening since Pinter wrote it, and was happening for generations before' (2013). The relevance of Pinter plays is something which is also explored in this thesis because Pinter writes about ordinary human beings who exist in real life. However, these human beings have secrets and desires that no one knows, so they use their traits of aggression and their sexual-orientated nature to represent themselves on stage. In an interview with assistant director Holly Race Roughan about performing Pinter, she 'gives an insight into what makes the process of rehearsing and performing Pinter's work unique' and says that: Despite being one of his earliest works, *The Birthday Party* has all the characteristics of a 'typical' Pinter play. Pinter's writing is so distinctive, that we commonly use the adjective 'Pinteresque' to describe a particular type of work. For example, Pinter's plays are famous for their pauses. In this sense Pinter writes not just with words but also with silence' (2013).

The Birthday Party, similar to any Pinter play, needs a psychoanalytical reading to make it fully comprehensible. The connection between *The Birthday Party* and Freud is more likely to be understood if we utilised Freud's concepts of the Oedipus complex and the castration complex. Freud introduced the world to psychological terms defining every aspect of literature in relation to life in general – and sexuality in particular. This happened when he started linking literary works to the human mind (especially repressed thoughts) along with dreams, daydreaming and sexual issues. One of the most important literary works that Freud based his theories on was Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*.

Please refer to the Definition of Terms section (7.2.b) for a detailed summary of *Oedipus Rex* which highlights the Oedipus Complex and its origin.

Oedipus's story paves the way for Freud to develop one of the major theories in psychoanalysis: the Oedipus complex. This term was first used in his paper 'Concerning a

Particular Type of Object-choice in Men' in *The Psychology of Love* that mainly discusses four 'necessary conditions for loving' which were discussed in detail earlier in this thesis (see sections (7.2.b) and (9.2) for further explanation).

The four conditions of love mentioned earlier in the thesis form the essence of a child's love for his mother, and later on, his mature love for women. As Freud mentioned in this paper, 'the love objects chosen subsequently possess the imprint of maternal characteristics, and all become easily recognisable maternal surrogates' (p. 244). The maternal bond does not break after the umbilical cord is cut. A man looks forward to living his whole life with a woman who shares certain characteristics with his mother. Having mother issues can be a negative aspect in a man's life, because he will experience disappointments throughout his search for 'maternal surrogates.' This whole concept is widely represented in the literature. As mentioned earlier, Oedipus married his biological mother and had children with her. This action required punishment (see section 7.2.b), i.e. that he blind himself and prevent himself from seeing the act that he had committed. Whether he was terrified of the past, afraid of the future or even afraid that his biological father's spirit might come back to haunt him, as usually happened in myths, we, as readers, may relate to his blinding as self-punishment. On the other hand, in modern literature, actions like trying to fulfil the Oedipus complex might be celebrated, not punished. An example of celebrating the incestuous relationship between a mother figure and a man is Pinter's *The Birthday Party*.

From the beginning of the play, there is a connection to Freud's Oedipus complex, especially with the relationship between Meg, a woman in her 60s, who co-owns a boarding house with her husband Petey, and Stanley, a man in his 30s, who has been living in the house for a year. The relationship between Meg and Stanley is not defined, but at times the way Meg treats Stanley resembles a mother's treatment of a child. She wakes him up, prepares his 'cornflakes', makes him drink his tea every morning, calls him 'Stan' or 'Stanny' and, if he does not wake up, goes up to his room to 'fetch' him, or 'ruffles his hair as she passes' by him. She tries to be motherly with him despite the fact that he repeatedly humiliates her by telling her that the cornflakes are 'horrible', 'the milk's off', she is 'a bad wife', 'succulent' and that the tea is akin to 'gravy' and 'muck'. In addition, he questions her ability to keep the house clean while he sees her using the duster. He tells her that his room is a 'pigsty' and that 'it needs sweeping' and 'papering' (pp. 8- 13). She always defends her motherly deeds in front of him, even when he insults her. She defends her cornflakes by describing them as 'refreshing', and she tells him that 'you won't find many better wives than me' when he

accuses her of being a bad wife. Furthermore, she defends her ability to keep the house clean, saying that '[she] keeps a very nice house and that [she] keeps it clean' (pp. 8- 13). He behaves like a spoiled child, and yet he gets what he wants. She even asks him if he wants some tea after he refuses to eat the 'horrible' cornflakes. And he gets it. He is a man in his 30s who clearly needs to be taught good manners. Meg tells him to say 'please' and 'sorry', a typical way of teaching young children those magic words that get everything done for them (p. 11).

Meg treats Stanley like a lover in other moments. She loves having him around and particularly likes that he is a 'pianist'. As he says, musicians normally reflect the bad boy image that girls love but mothers fear. Stanley reminds her of youth and of how she could have had some adventures with more men when she was younger; in fact, maybe even a 'pianist'. She wakes him up and bursts into his room, laughing. This is what a lover would do when she wakes her man up and starts seducing him and fooling around the bed. His own bedroom is mentioned a lot in the play. Meg even talks about it in a 'sensual' way while 'stroking [Stanley's] arm', saying 'that's a lovely room,' and that she has 'had some lovely afternoons in that room.' This indicates she is a confused old woman (p. 13). She understands that he is not her real boy, and yet she never knows what to call him. He even draws her attention to this issue: 'Tell me, Mrs Boles, when you address yourself to me, do you ever ask yourself who exactly you are talking to? Eh?' She never answers and changes the topic immediately (p. 15).

Apparently, Meg is either barren or has never had the chance to have her own children. She never mentions children during the play. However, she expresses her preference for having a boy and not a girl if she were to have children. Petey reads her an excerpt from the newspaper that says that a woman gave birth to a baby girl. We can see her cruel reaction to that as she says 'Oh, what a shame, I'd be sorry. I'd much rather have a little boy' (p. 5). Meg would rather have a boy because, according to Freud's Oedipus complex, a boy is attached to his mother. Apparently, Meg would rather have a boy to provide for him his whole life; she wants to have a connection with the little boy resembling the connection she has with Stanley.

In general, men tend to protect the women to whom they are related, even if the act of protection is not intentional. According to Freud, if the male fails to protect the female, he will 'rescue' her from any trouble in which she is involved (p. 247). The example I want to

highlight here is a male protective behaviour which shows the male preventing the female from experiencing other phallic figures, namely cigarettes. As previously mentioned in section (9.2), a cigarette is considered a phallic image that symbolises either a father's penis or a mother's breasts. Meg is the one to be protected in *The Birthday Party* from the effects of the cigarette:

Meg: Is the sun shining? (*[Stanley] crosses to the window, takes a cigarette and matches from his pyjama jacket, and lights his cigarette.*) What are you smoking?

Stanley: A cigarette.

Meg: Are you going to give me one?

Stanley: No.

Meg: I like cigarettes. (*He stands at the window, smoking. She crosses behind him and tickles the back of his neck.*) Tickle, tickle.

Stanley (*pushing her*): Get away from me (p. 13).

This short conversation over a cigarette may seem trivial to some people, but it means a lot to Meg and Stanley. When she asks him for one, he refuses, which indicates that a cigarette may fall under the phallic symbol, according to Freud's first interpretation of the symbol of the cigarette. Meg's 'I like cigarettes' shows her heterosexuality and her longing for a heated sexual relation with this younger man who represents her lost youth, while she refers to herself as his 'old Meg.' Furthermore, as mentioned earlier in Freud's second interpretation of the symbol of the cigarette, a cigarette may also be seen as a nipple substitute. Therefore, if Meg asked for a cigarette, it means that she also has sexual feelings towards her mother and wants to suck on her nipple for either food or to express her sexual instincts. Meg could get away with expressing such emotions for her mother and survive her father's castration punishment, because she is already castrated. According to Freud, in 'On Female Sexuality' ([1927] 2006), a little girl's first love object is her mother (p. 309). He adds that 'we have long understood that the development of female sexuality is complicated by the task of relinquishing the originally dominant genital zone, the clitoris, for a new one, the vagina' (p.309). He compares the substitution of the clitoris by the vagina with 'the exchange of the original object, the mother, for the father' (p.309). Based on this notion, Meg asking for a cigarette symbolises her attachment to her mother's breasts, because 'the relationship with the mother was the original one and the attachment to the father was constructed upon it [...]' The transfer of emotional connections from the mother – to the father – object form the chief

content of the development leading to womanhood' (p. 314). Julia Kristeva, in 'Experiencing the Phallus as Extraneous, or Women's Twofold Oedipus Complex' (1998), agrees with Freud that a woman forms feelings of attachment for her mother. However, Kristeva argues that women's 'adherence to the phallus [...] effectively structures them, but at the price of often traumatic suffering' that might lead to female bisexuality (p. 29). She states that the structure of 'our physical destiny' is 'under the threat of castration, the phallicism of both sexes succumbs to repression and is succeeded by the latency period' – the period between the stages of a child's psychosexual development, when a child starts school, and when the Oedipus complex starts to dissolve. The child would be at any age from 3-7 years old (p. 31). Kristeva continues by saying 'in the case of male sexual development, the Oedipus complex [...] is subject to a veritable "catastrophe," that takes the form of the boy's turning away from incest and murder and culminates in the institution of conscience and morality, in that Freud saw "a victory of the race over the individual"' (pp. 31- 32). Although 'turning away from incest and murder' saves a man from coming closer to fulfilling his oedipal desires. and therefore, saves him from being castrated.

Moreover, when a son loves his mother and is attached to her, he forms feelings of fear towards his father, which may turn into hatred. He sees that his mother is his whole world and that she resembles purity and higher powers, but when he grows up and hits puberty, he starts seeing things differently, especially his mother's relationship with his father. A son knows that his parents are involved in a sexual relationship with each other, just like any other couple he ever knew. More specifically, his mother acts like the prostitutes whom he finds attractive, or, as Freud describes them, as 'love objects of the highest value' (p. 243). A son then knows he is not the only one in his mother's life and that he was the product of this sexual relationship. Meg represents all of this to Stanley, even though she is not his real mother. He sees her as a 'love object' but he knows he cannot have her, due to her being married to Petey (p. 243). However, no matter what her relation to Petey may be, it appears that Stanley has some issues regarding his own father. He says:

My father nearly came to hear me. Well, I dropped him a card anyway. But I don't think he could make it. No, I-I lost the address, that was it. (*Pause.*) Yes. Lower Edmonton (p. 17).

These lines talk about this boy, a boy who needs his father's encouragement while playing the piano on stage. However, he is nowhere to be found. Stanley even justifies his father's

absence by blaming himself for the whole thing. He stresses the fact that it was his own fault his father never showed up to his concert, thereby giving him an excuse. Stanley, on the other hand, keeps behaving like a child throughout the play. In some parts, Goldberg and McCann, two men who stayed for a couple of days in the boarding house, start bullying him verbally and questioning him. He cannot even reply to their questions or defend himself. Towards the end of the play, they both start promising him that they will save him if he goes with them. All he can say is ‘Uh-gug ... uh-gug ... eehhh-gag ... (*On the breath.*) ... Caahh ... caahh ...’ (p. 78).

Stanley expresses his need for safety and not experiencing growing up. He even refuses to have a birthday party. He does not want to be mature enough to understand what is going on around him:

McCann: ... Were you going out?

Stanley: Yes.

McCann: On your birthday?

Stanley: Yes, why not?

McCann: But they’re holding a party for you tonight.

Stanley: Oh really? That’s unfortunate.

McCann: Ah no. It’s very nice.

Voices from outside the back door.

Stanley: I’m sorry. I’m not in the mood for a party tonight.

McCann: Oh, is that so? I’m sorry.

Stanley: Yes, I’m going out to celebrate quietly, on my own.

McCann: That’s a shame (pp. 31- 32).

Stanley here describes his own birthday party as ‘unfortunate’, which obviously reflects on his actual birth, because ‘birth is the first life-threatening danger’ (Freud, p.248). He finds it ‘unfortunate’ that he was born in the first place, that he was forced out of his mother’s womb – the only place a foetus can be safe from the cruel outside world. After birth, both the infant and mother feel insecure and need all the possible care the family and society can provide. If that never happens, then they will both live in an “unfortunate” set of events that lead to a disturbed life while the child is growing up. Freud described the same situation as follows:

The moment of danger is not lost in the change of meaning; the act of birth, in fact, is the very first danger from which one was rescued by one's mother's efforts. Equally, birth is the first life-threatening danger, since it is the model of everything that will afterwards cause us to feel fear, and the experience of birth has probably left us with the affective expression that we call fear (p. 248).

Consequently, Stanley suffers from many types of fears, and one of them is the 'fear', caused by his own birth and aggravated by his father's carelessness that resulted in fearing and hating him.

Stanley's real father would never be the 'damaged third' in the relationship between Stanley and his real mother. Therefore, he replaces his mother with Meg, who already has a husband, a passive character who shows no reaction to anything around him, and treats him like the father who would be affected or 'damaged' by the oedipal relationship between a mother and a son.

Another type of fear that Stanley suffers from is the fear of castration. Gussow says that Stanley's fears could be justified because 'Stanley is a forerunner of Pinter victims to come. Primarily, however, the play's mode is psychological, as Stanley is hounded by those two maleficent operatives, Goldberg and McCann' (1988).

In addition, Stanley suffers from another fear, which is the fear of being exposed. Gussow says that: 'the fact that we never learn the reason for [Goldberg and McCann's] Stanley-crushing mission only stimulates our curiosity. *The Birthday Party* is a play of intrigue, with an underlying motif of betrayal' (1988). As the audience's curiosity is intrigued, Pinter could not offer a solution to the curiosity; instead, he adds to the intriguing thoughts and says in his Nobel Prize speech 2005, 'as I have said, the search for the truth can never stop. It cannot be adjourned, it cannot be postponed. It has to be faced, right there, on the spot'.

Stanley's fear of exposing himself is portrayed by crying a loud cry during the aggressive interrogation scene performed on him by Goldberg and McCann. In *Psychoanalysis and Performance*, Steven Connor's 'Violence, ventriloquism and the vocalic body' adopts Freud's adaptation of the term 'omnipotence of thoughts' in *Totem and Taboo* (Freud, [1913] 1960, p. 85). Connor mentions the Freudian term to construct the relation between the art of ventriloquism, the purposeful primitive infant cries and the child's 'fantasy of soronous omnipotence' – which is Freud's 'magical thinking' (Connor, 2001, p. 76). The ventriloquism discussion in Connor's essay relates to Stanley's interrogation scene in *The Birthday Party*.

Stanley's cry could be interpreted in a various number of interpretations. One way of interpreting Stanley's cry starts with portraying him as a child who is living with his metaphoric parents Meg and Petey. Thus, the sudden appearance of the intruders Goldberg and McCann disturb the peace of the family dynamics which creates stress and anger at the house. In Stanley's interrogation scene specifically, Goldberg and McCann play the role of the puppeteer or a ventriloquist by putting words into Stanley's mouth and violently accusing him of acts he did not commit, which leads him to produce a loud cry resembling that of an infant's. Stanley's situation could be interpreted by Connor's explanation of ventriloquism as a metaphor of a person in a position of power taking control over someone else's voice; namely, the infant's. He says that: 'the voices of appeal, threat or raging demand of the child produce a sense of sadistic mastery, which both produces an object of its own, and makes the world temporarily an object' (p. 76). He also explains how the infant's cry could over-power the 'rage' of the controlling powerful person by saying that: 'the rage of the infant and the toddler will often manifest itself in a desire to put its will into sound, to force sound into a permanent form; as though the amplitude of a cry would imprint it more firmly and permanently on the world, and give it the quality of manipulability that the child finds lacking' (p. 76). Stanley's cry, therefore, is an attempt to reclaim his existence as an independent individual who does not need a higher authority of puppeteer or a ventriloquist to control his words and his moves. In addition, Stanley's cry is an attempt to escape the 'inevitable element of humiliation in simply being a child' and being 'more or less exploited by the parents', or in this case, 'being exploited by' the intruders/ puppeteers/ ventriloquists (Phillips, 1999, p. 101). The following scene quoted from *The Birthday Party* shows how Stanley's cry was induced as a result of the aggressive acts performed on him (refer to section 7.2.e for further explanation on aggression):

McCann. You're dead.

Goldberg. You're dead. You can't live, you can't think, you can't love. You're dead. You're a plague gone bad. There's no juice in you. You're nothing but an odour!

Silence. They stand over him. He is crouched in the chair. He looks up slowly and kicks Goldberg in the stomach. Goldberg falls. Stanley stands. McCann seizes a chair and lifts it above his head. Stanley seizes a chair and covers his head with it. McCann and Stanley circle.

Goldberg. Steady McCann.

Stanley (*circling*). Uuuuuuhhhhh!

McCann. Right, Judas.

Goldberg (*rising*). Steady, McCann.

McCann. Come on!

Stanley. Uuuuuuhhhhh!

McCann. He's sweating.

Stanley. Uuuuuuhhhhh!

Goldberg. Easy, McCann.

Goldberg. The bastard sweatpig is sweating.

A loud drumbeat off left, descending the stairs. Goldberg takes the chair from Stanley. They put the chairs down. They stop still (Pinter, [1957] 1996) pp. 46- 47).

The power Goldberg and McCann have over Stanley in the quote above begins with the power of their voices. Connor explains how the power of the voice interferes with the reception of the information given by the person speaking – or screaming. He says that: ‘the power of the voice derives from its capacity to charge, to vivify, to relay and amplify anger’ (p. 82). Therefore, whenever Goldberg and McCann try to control Stanley using their voices, these voices become louder, will become significantly more powerful and will have actual chances in taking control over Stanley.

Another way to interpret Stanley’s cry is connecting Connor’s description of the nature of the cry with Pinter’s writing style. Connor says that: ‘a cry is not pure sound, but rather pure utterance, which is to say the force of speech without, or in excess of, its recognisable and regularisation forms’ (p. 78). A cry in a Pinter play, therefore, could create confusion merely for the fact that Pinter is well known for the effects his unspoken words, his pauses, his dots and his dashes have on the development of his plays, and therefore, on the way his plays are perceived by the audience. Stanley’s ‘Uuuuuuhhhhh!’ could be interpreted as being a full sentence which has never been written by Pinter or spoken by Stanley but has been implied within the events of the play. There are unlimited possibilities of utterances which could have been said by Stanley. He could have been saying ‘I did not do it!’, ‘I need help!’, ‘I’m angry!’, ‘I’m tired!’, ‘I’m haunted by demons!’, ‘get me out of here!’, ‘I cannot see!’, ‘Stop telling me what to do!’, ‘You cannot control me anymore!’, or any other sort of uttering. And

because Pinter's characters are, to an extent, mysterious and vague, they suggest different and contradictory interpretations. Stanley is a Pinter character, and no one will be absolutely certain of the correctness and authenticity of his actions and utterances. Pinter admits in his Nobel Prize speech that 'truth in drama is forever elusive' and that 'the real truth is that there never is any such thing as one truth to be found in dramatic art. There are many' (2005). Pinter, however, does not disclose more information than what is written in the script to the actors, the directors, the critics or the audience, which hinders and complicates the process of producing a play to Pinter's standards, and also obstructs the process of criticising and interpreting the characters' personalities and decisions.

A third way of interpreting a cry is also mentioned by Connor. He says that: 'the cry makes me blind, swallowing up the world of visible distances and distinctions' (p. 79). The intensity of Stanley's 'Uuuuuuhhhh!' is one of the factors that caused his blindness, in addition to the fact that Goldberg and McCann took his glasses and broke them. The blindness theme in Pinter plays is explained in this thesis in relation to Freudian concept. Blindness is interpreted as either a consequence of resolving one's Oedipus complex or as a form of castration: literal genital castration or metaphoric castration. In Stanley's case, the violent acts performed by the intruders caused him to regress from an adult man into a castrated child and finally into a crying toddler. Freud's term 'regression' is a form of behavioural retreat which occurs when an adult is experiencing stressful or uncomfortable situations causing him to retreat into a childlike. 'Regression' is explained in Freud's *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* as one of the significant factors which create neurosis, along with 'development' and 'fixation' ([1915] 1991, p. 383). Freud says that 'the libidinal function goes through a lengthy development', he projected that 'a development of this kind involves two dangers - first, of *inhibition*, and secondly, of *regression*' (p. 383). Fixations are created by the danger of 'inhibition'; the 'stronger the fixations on its path of development, the more readily will the function evade external difficulties by regressing to the fixations' (p. 383). I believe that Freud's 'regression' forms the base for interpreting Stanley's childlike behaviour, which resulted from the intruders' aggression. 'Regression' also forms the base to the act of retreating to the crying-infant stage who is seeking the safety and warmth of a mother's womb. However, Connor does not agree that the infant still seeks a mother's care and says that: 'the infant does not want interiority, the comfort and safety of the womb. It wants to have done with space, wants to be again where there are no distances or dimensions, no inside or outside' (p. 79). Connor's statement is contradictory to Freud's idea that everyone

goes through a regression phase and wishes to go back to the womb to feel safe and taken care of. Connor's idea mainly suggests that getting out of the womb could be likened to getting rid of all the parent-figures, and that Stanley should not regress to the womb, but he should escape everything related to the mother-figure and father-figure. Stanley also has to refrain from appearing vulnerable and needing a mother because his vulnerability will lead others to perform aggressive acts on him. Subsequently, Stanley's regression case resembles what D.W. Winnicott says about neurosis in *The Child, the Family, and the Outside World* (1978). Winnicott says that

Many of the children who are excessively nervy have in their psychological make-up an expectation of persecution, and it is helpful to be able to distinguish these from other children. Such children often get persecuted; they practically ask to be bullied – one could almost say that at times they produce bullies among their companion. They do not easily make friends, though they may achieve certain alliances against a common foe' (Winnicott, 1978, p. 213).

Winnicott's quote sheds light on the atrocious notion of bullying. In this thesis, we find that Pinter's selected plays offer a great deal of violent bullying towards the characters, especially Stanley. When Goldberg and McCann first make an appearance, it becomes clear that Stanley has certain fears of exposing his undetermined past. Stanley's past life is portrayed as a mixture of distorted memories about his family, his relationship with his father, his past occupation, and his artistic interest. He has doubts about Goldberg and McCann and keeps asking about their intentions and where they come from because he has fears of being exposed, and therefore, being persecuted for his past actions. Hiding and distorting the facts about his past life will, according to Winnicott, cause Stanley to be bullied for the purposes of prosecution.

10.0. Conclusion

This thesis presents a psychoanalytical approach to Harold Pinter's plays, namely *Old Times* (1971), *The Homecoming* (1965) and *The Birthday Party* (1957). These plays are analysed by using a Freudian psychoanalytical approach aligned with a close reading of the works. Furthermore, the thesis aims at conducting a thorough analysis of the selected plays, by using key Freudian concepts such as the Oedipus complex, the castration complex, the 'uncanny,' aggression and dream analysis, and by providing a different way of understanding them from a psychoanalytical point of view.

While writing this thesis, I had the following objectives in mind. The first objective was to conduct a close reading of psychoanalytic and drama texts, to test a series of key psychoanalytical concepts against selected plays in Pinter's oeuvre. The second objective was to locate the thesis in relation to the existing but limited psychoanalytical criticism of Pinter. The final objective was to establish and address specific methodological issues arising from the application of psychoanalysis to drama and theatre. Each objective was implemented in different sections of the thesis. My contribution to the study is resulting from my personal experience attending theatrical performance in UK as an educated Jordanian woman who comes from an Arab Muslim culture where there are more restrictions on dramatic performance and where most social and sexual topics are considered taboo.

I initially chose Freudian psychoanalysis because Freud invented the term 'psychoanalysis' and his theories and concepts lay the ground for the other theorists who succeeded him and aided them in creating their own theories. Those theorists had different approaches to Freudian psychoanalysis. Personally, I found his theories to be very successful in painting an overview image of Pinter that connected him to his plays from both a personal and a professional angle. The personal angle includes his past experiences as a child, a teenager, an adult, his relationship with his parents, his relationship with his friends, his curiosity surrounding literature, his relationships with women, his marriage to actress Vivien Merchant, having a child with Vivien, being awarded a Nobel Prize in Literature, his marriage to Lady Antonia Fraser and spending the last days of his life with her. All of the above are considered components of Pinter's personal repertoire, which had an apparent effect on his view of people and their interactions. These views helped him create his characters and construct complex, sometimes incomprehensible, plays, but they also helped him understand the conflict between people in real life and then reflect them on stage by

creating similar conflicts amongst the characters. The other angle connecting Pinter psychoanalytically to his plays is the professional angle, which is mostly concerned with his creative writing process, his acting career, his directing career and the choice of actors. Moreover, Freud helps in understanding Pinter better, because he offers explanations for what goes into a human mind, relating everything to the person's past sexual experiences, which start from the day this person is born, and because of the elements of shock, sexual themes and oedipal relations which Pinter freely discussed on stage.

This thesis is constructed using several methods that involve a close reading of the selected plays and an array of Freudian corresponding material. The research is supported by a close reading of extant literature addressing Freud and Pinter and their connection with each other and with the theatre in general. I draw on other resources and data, including attending live performances of the selected plays, watching recorded film adaptations and sifting through archives, including interviews with actors and directors as well as Pinter's own commentary on his work. The thesis proposed that the psychoanalytical terms applied herein support a substantial analysis of the plays. This is particularly the case, I argue, because Pinter, through his creative writing process, produces complex plays that touch on controversial subjects, including sexual aggression and unconventional dysfunctional familial dynamics. The other method I used involved conducting a psychoanalytic reading of the theatre event, including a review of the reception of the plays and aspects of design, thus connecting theatre and theatricality, sexual dynamics, Pinter's process and Freudian theory.

The thesis fills in the gap in the previous literature, which, I believe, offers a poor psychoanalytical connection between Pinter and Freud. Except for a few resources, including Lucina Paquet Gabbard's *The Dream Structure of Pinter's Plays: A Psychoanalytical Approach* (1976), Peter Buse's *Drama + Theory: Critical Approaches to Modern British Drama* (2001), and a collection of essays edited and compiled by Patrick Campbell and Adrian Kear in *Psychoanalysis and Performance* (2001), the other resources I consult in the Literature Review section mention Freud's concepts in passing, without paying tribute to him or mentioning his name as the original developer of psychoanalysis. Freud himself condemns the lack of attribution to himself and his theory of dream interpretation at the beginning of 'Lecture XXIX: Revision of The Theory of Dreams', noting that 'much of dream interpretation has been accepted by outsiders – by the many psychiatrists and psychotherapists who warm their pot of soup at our fire (incidentally without being very grateful for our hospitality) [...], by the literary men and by the public at large' ([1933] 1989,

p. 9). This statement demands analysts pay tribute to his psychoanalytical theories and give him recognition instead of mentioning them in passing. Consequently, being grateful for Freud's contribution to the world of psychoanalysis is the least a psychoanalyst could do when referring to, for example, the ego, the id, the super-ego, the Oedipus complex, the castration complex and many others. That was one of the aims of this thesis – to pay tribute to Freudian concepts and view them as generators of conflict in a theatrical setting such as that offered by Pinter.

The Pinter-Freud connection established in the thesis is not only a result of perceiving Pinter's plays from a Freudian point of view, but it also comes as a result of the connection between the plays and audience members. The reason why audience members choose to attend these plays is one of the elements I was interested in exploring. I explained it by defining the connection between theatregoers' inner conflicts and the Freudian, womb-like theatre.

This thesis aimed at shedding light on Pinter's selected plays in relation to Freud's psychoanalytical theories through the four following sections: Literature Review, Methodology and Definition of Terms, Psychoanalysis of the Theatre and Case Studies. In addition, it also conducted psychoanalysis of the institution of theatre itself, relating to its historical, civil and social roles in creating an interesting relationship between playwrights, characters, audiences and critics. The first section is the Literature Review discussed the previous literature written on Pinter in relation to psychoanalysis, which does not always relate the psychoanalytical terms used in the analysis to Freud; therefore, this thesis draws attention to Freud's psychoanalytical concepts to use them in analysing Pinter's plays. The Literature Review also includes the Research Objectives and the Research Questions which aimed to fill the gap in the previous literature. Secondly, Methodology and Definition of Terms section, which discusses the methods the thesis uses to arrive at the results pursued. The methods involve a close reading of Pinter's plays, a close reading of Freudian material and the application of Freud's psychoanalytical concepts to Pinter's plays, using a critical analysis method to conduct psychoanalysis of the plays, defining the main psychoanalytical terms and conducting psychoanalysis of the theatre. Definition of Terms includes definitions of the following: the Oedipus complex, Pinter and the Angry Young Men, the castration complex, the 'uncanny,' aggression and dream analysis. These terms were repeatedly mentioned throughout the thesis, in order to provide a better understanding of the thesis and to relay its importance. Thirdly, Psychoanalysis of the Theatre shed light on the theatre and

how it is perceived as a 'safe environment' for writers, actors and audiences (Campbell, 2001, p. 11). The chapter included four sections: sexual cultural theatre, a psychoanalytical reading of the theatre, subconscious writing and my approach to psychoanalysis. The chapter also includes my personal experiences attending theatrical performances and a brief comparison between British and the genre of theatre which is performed in Jordan. Lastly, the Case Studies chapter followed a Freudian approach with a close reading of the three selected plays.

I conclude that the key Freudian concepts I used in this thesis, appeal to Pinter as the creative aspects of constructing a play. In addition, I draw attention to the movement with which Pinter was associated, namely, The Angry Young Man, and conduct a psychoanalysis of the theatre by examining the history of sexuality and homosexuality in drama, which links the real lives of Pinter's audience to the Freudian aspect of being in a dark, womb-like room watching actors play out scenes and narrate lines that could bear an 'uncanny' resemblance to their real life events.

11.0. Bibliography

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