Chapter Five

Shadow and Light
There are several inhibiting factors which prevent Pinter's characters from entering a healthy social life. One of the shared predicaments of all his characters is isolation arising out of inability for human contact and communication. This occurs, most often due to conscious evasion. The extreme isolation that they experience even with their closest associates relates their predicament to the much wider perception of alienation by the Existentialists.

Alienation is the central concept in Existentialism and it influenced the Theatre of the Absurd. Most of the Absurd plays derive their disturbing quality through their honest treatment of the inevitable truth of man's alienation. All their protagonists share the sense of being out of place in the world which is the prime reason for their alienation. For them, isolation and the impossibility of communication are enduring problems of man's existence. The works of Sartre and Camus were largely responsible for the concept to take roots in the realm of drama. Camus' *The Myth of Sisyphus*, which is perhaps the most cited document in metaphysical absurdity describes four ways through which the feeling of absurdity arises. Two of them - a sense of being
left alone in an alien world and a sense of isolation from other beings - appear prominently in the context of alienation in Pinter's plays. The characters' attempts to surmount the agony of isolation end in pitiable failures. The prospect of facing the reality of the inevitable destruction of illusions tilts the delicate balance of their lives.

True to the tradition of Absurd plays, alienation and the problem of communication are major themes in Pinter also. He does not take these to the metaphysical level. The staunch realism universalizes his characters, and the extreme privatization of the situation endows them with a high degree of individuality. This individuality makes their problems a general psychological reality of man as well. The characters resort to both conscious and unconscious methods to combat the realization of their isolation. The illusions, that they wilfully submit themselves to, are instances of such attempts. As most of the plays present a close family circle, that is, a situation of supposedly intimate relationships, the isolation of the characters appears all the more poignant; it is the isolation man experiences in his private life, within his own family.
The alienation of Pinter’s characters would appear as a kind of self-imposed exile from life as a consequence of their own psychological imbalances. They are estranged not by being rebels or non-conformists; repression forces them to be self-exiles. The estrangement is more of the individual’s psyche, than an imposed isolation by society. As they are victims of neurotic anxiety, they resort to repression as a defence; withdrawal is a natural reaction that follows. Like other defence mechanisms, repression produces a reverse effect blocking the way to a healthy solution to their problems. This aggravates the situation since it allows fear to grow to alarming proportions without the restraints of reality. The withdrawal further separates them from reality which becomes a situation conducive to the development of neurosis.

A psychological understanding of the concept of alienation is likely to lead to the conclusion that self-alienation is the culmination of all kinds of estrangements an individual can experience. It can have undesirable effects on the personality of the individual. Karen Horney has explored the concept of self-alienation. In her New Ways in Psychoanalysis she says: "If a person’s spontaneous individual self has been stunted, warped or choked he is said to be in a condition of alienation from himself or
alienation from self." By emphasizing the role of restrictions on an individual's self she also connects it to the psychological concept of repression. She observes that neurosis prevents one from a full realization of "that most alive centre of ourselves" which Richard Schacht interprets as the same as Freud's concept of "libido"; hence here alienation becomes analogous to Freud's repression of libidinal energies. Repression and the resulting estrangement are also recurring experiences in Pinter's world of neurotically inclined inhabitants.

Pinter's skilful use of the past, or the theme of memory, helps to reveal how lonely the characters are in their private lives. There are several ways in which the past is used in the plays. For all the characters the past represents fulfilment which they desire but cannot achieve in the present. Sometimes as incidental recollection and sometimes as a long obsession, they remember their younger days. For them memory is the best means to evade the harshness of the present. The remembrance of a satisfying past creates a feeling of ability and potential through which they unconsciously seek to gain self-assurance.

For Rose and Stanley, the room which becomes a haven to withdraw into, is also the agent in their alienation. Rose never leaves her room, Stanley rarely goes out of the
boarding house, Edward never goes out at all - these are prompted by the insecurity they feel. Nevertheless it leaves them isolated and with a "neurotic need for affection", a situation which Horney identifies as part of the neurotic phenomena. Even with this need, they are incapable of establishing a proper human relationship. Apparently it is the fear of an external threat that forces them to remain indoors. But this fear appears so grossly out of proportion to the real threat that one could conclude that the whole situation is rather the result of an unbalanced vision on their part. It is, therefore, their own inhibitions that necessitate their isolation.

In The Room, as repression of Oedipal feelings creates in Rose a fear of the father figure who could threaten the security of her present life, she is constantly on the vigil to avoid a possible encounter with him. Persecution by such a fantasy forces her to reject all social life. Her loneliness is highlighted by the total lack of communication between the husband and wife. If a sense of loss signifies alienation then Bert must also be a victim. He is so estranged even from his over-concerned wife that he has to seek the companionship of his van; the van becomes the sole object of his drives of aggression and sexuality.
Stanley in The Birthday Party suffers alienation from society. He seeks solace in self-exile due to anxiety and fear. He detaches himself from the people around and from his vocation as a pianist, the reason for which are left vague. This detachment prevents the possibility of an alternative release of tension, but aggravates the tension and becomes a major contributing factor in his neurotic breakdown. He remembers incidents from his past on many occasions. Though he is talking to Meg it is to 'himself' that he recalls the experiences of a grand concert which had established him as a great artist.

Stanley (to himself): I had a unique touch. Absolutely unique. They came up to me. They came up to me and said they were grateful. Champagne we had that night, the lot. (32)

It is noteworthy that this recollection comes soon after he hears about the visitors. The passage in which Meg remembers her past illuminates her character.

Meg: My little room was pink. I had a pink carpet and pink curtains, and I had musical boxes all over the room. And they played me to sleep. And my father was a very big doctor. That's why I never had any complaints. I was cared for, and I had
little sisters and brothers in other rooms, all different colours.(70)

This description, which in all probability is a fantasy of wish-fulfilment on the part of Meg, evokes the sensuality of youth in the pink colour and music, in sharp contrast to her present state. It points to her frustration over her lost beauty and youth.

Stanley is an extremely withdrawn individual. He takes care to remain in the boarding house even though it is not a very likeable place. It is not just fear of the intruder that isolates him from society. His attitude to the female folk reflects the effect of repression resulting from a revival of Oedipal feelings which has led to feelings of sexual inadequacy. This further alienates him as he is thus denied the healing influence of a healthy relationship possible through Lulu. Stanley is self-alienated also. He is trying to evade his real self, to run away from all that he had been. In the moment of his personal crisis, his past and his relationships do not aid him. Estranged from his profession as an artist he too can be seen as alienated from work as well. His soliloquy about the concert focuses on the recognition and acclaim he had received. It is not clear whether he was a non-conformist at that time; or is it the working out of the menace that forces him to reject
society and vice versa? Eric Fromm thinks that it is conformity that alienates a person, a non-conformist always has the freedom to act as his self directs. Therefore, alienation from society by being a non-conformist ought to prevent self-alienation to a great extent. But this is not true in the case of an individual like Stanley who does not have a well-developed sense of selfhood and is already on the path to a mental breakdown. Unlike the majority of the artists, nonconformity does not grant any boost to his creative powers. Earlier, as an artist he seemed to be aware of his self and its needs; now, in the present state of isolation he is estranged from his self.

Stanley is frustrated with the kind of life he has to lead and with the food he has to accept. In his loneliness he desires for affection but is forced to reject love and friendship. Such a kind of rejection against the utmost needs of the self is an agony many a Pinter protagonist shares.

In the play, there are other characters who try to evoke the past frequently as a source of self-assurance at some critical point in the past. Goldberg and Lulu also remember. For them remembrance is a psychological necessity. Flora, Kate, Anna, Max - they all recall their past with a deep sense of loss. It is the absence of
something they had experienced in the past that kindle their reminiscences. Flora's recollection of a past sexual encounter powerfully projects the absence of sexual gratification in her life with Edward. Even though she does not recall the incident with a sense of loss or regret, estrangement and sexual frustration prompt her to yearn for a similar experience in a situation in which she finds a possible substitute for her impotent husband. The loss of sexual satisfaction alienates Edward and Flora. Max in *The Homecoming* fondly remembers his life with his wife. Now being an old man, over-anxious about the loss of sexual attractiveness, yet with sexual desire, his memory is only consoling and confidence-enhancing for him. He recalls the past with a deep sense of loss. In Pinter, individuals who suffer from frustration suffer alienation as a necessary consequence.

Davies in *The Caretaker* is a character who is alienation-incarnate. His estrangement affects him as a great psychological problem. He too shares with many Pinter protagonists the predicament of the loss of security and a sense of definite selfhood and identity. He is so alienated from his real self that the creation of a false self to interact with society becomes a necessity for him. He moves around under an assumed name and builds up the image of an
entirely different person, a person befitting his fantasies about himself. The image of the respected well-to-do socialite that he projects is a fulfilment of his desire for all that he is deprived of. Even though he comes in as a tramp, he pretends to be a dandy. He is trying to run away from all that he really is. Gradually he builds up the image of "Bernard Jenkins" who has a "strict sense of cleanliness", who "ate dinner off the best of plates" and who prides in his sense of racial superiority. He is proud of his insurance card with four stamps on it. But through his language, his appearance, his fear and his aggression the dramatist reveals the true picture. The attempt on the part of the poor man to present himself as someone significant makes him one of the most pathetic figures in Pinter's plays. Without the essential sense of selfhood he cannot relate himself to society. His effort to project an unreal self further alienates him from others, thereby he is forced to reject all possibilities of friendship and affection that Aston provides for him.

In the context of alienation in the play, the statue of the Buddha assumes great significance. Buddhism preaches alienation for self-attainment. In Pinter's world of isolated individuals there is alienation without self-attainment. The statue becomes a symbol of alienation.
Thus does not the breaking of the statue symbolically bring into being a closer union between the brothers? Here all the three characters are victims of alienation. The opening stage direction sets the tone. Mick is alone in the room, sitting on the bed, an unusual opening for a Pinter play; the solitary figure captures immediate attention. Throughout the play we see the three characters desperate in their loneliness and trying to reach out to one another.

Davies is also the prime example in Pinter of self-alienation. He is not aware of himself as a person. In his constant effort to create an impression on others he is forever thinking of others. Even his own personality is to be shaped for others who matter. The lack of selfhood takes away all his confidence in facing the world. He unconsciously desires to shut the world out; his request to close the window to shut out the draught and his constant displeasure at the others outside in the street is a direct expression of this. Mick is also alienated, for he treasures and jealously guards his possession of his brother. Aston is the only companion that he has, so the possession of Aston is more important to him than hospitality or charity. Aston is the worst sufferer, totally alienated being ostracized by society with the label of insanity. His hospitality to Davies projects his need
for affection and his desire to get back to the mainstream of social life. His incessant effort to refix the plug in the toaster, a kind of work in which he has complete involvement, symbolizes his desire to establish a lost unity. As the play ends it is not certain whether Aston fixed the plug, but his rejection of Davies makes it certain that he has failed in connecting himself to normal social life - a failure which is the result, not of his personal inadequacy but of the inadequacy of the chosen one.

In Pinter protagonists a recollection of the past is not very different from the creation of a fantasy, for they have lost the authenticity of character that can make their experiences seem real. Davies' past is also a fantasy which he clings on to in a desperate attempt to establish an identity for him. R.D. Laing argues that a firm sense of one's own autonomous identity is required, in order that one may be related as one human being to another. If such a sense does not exist the person will be under the constant fear of a loss of identity. The fear of losing identity may force man to dread relatedness as he fears it would engulf his identity; therefore he constantly suffers uncertainty of the stability of his autonomy. An unstable sense of identity or selfhood may become a very strong motive for a person to practise isolation both in the
conscious and unconscious levels. The self-image that Davies tries to create may be seen as an attempt to preserve an autonomous identity. He too incorporates elements of Laing's description of the schizoid man who practises isolation in an effort to be omnipotent or to be in control. Such a person avoids all creative relationship with others. Even though towards the end of the play Davies demands our pity as a hapless victim the fact remains that he rejects Aston by his own choice.

Many other characters also suffer from a lack of a definite identity. For them the creation of a false self or merely the assumption of another name becomes a matter of great significance, which also becomes a consequence of their alienation from the real self. Rose has the name Sally which her father figure calls her; for her Sally is a flight back to a world of security and affection, a world in conflict with her present world and therefore from which she is forcibly seeking an escape to reduce the conflict and to live in the present. Even though she has Bert with her, her relation with him is not strong enough to wipe out her desire for an earlier phase of life. Therefore alienation and consequential frustration become a daily experience for her. Apparently, Stanley too is living under an assumed name. When Goldberg asks him "Webber, why did you change your name?" his answer is "I forgot the other one." (60) Is he
pushed by his neurosis to so deep a level of self-alienation that he completely forgot his earlier self?

Even though Pinter characters, in general do not seem to opt loneliness, except perhaps Stanley, they do have an unconscious desire to remain aloof from the people around and to reject possible relationships. Rejection is an important theme that gains significance in this context. Two kinds of rejection take place in the plays. One is a wilful rejection as happens in the case of Davies' rejection of Aston, Walter's rejection of Sally and Stanley's rejection of Lulu; the other is a consequential inevitable rejection as Flora rejects Edward and the sons and Ruth reject Max. Davies rejection of Aston consolidates his alienation from society. His self-image which is grossly displaced from reality is what necessitates his rejection of Aston, a relationship which could afford him security and affection. Earlier he had rejected his wife. The reason that he gives for deserting her suggests an extreme sense of cleanliness that he demands. It again highlights Davies unbalanced mind. His disgust is not disproportionate if the allegation against her that she kept her underwear in the vegetable pan, is true but the fact that he rejected her just for that makes it an extreme case. Davies' incapacity for social relationships is once again made evident here.
Stanley's rejection of Lulu takes place in entirely different circumstances; the rejection however prevents a possible solution to his neurotic anxiety. The possibility of a balancing of emotions never occurs and it further aggravates his isolation. Walter rejects Sally and thereby closes an easy way for him to begin a new social life which he very much desires, but his inhibitions condemn him to remain an outcast criminal. Flora's rejection of Edward is inevitable because Edward's neurosis makes him unfit for a husband. Hence when a better possibility presents itself in the form of the Matchseller Flora can without regret grab and retain the substitute. Similarly Max by his neurotic vision and perversions alienates himself from his sons and Ruth; he makes his rejection by them inevitable. Even though social life continues as a monotonous routine they have mutually rejected one another's affections for a long time.

Gus, Walter and Sally are characters who suffer alienation in their work as well. Gus almost always expresses his discontent over his work. He is forced to do work which he positively hates and is ashamed of. Likewise Walter and Sally cultivate a dislike towards their work in that it is against the supposed moral principles of their society. Therefore they are forced to create a different
self-image through which they hope to achieve a certain respectability denied to a criminal or a night-club dancer. Parallel to this, we have characters who carry out their work with interest and involvement. There is Aston with his work of refixing the toaster. Disson also has involvement in his job as a manufacturer of sanitary ware but his kind of work could be seen as an extension of his neurotic personality. Hence their involvement do not alleviate or lessen the sense of alienation and in Disson it does have a derogatory effect on his personality.

In the play memories and fantasizing by the characters are important indicators to their estrangement. When the characters recall the past most often memory and fantasy merge. In some, fantasizing goes to the extreme of creation or adoption of a second self, in others it is only recurring reminiscences. Creation of illusions and their failure occur repeatedly. For the majority of the characters the past is only an illusion purposefully created and unconsciously resorted to by them in their moments of need of sustenance and security. The illusion is never a source of endless sustenance, it breaks down and the characters are jerked back to the reality of their own isolation. In Tea Party it is an illusion of the future that fails. Disson painstakingly builds up a satisfying image of himself as a
business man and as a family man, but here the breakdown comes even before it gets going. The Collection and Lover present conscious efforts through creation of illusions to escape estrangement. The story of betrayal of Stella in all probability is pure fantasy; it highlights the extreme isolation and resulting boredom that she experiences so that the illusion of an extramarital affair becomes a point where she can make a contact. Likewise Richard and Sarah try to build a different self out of each other and fail. In The Birthday Party Stanley's and Meg's memories can have no stamp of authenticity when judged by their character. But they are revelations of their disturbed minds and specifically of their deep estrangement in the present. Kenneth Keniston finds that most instances of alienation share the assumption that some relationship or connection that once existed that is natural, desirable or good has been lost. Such a loss of desired relationships and ways of life are a common experience for Pinter characters.

In the context of alienation as a psychological experience the "memory" plays deserve special mention. Steven H. Gale classifies the five plays Landscape, Silence, Night, Old Times and No Man's Land as "plays of memory." He points out that they are "almost totally involved with the past" and that in these plays the element of menace has
definitely lost its active motivational emphasis. Hence the resultant focus is on the past which haunts the characters. In these plays Pinter manipulates the concept of time in a bold way to reflect the disorientation his characters are experiencing.

As in the earlier plays the past recalled in these plays may be pure fantasy; things that might or might not have happened. Verification is impossible and irrelevant. The past has significance for its relevance to the present state of mind. The past is also the mould for the attitudes and visions of the present. In these plays the past and the present are not two different aspects of time; they may, at best, be conceived as two varying moods of the protagonists and in their minds they merge into a timeless entity. The action of the past becomes the action of the present; past is thus continually recreated. Gale's comment in this regard is significant: "Paradoxically, we are what the past has made us, yet we remake the past according to what we are." This is exactly the way Pinter has used the past of his characters to dominate and become the present. Anna's comment about the past in *Old Times* is applicable to the concepts of the past and memory in all of Pinter's plays.

Anna: 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.
The whole unreality of the past is brought out in this observation. The past is recollection of things that in all probability, never happened.

Gale considers *No Man's Land* as a play that comes between *The Homecoming* and *Landscape* in Pinter's thematic and stylistic evolution though it is written much later. He also calls it "a mixture which looks backward." It has a special significance because it recalls many of Pinter's earlier plays. The things that Spooner remembers are those that happened in other plays — "the exit through the door", "a door locked", "entrance of a stranger", "voice unheard" and "command from an upper floor". These bring to mind the familiar metaphor of the room the intrusion and the menace. The basic theme is also one of intrusion into the room. Both Hirst and Spooner use the past in a characteristic manner, to live in the present.

From his speech full of literary allusions it is evident that the past that Spooner recalls is not something that actually happened. Here is deliberate creation. Past is used to create a "self" that could communicate and establish contact with another human being. The memory presents Spooner as a person who has been alienated from the time of his birth.
Spooner: I looked up once into my mother's face. What I saw there was nothing less than pure malevolence. I was fortunate to escape with my life. You will want to know what I had done to provoke such hatred in my own mother. (26)

He emphasizes that he "derives his strength" from the fact that he has "never been loved". (26) He is a person who exists in a state of complete isolation in the realm of emotions. In their search for love or human contact Hirst and Spooner keep on remembering; Hirst recalls his dream which itself is incoherent. Spooner perceives that they are the inhabitants of "no man's land" which does not move, change or grow old but "remains...forever...icy...silent." (34) He asserts this again towards the end of the play. This assertion comes as an acceptance of the inevitability of alienation.

In *Landscape*, the past may be pure fantasy. It is definitely an evasion of the present. Beth and Duff are so estranged from each other, that communication is virtually impossible. Beth is sitting in an armchair away from the table where Duff is. They are "relaxed" and speak intermittently, but not to each other. Both are remembering the past. Beth's recollection of the seaside shows her yearning for an intimate relationship with a man. It is a
relationship which she misses in the present. Detaching herself completely from the life and the man around she is ruminating over the satisfaction she had derived from an earlier relationship. She tries her best to make time stand still and to feel that time has not done anything to her. In between the references to the past there is an assertion in the present tense "I am beautiful." This perhaps sums up the present frustration in her existence. The quality of being "beautiful" connects her past and present personalities. As she later says: "I could stand now. I could be the same. I dress differently, but I am beautiful." (12) In her present life she lacks the kind of narcissistic gratification that beauty and the man on the seashore gave her.

Sensuality is Beth's dominants trait. In her reveries she evokes pictures revealing this.

Beth: He touched the back of my neck. His fingers lightly, touching, lightly, touching, the back, of my neck. (13)

For her the sense of touch is very important especially since she misses it in the present. Sense of touch implies contact with another being and Beth seems to be obsessed with it. Another image she repeats and which she lacks in her present relationship is that of babies. She recalls
That she is an artist, a painter. But when she takes out her drawing pencil "there was nothing to draw. Only the beach and the sea." (18) She lives in a world where there is nothing significant. As she seeks meaning to her life, in a remarkably poetic passage, it is easy to perceive that she has lost meaning in her present life. (24) The play ends with Beth discovering her true love in a picture from her past, a picture of silence, sweetness, soft breath and the gentle sound of the tide.

In contrast to Beth's, Duff's memory is more recent signifying his closer relationship to the present. But in both, the past and present are equivalent to fantasy and reality. The distinction is hardly perceptible. This imparts a dream-like poetic quality to the play. It may be evasion on the part of Beth; evasion of experiences that increase tension and preoccupation with those that satisfy the ego. She lives in the play as a girl and not as a woman entering middle age. Sexual frustration pushes her into alienation and her defences further push her out of an awareness of time. Now she has reached the shore of a precarious calm. The readers' realization that reality is inevitably bound to disrupt and shatter her sooner or later gives the play its strength. Beth presents a picture of sensitivity, frustration and alienation— all these lead her
to a world of fantasy. When viewed psychologically, the man on the beach is a fantasy created with the elements of experience that would satisfy her. Pinter's opinion is that the man on the beach is Duff and Beth's image of Duff of the past, of the time when he loved her contain attributes of Mr. Sykes, her former employer also. Still then, the fantasy, or memory, is an evidence of her deep frustration and estrangement from life and love in the present.

In *Silence*, the memory of the three characters are closely interwoven, yet lack coherence thereby imparting an atmosphere of unreality. Martin Esslin observes that the play tries to portray "the way in which memory gradually fades in the process of living and ageing, the way in which the most intense emotions gradually flatten out and lose their impact and intensity." Here the past has lost its intensity and significance in the present; it is only faded memory. Even then the ultimate residue of existence turns out to be isolation since the characters in spite of their need and desire, cannot communicate and maintain a relationship. Rumsey voices his isolation.

Rumsey: There is no-one to tell me what is expected or not expected of me. There is nothing required of me.
Ellen's situation is equally desperate. She is a person who has forgotten herself.

Ellen: I sometimes wonder if I think

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But I couldn't remember anything I'd actually thought, for some time. (36)

When Bates offers to go out she refuses. She knows that she wants "to go somewhere else", but does not know where. (37) She cannot accept anything that Bates offers. Bates is also trapped in memory. Within the prison wall of their own minds the characters move about never seeing anyone and never talking. It is absolute silence around. Ellen waits for the sound of someone to tell her of reality. Pinter recreates their past from half-remembered things. Even in the memory life does not advance. At the end of the play the characters are still remembering the same events as at the beginning. It is a memory which may be "of today or of yesterday or of a long time ago". (46)

The three characters in the play are not old, yet in their minds they are suffering the pangs of lost youth. What they feel, in the present, is a kind of numbness, arising from frustration and loneliness. Since they have nothing to enliven their present state, they continue to
live in memory. It is evident that Rumsey, Ellen and Bates are in need of companionship, yet they avoid all kinds of communication and contact. Rudiger Imhof writes of the play, that the plot of the love affair stresses the loneliness of the characters and their inability to communicate because it shows that "even people in love are unable to establish any mutual understanding."

In *Old Times*, there is a continuous evocation of the past. Like Pinter's many other couples, Kate and Deeley too find that life has become boredom and stagnation. However there are enough remembrances to make the old times desirable. An occasion which necessitates a reunion of the two friends Anna and Kate, indicates their alienation which brings in the need for togetherness. Anna appears more isolated and in desperate need for affection. Apparently, this prompts her to forcibly draw Kate back into the past when she had sole right over her. *Old Times* is different from *Landscape* and *Silence* in that, here the characters are talking to one another. Between Anna and Kate, memory of the past brings in a fight for dominance. It is clear that they share a very close intimacy.

Kate has the power to create and kill the past, in the play because it is a past created through words. After Anna makes her appearance, it is through her memory that the
picture of Kate as a young girl is created. Kate appears as a lonely and sensitive girl, who longs to be like her ebullient companion. Her quality of detaching herself from time and space is seen in Anna's recollection: "Sometimes I'd look at her face, but she was quite unaware of my gaze." (26) Whenever Anna recalls the past she seems to be unaware of Kate's presence in the room, with her in the present. Kate is also a person who dislikes reality.

Kate: The only nice thing about a big city is that when it rains it blurs everything, and it blurs the lights from the cars, doesn't it, and blurs your eyes, ... (59)

This blurring of vision which she likes, is an indication of her desire to avoid clear vision and thereby reality. In her memory also Kate experiences loneliness. She often visits the seashore, it is a long beach with very few people. The seashore is a metaphor Pinter uses repeatedly to signify isolation and separation.

Anna can be considered a creation in Kate's memory. It is interesting that Kate recalls Anna, step by step through the suggestions and questions of Deeley. Like a psychiatrist, Deeley incites the hidden memory in Kate's mind. As the memory gets strong enough to be a persona, it emerges as Anna. Both Kate and Anna can be taken together
as two facets of the same personality. Anna is the kind of person Kate wanted to be in her youth. While Kate is reticent about their past relationship, Anna recalls in great detail their moments of intimate friendship. She remembers as if everything happened the day before and not twenty years ago. Anna may be Kate's other self, with which only she can become full. Even in their days together in London, the close intimacy she had with Anna complemented Kate's desires. Anna went out in Kate's underwear, which she happily lent to derive a vicarious satisfaction by being a person she desires to be but which she could not become. In Act One Kate is dominant at the beginning, gradually Anna emerges and subdues her. She is on the centrestage in Act Two. While Deeley and Anna talk Kate is insignificant andretires to the background. She interrupts in between to comment "I said you talk of me as if I am dead Now". (35) Towards the end of the play as Kate remembers her "dead" Anna ceases to exist. "She switches off the lamps, sits on her divan and lies down." (73) This. effacing of Anna by Kate strengthens the opinion that Anna is only a memory, a memory which Kate digs out with the help of Deeley. For Kate and Deeley the memory and the persona of Anna serve the purpose of revealing facets of their relationship at different stages. Anna highlights the lack of companionship and the
loneliness of their present lives which made it necessary for an old memory to surface.

Anna is part of Deeley and Kate, a part of their consciousness. In Deeley's memory, towards the end of the play, both Anna and Kate merge.

Deeley: She thought she was you... May be she was you. May be it was you, having coffee with me, saying little, so little. (69)

The memories of the characters have been altered by time according to their needs and desires. It is a past which happens in the present. Anna's remark, "how sensible and courageous of both of you to stay permanently in such a silence" points to their present situation. (19) They live in the silence of the past, where the present is absent; it is the silence of memory, when consciousness becomes memory. Bright lights at the end of the play suggest the end of the fantasy. As in the bedroom scene earlier, Deeley can choose only Kate; he too accepts Anna as a fantasy.

Night is a very short play resembling the other plays in its theme of memory. Here again, the past is used to enliven a present relationship; it provides a subject to think and talk about. In a perception of meaninglessness of relationships a meaningful past is an effort to provide satisfaction to the self.
In all these plays, the attempt by the characters to evade reality by creating an illusory past does not provide a lasting solution. Seeking an escape through fantasy is a defence against many of their present frustrations. But obsession with the past denies them the opportunity to live in the present. Beth in Landscape describes the play of shadow and light in her drawing.

Beth: Objects intercepting the light cast shadows. Shadows is deprivation of light. The shape of the shadow is determined by that of the object. But not always.... sometimes the cause of the shadow cannot be found. (28)

This is comparable to the play of fantasy and reality in the plays. The characters lack many things they desire like the utmost human need of communication and contact. But they prefer to stay in the shadows and to shape the shadows as they like. Their perceptions of light or reality are distorted by self-gratifying involvement in memory, hence they fail to find the cause of the shadow.
Notes


5 Richard Schacht, Alienation 121.


7 R.D. Laing, The Divided Self 83.


10 Steven H. Gale, Butter’s Going Up 175.
11 Harold Pinter, Old Times (London: Methuen, 1971) 32. All further references are incorporated within the text.
12 Steven H. Gale, Butter’s Going Up 200.
13 Harold Pinter, No Man’s Land (London: Methuen, 1975) 34, 59, 60, 68. All further references are incorporated within the text.
14 Harold Pinter, Landscape and Silence (London: Methuen, 1969) 10. All further references are incorporated within the text.
16 Martin Esslin, Pinter : A Study of His Plays 182.
17 Harold Pinter, Landscape and Silence 35. All further references are incorporated within the text.
18 Rudiger Imhof, “Pinter’s ‘Silence’ : The Impossibility of Communications” Modern Drama 17, 4 Dec. 1974, 457.