

Power, Discourse, and Knowledge

in

Harold Pinter's

The Birthday Party, The Dumb Waiter and The Caretaker

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Preface

In his dramatic works, Harold Pinter has tried to depict human relationship in the power struggle with tension, repression and threat between characters. The main aim of this book is to examine how Pinter has attempted to attack the abuse of power through discourse and knowledge forcefully by employing the critical potential of comedy. In fact, Pinter's comedy intends to uncover the truth concerning the use and abuse of power by those who hold it in order to dominate and subjugate the people in the world. Theories of power, discourse and knowledge by Michel Foucault are taken into consideration to carry out the present book to show how Harold Pinter intends to criticize authority by bringing plenty of humorous twist in his early plays namely *The Birthday Party*, *The Dumb Waiter* and *The Caretaker*. In Chapter one it will be discussed the destruction of individuality as a result of excessive verbal attacks by powerful characters who abuse of power and knowledge to operate situations to their own benefits. In chapter two it will be discussed how characters are manipulated and treated by the invisible authority who uses discourse and knowledge skillfully as weapons to exert his dominance over the least powerful character. In chapter three it will

argued that how the characters fight, protect and defend their territory and how interlocutor uses various linguistic strategies and knowledge for keeping others at a distance and of avoiding any threatening in an ongoing dynamics of power. Furthermore throughout the book the point, which will be highlighted, is the corruption of mankind and Pinter intends to criticize it by using comedy.

This book is retrieved from my Master thesis "Power of Comedy & Comedy of Power: A Foucauldian Reading Of Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*, *The Dumb Waiter* and *The Caretaker*" under supervision of Dr. Seyed Majid Alavi Shooshtari. My deepest gratitude goes to him for his vital support and assistance. His encouragement made it possible to achieve the goal.

Seyedeh Roghayeh Hojati Bonab

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