

# Bahman Forsi's The Vase and The Asylum and Harold Pinter's Absurdism

Mohammad Exir<sup>a</sup>, Alireza Anushiravani<sup>b\*</sup>, <sup>a</sup>PhD Candidate in English Language and Literature, Kish International Campus, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran, <sup>b</sup>Professor of Comparative Literature, Foreign Languages Department, Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran, Email: <sup>a</sup>[avinex2015@gmail.com](mailto:avinex2015@gmail.com), <sup>b\*</sup>[anushir@shirazu.ac.ir](mailto:anushir@shirazu.ac.ir)

The encounter between traditional Iranian society and Western modernity coinciding with the Constitutional Revolution, provided a background in which many political and social changes occurred. Modernity and its accompanying phenomena gradually changed people's life-style among which was the new genre of drama. Bahman Forsi, familiar with the Absurd Theatre, has created novel plays. The purpose of the present study is to compare Forsi's *The Vase* (1961) and *The Asylum* (1977) with Harold Pinter's plays. The researchers use the framework of literary communication studies to explain this influence. The methodology is based on the theories of François Jost and Siegbert Salomon Praver. Concerning influence studies and literary reception, these prominent comparatists have presented a scientific and concise method in their works. The findings of this study illustrate how Forsi, using the functions of language, characterisation, themes, and the elements of the Pinter's Theatre of the Absurd, has created the above-mentioned plays. He has appropriated this literary genre and thus enriched Persian literature.

**Key words:** *Bahman Forsi, Harold Pinter, The Vase, The Asylum, Absurd Theatre, influence, creativity.*

## Introduction

There is no precise date for dramatic performances in Iran, but Iranians have performed plays throughout history. Theatre, in its modern sense, has emerged in recent decades and is of European origin (Filippini, 2015, p.202). In the early twentieth century, between 1905 and 1911, the Iranian Constitutional Movement took place. The Constitutional Revolution not only brought about fundamental changes in Iranian political history but also transformed the social and cultural atmosphere of the country. This event was the result of confrontation between the traditional Iranian society and Western modernity that brought about changes in various aspects of Iranians' lives including art and literature. As a result of Iranians' acquaintance, and interaction, with Western culture and literature, the structure of the Iranian traditional play, which was more in the form of *Siah-Bazi* (comical acts on politics), *Ta'zieh* (Shi'i martyr plays) and *Naqqali* (comical acts on domestic life), also evolved and a new type of drama emerged.

The arrival of European theatre influenced and accelerated the modernisation process in Iran (p. 205). The return of Iranian students and scholars from the West brought about the arrival of Western culture and lifestyle. They translated works of Western playwrights, but their translations involved a complicated process: they were modified and simplified in accordance with the Iranian culture: proverbs and Persian stories were added; characters, names, places, and personality traits were appropriated, and ultimately, the text became more Persian rather than a mere translation (Ganjeh, 2017, p.21). In fact, the translator modified the text to suit the current Iranian conditions.

The increasing number of literate people, newspapers, and the relatively democratic atmosphere after the Constitutional Revolution, provided the ground for political activism and social movements, including the emergence of new theatre groups. A number of theatre groups and associations, such as *Anjoman-e Okhovvat* (1910) and *Tiatr-e Melli* (1910), used the translation of Western plays as well as plays by renowned Persian playwrights for political enlightenment (Shariati, 2016, p. 8). The plays of this period were mostly translated and / or adapted from European dramas, especially those of Mollier. The works of other authors such as Alexander Dumas, Friedrich Schiller, Eugene Labiche and Shakespeare were also translated and performed.

By the beginning of the 1960s, the translation of works by Chekhov, Beckett, Pinter, Ionesco, and so on, flourished, and Iranian playwriting altogether evolved into a Western modernism, existentialism, and Absurdism. This transformation took place in the works of playwrights such as Gholam-Hossein Sa'edi (1936-1985), Akbar Radi (1939-2007), Khosrow *Hakim Rabet* (b. 1930), Mohsen Yalfani (b.1943), Nasser Irani (1937-2018), and in its avant-garde

form, especially in the works of Bahman Forsi (b. 1933) and Abbas Na'ibandian (1947-1987).

Iranian community has been receptive to the Theatre of the Absurd. The translation and performance of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* was welcomed in Iran, due to its main motif, namely, *waiting*, which was taken into consideration by the Iranian traditional and religious society, considering waiting for the Twelfth Imam to appear as sacred and respectful.

From 1954 onwards, a new wave of translation of the works of Sartre, Camus, Ibsen, Arabal and especially Beckett and Ionesco began. In 1965, Davood Rashidi (1933-2016) translated and directed *Waiting for Godot* after which other translations were made by Saeed Imani, Sirus Tahbaz, Najaf Daryabandari, and others (Kamyabi Mask, 2006, pp. 420-21). In Iran, the Theatre of the Absurd seems to have had good fortune, and Bahman Forsi has not been alien to the original texts, translations, or performances of the Absurdist plays.

### **Significance and Objective of the Study**

Comparative Literature is the knowledge examining the relationships and literary interactions between different cultures and languages. One of the branches of research in Comparative Literature is the comparative study of literary schools, that is, how different cultures have interacted with, and influenced, one another. The aim of this study is to study the relationship between the school of Absurdism in Iran and the West through a comparative study of the works of an Iranian playwright and a Western one. To this end, we have chosen two prominent playwrights in Iran and England, Bahman Forsi and Harold Pinter, respectively. The former is a leading playwright of this school in Iran and the latter, one of the founders of this school in the West and the winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature. The main purpose of the study is to show how the social and historical context of Bahman Forsi's time provided the context for being influenced by this Western school and playwright, and how he has, through his literary creativity, appropriated this literary genre, and thus, enriched Persian dramatic literature.

The significance of this study is its emphasis on the discovery of the relationship between Forsi's Absurdism and that of Pinter's. The present researchers have attempted to show in what ways Forsi's theatre has been influenced by Pinter's, and how Forsi has appropriated, or Iranianised, these influences. They maintain that the primary purpose of studies in Comparative Literature is to find the relationship rather than doing mere comparison and contrast. *The Vase* (1961) is the first and *The Asylum* (1977) is among the latest of Forsi's plays. The reason for choosing these two plays is to show that Forsi has believed in, continued, and been faithful to, a particular style of Absurdism from the beginning to the end

of his writing career. The reason for choosing Pinter is that he is not only an Absurdist writer but also the founder of a particular style of Absurdist theatre known as *pinteresque*.

### **Theoretical Framework and Methodology**

The theoretical framework of this research is Comparative Literature. The purpose of Comparative Literature in its traditional form is to discover the relationships and literary influences among literatures of different nations and cultures. Neither the French school nor the American school of Comparative Literature has referred to 'comparison' as its goal. As Anushiravani (2019) maintains:

*Since its birth, the term comparative has always been problematic for Comparative Literature, and many have mistakenly assumed that the purpose of Comparative Literature is to compare two or more literary works from different languages and cultures. The nature of Comparative Literature is the study of literary and cultural interconnections and interactions among different nations and cultures, which is not a new phenomenon; however, until the early twentieth century, it has not been carried out academically and methodologically, it has been rather a matter of personal taste (p. 83).*

Comparative Literature is based on examining the similarities or differences in more than one literature. The present study uses the American school of Comparative Literature. Henry Remak says, "Comparative Literature is the study of literature beyond the confines of one particular country ... In brief, it is the comparison of one literature with another or others ..." (qtd. in Bassnett, 1979, p.31). François Jost (1974) categorises the study into four groups: Relations (Analogies and Influences); Movements and Trends; Genres and Forms; and Motifs, Types, and Themes (p. v).

Out of the four groups above, this study falls into two groups of literary relations and comparative studies of "movements and trends" which are essentially the same, and thus, providing the basis of the methodology of this paper. The purpose is not to list just the similarities but to discover why and how these similarities and differences have emerged.

### **Absurdism**

The origin of artistic Absurdism goes back to 1916 when a number of refugee artists, known as Dada, got together in Switzerland. Dadaism was the product of the artists' awareness of the uncontrollable society that sought to justify the irrational experiences of the 20th century, including World War I, by using rational justifications (Sandrow, 1972, p.16). In fact, they reflected the absurdity of rational principles and ideals of society, and highlighted artistic expression with independence of rational control.

On the other hand, the Theatre of the Absurd and Existentialism share common themes. Dorczak (1990) maintains that Existentialism emerged as the most fertile philosophy in the realm of the Absurd. She adds that Absurdism, relying on philosophical sources, was welcomed in the domain of the theatre in the 1950s (p.24). It was Martin Esslin who first employed this philosophical term in the field of drama; he also used “the Theatre of the Absurd” - sometimes called the "anti-theatre" – as the title of his book. Absurdism, and in particular Absurd Theatre, refers to the works of a group of European and American playwrights who were writing and producing plays during the 1950s and early 1960s.

Concerning the definition of the Absurd, various critics have offered their own views. Ionesco regards everything devoid of purpose as Absurd: “Cut off from his religious, metaphysical, and transcendental roots, man is lost; all his actions become senseless, absurd, useless” (qtd. in Esslin, 2001, p.23). Albert Camus (1979) holds that humanity is inherently eager to seek happiness and wisdom. He argues that “...in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, is properly the feeling of absurdity” (p.13).

In Iran, too, the word absurd has been translated as synonymous with a variety of terms such as nihilism, meaninglessness, nonsense, and the like, indicating the difficulty of translating the term. In fact, as mentioned earlier, anything that contradicts human rational expectations may be absurd. Therefore, in order to avoid misunderstanding, it may be useful to use the universal term of the Absurd Theatre.

### **Harold Pinter**

Harold Pinter belongs to the younger generation of playwrights following the founders of the Theatre of the Absurd. Although twenty-four years younger than Beckett, he is considered one of Britain's most influential modern playwrights, acknowledging the influence of Beckett and Kafka (Esslin, p. 290).

The chaotic and confusing condition of modern human beings, especially in the aftermath of World War II, is reflected in the plays of the period, presenting them as lost, alien, and hopeless creatures in a devastated society. The catastrophic post-war conditions led people to chaos and forced them to break ties and relationships. Pinter's great concern was the prevailing violence in the world, a source of inspiration for many of his plays. Pinter represents a chaotic world in which elements of fantasy and reality are intertwined. Despite Pinter's realistic approach, his use of such elements creates confusion and anxiety in the audience.

On the other hand, Pinter's plays are not about *something*; that *thing* is represented as part of the play. Meaning comes from the direct impact of events on stage. In addition, Pinter does not comment on the meaning of his plays but tends to have the audience catch it (Dukore, 1988, pp. 6-7). To understand the meaning, the audience needs to relate the words, silence, and events of the play to each other. Meaning is achieved by recognising the difference between what the characters say and what they do. In addition, Pinter offers a reversed definition of *dramatic irony*, that is, something happens onstage of which the audience is unaware and tries to understand the implied meaning, but the author and the characters are aware.

Although his plays fall within the context of the Theatre of the Absurd, concerning character, Von Paschen (2012) holds that Pinter, by using *comic relief*, reveals the threatening nature of several of his characters; this unique feature has been so remarkable for many critics that he is considered as the creator of the new genre of the *comedy of menace*. Von Paschen further adds that “the combination of sinister characters and witty, ironic dialogs” full of implied humour has led to the coining of the term *pinteresque*, to further illustrate “the sinister but comic” nature of his plays (p.80).

Pinter plays, Dukore believes, have a comic beginning, but they turn into physical, psychological, or potential violence, and sometimes a combination of all three (p.26). This may explain why he presented the comedy of menace to the world theatre. Therefore, the combination of humour and tragedy in his plays is important: it generates ambiguity, which in turn, according to Prentice, brings about fear and terror (p.40). Pinter employs comedy not for laughs but for his view of his characters’ inner world.

In addition, a sense of fear is conveyed through a confined space such as a room repeated in several of his plays. In these small rooms there are usually people who are in conflict with each other. They, Abu-Arja (2017) holds, may have either similar pasts and interests or be completely opposite to one another. Their presence in small spaces leads to conflicts that, in turn, brings about aggression and hostility (pp.113-14). Characters enjoy its security as long as they reside in such a place; by the arrival of the stranger–intruder, Chui (2013) notes, menace appears and the sense of security is undermined. Pinter uses this setting as a major means of developing conflict in his plays (p.6). *The Room* (1957), *The Birthday Party* (1957), *The Dumb Waiter* (1958), and *A Slight Ache* (1958) follow this pattern; in fact, characters seek at least a temporary shelter from something or someone whose intention is unknown to them or to the audience. In most of Pinter’s plays, there are characters who find security neither in their surroundings nor in their relationships with others, so they eventually have to cope with isolation and loneliness.

Like theme and plot, language and character are also of great importance. Speaking without a proper background is one of the features of the Theatre of the Absurd, indicating absurdity, chaos, or uncertainty. In many of Pinter's plays, language creates both confusion and disorientation; language is not used as a means of expressing the subject. In some of Pinter's early plays, the language of the characters - most of whom coming from the working class - is natural and ordinary, as if on a tape recorder, along with a mumbling, repetitiveness, poor grammar, incomplete sentences, inattention, sudden shifts of subjects, refusal or inability to leave a subject abandoned by another person and the like (Dukore, p. 4).

Pinter's characters, Dukore holds, use words and silences as a weapon in their conflicts. "no matter how one is addressed there is an implicit demand for a particular range of response. To respond within that range is to accept the relationship on the terms of the first speaker; to reply outside of that range is to qualify or reject the common ground of the relationship as envisaged by the first speaker." It is clear that, Dukore adds, the response to silence is often of the latter type (p. 59). In *The Caretaker* (1988), when Davies asks Aston to acknowledge that he will blame the man having attacked her, Aston's response is outside the range, merely saying, "I saw him have a go at you" (p.9); the second time Davies asks Mick what happens to him, Mick's silence means rejecting him.

On the other hand, it is difficult to discover the reality about the characters because Pinter, Abu-Arja holds, creates mysterious characters whose past and present are vague and uncertain. It is not easy to interpret them even if they talk about their past, for they may lie; it is, thus, almost impossible to distinguish truth, deception, or evasion (p. 118).

Pinter's characters are usually unable to handle their fears; besides, they cannot live comfortably against the threats posed by suspicions and facts. This fear is manifested in their meaningless actions. Pinter's characters are at the edge of the abyss, where they are alone; that is, when they return to their rooms, they are confronted with the basic problems of life which are, according to Esslin, loneliness, the mysterious universe, and death (p. 290).

Menace and fear are conveyed through both silences and words. Pinter's intended menace, Carter and McRae (2017) note, exists in the meaning of what is said and not said. His characters do not spend time with "memories, chats," or "tortured reflections"; they are less self-sufficient but more dependent on temporary relationships with each other (p.406). They are unable to predict various threats surrounding them; no stability is guaranteed, and threats are most often lurking outside. They strive, as Esslin maintains, to have a cosy place of their own to escape the cold and darkness enveloping them (p. 391). In *The Dumb Waiter*, Gus and Ben stay in the basement not knowing when and who they are ordered to kill, so when Gus goes out to drink water, Ben is told to kill him.

The characters' security is undermined in *The Birthday Party* too. Abu-Arja observes that audience faces the complexity of characters' relationships and how their past affects their present (p. 113). The characters seek in vain to escape their limitations, their past and past failures. When people are not able to recognise their limitations they may end in tragedy. If Stanley could have realised his position, abilities, and weaknesses, he would have survived the ultimate destruction. Pinter artfully shows that Stanley is the victim of his only crime: his birth. Life is then a great sin human beings commit.

### **Bahman Forsi**

It was not long after the establishment of the Theatre of the Absurd in Europe, particularly in France, that Bahman Forsi, influenced by the Western writers, introduced the Absurd Theatre in Iran. The frustrating atmosphere after the August 1953 coup d'état had a lasting impact on Iranian literature. Living in Iran, Forsi, has been exposed to such conditions and the desperate and absurd views. The themes of most of Forsi's plays are rooted in the social, cultural and political conditions of his society and those of the previous decades, having caused people's suffering and frustration. In terms of their physical, psychological, and social features, according to Rameshki (2014) and others, most of his characters are complex so that their actions and behaviour are unpredictable (pp. 100-01). While characters, Baniyadi (2014) notes, are often wasted and disappointed, the audience regards them as symbols of the society (p. 29).

Like Pinter's, Forsi's plays are not about *something*. Their main theme is social disintegration, inferred from what takes place onstage. Forsi highlights the chaotic world by employing numerous images: betrayal, prostitution, disrespecting and throwing away a father's corpse, abusing rather than treating the patients, misusing the position, and so on.

Threat, fear, anxiety and violence are key elements in *The Vase* and *The Asylum*; lots of marginal sounds such as machine guns, sirens, explosions, shooting and the like are heard (*Asylum*, 2015, pp.14, 15, 23 and *Vase*, 2014, pp. 34, 41, 65), each of which represents a threat in the outside world; this apprehension is expressed in the main characters' talks. Forsi maintains the existence of threats in what the characters say and do not say; he considers human achievements in vain and the product of determinism. In *The Vase*, he views love among people as a lie; his characters often hide their true selves and play roles for they know that the world is "a human-like lock" that cannot be unlocked (p.88).

Forsi employs a combination of tragic and comic as well as real and unreal events to highlight the anomalies of the society. In *The Vase*, the girl offers a comic description of her mother's disloyalty: Dad, "opening the door and entering the house ... sees two heads under the korsi! (Stool-like frame of wood covered all about with quilts and blankets and under

which a fire was placed for heating the legs in winter) ...one of which was probably mine or that of Fakhr Sadat's son whom my Mom breastfed" (p. 22). In *The Asylum*, a comic description of the phenomenon of illegitimate children is presented: "The baby is a living being, a co-product of a woman and her department's chief of staff, but since it must be admitted that it somehow resembles the mother of the grandmother's mother, based on the laws, the man! will own it" (pp. 85-86). By using the combination of fantasy and reality, in *The Vase*, the image of the dead mother in the frame gets back to life, and the characters' lucky star becomes alive. In *The Asylum* too, Khoosheh refers to "electronic flowers, neutron nightingales..." (p.41); at the end of the play, there is a bright halo around her head too.

Like Pinter, Forsi too uses reversed dramatic irony: In *The Vase*, after her father's death, the girl expects more opportunities in her relationship with the boy, but the boy is reluctant. The audience is not aware of the girl's future, the boy and the writer are though. Likewise, in *The Asylum*, the audience does not know why Khoosheh and Dr. Tooma stay in the asylum, but they themselves and the writer know that the reason is to make love more freely.

Enclosed space is also important to Forsi. In *The Vase*, the girl finds her fragile tranquility and relative security in being locked up at home and in no connection with society. When the neighbour enters, the girl regards him as an intruder that may endanger her brittle peace. Also in *The Asylum*, Khoosheh's entering the enclosed space of the asylum disrupts its tranquillity and disturbs Dr. Tooma and Khanoom Bozorg. This is why Khoosheh is seen as an intruder disrupting the peace and activity process of the place.

Forsi too finds security vulnerable; that is, confined space does not guarantee security. In *The Vase*, this vulnerability is shown in the father's view of a daughter who is very probable to become a victim of her own lust or that of other men. In *The Asylum*, Khosrow, not liking Khoosheh's way of rearing their son, Shiva, plays the role of a mental patient to help her treatment, unaware of the fact that not only does Shiva's problem remain but Khoosheh is also sexually abused. In the end, neither Shiva's problem is solved nor Khoosheh is cured but all family members are victimised.

Due to the menace, Forsi's characters are often reluctant to communicate. The few dialogues between them rarely end favourably, so they have to cope with isolation and loneliness. About half of the characters in *The Vase* do not speak at all; the father speaks a few sentences in the second scene and the neighbour just talks in the third one. Also, some conversations are interrupted, repetitive, or irrelevant, causing the audience's confusion. In addition, after the brief but hostile dialogue between the father and daughter, the father dies; after the conversation between the neighbour and the girl, the neighbour is expelled; after the conversation between the boy and the girl in both the first and the fifth scenes the boy runs away; and in the fourth scene, the girl talks to herself and, after turning over her mother's

photo frame and throwing out her father's corpse, suddenly feels lonely, starts crying out for lack of a supporter (p.47). In *The Asylum* too, with the exception of Khoosheh, Dr. Tooma, and Khanoom Bozorg, other characters only speak, but no communication is formed. All of *Mard-e Mashin's* sentences are irrelevant and make the relative relationship between the audience and the text fragile. The radio is also heard continuously, which is used by Forsi to fill the communication gap.

Like Pinter's, Forsi's characters are unable to predict danger. In *The Vase*, after the death of her father (symbol of restrictive tradition), the girl, imagining her freedom and liberation from tradition, gets excited and sexually surrenders herself to the boy; the boy, however, comparing her to a falling rootless tree and her life to a glass stinky vase, abandons her. It is then that she sees herself as a worthless creature and life as absurd: "Night? Day! Bitter? Sweet! Cold? Warm! Cooked? Raw! Full? Hungry! Sleep? Awake! Absurd? ... Full! No, full is the opposite of empty. Absurd? ... Absurd? What is the opposite of Absurd? No word is its opposite?" (p.46) So the girl has to accept loneliness and isolation in a tumultuous world and adapt to it. In fact, at the end of the play, the girl experiences a duplicated beginning. In *The Asylum* too, Dr. Tooma and Khoosheh, having mental problems, spend their time in the asylum in order to be apparently safe against outside menace, as well as free from the constraints of traditional life. To escape her loneliness, Khoosheh takes refuge in the asylum. Without anticipating the possible dangers, she sexually surrenders herself to Dr. Tooma, but is warned by Khosrow's slap. After this, she is frequently blamed, and abandoned, by Dr. Tooma, and her problems get more acute. Eventually, she is admitted as a mental patient and, in fact, returning to the starting point, re-experiences her loneliness.

Forsi does not provide his characters' details and backgrounds. In *The Vase*, he does not even mention their names: *Ensan-e Lang* (Crippled Man), *Ensan-e Koor* (Blind Man), *Koodak-e Velgard* (Vagabond Child), *Dokhtar* (Girl), *Pesar* (Boy), *Pedar-e Dokhtar* (Girl's Father), *Madar-e Dokhtar* (Girl's Mother), and *Mard-e Hamsayeh* (Neighbouring Man). Instead of sheltering the Blind Man crossing the street, the Vagabond Child uses him as his own shelter. At the end of the play, this same child snatches the Crippled Man's hat and runs away. Also in *The Asylum*, characters are Dr. Tooma, *Pesarak-e Rooznamehforoosh* (Newspaper-selling Boy), Khoosheh, Khosrow, *Khanoom Bozorg* (Old Lady), *Dokhtar*, *Mard-e Mashin* (Man of the Machine), *Mard-e Sefidpoosh* (White-Dressed Man), male and female patients and the nurses. By choosing the asylum, characters most of whom are mentally ill, the repetitive presence of the Newspaper-selling Boy (transferring frightening news), and Man of the Machine, Forsi highlights the destructive impact of mechanical life on the human mind.

A society that, through the influence of Western modernity, is gradually transforming and putting away traditions does not stand a patriarchis. Both the girl in *The Vase* and Khoosheh

in *The Asylum* try not to confine themselves to traditional life, and seek out-of-the-ordinary relation with men, ultimately leading to their physical and psychological misery. Boasting about sending a son (Shiva) to Europe for education and living, and using French and English words by Man of the Machine (pp. 21-3) and Dr. Tooma (p. 91) also show the influence of Western culture and life among Iranians. On the other hand, Dr. Tooma makes good use of the proverbs and metaphors of Iranian culture (pp. 87 and 92). In this way, Forsi uses the context of traditional Iranian society to create his Absurdist plays.

## Conclusion

*The Vase* and *The Asylum* have features based on which Forsi is placed among the Absurdist writers. Characters, language, plot and structure in his plays distance them from realistic ones, bringing them closer to the Absurd Theatre. No especial event takes place in his works; they lack a specific beginning or end; the narrative is non-linear; the plot appearing gradually is circular: the ending of the play is its beginning. The plot's disordered structure, illogical events, combination of fantasy and reality and comedy and tragedy, are features of the Theatre of the Absurd. Forsi does not explicitly convey an image of absurdity but implicitly applies the elements of Absurdism in an Iranian context, in an Iranianised way.

Moreover, Pinter's audience mostly views absurdity while Forsi's mostly hears about issues related to absurdity. Pinter's Absurdism is contained in the text and themes, while Forsi's is often concerned with the subject. Concerning their significance, marginal sounds in Forsi's plays are equal to, and sometimes more important than, the text, while in Pinter's, the text enjoys priority. This may be due to the nature of Iranian society where feelings and emotions (margins) are often involved in decision making (text). Also Pinter is capable of clearly portraying the shortcomings and problems of the social classes, but Farsi, due to the lack, and development, of social class – which is the result of absence of political, cultural, and economic stability - is unable to deal with such issues explicitly. Pinter does not face censorship to obstruct his explicit political protest, while in the case of Forsi, due to political restrictions, this aspect is not very impressive. Therefore, Forsi has to employ irony, metaphor, and symbol in order to avoid censorship. Pinter sees the world as so chaotic that the urns to silence rather than language, while Forsi uses language rather than silence. It may be due to the traditional and religious nature of Iranian society that Forsi, in order to preserve and respect values, does not display life in a totally devastated and corrupt way; he rather leaves some rays of hope. In addition, despite the advent of Western modernism in Iranian society, traditional structures such as patriarchy, gender inequality, etc. still operate, thus differentiating Forsi's approach from Pinter's. Regarding all these, it can be said that, despite the similarities, Forsi appropriates the elements of Pinter's Absurdism in an Iranian context employing them in *The Vase* and *The Asylum*.



## Acknowledgement

The authors would like to share their gratitude to University of Tehran for sharing their pearls of wisdom with us.

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