



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**ABSURDITY IN THE LITERARY WORKS OF
ALBERT CAMUS AND SAMUEL BECKETT**

ASHKAN SHOBEIRI

FBMK 2011 29

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**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

2011

**ABSURDITY IN THE LITERARY WORKS OF
ALBERT CAMUS AND SAMUEL BECKETT**

By

ASHKAN SHOBEIRI

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, University Putra Malaysia,
In the Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

December 2011

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Chairperson: Associate Professor Wan Roselezam bt. Wan Yahya, PhD

Faculty: Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication

This research has a focus to reexamine and hence reevaluate the concept of the absurd, philosophically and separately, through selected works of Albert Camus's *The Outsider* and *The Myth of Sisyphus*, and Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and *Endgame*. In this attempt, I clarify how the two authors represent the absurdity of the human condition. Moreover, this study directs much of its attention on the comparison between Camus's and Beckett's absurdism, in order to elicit more differences than similarities regarding the absurd. Through identification of a gap which indeed appears from comparison of their selected literary works, it becomes possible to renew essential ideas and concepts that the two authors have ventured into.

Although the absurdity and meaninglessness of life are both to be found in the oeuvres of Camus and Beckett, yet their conclusions of the issue are different. What differentiates their absurdism is the message that the absurd carries on in their oeuvres, regarding the question of why awareness of the absurd emerges differently in their stories' characters. While Camus's characters are happy and courageously accept their destiny, along with their awareness of the absurdity of the world, Beckett's characters are hopeless and helpless. While Beckett leaves his audience in the dark well of the absurd, Camus shows a path to his readers to move forward and not stay in the dark.

By way of offering conclusion, it is possible to be inspired by the absurd to appreciate life. As Camus leaves Sisyphus at the foot of the mountain, it is an absurd man who makes the absurdity of his existence meaningful by creating his own meanings. By dealing with Camus's absurdism, one is being guided in how the absurd can help one have a more profound vision and understanding of one's very own existence and a realistic function in our new world.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**KEANEHAN DALAM HASLI KARYA
ALBERT CAMUS DAN SAMUEL BECKETT**

Oleh

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Kajian ini bertumpukan kepada pengkajian serta penilaian semula konsep keanehan melalui sudut falsafah secara bandingan menggunakan hasil-hasil karya terpilih Albert Camus iaitu *The Outsider* dan *The Myth of Sisyphus*, serta hasil-hasil karya Samuel Beckett iaitu *Waiting for Godot* dan *Endgame*. Dalam percubaan ini, saya menjelaskan bagaimana kedua-dua pengarang mempamerkan keanehan manusia. Tambahan pula, kajian ini bertumpukan kepada perbezaan konsep keanehan melalui perbandingan antara hasil-hasil karya Camus dan Beckett. Dengan mengenalpasti jurang yang timbul daripada perbandingan hasil-hasil karya terpilih ini, idea-idea dan konsep-konsep penting yang diketengahkan oleh kedua-dua pengarang ini boleh diperbaharui.

Walaupun unsur-unsur keanehan dan kehilangan makna hidup boleh ditemui di dalam karya-karya agung Camus dan Beckett, namun kesimpulan mereka mengenai isu-isu

tersebut adalah berlainan. Apa yang membezakan unsur keanehan tersebut adalah pesanan yang dibawa oleh karya-karya mereka yang melibatkan personalan mengapa kesedaran terhadap keanehan muncul dan berbeza dalam watak-watak ciptaan mereka. Walaupun watak-watak Camus kelihatan gembira dan berani menghadapi nasib mereka melalui kesedaran tentang keanehan duniawi, watak-watak Beckett kelihatan tidak berharapan dan tidak berkemampuan. Walaupun Beckett meninggalkan para penonton di dalam telaga gelap keanehan, Camus menunjukkan laluan kepada para pembacanya untuk mara ke hadapan dan tidak kekal di dalam kegelapan.

Sebagai kesimpulan, konsep keanehan boleh dimanfaatkan untuk menjana inspirasi dalam menghargai kehidupan. Apabila Camus meninggalkan Sisyphus di kaki gunung, keanehan seseorang itu membuatkan keanehan kewujudannya bermakna dengan terciptanya makna tersendiri. Melalui pengendalian konsep keanehan dalam hasil-hasil karya Camus, seseorang itu dipandu oleh unsur keanehan yang boleh membantunya untuk mencapai visi dan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang kewujudan yang memberikannya sesuatu fungsi yang nyata di dalam dunia yang baharu.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my thesis supervisor, Associate Prof Dr Wan Roselezam Wan Yahya, for all her advice, patient guidance, valuable suggestions, support and time. I am also grateful of two committee members Dr Arbaaya Ali Termizi and Dr Kamariah bt. Kamarudin. Special thanks to Kamran Eshraghiyan, a great professor and a patient mentor. Last but the most important, I am always thankful for the love and support of my parents.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 6 December 2011 to conduct the final examination of **Ashkan Shobeiri** on his thesis entitled “**Absurdity in the Literary works of Albert Camus and Samuel Beckett**” in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declared that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

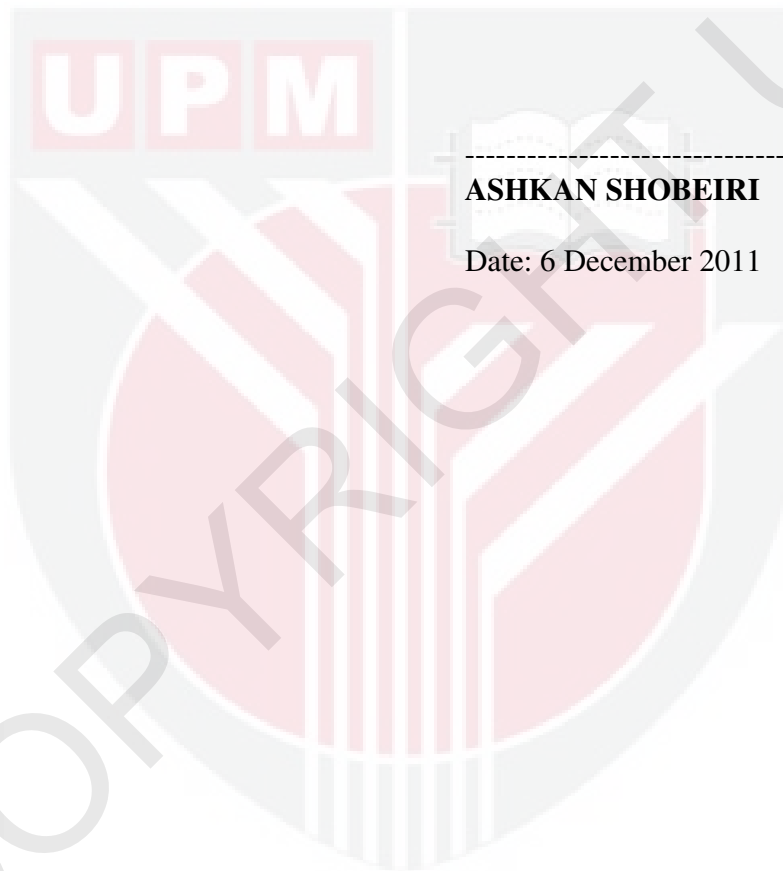


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