



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***THE GROTESQUE IN SELECTED MODERN PERSIAN
AND POST-WAR BRITISH SHORT STORIES***

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**THE GROTESQUE IN SELECTED
MODERN PERSIAN AND POST-WAR BRITISH SHORT STORIES**

By

NAHID SHAHBAZI MOGHADAM

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

June 2013

DEDICATION

To my Parents

For their Unfailing Love and Support throughout my Life



Abstract of thesis presented to the senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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June 2013

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The grotesque enjoys a long history and a wide range of theoretical discussions which provide various, sometimes diverse, interpretations of this artistic and literary genre. While some scholars discuss the grotesque in association with related fields of study such as psychology or philosophy, some others basically focus on the grotesque itself. From a different perspective, the grotesque is also considered as a subject of study in terms of any or all the three levels of production; author (artistic mind), work (creation) and reader response (reception).

The present study concentrates on the theories of the grotesque per se, and it is basically involved with work and partly with reception, considering that some elements of the grotesque are related to the effects it produces. This research discusses the grotesque as a focal image and mode of representation, based on a pattern developed from its recurrent elements. Accordingly, the recurrent features of the grotesque are drawn from the scholarship and are then classified and developed into hallmarks constituting the framework presented by this study.

The grotesque, as a subcategory of Western aesthetics in art and literature, is also studied in this dissertation for its adaptability and extension to non-Western literature, namely short fiction. The study is thus devoted to a textual reading of selected Modern Persian as well as Post-war British short fiction. It is sought to trace the grotesque through its basic pattern in the interpretation of works from both literary traditions. In this regard, pairs of stories are thematically matched through motifs potentially associated with the grotesque. This is in line with the methodological approach to comparative studies, which requires a point of departure as the rationale for the comparison.

Four sections in two discussion chapters are devoted to textual analysis of four pairs of stories. Textual analysis for each section initiates with a discussion on the common motif and is followed by close readings of both stories in the pair, which are read and interpreted in their depiction of the grotesque. A final section on each story pair concludes on the commonalities due to grotesque representations and elaborates on the variations of grotesque fiction as portrayed. This implies that the classification of grotesque fiction and its interrelatedness with the fantastic and caricature are also elaborated on. This study suggests that common misunderstandings and interpretive contradictions surrounding the meaning and the structure of the grotesque have most to do with its variations and interrelatedness, which can be best explicated in terms of its comprising a basic pattern with flexibility for its merger with other terms and modes.

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

**ASPEK “GROTESQUE” DALAM CERITA PENDEK TERPILIH
PARSI MODEN DAN INGGERIS SELEPAS PERANG**

Oleh

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Aspek “grotesque” mendapat tempat meluas dalam sejarah dan perbincangan teori yang memberikan pelbagai tafsiran berbeza terhadap genre seni dan sastera. Walaupun sesetengah cendekiawan membincangkan aspek “grotesque” sebagai suatu cabang ilmu yang berkaitan dengan bidang psikologi atau falsafah, sesetengah mereka yang lain pula menumpukan kepada aspek “grotesque” itu sendiri. Daripada perspektif yang berbeza, aspek “grotesque” juga dianggap sebagai subjek kajian dari segi mana-mana atau semua tiga peringkat produksi; pengarang (minda seni), karya (penciptaan) dan sambutan pembaca (penerimaan).

Kajian ini tertumpu kepada teori aspek “grotesque” itu sendiri dan pada dasarnya melibatkan karya (penciptaan) dan sebahagiannya dengan penerimaan, mengambil kira bahawa beberapa elemen dalam aspek “grotesque” ini adalah berkaitan dengan kesan-kesan yang dihasilkannya. Justeru, tesis ini membincangkan aspek “grotesque” sebagai imej tumpuan dan mod perwakilan, berdasarkan corak asas yang dibangunkan daripada unsur-unsur pengulangan. Sehubungan itu, ciri-ciri pengulangan aspek “grotesque” diambil daripada sumber sastera dan seterusnya

dikelas dan dibangunkan menjadi tanda yang membentuk corak asas yang dibentangkan oleh kajian ini.

Aspek “grotesque” sebagai sebuah sub kategori estetika Barat dalam seni dan sastera, juga dikaji dalam disertasi ini untuk penyesuaian kepada kesusasteraan bukan Barat, iaitu fiksyen pendek. Kajian ini dikhususkan untuk teks bacaan terpilih fiksyen pendek Parsi Moden dan Inggeris selepas Perang. Ia berhasrat untuk memaparkan aspek “grotesque” melalui corak asas dalam tafsiran karya daripada kedua-dua tradisi sastera ini. Dalam hal ini, pasangan cerita dipadankan secara bertema melalui corak yang berpotensi untuk dikaitkan dengan aspek “grotesque.” Ia adalah selaras dengan pendekatan metodologi kepada kajian perbandingan yang memerlukan satu ciri asas sebagai rasional dalam membuat perbandingan.

Bagi setiap empat pasang cerita, perbincangan awal pada corak biasa diikuti oleh bacaan terperinci kedua-dua cerita dalam setiap pasangan, yang kemudiannya dibaca dan ditafsirkan menerusi aspek “grotesque” yang dipaparkan. Satu bahagian akhir setiap pasangan cerita menyimpulkan persamaan terhadap kewujudan aspek “grotesque” dan menghuraikan tentang variasi fiksyen aspek “grotesque” seperti yang ditonjolkan. Ia menunjukkan bahawa klasifikasi fiksyen aspek “grotesque” serta saling perkaitannya dengan kehebatan dan karikatur juga turut dihuraikan.

Kajian ini mendapati bahawa kesalahfahaman biasa dan percanggahan tafsiran terhadap makna dan struktur aspek “grotesque” itu adalah disebabkan oleh variasi dan saling perkaitannya, yang sebaiknya boleh dihuraikan dari segi ia terdiri daripada corak asas yang fleksibel untuk penggabungannya dengan terma dan mod lain.

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I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 11 June 2013 to conduct the final examination of Nahid Shahbazi Moghadam on her thesis entitled “The Grotesque in Selected Modern Persian and Post-War British Short Stories” in accordance with the Universities and University College Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia (PU. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy.

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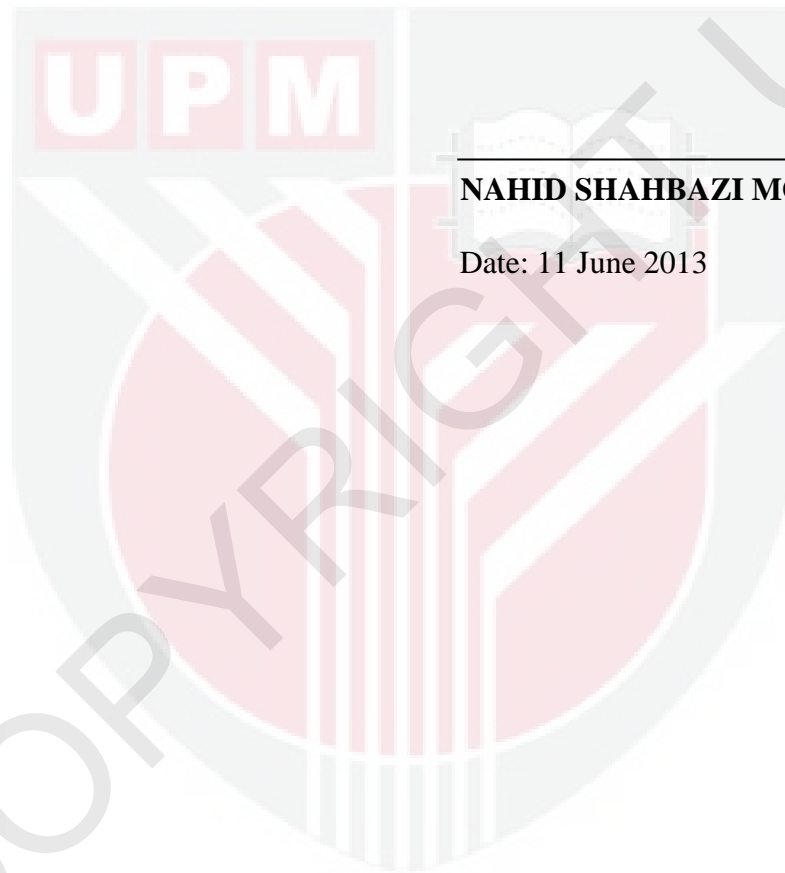
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DECLARATION

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



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Date: 11 June 2013

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