

**Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctorate in
Philosophy, Department of Philosophy, Macquarie University**

Thesis Title:

**ALBERT CAMUS' MORAL PHILOSOPHY
AND THE ETHICS OF TRAGIC FREEDOM**

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SUMMARY

This thesis aims to examine the key philosophical premises of Albert Camus' moral and political thinking by retracing as yet unacknowledged philosophical influences that form the core of his tragic vision of human freedom. The first part focuses on the fundamental influence of his encounter with Christian and ancient metaphysics discussed in his early dissertation on Christian Metaphysics and Neoplatonism, and then examines the similarities he shared with the materialist theories of Ludwig Feuerbach and the Marquis de Sade, which, I argue, impacted on Camus' own conception of the tragic paradigm of Nature, God, and Man, as well as his philosophy of the Absurd. This is followed by an analysis of his reaction to German philosophy, notably Hegel, the influence of Nietzsche on Camus' concept of the Will to Happiness, and how these determined his views on nihilism.

The latter chapters are devoted to Camus' relationship to the philosophy of existentialism, both Christian and Marxist, with the attempt to dispel the common designation of his belonging to either of these two schools of thought, and to highlight the originality of Camus' own position, despite the themes he shared with them. Chapter Six examines his early connection to communism and how the two traditions of liberal and revolutionary socialism influenced his political ethics, with particular attention paid to the subject of poverty, and the views he expressed in his journalistic articles in Algeria on the Misery of Kabylie and later in *Combat*. It also considers his views on Utopian thinking, teleological ideologies, and the consequences of historicism, based on both Christian and German philosophical traditions. The final chapter examines his philosophy of revolt in *The Rebel*, the concept of Nemesis, and how these relate to natural law theory as a major influence on his philosophical ideas of morality and ethics.

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT

I hereby declare that this work has not been submitted for a higher degree to any university or institution other than Macquarie University. I am the sole author of this thesis, and all references to the work of others and the sources used have been clearly cited.

Signed:

Date: October 31, 2011

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