

## REPETITION IN ANUAR NOR ARAI'S *VACUUM*

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### ABSTRACT

One of the most significant features in dramatic conversation in Theatre of the Absurd is repetition. The technique is to signify the nonsensical dialogue as a form of communication between people which is perceived to be futile. It is a common marker for any absurd play to indicate that too many words lead to more confusion thus leading us far away from understanding the significant philosophical underpinnings. This paper intends to focus on the appropriation of absurd techniques which is the repetition of words and phrases experimented by the late Anuar Nor Arai in his play, *Vacuum* during the period of Experimental Theatre. It examines the technique used that is applicable to the theatre in Malaysia, especially in relation to the local social changes and political scenarios. His experimentation had given an insight of a soul who is confused and lost in finding his identity in a vortex of change in Malaysia's new, restructured society.

**Keywords:** absurd theatre; experimental theatre; repetition technique; nonsensical dialogue; Anuar Nor Arai

### ABSTRAK

Salah satu teknik yang terpenting dalam mempamerkan bentuk perbualan didalam Teater Absurd adalah teknik pengulangan kata-kata. Teknik pengulangan ini menunjukkan dialog yang tidak logik diterima akal. Ia juga merupakan penanda kepada teater absurd yang ingin menonjolkan bahawa perbualan sentiasa menjadi alat untuk mengalih perhatian manusia dari membincangkan isu yang sebenar. Maka, dengan itu, falsafah yang mendasari teater ini cuba menunjukkan perbualan tanpa makna dan lari dari membincangkan isu sebenar adalah sia-sia. Kajian ini akan memfokuskan teknik pengulangan yang digunakan oleh penulis, allyarham Anuar Nor Arai dalam teaternya, *Vakum* pada ketika zaman teater Eksperimental. Kajian ini juga akan menunjukkan bagaimana teknik pengulangan masih lagi relevan untuk mengutarakan isu-isu berkaitan dengan perubahan sosial dan senario politik di negara ini secara amnya. Eksperimen beliau telah berjaya menelusuri derita saraf yang dialami oleh insan-insan yang terkeliru dan tersepit ditengah-tengah arus perubahan di negara sendiri.

**Kata kunci:** teater absurd; teater eksperimental; teknik pengulangan; dialog tidak logik; Anuar Nor Arai

## INTRODUCTION

The change of political scenarios in the 1970s had left many with uncertainties of the future of the country. National policies were restructured and new ones were introduced and implemented. We could easily read national history to follow what had happened during this period, nevertheless little do we pay much attention to what was exactly happening within the society in confronting the changes. However, we could grasp the actual scenarios through the work of arts as many artists had tried to portray this tumultuous period of change. Playwrights such as Anuar Nor Arai intended to portray the confusion of the individuals in coping with the vortex of transformation through his play, *Vacuum*. It highlighted that change was indeed inevitable, and yet many were found to be still be confined in an old fashioned dogmatism.

This paper intends to highlight the appropriation of absurd techniques in the translated version of Anuar Nor Arai's *Vacuum* which was published in 1993. Absurd theatre techniques are cleverly employed by the playwright in order to give an insight into the delicate situation prevalent as the Theatre of the Absurd was deemed to be extremist and atheistic by many scholars. Anuar Nor Arai had subtly experimented with repetition technique particularly that has enabled him to illustrate the innermost thoughts of men when confronted with conflicts and changes in life. His method of appropriation of these techniques was unique and made this play different from any typical absurd plays originated from the West.

### THE RISE OF THEATRE OF THE ABSURD IN MALAYSIA

The rise of absurd plays in Modern Malay theatre was believed during the period of political upheaval following the tragedy of May the 13<sup>th</sup> riot. The influence of the Theatre of the Absurd is believed to have emerged in Malaysia during the political upheaval following the tragedy of May 13<sup>th</sup> 1969 riot[1] Tracing back to the origins of absurd theatre, it was an anti-literary movement in the 20<sup>th</sup> century that was born and nurtured in Europe during the post-World War II era. The existentialist notions and impression of pessimisms, which arose after the terrible and horrifying war, had led to the birth of this form of theatre. Some of the European playwrights questioned the truism of the so-called progress, civilization, and the reality of individuals in their plays.

In Malaysia, the influence of the Theatre of the Absurd on the Malay playwrights occurred very much later; especially in the early 1970s when the Malay playwrights were confused and were seeking new alternatives as an approach to theatrical production. Krishen Jit once mentioned "what distinguishes each play from the next and brings out a response from many playwrights in each generation, are the political events, which have shaped and scarred the country"[2]. Therefore, events such as the May, 13<sup>th</sup> 1969 riot became a starting point for the restructuring of the society, especially for the Malays. Solehah Ishak pointed out in her article, "Trends of Modern Malay Theatre" that, as a response to the riot, the government began to strengthen the Acts and new ones were introduced. The New Economic Policy was introduced as a solution to eradicate the economic problems faced by the Malays. The policy which was implemented on July 1st, 1969 had encouraged the Malays to leave their *kampungs* to move to urban areas to

venture into labour intensive industries and obtain the 30% of the Malay equity capital (163). According to Solehah, the change in political and social milieu had indeed brought a significant change to the Modern Malay Theatre in that period. She added that events such as May the 13<sup>th</sup>, resulted in a more earnest and serious response from the local playwrights. She further mentioned it was the period that playwrights were more sensitive towards the changes inherent in the society. “The anger, hopelessness, turmoil and chaos prevalent in their society are reflected in the abstract plays of this decade as dramatists grope to find meaning and give direction to their shattered and splintered milieu” (170). It can be said that Theatre of the Absurd had become an alternative tool to channel the playwrights’ response, insights and feelings towards the social changes in the society at that time. The racial riot led to the requisitioning of national identity and purpose, which affected a wide range of spheres of Malaysian life.

With regards to style, the playwrights of this era tended to experiment with new approaches in combination with traditional theatre techniques. The new approaches not only reinforced Malay culture but also gave the plays a dynamic contemporary meaning and image (Nur Nina Zuhrah, 1992: 145). It was during this time, that many playwrights had a strong tendency to experiment with the absurd theatre. The struggle within an individual self, became one of the most experimented subject matter in these works, in which it resembles a soul who was confused in the vortex of change in the new society. Hence, the absurd technique was deemed fit to portray the struggles within an individual who intended to seek his roots and identity as the absurd techniques contain strong allegorical elements[3]. Therefore the strong allegorical elements became a suitable mode for the playwrights to express their insights in their works.

A closer look at the works that were produced by these playwrights of the 1970s, shows that their works give primary attention to individual existence. More accurately the plays presented psychological dilemmas experienced by most of the characters in the plays (Nur Nina Zuhrah & Rahmah Bujang, 1988: 144). The plays that were written during this period reflect on the issues that are existential and commonly represented by individuals who are caught in self-conflict to find the meaning of life. The playwrights depicted the dilemmas and confusion in their works through the characters in the plays. The pain and confusion further reflect the playwrights’ insights and their concerns over social issues which were prevalent then. (Mohd. Ramli Raman, 1991: 21-23). While the priority of realistic plays is to have a realistic representation, absurd plays on the other hand highlight conflicts of the individual self and provide insights into the truths and meanings in life.

Anuar Nor Arai is found to apply the common techniques that many other experimental playwrights had employed in this era. The common absurd techniques applied would be repetitive and nonsensical words which are evident in the dialogues. It is perceived that the experiment made by many playwrights during this period is more like an attempt to produce something different in the concept of the Malay absurd. However, it is found here that the experimentations made by Anuar Nor Arai were not widely accepted by the local theatre critics and the audience. This is mainly because the plays were distinguished to be vague and difficult to be understood (Nur Nina Zuhrah, 1992: 154). As a result, the absurd plays have created confusion among the audience, as they cannot comprehend the meaning that the playwrights intended to bring.

The rise of the Theatre of the Absurd during the period of Experimental Theatre is perceived as an unfavourable development in Malay theatre. Since Malaysian society is still basically religious, western influences on the absurd plays which contravene with Islamic values, are looked upon as elements that negate religious values. This phenomenon which is closely related to the origins of the absurd and its epistemology has created much confusion among the audience and most of the local theatre critics. The advent of Islamic revivalism in Malay theatre in the 1980s had eliminated any possibility of the absurd play sustaining its popularity in the Malay theatrical arena.

In relation to this, looking at the plays closely, it is found that most absurd works are not as simple as it might seem or even as absurd as it was once labelled. The plays are indeed philosophical. Mohd. Ramli Raman mentions that in accordance with some sociological issues raised by the playwrights, the characters displayed in the absurd plays are actually searching for a man's dignity in the essence of life (1991:17, 21-23). The absurd level in these works reveals the search of an insatiable soul finding the meaning of life. He suggested that these absurd plays are somehow not just a simple application of the absurd elements. Indeed these absurd plays are by nature very existentialistic and bring the audience into a metaphysical perspective. Mohd. Ramli Raman indicates that absurd plays are solely highlighting the tumult of the internal conflicts experienced by humans in finding the authenticity of life (Mohd. Ramli Raman, 1991: 22). His notion seems to conform with the earlier findings by Abdul Rahman Napiah or Mana Sikana (1983: 20) in his book, *Esei dan Kritikan Drama*, that most absurd plays that were written during the period of experimental theatre such as Anuar Nor Arai's *Vacuum* can be categorized as 'metadrama' or metaphysical drama.

Most of the works that were produced during the reign of the Experimental Theatre in the 1970s reflect a strong basis of the absurd elements. Rahmah Bujang and Nur Nina Zuhrah commented that not many playwrights intended to delve into the individual existential and psychological dilemmas, or even attempt to raise local concerns at the universal level. The playwrights are more focused on their responsibilities to raise the issues at hand and "thus made the works to be socially oriented"(1988: 144). Anuar Nor Arai is one of many who was known for his experimentations within the absurd framework and was successful in raising local concerns at a universal level. Unfortunately, his effort and creativity have not received much attention. On the contrary, much criticism has been hurled at the absurd theatre during its short life span on the local theatre scene.

### **METHOD: REPETITION IN ABSURD THEATRE**

The birth of the absurd theatre had shaken many conventional styles in the mainstream theatre in the West. New approaches were discovered, created, and applied (Esslin, 1968: 22). Its origins which was rooted in the avant-garde experiments in art of the 1920s and 1930s and the strong influence by the horrors of the Second World War can be the reasons why absurd theatres required different methods in bringing their subject matters to the stage performance. As a result, the techniques reflect the precariousness of human life and its fundamental meaninglessness. Theatre of The Absurd often incorporates clowning and mad scenes as life itself is confusing. Nothing can bring meaning to it as everything in life has become meaningless as everything has lost its meaning, the Theatre

of the Absurd portrays this chaos and confusion through its characters who talk nonsense among themselves. Life through the perspective of the absurd is perceived to be devoid of purpose and language a futile means of communication.

Important features of the Theatre of the Absurd are its focus on whimsical plots and verbal nonsensical language. In terms of plot, the plot of the Theatre of the Absurd has no structure at all. According to Solehah Ishak in her article *Tahap Drama Kontemporari – Abstrak atau Absurd*, absurd plays have a circular structure in which the play will end the way it begins. In other words, there will be no conflicts in between or resolutions of the conflicts (1982: 66). Often the characters have no characterization at all. They are represented as puppets which are just waiting, and their wait is always perceived to be endless and pointless. Another important aspect in absurd techniques is verbal nonsensical language. Absurd Theatre seeks to break down the functions of language which are usually conventionalized and stereotyped, as is evident in the other forms of theatre. The Theatre of the Absurd emphasizes that words fail to express the essence of human experience, and because of that, words are not able to penetrate beyond the surface. George R. Kernodle notes that the Theatre of the Absurd involves, to varying degrees, the following special elements: a breakdown of language and communication, incongruity, senseless logic, discontinuity, senseless repetition, identity loss, conformity, hopelessness, despair and futility (1937: 310-311). It is clear here that language is one of the most important elements that distinguish an absurd play from other plays.

In *Vacuum*, I would like to argue here that Anuar Nor Arai had used the second feature of Theatre of the Absurd which is the use of language that focuses on the repetition of words and phrases. The repetition of words and phrases further reflects the sense of void and meaninglessness experienced by the main characters. It also reflects the element of 'pure' abstract in Absurd Theatre that illustrates the emptiness in communication among human beings. Since Absurd Theatre assumes an anti-literary attitude, language is no longer an instrument for the expression of the deepest level of meanings (Esslin, 1968: 319). The language used lends the plays a deep metaphysical meaning and the conflicts within express more than any language is able to. Thus, the language in these plays is dislocated and full of clichés and repetitions.

When critics talk about the features of the absurd plays, they often mention the effect that arises from the similarity of the language used to everyday speech. One of the most significant features in everyday conversation and dramatic discourse in the Theatre of the Absurd is repetition. Repetition is a major stylistic feature in absurd plays, and this technique is also employed by local experimental playwrights, such as Anuar Nor Arai. Schnebly states that repetition not only creates meaning and promotes interaction between the characters, but also signals discord between them (1993: Abstract iii, iv). This is simply because repetition can be employed to evade giving pertinent responses, to verbally dominate other characters, and to show contrived involvement. In addition, repetition can create harmony by involving us emotionally in the musical patterns of the dialogue, by bonding with the repetition of our everyday speech to produce dialogue that feels comfortable, and by making us laugh. Yet, repetition can also create disharmony owing to too much repetition, or noise. Repetition also illustrates communication systems in a state of collapse.

In *Vacuum*, repetition is a central stylistic feature, a feature common in absurd

plays. Anuar Nor Arai, however, prefers to repeat only selective phrases in his work. Schnebly's findings are relevant here, especially when we scrutinize Anuar Nor Arai's play, *Vacuum* that reflects how the use of repetitive words, phrases and even nonsensical dialogues contribute to the portrayal of issues that are otherwise difficult to discuss publicly. The colloquial language used is easily understood; thus the audience is able to grasp and appreciate the delicate issues at hand. The language that seems to be familiar to most mimics such as the repetitive nature of ordinary talk such as dialogues which should feel comfortable seem threatening and unsettles the audience or readers because it captures the ambivalence in our communication process.

### ANALYSIS OF *VACUUM*

*Vacuum*, by Anuar Nor Arai unveils a different approach in Malaysian absurd theatre, when the play itself is represented by unchanged and yet vague setting in the entire play. The stage or setting is empty, which reflected the concept of a vacuum, and equipped with huge balls and balloons as the props. Compared to many plays staged during the era of modern Malay theatre, *Vacuum* conforms totally to the concept of the Theatre of the Absurd. To complement the absurd styles, Anuar Nor Arai added the final touch by utilising an old yet futuristic music as the background music for the play. The costumes selected by the playwright further had reflected on absurdity. The character, Old Man wears an old fashion set of clothes, whilst another character, Old Woman wears modern clothes with traditional details. In comparison, the young couple wear contemporary clothes indicating that they are modern people living in a modern society. The portrayal of the two generations of young and old indicates a conflict that was to gradually unfold in the plot. The young denote change and hope and while the old symbolizes dogmatism and complacency. Anuar Nor Arai unravels this issue creatively. The discussion on how to resolve it is as simple as one would imagine. Certainly, there is no definite solution to the problem. Thus the solutions suggested by the playwright are philosophical, signifying the fragile yet tough issues being addressed.

As the central issue in this play is about the conflict revolving around two different generations as they strived to lead a better life, the language used in this particular play is philosophical. Not only that, it begins with the Old Man waking up from a long slumber and starting to talk to himself,

Old Man: We have **lost** our mind. **Lost** our thoughts. **Lost** our senses. **Lost** our usefulness.

(*Vacuum*, 993:184)

The word 'lost' is repeated several times. The Old Man is commenting on the 'things' he has lost in life, and the meaninglessness of life in this modern world. Although Anuar Nor Arai employs repetitive words in his dialogue, they seem to echo and rhyme with each other. The first few times we encounter these repetitions, they are not immediately noticeable. Nonetheless, after a few instances, the repeated phrases seem to take on a significance of their own and contribute to his intended meaning. Every repetitive word is not random, as compared to those in many other absurd plays. Anuar Nor Arai carefully chooses the words to lead the reader or audience to the meaning he wishes to convey in his work. Significantly, the words or phrases are not repeated more than two or three

times. Here, the lines indicated that life has become so complex, and beginning to lose its meaning.

Next, the play continues to repeat the word ‘perfection’ and this is evident in the following lines,

Old Man: Don’t go anywhere. Here is **perfection** personified, **perfection** of all those times. It is here that everything comes to an end. You don’t have to search. You will not find what’s not there.

(*Vacuum*, 1993: 184)

Anuar Nor Arai chooses to highlight is the word ‘perfection’, which is used in the Old Man’s lines when he gets irritated with the Young Man who seems to be dissatisfied with his explanation and tries to escape from the vacuum. The word ‘perfection’ is repeated twice in the lines resembles that people should start to consider living in the vacuum since it is an ideal place to live in. Life in the vacuum is perceived to be blissful. The Old Man further indicates that whatever is found in the vacuum will be perfect for all mankind. In other words, the Old Man is trying to persuade the Young Man to abandon his worldly pursuits and remain living in the vacuum.

It can also be further indicated here that the Old Man is trying to protect his world by building a shield that separates the new world and the vacuum. The vacuum is filled with his beliefs and value systems. It is purely a world that he is familiar with and strongly upholds it. On the contrary, anything that is outside the vacuum is a world full of threats to his ideals. Therefore, he is trying his best to stop the Young Man from going out of the vacuum, since he does not want the Young Man to explore the new world without appreciating his old beliefs and value systems. Old Man wants the younger people to stay in the vacuum to maintain the old traditions for the next generation.

Repetitive words and phrases in different sentences and can be seen in the dialogue below,

Old Man: It is not there, right? We’ve lost something. We’ve really lost something. (Silence for quite a while). There, see for yourself. Your actions. Aren’t you looking **for what was once there at one time?** (Young Man *rubs all over his body*).

Old Man: What’s your choice now?  
(Young Man *tries to move. He does not succeed*).

Old Man: Sway your legs.  
(Young Man *tries to move his legs, but he does not succeed*).

Old Man: (*Laughs*). Be proud of what you have. At least, your abilities are the result of my re-creation. (Silence, the Young Man looks at everything with pent-up anger and emotions). There, it’s nothing, right? Don’t look all over your body again. You don’t have **what is already there**. Surely **what you don’t have was never there**, right? You should be proud that you **have something from nothing**.

Young Man: (*Angrily*).  
What is the meaning of all this? I’ve been made a fool like this for far too long time.

Old Man: I have already answered it hundreds of times.

Young Man: Your response too is such that from **nothing it become something.**

(*Vacuum*, 1993: 184-185)

From the dialogue above, it is clear that these two characters are talking about finding something in nothing. The Young Man tries to look for something to hold on to, something that will give him strength to carry on living. He wants to find his freedom and that would make his life meaningful. The Old Man, however, tries to protect the Young Man's innocent faith from the cruel reality outside the vacuum. The Young Man is idealistic in what he believes and hopes to find. As a young man, this character is not afraid to explore the new world outside the vacuum and finds his freedom.

Vacuum is a unique play that also offers different dimension of meaning. When too much emphasis on persuading others from not leaving the vacuum, the play is also indicating that in achieving the modern world, the faith in God is slowly weakening. This can be seen in the lines,

Young Man: (Angrily)

By hindering all that I want? There's nothing more **true than the truth** that's been **created**.

Old Man: (*He's angry. He walks about*).

Don't you talk about **that truth**. Didn't we ignore it all this long while since we **created** this space?

Young Man: (*With raised voice*). Our way of life is crazy and without religion. Show me the way out of this vacuum.

(*Vacuum*, 1993: 192)

From the lines above, the two main characters are arguing again about the concept that the vacuum holds. The concept is created by the Old Man, and that is perceived to be ridiculous by the Young Man. Young man is tired of babbling repeated words to signify his intentions, but the Old Man refuses to understand it. The Old Man insists on using his own jargons in referring to the Young Man's arguments and intentions.

In a place such as the vacuum, faith in oneself and God is really put to the test. The Young Man's faith is of no exception; and to make matters worse, the Old Man tries to lure him into becoming part of his creation, that is, the new world where values and beliefs are set aside. It is a new world ruled solely by the Old Man. The Young Man's faith and beliefs weakens and diminishes, and he is forced to adapt to the new rules set by the Old Man in order to survive living in the vacuum. Here, the dilemma faced by the Young Man represents the predicament faced by the people living in modern societies, who while pursuing a modern lifestyle struggle to uphold their religious values. Vacuum can be a symbol of a world that is perfect with plenty of temptations to lure the younger generations to be swayed with fake happiness. Vacuum offers people to gain something from nothing and from that nothingness, shall create something and human beings will be lulled into sins thus luring them away from God.

Generally, repetition had become the key characteristic of Anuar Nor Arai's technique in representing the dilemma faced by different characters in his play, that is, the younger generation that sought for a new change and the older generations that were too complacent for no changing at all. The gap between these two generations was so intense and this was represented intelligently by the playwright. The communication is portrayed



in a state of collapse, when both, Old Man and Young Man did not understand what each other were saying. They kept repeating their words and phrases to further emphasize their reluctance to give in and blame each other for not being able to understand each other's contentions. There is no solution to the communication gap between these two generations. Indeed, it symbolizes that there is no solution at all to this matter since in reality, it happens, and it does happen all the time.

*Vacuum* highlights the concerns of the playwright in a unique way. The playwright represents his ideas in between the repetitive words and phrases that indicate his subtle ways in bringing a delicate yet problematic issue that needs to be addressed intelligently. What the playwright intends to bring here is not something that is apparent, or even tangible, indeed it is something that one can feel at heart when one is really sensitive with the current surroundings. Humans are trapped in the world of their own makings. Modernism has replaced mundane and simple routines and because of these complexities, humans tend to be lost in the fast pace of the current contemporary lifestyle. Anuar Nor Arai's *Vacuum* tells the audience to be alert and sensitive with the changes that is happening around us. With the advent rise of modernisation in the society, the playwright intends to portray the great challenge that it will bring to the society in the future.

## CONCLUSION

Anuar Nor Arai's play, *Vacuum* attests to his creativity as a playwright and is more than just a representation of an unparalleled work of art that defies conventional styles and techniques. Coming from a playwright who wrote during that era, his work is well-written and unique. Repetition had become the key characteristic of Anuar Nor Arai's technique in his play. Through the characters in the play he portrays doubts and confusion over the matter of self and existence, and cleverly deals with these issues with the object of finding some kind of answers. He highlights his concerns and offers insights into human relationships through his creative ability and the appropriation of absurd theatre techniques. Having examined the play, it is evident that it would be impossible to deal with existential and metaphysical issues using realistic theatre techniques. However, absurd theatre methods are more than capable of depicting confusion and the entrapment of the mind, body and soul through characters who are caught in a vortex of modernisation, as they search for the meaning of happiness.

The issues highlighted on generation gap and challenges living in a modern world are sensitive and highly controversial, but with the appropriation of absurd techniques, the issues are eloquently well portrayed. As such, it needs more than just knowledge of theatre techniques to explore and to discover the real meaning behind his play. In general, Malay absurd plays are not only about absurd experimentations but also the philosophical underpinnings that have gained the attention of some theatre scholars. Conflicts and dilemmas are presented using the techniques of the Theatre of the Absurd. Babbling jargons and nonsensical dialogues are symbolic of the confusion experienced by absurd characters. And *Vacuum* takes it one step further to show that these characters not only experience confusion but also they are presented with rays of hopes at the end of the play. Through the technique of repetition, the playwright hinted that Young Man is trying his best to wrest his way out from the vacuum. This further indicates his intention to gain

freedom, hence becomes a symbol that he has not lost hope. It gives the audience or reader the impression that the playwright offers some sort of closure even though it is to be found in the midst of repetitive mode set in the play. This is important to note as it indicates the play's point of departure from the typical western absurd plays. Thus denoting the significance of the playwright's appropriation of technique to produce a play that is uniquely his own.

The existential discourses that are highlighted in the play reflect on the nature of existence and the purpose of life which cannot be understood by just looking for the answers in the physical world. The physical world that is so tainted with material gains and manipulations have drawn men to search for something more substantial. The political upheaval which transpired after the May 13<sup>th</sup> incident became an eye-opener to many as it made them realized that the nation needed some kind of transformation. Transformation was indeed crucial and the society must be prepared mentally and spiritually for the inevitable challenges of modernisation. We must always remember that it is the society that will be directly affected by any political changes. Whether or not the society suffers as a result of these changes depends greatly on the effectiveness of the policies introduced and implemented by the government specifically.

[1] Racial riots of May 13, 1969. Much has been written on this topic. Amongst others see Mahathir Mohamad, *The Malay Dilemma* (Singapore: Asia Pacific Press, 1979), Tunku Abdul Rahman, *May 13<sup>th</sup> and After* (Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Melayu Press, 1969), and National Operations Council, *The May 13<sup>th</sup> Tragedy* (Kuala Lumpur: National Operations Council, 1969).

[2] Refer to the article by Lim Cheng Hoe. 2003. Politics play a part. *The Star*, 23 May: Theatre 3

[3] Abdul Rahman Napiah Interview via email dated December 1<sup>st</sup> 2009.

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