PREFACE

Approach to literature has taken a great turn from straightforward representation to theoretical analysis. Samuel Beckett's dramatic works had conventionally been interpreted as representative of the theatre of the absurd. This thesis aims to re-read his dramatic works within the context of contemporary theoretical formulations especially in relation to the question of the body. Figuration of the body is Beckett's major pre-occupation and an obsession with it is evident in almost all his dramatic works. This phenomenon draws comparison with the contemporary theoretical trends, that is, the obsession with the question of the representation of the body. Hence this study analyses Beckett's works within the theoretical framework of feminist, psychoanalytic and post-colonial criticism, where figuration of the body is a major concern. The thesis analyses such questions as: What is the body? What are the implications behind Beckett's pre-occupation with the body? Is
he using it as a technique to create various effects, and if so what are the implications? The study looks at the body from different angles: the objectified body, the body as a mirror and the body as a cultural tablet. And the argument is substantiated by the writings of contemporary theoreticians.