

Bachelor Thesis Evaluation

Author: Ing. Zuzana Holečková

Title: *Major Minor Literature: The Grass is Singing and Disgrace*

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Soňa Nováková, PhD., CSc.

External Assessor: Mgr. Klára Kolinská, M.A., PhD.

External Assessor's Evaluation:

Zuzana Holečková's Bachelor Thesis discusses a very interesting and productive topic which offers a number of complex aesthetic, as well as ideological implications: the author proposes to interpret two, now nearly canonical 20th-century novels written in English and set in South Africa, namely Doris Lessing's *The Grass is Singing* and J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*, via the postulates of the concept of minor literature as defined by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari.

Besides other aspects, the two novels under consideration are connected also thematically: both narrate tragic stories of white women suffering brutal violence at the hands of black men. Both stories are told sensitively, without the ambition to judge, but with clear understanding of not only individually psychological, but also historical, cultural, and ideological complexities of the context in which their characters' tragedies happen. In that regard, the comparative approach is fully justified and leads to convincing conclusions.

The introduction of the thesis explains clearly the author's intention and methodology; a minor objection may be raised against a certain disproportionality of the text: while it is without question that the analysis of such literary texts needs some explanation of the historical context, the chapter dedicated to its summary appears unnecessarily long in relation to the part reserved for the literary analytical part itself. The two main parts – the historical chapter and the analytical one – might perhaps have been linked together more closely and organically; this would have given the individual historical data better justification (after editing some of the unnecessary ones), and would have facilitated even better understanding of the author's literary interpretations.

A similar commentary might be made about the part discussing theory: while the author's arguments are certainly justifiable in themselves, the whole discussion of the theoretical concepts still appears somewhat mechanical, and slightly distant from Lessing's and Coetzee's narratives. The strongest part, in my view, is the author's discussion of language in the two literary works in question, and the application of the notion of minor language and

minor literature to their analysis, including the reference to Kafka – however distant Kafka's own work might appear in this regard.

In any case, the author's approach brings generally meaningful and convincing conclusions, especially in commenting clearly on the similarities, as well as differences, between the approaches of modernism (represented by Lessing's work) and postmodernism (exemplified upon the case of J.M. Coetzee).

A minor comment might also be made about the language and style in which the thesis is written: while both the language quality and stylistic register are certainly generally acceptable, still the text would benefit from an even more careful editing focusing on occasional minor problems, which slightly spoil the overall good effect of its reading.

In view of the comments made above I recommend Zuzana Holečková's Bachelor Thesis for defence with suggested evaluation of EXCELLENT – VERY GOOD.

Prague, June 5th, 2019

Mgr. Klára Kolinská, M.A., PhD.