

**Posudek vedoucího práce na Mgr. KATEŘINU KOLÁŘOVOU A JEJÍ  
DOKTORSKOU DISERTACI *KNOW YOURSELF, WRITE YOURSELF! QUEER  
SUBJECTS AND THE CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER AND SEXUAL IDENTITY AT  
THE TURN OF THE 19TH CENTURY***

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Kateřina belongs to the best doctoral students I have ever supervised. Her MA thesis won the Vilém Mathesius Award for excellence. In the course of her studies, focused on comparative cultural history with a special emphasis on modern English literature, gender studies and feminist criticism, she was very active, taking numerous courses both at the Faculty of Arts and abroad, finding consultants in gender studies at two very good German universities (she won three research scholarships to Germany and participated in the summer school of the Free University of Berlin), and presenting the results of her research at international workshops and conferences (six papers) as well as in her publications (including seven articles in academic journals, four published in Germany). Since 2003 she taught courses at the Department of Gender Studies of the Faculty of Humanities and became a grant coordinator at this department. In 2005 she taught a seminar on Victorian Masculinities at the Free University of Berlin. She also organized an international conference and submitted an application for a post-doc grant.

Kateřina's dissertation is a very carefully researched, theoretically oriented monograph mapping a not yet sufficiently researched area of literary history: autobiographical texts of authors with a homosexual and lesbian as well as heterosexual orientation at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century. These are not studied as homogeneous works of art but as sites of conflicting discourses of self-fashioning, sexuality, written from a number of subject-positions and materializing diverse individual as well as social practices. The choice of major theoretical approaches, Foucault's notions of discourse and sexuality as "deployment of power" and Butler's theories of gender, sex and queer performativity is well-grounded in the problematic nature of studied texts. Moreover, Kateřina makes fairly successful attempts to interpret them in relation to the poststructuralist concept of writing and numerous other theoretical approaches especially in women and gender studies (Sedgwick, Kristeva). The result of her efforts is a thorough monograph, combining detailed literary analyses with penetrating theoretical discussions of the genre of autobiographical writing, construction of gender and sexual identities and performative power of discourses.

Despite the generally high standard of Kateřina's dissertation I have a few comments concerning some theoretical and methodological aspects of her approach:

1. I am not quite sure whether the final version sufficiently points out the difference between the two approaches to identity: "matrix of intelligibility" (normative approach) and "discursive materiality" (performative approach).
2. Discussing the relationships between bodies and texts should greatly benefit from Deleuze's and Guattari's discussion of "body without organs" and "desiring machines" in *Anti-Oedipus*, rectifying some assumptions of feminist psychoanalysis.
3. The same can be said concerning the use of Foucault's theory, where much greater attention should be paid to the definitions of statement and discourse in *Archeology of Knowledge*. Discourse is not an expression of the individual, but rather of the ways in which the roles of an individual are performed in relations to authority, specific sites and subject positions. The analysis must look for a field of regularity for various positions of subjectivity.
4. And finally a general comment: the use of too many theoretical sources often decreases the legibility of the text and sometimes leads even to jargon-ridden passages. If the dissertation is prepared for publication, it will need thorough editing connected with rethinking the justification of some key concept.

In spite of these, rather minor, reservations I am convinced that Kateřina's dissertation is both in terms of primary research and of theoretical reflection high above the average of PhD dissertations at the Department and that it should be published. **Doporučuji práci k obhajobě.**

V Praze, 4. února 2007



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školitel