

POSUDEK BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

KATEDRA ANGLICKÉHO JAZYKA A LITERATURY PedF UK

Autor práce:	Štěpánka Lacková
Název práce:	Social class in E.M. Forster's <i>Howards End</i> and Zadie Smith's <i>On Beauty</i>
Vedoucí práce:	PhDr. Tereza Topolovská, Ph.D.
Rok odevzdání:	2020
Rozsah práce:	61 stran
Posudek:	<input type="radio"/> vedoucího práce <input checked="" type="radio"/> oponenta
Autor posudku:	Bernadette Higgins MA

	Posuzovaná oblast	Zvažovaná kritéria □	Body (0-5) ¹
1.	Celková charakteristika	Splnění zásad zpracování práce, adekvátnost titulu práce, naplnění stanoveného cíle, logická struktura práce, vyváženost a propojenost teoretické a praktické části	4
2.	Teoretická část	Stanovení a splnění cílů, prezentace různých teoretických přístupů k řešení problému, jejich kritické posouzení a zvolení relevantní teoretické základny pro realizaci praktické části	4
3.	Praktická část	Vhodnost a aplikace zvolené metodologie, jasnost formulace hypotéz, relevantní a srozumitelná argumentace a interpretace získaných výsledků, jasnost formulace závěrů práce	3
4.	Jazyková úroveň	Gramatická správnost a komplexnost, slovní zásoba, koheze a koherence textu, interpunkce a stylistické aspekty, celková úroveň jazykového projevu	3
5.	Struktura a forma	Přehlednost struktury, členění, řazení a proporčnost kapitol a oddílů, konzistentnost úpravy práce, odpovídající rozsah práce, adekvátnost a provedení příloh	4
6.	Práce s odbornou literaturou	Kvalita, množství a relevance odborných zdrojů, kritický přístup ke zdrojům, odpovídající úroveň citační praxe	4

Celkové zhodnocení práce (včetně kritických výhrad):

This thesis is a well researched, formally accomplished and, on the whole, well expressed exploration of E. M. Forster's *Howards End* (1910) and Zadie Smith's homage to it, *On Beauty* (2005). The author's focus is the treatment of class in both novels, though she also states (p. 9) that "the secondary aim of this paper is to analyse *On Beauty* as a pastiche of *Howards End*". In the theoretical part, using the work of Giddens and Sutton as a guide, the author discusses class in general, then its operation in Edwardian society and reflection in literature of the period before looking at class in contemporary England and the US and in British literature. In terms of class, the main difference between the two books/periods is the existence of an underclass in Smith's work, however marginal its members are to the plot, whereas the equivalent of the underclass in Forster's work is his reference to 'the abyss', a metaphor for the drastic ruin and poverty shadowing the existence of the Basts. The least interesting part of the theoretical part is the focus on the connection between the two novels,

¹ Bodové hodnocení na škále 1-5 (5 bodů maximum), 0 bodů z jedné či více posuzovaných oblastí automaticky znamená, že práce není doporučena k obhajobě.

although the section on intertextuality is well written and researched. The author notes (p. 32) that “Zadie Smith has explicitly acknowledged in the forward of *On Beauty* that she is paying homage to *Howards End* with this book.” and it could be argued that a minimum amount of space needed to be given to this aspect of the work, given that it distracts from the main focus of the book. Moreover, the author seems to suggest that Smith is somehow ‘improving’ on Forster’s novel (p. 32 “With the addition of new themes, Smith makes the relationships in her novel more complex and also allows the readers insight into the minds of more characters than Forster and therefore significantly expands her scope of interest”).

The practical part starts with a section on *On Beauty* as a pastiche of *Howards End*. Again, it feels that this secondary focus does not help the development of the main theme of class. The rest of the practical part comprises a focus on the upper-middle class and working class in both books and the underclass in *On Beauty*. This last section is interesting as it foregrounds the existence of race as an issue in the book, an area that feels relatively unexplored. The author says that (p. 48) “Zadie Smith makes her depiction of the working class more nuanced by the addition of the issue of race” yet she seems to rather shy away from exploring these nuances, e.g. (p. 55) “In *On Beauty*, Smith depicts the working class with the addition of the issue of race. However, despite all the main characters originating from a black background, apart from Howard, the class division remained a deciding factor in the inability to create meaningful relationships across the social classes”.

There are a few typos, e.g. misnaming a frequently cited source -Mitchel/Mitchell (pp 12, 13, 14)), Andrea Levi/Levy (p. 20), Mrs Wilcox (p. 36) seeking a “spiritual hair”. And surely a misinterpretation of Bentley (p. 20) describing the unquestionably middle-class Martin Amis, as working class, “Regardless, he claims that there are writers of working-class fiction among contemporary British authors, for example, Martin Amis whose *Lionel Asbo* (2012) depicts a working-class man as —the eponymous petty criminal [...] whose main interests are drinking, pornography and maintaining his dogs in a state of heightened viciousness. (Bentley 48)”. But on the whole, this is clearly written work which is structured well and shows evidence of extensive research and thought and I do not hesitate to recommend it for acceptance.

Témata a náměty k diskusi při obhajobě

- 1) Can the author say more about the three mixed-race Belsey children and their very different attitudes to life?
- 2) Can the author say more about Carl’s argument with Zora, which she quotes on p. 48 —“I’m just some experiment for you to play with. You people aren’t even black anymore [...]”

Práci tímto doporučuji nedoporučuji k obhajobě.²

Datum: 12. září 2020

Podpis:

² Výsledná známka zahrnuje hodnocení posudku vedoucího práce, hodnocení posudku oponenta a hodnocení výkonu studenta v průběhu obhajoby.

