

Abstract (English)

This thesis is concerned with the opening section “A Sort of Introduction“ of Robert Musil’s *The Man Without Qualities*. It follows the plot developed throughout the evolution of the main character Ulrich, and his gradual realization that he is a “man without qualities” and that he needs to “take a break from life,” as the discovery of a starting position for his life experiment. Closer reading is given to the “other condition” that Ulrich discovers in his nightly adventure. The idea of mystical unification touches on the central theme of love and eroticism, which are in various aspects, characterized by both Leona and Bonadea. Broadly understood the concept of unification, as a form of unfulfilled need, transforms into a “projection surface” on which we can see the suppressed inclinations of individuals and society, leading among other things to the rehabilitation of the philosophical construct of “Genius”, the search for a type of “strong individual”, that will be able to withstand the demands of the “new era;” – reflected in this section by Clarisse and Walter. Along with this “story” level of the text, I follow in a few subchapters what we may call the “imaginative” level, that is, the collection of themes that show the “internal” perspective of storytelling. For example, the motive of a window being a place of an “insight”, the motive of a house being a living organism, the connection between the themes of love and violence, sport and mysticism, the concept of a genius, effect of music being an imitation of mystical experience or the problem of language in the background of Musil’s account of poetry. The last aspect that I focus on is the text arrangement in which we can trace the author’s program, realized, for instance, in an ironical continuation of the Bildungsroman and by other structural changes of the genre itself.

Keywords (anglicky) Robert Musil, Man without Qualities, Novel Introduction, Modern style, Nietzsche, Genius, Wohndiskurs