

Dominika Freimannová, *City as a Fictional Character in the Postmodern Novel:
Alexandria Quartet and The Moor's Last Sigh*
Supervisor's Report on B.A. Thesis

The thesis is a very refreshing attempt to deal with the question of postmodern urban space, as it is represented by the two English-written but universally (i.e. inter- and supra-nationally) conceived novels. The student prepared her ground thoroughly, using predominantly Linda Hutcheon's books on postmodernism together with other relevant accounts of both modernism and postmodernism. This allowed her to identify several thematic fields characteristic of the two concepts and to distinguish neatly between their use in modernist and postmodern fiction (subjectivity, perspective, palimpsest, myth and allegory). While arguing that modernism strives after overcoming fragmentation by seeking semantic unity and postmodernism resigns to such ideal goals, she tries to validate this basic notion in her comments on the way the city is constructed in Durrell's and Rushdie's texts. Her method should be appreciated: first she resorts to general statements just to become more and more specific as she progresses with her analysis, making her arguments more and more convincing.

The two novels are indeed very complex texts, partly even resistant to analysis. Yet the student proved high ability to present her issues clearly and without annoying simplifications. Though her discussions of the two novels run almost always parallel to each other, they are never entirely separated and meet happily in the last chapter. Obviously, the complexity of the two novels calls forth a plethora of questions that have not been tackled in the thesis. Just a couple of examples, to provide ideas for further discussion: Does the fact that Pursewarden is named after a Tarot card figure affect the way the character and (not only) his position in the novel space are conceived? Viewing *The Moor's Last Sigh* as a cyclical, closed account, how should we read the final motif of Moreas's sleep on a gravestone with the hope of awakening, like Rip Van Winkle, in the new world (or the New World), in terms of historical, cultural and political implications?

I consider the submitted thesis a very successful attempt, reaching beyond the requirements of this stage of study, and it is my pleasure to recommend it for the defence as excellent (**výborná**).

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