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UNIVERZITA KARLOVA – FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

ÚSTAV ANGLOFONNÍCH LITERATUR A KULTUR

Report on Bakalářské Práce(Oponentsky posudek): The Political Voice of Aphra Behn

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Zpracoval : Kristyna Hoblová

THE POLITICAL VOICE OF APHRA BEHN

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General Remarks:

This thesis is well written and conforms to the requirements of academic writing, the text being largely devoid of any serious issues of spelling or grammatical issues which might detract from the impact it makes. The structure of the thesis is clear and simple without being simplistic and allows the student to make her points with a minimum preamble and to then press home the advantages won by this method- sometimes being admirably cogent and coherent. of The student remains focused at all times and the essential thesis of the work being reasonable and clear, it is easy to accept the points made and to move on.

I find this analysis of the politics of Aphra Behn's writings and the contextualization of her work within Restoration Court and Public life to be engaging and highly readable and would go as far as to say that this is probably the best BA work I have read to date and the student is to be commended for a solid uncluttered work which while having something of the survey in it, is certainly not limited to being a catalogue of facts from the Stuart period. .

There are moments where the poise of the writing slips a little but it would be churlish to complain about this .Section 3 I found the contain the real meat of the Thesis and while I felt that the issues of the Stuart Thesis of Kingship and the Filmerian analogy really needed more analysis, it is clear that the limitations imposed by the thesis are largely fair and that it leaves clear scope for further consideration at MA level, something which I hope the student considers.

The exigent contradictions of Behn's politics are a problematic which I did think was indicated but not adequately explained, even with some reference to Dryden(which could have been prosecuted more comprehensively)There is a germinal discussion of *excessive promiscuity*(p.53) and also of the abandonment of modes of reading the Cavalier- I did feel that this was an excellent opportunity to engage in a dissection of the politics of sexual power and of the instability of relationships which Restoration Theatre is often predicated upon, but that the student did not really obtain leverage here and seems to have done little more than mention it and then inexplicably move on. Works such as *The Willing Mistress* (from *The Dutch Lover*) and *The Disappointment* are clear evidence of the debate concerning female sexual empowerment and it seems an oversight that there is not more consideration of role models within the court which would have informed Behn ie Barbora Villiers et al.It is perfectly clear that women were intimately involved in politics at all levels and their influence upon the Stuart Kings is also worthy of much more consideration. At times I felt that the treatment of this theme was a little dry and eschews real acknowledgement of the scandals, skullduggery and moral relativism which steeped this era and served as the focus of its literature Also, terms like "*general ethical anxiety*" while containing truth , are unhelpfully vague especially when the student has demonstrated both the ability and the desire to employ more rigorous scholarly language throughout the paper.

Recommendation

Notwithstanding the forgoing comments ,I find this thesis to be of substantial merit and recommend it for a pass at a grade of Very Good(2) to Excellent(1).

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