

## Supervisor's Report

### Galina Kiryushina, "Saying Seen Again: Audio-Visual Aspects of Samuel Beckett's *Company*, *Ill Seen Ill Said* and *Worstward Ho*" (MA Thesis)

The presented thesis develops the candidate's previous work concerning the motif of the voice in three plays by Samuel Beckett. While developing some of her earlier observations regarding the voice, Ms Kiryushina interprets Beckett's late trilogy of short novels in the broader context of the broadcast media and cinematography, and engages in detail some of the most influential early theories concerning these. Moreover, the candidate persuasively demonstrates how Beckett's earlier work for and with the radio, television and film may be viewed to trigger seminal aspects of his later prose; specifically, it is the "radiophonic" use of the voice and the use of the cinematic technique of montage that forms a prominent feature of the *Nobow On* triptych. Such interpretation has been proposed to an extent by several earlier commentators; however, no consistent engagement – and certainly not one of such scope – exists as yet. Beckett's biographers have noted, for instance, the fact that he has read and admired Vsevolod Pudovkin, and what impact this has had on his work; not much attention has been paid to the influence of Sergei Eisenstein on Beckett though, a gap that Kiryushina fills meticulously, pointing out even the existence of Beckett's letter of 1936 (unanswered) in which he seeks Eisenstein's apprenticeship.

The list of illuminating points presented in Ms Kiryushina's thesis would be far too long for the purpose of a thesis report. Suffice it to say that her work may be regarded as a nucleus of a solid critical monograph which, when developed through an engagement with more recent media theory, would easily weather the competition in Beckett studies and would represent a truly significant contribution to international scholarship. Kiryushina's argument is carefully laid out, her style is always clear, engaging, and often witty, and the linguistic elegance is striking. Apart from an occasional terminological awkwardness ("multi-meaning language", p. 5), there are very few objections to raise.

Given the above, it hardly needs to be emphasised that the level of intellectual and stylistic achievement demonstrated in Ms Kiryushina's work supersedes by far what is expected of a Master's thesis. It is without hesitation that I recommend the thesis for defence and propose to grade it as "excellent".

Prague, 15 May 2014

doc. Ondřej Pilný, PhD