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UNIVERZITA KARLOVA – FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

ÚSTAV ANGLOFONNÍCH LITERATUR A KULTUR

Posudek Bakalrské Práce(Vedoucky Report): “ Science Fiction as Social Fiction: British Sci-fi and its antecedents”

Report on Bachelor’s Thesis(Supervisor's Report): “ Science Fiction as Social Fiction: British Sci-fi and its antecedents”

Vedoucí Diplomová práce: Colin S Clark MA

Oponent: Pavla Vesela PhD

Zpracoval : Kristyna Bohacková

General Remarks:

What the student then embarks upon is a detailed reading and comparative analysis of major texts in the field, some selected as representative examples of the motifs and concerns of British Sci Fi. The polemic of embedded ideology in this literature is central here and Boháčková makes good use of a raft of secondary texts which have reflected upon and deconstructed this often highly charged debate upon the relative roles of satirizing or reflecting social conditions in Britain and extrapolating futures. The section in Chapter One considering definitions is particularly a propos of the state of the genre and of cross-genre movements which are clear in the modern speculative. Chapter 2 offers and consideration of exemplary novels in the genre, the development of a distinct genre around 1926 and an intriguing binary in Orwell /Huxley and MacLeod/Roberts. In addition, Boháčková provides an overview of the developmental trajectory. Finally, in chapters 4 and 5 ,the author offers her own perspectives upon the latest developments in the genre, on the role of literature in political speculation and its new texts, authors and ideological concerns. All told, this serves as an interesting consideration of the future as a an exercise in statecraft and in social engineering rather than as abstract blue-sky thinking.

This thesis has focus and demonstrates the clear ability on the part of the student to pursue a theme across a broad range of relevant literature, moreover, a component of academic synthesis which, while not yet truly in the spirit of pioneering enquiry, is nonetheless gratifying. The scope of this thesis having been so broad, it is nevertheless gratifying that the material under consideration is exposed to useful analysis.

Structurally and there are only minor formatting issues here and none worthy of particular note. The most limiting factor I see here is the somewhat vulnerable work on MacLeod and the lack of tenacity in pursuing the trajectory of this theme into modern speculative fiction which, while a discrete area of study in terms of the historical/historiographical concerns of this work, is however thematically contiguous and it is a little disappointing it is not further explored. This however is a simple byproduct of the limitations of the BA project which could be fruitfully expanded into an MA thesis.

Recommendation

Bearing in mind the foregoing comments, I would recommend that this work should be passed at a grade of 2 (Velme Dobre) and I commend it for consideration at that level.

Colin S Clark MA