

Opponent's Report

Pavel Bakič, "Depiction of Media in British Dystopic Fiction" (BA Thesis)


Pavel Bakič's work addresses a challenging topic and abounds in original insights in the novels selected for discussion. It uses the work of several important theorists and critics to form a basic interpretative framework, largely in a judicious manner. However, its treatment of "media" is somewhat over-reliant on the work of Marshall McLuhan: reference to more recent media theorists would provide a useful point of contrast. This would be particularly beneficial in terms of the very definition of what a medium is, and how media have been classified before and after McLuhan, since there is a palpable difference between the historical context of H.G. Wells's fiction and that of Moore and Lloyd's. In other words, a refined concept of the "medium" is required if it is to cater adequately for worlds that are characterised by a vastly divergent nature, number and political and cultural signification of media. This point may perhaps be addressed in the defence of the thesis.

The central argument of Mr Bakič's thesis is somewhat loose, fluctuating between an attempt to discern a direct line of development in what is termed "British dystopian fiction", and a comparative treatment of the respective works. As a result, the thesis comes across as a series of perceptive readings of several novels, rather than a consistent statement concerning the central topic.

The general lucidity of style is somewhat marred by linguistic errors and minor inaccuracies; a major weakness consists in the incorrect use of articles (in some passages, a mistake occurs literally in every other line). The use of the required MLA format in the references and bibliography is erratic at best.

Despite the shortcomings outlined above, I recommend the thesis for defence and propose to grade it "very good".

Prague, 7 September 2010


doc. Ondřej Pilný, PhD