

Supervisor's Report

Lucie Halášková, "Fragmentation and Disjointedness in Samuel Beckett's Plays"

(BA Thesis)

Lucie Halášková's ambitious thesis deals with prominent structural features in selected plays by Samuel Beckett. The work is based on a significant amount of research in complex secondary sources; the ability to judiciously use some of these is quite unique at bachelor's level. The style is largely elegant and the work is linguistically accomplished.

There are some critical issues that are to be raised as regards the use of terminology, however. Primarily, it seems that one or the other concept used in the principal argument, and in the thesis title, is superfluous: fragmentation hardly obtains without disjointedness, and vice versa; in fact, the terms appear virtually synonymous. Moreover, the notion of "fragmentation" seems to be overused at times, resulting in odd combinations such as "fragmented characters" (an expression that might have some validity only in case of *Play*, or *Happy Days* perhaps). Some awkwardness pertains also to the way in which much less specific notions are used; to quote one example: "concepts" are said to be "in a constant state of flux, and are thus never complete" (p. 51). Finally, the candidate occasionally displays a tendency to select quotations from the primary texts based on a desire to prove a salient point that has been made in a theoretical text, without paying sufficient attention to the full context of the quotation in Beckett.

Despite these reservations, the intellectual performance is still considerable, and the ability to work with contemporary philosophical and theoretical texts is exceptional.

I recommend the thesis for defence and propose to grade it as "very good".

Prague, 30 August 2011

doc. Ondřej Pilný, PhD