

LENKA MERVOVÁ B.A. THESIS – REVIEW WRITTEN BY THE OPPONENT

The theme of death of the Female Protagonists in *The Awakening*, „The Yellow Wallpaper“, and *The House of Mirth*, and Its Realistic Foundation is a title that would benefit from a brief discussion of the term „realistic“, and of the intricate relationship between any work of art and what we choose to call, for lack of a better term, reality. If one reads the following sentence on p. 7 („This poetry supports the fact that in society, there appeared a growing trend...”), things do not get clarified any further, and once we would actually want to talk about reality, I assume we would have to mention at least the notion of „true womanhood“, quite a dominant one in a given era. Thus, I believe that Ms. Mervová might like to provide us with a workable definition of the term „realistic“ during the oral defense, as well as with its applicability in her thesis.

As to the analysis itself, I have to admit that I did not quite see the main unifying argument: there is quite a conventional analysis of *The Awakening*, quite a conventional analysis of *The House of Mirth*, and an analysis of „The Yellow Wallpaper“ one might have minor troubles with (such as: Does the protagonist truly think about her child quite often, and does she not suggest that she might want to commit suicide? – given also the fact that she is a very unreliable narrator), but what does that amount to? In other words, how does the literary typology Ms. Mervová establishes help us in understanding the theme of death? Do the different literary types choose suicide because of different reasons? And if so, is it possible to claim so just on the basis of three selected works? Yes, they are undoubtedly canonical, but is that a representative sample? I would simply want Ms. Mervová to state rather clearly what it is she achieved and how did she do that at least during the oral defense; maybe I was not reading enough between the lines, but even though I liked the theme of the thesis and found many of its passages interesting and stimulating, I was somehow missing a strong, persuasive conclusion.

Finally, I wish to comment on Ms. Mervová’s language, which I find adequate and reasonably precise. There is just one logical mistake in the Czech abstract (in the very last sentence, the word „však“ does not make any sense and should have been omitted), a few misprints (e.g. on p. 8 „bettle“ instead of „battle“, or on p. 5 „in they nature“ instead of „in their nature“), and occasionally clumsy syntax which might prevent one from a clear understanding of the given issue (e.g. on p. 1 „its important role presented exactly the female aspect“ needs to be re-phrased, I would think).

In spite of the above-mentioned problems, in my opinion, the submitted thesis clearly meets the requirements, and I think that Ms. Mervová deserves the grade „velmi dobře“. As I believe that the role of the opponent is to point out both actual and potential weak spots of a submitted work, I am looking forward to Ms. Mervová’s response. Therefore, the final result depends on the review written by the supervisor and on Ms. Mervová’s performance during the oral defense.

Prague, Aug. 30, 2013

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