

Oponentský posudek na bakalářskou práci Elizabet Kovačevy

“Narrative Structures in Virginia Woolf’s Shorter Fiction”

My assessment of Elizabet Kovaceva’s BA thesis about the significance of the short story in Virginia Woolf’s output will be brief. It is an excellent piece of writing, thoroughly researched and organized. Its excellent and accomplished English is indeed a pleasure to read. The underlying premise is clearly articulated: shorter fiction must be considered in relation to Woolf’s novels, yet its formal difference must be fully appreciated. The chosen route to fulfill the proving of this thesis – through a focus on the narrative strategies, intertextuality and challenging genre definitions – is quite appropriate.

I appreciate the subtle fact that Woolf’s name has not been metamorphosed into the awkward Woolfová in the Czech abstract. (This is a slight detail, yet I cannot but ask why the Czech and English versions of the abstract actually, to a certain degree, differ in their formulations.)

I have only a few questions about the actual close readings and some of the concepts used in the thesis:

1. What exactly was the impact of the post-impressionist exhibition in 1910 on the views of Virginia Woolf?
2. How precisely did Woolf’s “experiments” (chapter 3) subvert and expand the genre of short story? Did these have a general impact?
3. I would like to see the concept of the *flaneuse* developed much more, not only in relation to Woolf’s writing (see page 21). But the *flaneur* of Baudelaire and Benjamin is not only about taking in street life, but also about being seen. This may imply a consciousness not only as observing, ruling a perspective, focalizing, but also as being the object of the perception of others. In this sense, there can be a vast difference between the position of the *flaneur* and the *flaneuse*. Thus, if Clarissa Dalloway responds to all she sees (see page 21), how does a switch in perspective work? In this light, what resonances may the obvious change in focalization have in a reading of the story “Mrs. Dalloway at Bond Street” in relation to the same passage in the novel (see pages 19 and 20) – Mrs. Dalloway says that she is “conscious of her hat”, does that mean she is being stared at? Are there any possible conclusions to draw from this?

To conclude, I fully recommend the thesis for defense with the preliminary mark of excellent (**výborně**).

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