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Posudek

Student: **Jana HUNČAGOVÁ**

Diplomová práce: **“Manipulation of Human Mind in the Works of Charles Brockden Brown”**

Vedoucí práce: **Doc. PhDr. Michal Peprník, Dr.**

Rok dokončení: **2011**

Oponent: **PhDr. Matthew Sweney M.A.**

Analysis:

Ms. Hunčagová sets out to analyze four novels by Charles Brockden Brown in terms of plot, psychology, reader response, and against the background of the politics of the time.

Ms. Hunčagová should be commended for her excellent job on this thesis: it is a pleasure to read, very logical and concise. In my opinion the best parts are the chapters titled “Political Implications” (I and II), especially her discussions of William Godwin and Jeremy Bentham; discussion of the problems inherent in a new democracy and the fear emanating from them in the 18th century make sense as the backdrop against which Brown’s novels are set. I would have advised her to put these together in the beginning of the work, and to describe the plots in relation to the politics later. But this is just a quibble, the thesis is coherent as is.

One small problem is the recurrent minor grammatical problems in English—mostly with articles. This is a shame, for it detracts from the overall reading experience.

I have almost no criticism of this work; perhaps only in one place, where the author writes on p. 22 that “[I]f it is possible to descend as deep as Hell, it is also possible to go as far as Heaven in the opposite direction.” I would counter that this is not good Christian theology; that we are all sinners, which is why evil in Brown’s works is so believable.

I would like to ask Ms. Hunčagová:

- if she thinks that CBB had a contribution to what we now call the psychological novel, and if so, what exactly was that contribution? Also,
- which of his novels do you think are under-appreciated, and why?

In terms of logic, clarity, bibliography, appropriate citations, etc., this is truly excellent work, and the hard work which Ms. Hunčagová has put into it is evident throughout.

I recommend this thesis for defense.