



FACULTY OF ARTS
OF CHARLES UNIVERSITY
IN PRAGUE



Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures

21 March 2012

To the Dissertation Defense Committee of Vít Vaníček
Arts Faculty
Charles University-Prague

Supervisor's report on a doctoral thesis authored by

Mr. Vít Vaníček, Ph.Dr. entitled

**“Territory and Deterritorialization
in Works of Thomas Pynchon:
Space in the Post-Modern Novel” (2012)**

Vít Vaníček attempts in his doctoral thesis to articulate some of the main fictional and theoretical contours of the problematic of aesthetic space in chosen works by the American novelist, Thomas Pynchon.

His 226-page study elaborately investigates through a nicely balanced syncretistic methodology the abovementioned basic problem of spatiality, spaciousity if you prefer (Jean-Luc Nancy) for the thematic object of focus of the Pynchon page. This theoretical scaffolding amply illuminates some chief lineaments of space for six of Pynchon's novelistic works. This reader found this methodological approach both resourceful and engaging and very apt for a writer of Pynchon's high level complexity.

As for the prose, there are a few lapses in style only where it could have been a bit more elegantly stated, but all in all the study stands on its own as a fine linguistic product for acceptance to the next stage in the procedure to be examined for the doctoral degree.

This present thesis could also be further prepared for publication by highlighting more formal qualities in Pynchon's work (the structural patterns, organization, and soundscape of the Pynchonian units of composition, etc.) as well as engaging some leading problems of postmodern aesthetics, per se, such as Pynchon's production of a non interpretive space very much aligned with transforming out attitudes and dispositions towards the problem of meaning in Pynchon's compositional work and toward by extension the world in general.

The candidate may also wish if he is so inclined to investigate Niklas Luhmann's systems theory as a way to discuss autopoiesis and structure in this study; a text by Joseph Tabbi, *Cognitive Fictions* (2002) that contains a chapter on Pynchon could be usefully explored to this end.



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Overall, this doctoral dissertation represents more than a decade of teaching and of late of supervising the candidate, and in my judgment aptly serves as a crowning achievement for Vit's academic work in language and in literary-cultural studies in our faculty.

I hereby recommend to the board, as supervisor, that this doctoral thesis be admitted to the next stage of the defense.

Sincerely,

Erik S. Roraback, D.Phil. (Oxon.)
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Charles University in Prague