

Manhattan Transfer. DOS Passos' Depiction of the City of New York and Ellen Thatcher's & Jimmy Herfs' Perception of the World

Language	English
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Goodreads Rating:	4.50
ISBN13:	9783638912358
Published:	February 20th 2008 by Grin Verlag Gmbh
ISBN10:	3638912353
Genre:	Uncategorized
Pages:	28



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Seminar paper from the year 2007 in the subject American Studies - Literature, grade: 2,0, Ernst Moritz Arndt University of Greifswald (Institute of Anglican and American Studies - English Literature and Cultural Studies), course: Fragments shored against ruins: T.S. Eliots fruhe Lyrik und die Entstehung der modernistischen Avantgarde, 9 entries in the bibliography, language: English, abstract: Manhattan Transfer is one of the earliest of that type of novels which has come to be known as "collectivistic." The idea is to present a cross-section of the social structure, the social organism; an "over-view" of the subject in which details of individual lives merge in the general picture of society" (Belkind 1971:61). This quotation by Allen Belkind shows that the American author John Dos Passos is not interested in individual characters and their lives in Manhattan Transfer but in how the characters solve the problems and their everyday life in a metropolis, in the city of New York. I would like to deal with Manhattan Transfer by John Dos Passos which was first published in 1925. I will start with some autobiographical facts about Dos Passos to show how he grew up and how his life influenced his works. A short summary and the numeration of stylistic features of Manhattan Transfer will lead to the depiction of the city New York as the actual protagonist of this novel. There are different social

groups such as immigrants or poor and rich people described in the book.

I want to deal with Ellen Thatcher and Jimmy Herf as the protagonists, and I want to show how they perceive the world. This part is the main topic of this paper.

There are numerous essays about the novel *Manhattan Transfer* and how it deals with New York. I am going to point out the images of New York and their effects on Ellen Thatcher and Jimmy Herf. John Rodrigo Dos Passos was born in Chicago/ Illinois on January 14th 1896. He studied at Harvard University and in Spain. He used the experiences he made a