Zuzana Glatzová’s Bachelor dissertation addresses an interesting, multidisciplinary and potentially productive topic, which is rarely addressed in the context of Czech academia: the representation of death in selected works by 20th century Native American writers of fiction, specifically Leslie Marmon Silko’s novel *Ceremony*, Louise Erdrich’s *Tracks* and N. Scott Momaday’s *House Made of Dawn*.

As already mentioned, the topic is multi- or interdisciplinary by nature, which is its undeniable strength and at the same time a methodological complication. The in-depth discussion of such a liminal notion such as death, and an analysis of the literary production of a minority culture, and such a distant one at that, requires not only knowledge of the literary material itself and the immediate context thereof, but also a solid orientation in its general, as well as specific cultural aspects, including the historical, ideological, and anthropological ones. The author well identified an issue that is highly pertinent to Native American literature and culture, but her lack of access to the cultural background of her examples, and perhaps – quite understandable – lack of experience results in a discussion that seems to remain on the surface of things, and hardly offers original or surprising conclusions. The discussion suffers from an excessively descriptive approach and, in spite of sincere attempts at contextualization, does not manage to identify characteristic features of Native American writing as distinctive from any other produced in the English language. The textual examples themselves are, without doubt, sufficiently representative in themselves, and provide ample space for discussion; the problem is that they are “representative” , even “canonical” by parameters from outside their culture of origin, and the author makes hardly any mention of the controversy concerning these authors’ works, and of some of the counter-positions assumed towards them by some Indigenous scholars and critics. This is not to diminish their quality or the influence which the novels in question have had on the further development of Native American writing; also, while I understand that the author’s focus was
on a specifically delineated notion, some discussion concerning the chosen novels’ position within their cultural context would have made the overall discussion stronger and more convincing in conclusions.

On the conceptual, and methodological note, there is, in my view, a problem in the author’s use of terminology: the author uses the term “Indian,” which, from today’s perspective, is excessively loaded with problematic cultural and ideological baggage. The author does include a commentary on her use of terminology, and is thus clearly at least to some extent aware of the implications, but satisfies herself with the easiest choice and resigns on making use of the discursive potential of the notions in question. Again, the analysis would have been more powerful if it had included at least some mention of the pertinent considerations.

And, on a purely formal note, the text of the dissertation would have benefited from more careful editing, eliminating occasional language mistakes and inaccuracies; although these are not of a serious kind, they spoil the overall effect of reading the text and its impact.

In view of the comments made above I recommend Zuzana Glatzová’s Bachelor dissertation for defence with suggested evaluation of VERY GOOD.

Prague, August 24th, 2018

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