

Markéta Soukupová's M. A. thesis – review written by the supervisor

Mr. Soukupová's M. A. thesis, *Shock and Awe: Deformities in Southern Gothic Short Stories of Flannery O'Connor, Tennessee Williams and Truman Capote*, is, as the title announces, a study with a clear focus from the very beginning till the very end. As such, it is neatly structured and provides an in-depth, nuanced argument. Both the selected phenomena and the chosen primary texts are analysed in a fluent and persuasive manner, and therefore, Ms. Soukupová was able to reach and justify the conclusion she was aiming at. And, in her particular case, it looks like good old Freud was still relevant, even though recently, he came under lots of attacks from many different perspectives. Thus, after re-reading the submitted thesis, I just wonder: how would it fit within the relatively recent field of the new Southern studies, so eloquently called for by for example Patricia Yaeger?

Admittedly, I could have recommended this truly brilliant scholar earlier. Therefore, at this point, I do not expect more than a brief answer: Would Yaeger's analysis of the exaggerated monstrosity as „crisis of whiteness“, as it is presented in e.g. *Dirt and Desire*, have any impact on the thesis as to the main argument Ms. Soukupová is making? And a few closely related questions: given the fact that there is female Gothic, and in connection with what Yaeger had to say, would Ms. Soukupová advocate the use of the term „ethnic Gothic“, too? And since in the final chapter she herself suggests the possibility of including other works in the future, which ones would seem to be, in her opinion, rather useful: maybe more recent ones that also consider class and lesbianism (see for example Dorothy Allison)?

Finally, I also feel compelled to say that I had the chance to trace Ms. Soukupová's intellectual development: from the early versions of her B. A. thesis to this „product“. Thanks to her hard work and enthusiasm, she has made a huge progress, and should be proud of herself – given also the difficult working conditions she was facing now, with a less adequate feedback via e-mails.

This being the case, I am suggesting the following grade: výborně/excellent. As always, though, the final result very much depends on the review written by the opponent, as well as on Ms. Soukupová's performance during the oral examination of her thesis.

Dr. Hana Ulmanová

Prague, May 22, 2020