

Jan Kesman's B. A. thesis: review written by the supervisor

Jan Kesman's B. A. thesis, **Reconstructing the Myth: *Blood Meridian* as the New Western**, is a solidly focused and neatly structured study of Cormac McCarthy's *Blood Meridian*. The argument is fluent and persuasive, and leads to the desired conclusion. From the very beginning, one can see that the author is highly interested in the given phenomena: thus, his analysis is nuanced and sensitive, as well as precise and thoughtful.

The secondary sources he is relying on range from rather historical (Frederick Jackson Turner) to almost philosophical (Ronald Barthes), and also include a variety of contemporary works related to both the Western genre and *Blood Meridian*. I was pleased that he has consulted the theses on this or similar theme submitted at our department, too, but since he has not used them directly, I would wish to ask whether he did find them relevant for his purposes at least slightly; or is it his belief that they are all (Zdeněk Polívka, Barbora Kubalová, Aleš Kuna) researching entirely other fields and themes?

Since I served as Mr. Kesman's supervisor, I do not really have any substantial comments; perhaps just a few truly marginal questions. In the sections devoted to the Western genre, Mr. Kesman is justifiably mentioning several Western films both before and after *Blood Meridian*, arguing that the language of novels and cinema is, in this case, to a certain degree comparable. While this is certainly correct, there are also some remarkable differences: where would he see them (again, we are talking about Westerns only)? And does that implicitly mean that there are no writers both before and after comparable – again, in this respect only – to McCarthy? The second bunch of questions is, then, touching upon the relationship between the kid and Judge Holden. Since Mr. Kesman did occasionally refer to

the old Greeks, how would he apply the classical notions of hero/antihero, protagonist/antagonist to their relationship in the novel? And would it – in his opinion – somehow contribute to the point he is himself making?

Having said that, I believe it is self-evident that my suggestion for the grade is “výborně”/“excellent“. The final result, though, will very much depend on the report written by the opponent, as well as on Mr. Kesman’s performance during the oral defense.

Dr. Hana Ulmanová

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