

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

Ms. Soukupová's B.A. thesis, **Neither Old, Nor New: The Southern Belle Archetype in Lillian Hellman's *Birdie Hubbard* from *The Little Foxes* and Tennessee Williams's *Blanche DuBois* from *A Streetcar Named Desire***, submitted now for the second time, is a considerable improvement of the previous version, which was found insufficient last semester. Ms. Soukupová's discussion as to the nature of the American South and the Southern Belle is certainly more nuanced, and her approach towards the notions of stereotype and archetype is definitely more refined. The analysis of the two plays in question is consequently much more persuasive, and the selected feminist and gender theories are finally applied in an appropriate manner. Ms. Soukupová was also able to improve her writing skills. Her observations are, I believe, quite accurate and relevant, and at the same time, she managed to establish firm connections between the individual sentences, paragraphs, chapters and thoughts.

Having said that, I have to add two questions regarding Ms. Soukupová's conclusion. On p. 57, why is she mentioning „race“ at all, given that e.g. Judith Butler argued about gender only, and quite firmly dismissed any superficial applications of her theories on the constructed nature of race? And how come Ms. Soukupová is mentioning precisely *The Best Little Whorehouse* and *Steel Magnolias* as two other primary texts for further consideration and possible research, once there is a substantial body of rather contemporary and also canonical dramas as well (e.g. *Crimes of the Heart*)? Could she reasonably justify her choice, and perhaps also come up with a more detailed, well-argued, and maybe also chronological list of other potential titles?

This being the case, I believe that Ms. Soukupová might even deserve the following grade: „velmi dobře/very good“. The final result, though, depends largely also on the review written by the opponent, and on Ms. Soukupová's performance during the oral defense.

Prague, Jan 10, 2017

Dr. Hana Ulmanová, M.A.