

Ms. Piňosová's M.A. thesis – opponent's review

Ms. Piňosová's M.A. thesis deals with Emersonian principles and their practical applications for the African American minority in the U.S., as well as with *Invisible Man* and *Native Son*, two distinguished novels written by key African American authors. It has to be stressed that Ms. Piňosová interprets Emerson's complex works clearly, and persuasively argues that he may be considered the father of American pragmatism. In that light, she proceeds to the actual analysis. However, I believe that the role of the opponent is to point out real or potential problems in the thesis, and here they are.

In the literary chapters, Ms. Piňosová decided to discuss *Invisible Man* (1952) first and *Native Son* (1940) second, claiming that in *Invisible Man*, Emersonian principles are more immediately evident. While that is certainly the case, I cannot help but wonder whether she should not follow chronologically. Wright's influence on Ellison is indisputable, and thus she could have also considered Henry Louis Gates's theory of signifying (after all, she does touch upon the titles of the novels on p. 71 and 72). Moreover, those passages on p. 66 and 67 as to what is reminiscent of what and what resembles what would make more sense.

One minor question next. On p. 16, Ms. Piňosová mentions Danish thinker Kierkegaard, and not a single other philosopher in that respect. Even though I know what she means, in my opinion, dropping his name there is both irrelevant and arbitrary. Could she justify her choice at least during the oral defense?

The very last issue I would want her to develop is the notion of comic tradition in *Invisible Man*, as it was raised by e. g. Rovit (see p. 37). Would it be possible to take it more „seriously“ and briefly ponder upon the idea of what happens if Emerson himself becomes an authority (which is what he did not become for the protagonist, but did become, reasonably enough, for the purposes of the submitted thesis)? By the way, recently I came across a biographical article on Ellison claiming that his parents actually named him after Emerson – out of curiosity, is that treated as an established fact in the sources Ms. Piňosová consulted?

Depending on the review written by the supervisor and Ms. Piňosová's performance during the oral defense, I am suggesting the following grade(s): either výborně (A) or velmi dobře (B).

Dr. Hana Ulmanová

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