

Jan Mackal's B. A. thesis – review written by the supervisor

Mr. Mackal's thesis deals with the decline of Southern aristocracy in the selected novels of William Faulkner. While the theme is rather conventional, what has to be appreciated is Mr. Mackal's thoughtful and occasionally also critical handling of secondary sources, ranging from classical (e. g. Brooks) to very contemporary, as well as his central argument, which is highly precise and complex at the same time. Moreover, it is always supported by carefully chosen quotes from the primary texts (here, I am tempted to say that I enjoyed the final one a lot). Thus, there are just a few minor reservations to be made.

On p. 44, I am troubled by the wording: what is meant by the „true depiction“, and how does that work together with the relevant note? Then, on p. 54, Mr. Mackal writes that „Quentin believes... it would have lesser importance and consequences, if she had crossed the boundaries with him“; again, how would that correspond with the following quote? And also, while Mr. Mackal's English is flawless (there are just two errors I was able to detect: on p. 46 „fells“ instead of „falls/fell“, and on p. 48 in note 65 redundant „simply“), he could have paid more attention to the Czech abstract (see e. g. p. 6 – what is needed here is „postavy... by se byly vyhnuly“).

Finally, I feel obliged to mention that seeing Southern gothic under the key words, I was taken by surprise. While the theme of decline, among other things, is certainly gothic, Southern gothic is, I believe, never explicitly mentioned in the whole work, not to say discussed. Could Mr. Mackal touch upon its relevance to the central theme of his thesis at least during the oral defense, perhaps taking into consideration Petra Hesová's M.A. thesis, or some other relevant sources? And a truly marginal comment: has he read Ms. Rychetníková's thesis, submitted a few years ago at our department, and would it be important for his analysis of Jason's pretended sanity?

Depending on Mr. Mackal's performance during the oral defense and the review written by the opponent, I am suggesting the following grade: výborně/excellent.

Dr. Hana Ulmanová

Prague, Aug 25, 2012