

ALEŠ KUNA'S B.A. THESIS – REVIEW WRITTEN BY THE SUPERVISOR

McCarthy's apocalyptic *The Road*: a minimalist and allegorical reading is a very ambitious thesis, attempting to interpret the given novel in quite an original manner. In his analysis, Mr. Kuna relies on detailed knowledge of McCarthy's works in general, as well as on the help of truly contemporary secondary sources. Thus, he is able to work with different contexts and therefore establish very interesting connections, and his central argument is both thoughtful and persuasive. Occasionally, though, his reasoning becomes a little vague, and there are several loose ends, so to speak: e.g. once he discusses minimalism in music, why not in visual arts as well? What exactly is the point he wants to make here?

The language of the thesis is very adequate and almost flawless, with just a few regrettable and curiously enough even repeated misprints (such as Elliot, The Scarlett Letter, Hemmingway). At some places, though, Mr. Kuna could have been more precise – e.g. on p. 75 the expression „from its abstractness“ is rather unclear, as one is also left to wonder what is actually being referred to: literary analysis, or minimalist work?

As to the actual interpretation, there are just three points I would wish to raise. 1) While Mr. Kuna is certainly excellently acquainted with the American literary tradition and uses it in a very persuasive manner, I do not quite see the relevance of Alexander Dumas and Victor Hugo, both mentioned on p. 9. 2) I am not sure whether his reading of the Wandering Jew is not too one-sided, as it might potentially enrage some Jewish critics, even though I understand his effort to see that character within the apocalyptic tradition. 3) On p. 76, Mr. Kuna uses the term „proto-minimalist“ in connection to Robert Frost and his poem Fire and Ice, and I just wonder whether it has been used before, or how is this label used in poetry, since I would suspect the applicability might be somewhat different from prose.

In conclusion, it is my firm belief that this B.A. thesis could easily become a basis for an M.A., that is diploma thesis. Moreover, I would think that it might not be impossible to find a Czech literary/cultural/philosophical periodical that might be interested in publishing an essay on the given theme, and would be willing to offer some help in that respect.

In spite of the above-mentioned minor problems, I still believe that Mr. Kuna deserves the grade „výborně“. The final result, though, depends on the review written by the opponent and on Mr. Kuna's performance during the oral defense.

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