

Ms. Magdalena Müllerová's B. A. thesis – review written by the supervisor

Ms. Müllerová's B. A. thesis, *Evolution of the Approach to Death: John Updike's Novels of the 1960s*, is a clearly focused, neatly structured and well-argued study of the phenomenon that is precisely defined already in the title. Ms. Müllerová decided to analyze the following novels, *Rabbit, Run*, *The Centaur*, and *Couples*, which is, in my opinion, a reasonable and fully justified choice, taking into account what her main goal is. As to the secondary sources, she is relying on the relevant articles connected to the individual novels, on the conversations with the author himself (only to a limited degree, though, which is understandable and desirable), and on the Christian teachings and Sigmund Freud's theories.

In the introductory part, Ms. Müllerová is mentioning the so-called American religion, a concept used by a terribly influential scholar Harold Bloom, as well, which I believe could have been a very enriching device even later on. Therefore, my major question is obvious: Where would she situate the heroes she was considering in relation to the American religion? Would a more detailed work with Harold Bloom's ideas have modified her main argument and the subsequent conclusion, and if so, how? Could it have been e. g. more nuanced? Or, conversely: if not, why not?

Since I was acting as a supervisor, I genuinely do not have any other questions. I just feel I have to stress the fact that Ms. Müllerová's line of thought is very fluent and the conclusion persuasive. And, admittedly, I could have pointed out the potential further importance of Harold Bloom earlier; my fault, I overlooked that.

This being the case, I am suggesting the following grade: either výborně/excellent, or velmi dobře/very good. The final result will thus very much depend on the review written by the opponent, as well as on Ms. Müllerová's performance during the oral defense.

Dr. Hana Ulmanová

Prague, Aug 9, 2019