

Posudek na diplomovou práci Niny Hořkové-Makelberge *Experiencing Nature: Reading of Emerson's Mythopoeia*

This as an original and advanced treatment of the relationships myth and nature R.W. Emerson's essays. The novelty of this approach consists in reading Emerson in the context of recent and contemporary cultural and literary anthropology (Clifford Geertz, Wolfgang Iser), Neo-Kantian philosophy of fictions (Hans Vaihinger) and also rhetorical and literary approaches to historiography (Giambattista Vico, Friedrich Nietzsche, Hayden White). The stimuli of these major thinkers are quite successfully combined with the renowned approaches to myth (Ernst Cassirer, Joseph Campbell) and authoritative Emersonian criticism (Robert D. Richardson). This complex interpretive framework does not seem to have any parallels in the so-far existing approaches to Emerson's philosophy and literary qualities.

Another aspect, which has already been, although not sufficiently, discussed, is Emerson's relationship to the heritage of romantic philosophy. The argument about the importance of Schelling's *Transcendental Idealism* and Friedrich Schlegel's thought on myth as interpretive framework is fairly convincing, and yields more than usual comparisons of Emerson's thought with Coleridge, Carlyle, Jean Paul or Fichte.

The deficiencies of the approach are caused by the rather unsystematic approach of the author to the selection and discussion of individual texts: the rather narrow scope of the chosen essays lacks thorough and consistent justification; and the key texts, especially *Nature*, "The American Scholar" and, above all, "Poetry and Imagination" would deserve systematic analysis in relation to their contexts (for instance, the concept of the "gay science" in Nietzsche and Emerson; Schelling's and Friedrich Schlegel's theories of imagination; but also Wolfgang Iser's notions of "the fictive" and "the imaginary"). In the individual readings, the author should make more effort to make her procedures evident, distinguishing between the interpretation of primary sources and philosophical commentaries.

Finally, one could expect a more complex approach to the question of the "new" in Emerson's philosophy. Among others, the work should demonstrate more clearly the difference, inherent in Emerson's thought and rhetoric, between the nineteenth-century notions of progress and centrality of human spirit, and Emerson's daring overlap to the realms of recent philosophies of time and history.

These reservations, however, are not meant to imply serious problems in the author's approach. The inventive and stimulating nature of her well-informed approach is the main reason why the thesis highly surpasses the average of theses defended in the English and American literature program. **Doporučuji k obhajobě a navrhuji hodnotit "výborně".**

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vedoucí práce