

Ms. Iva Vejvodová's B. A. thesis – opponent's review

Ms. Iva Vejvodová decided to write her B. A. thesis on the portrayal of the tragic mulatto myth in William Faulkner's *Light in August*. While I believe that it is a truly fascinating theme, I wonder whether it is not too ambitious for such a relatively short analysis, and cannot help but think that narrowing down the focus would be useful. In that respect, Ms. Vejvodová could have consulted e. g. Karolína Jelínková's M. A. thesis written on a similar theme at our department a few years ago, and perhaps she would have found it relevant for her own work – either as an important source to be quoted, or as a substantial material that still does not cover all the aspects of a chosen theme, and than she could have tried to fill in a gap.

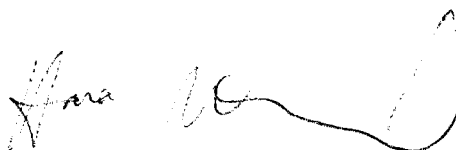
Having said that, Ms. Vejvodová developed a solid structure (i.e. she was able to organize her thoughts into the individual chapters) and presented a good argument, which is – given the complexity of her theme – a great plus. Yet, she could have worked more both on her Czech and her English: she is not always using the individual words (or even terms) precisely, and her syntax can get clumsy, which consequently influences the quality of the points she makes. In order to illustrate that, I have chosen the following three examples.

In the Czech text, Ms. Vejvodová states that „každý byt' jen s údajnou kapkou černošské krve je násilně zlynčován“, and that women were „v době Faulknerovy tvorby postaveny naroveň černým obyvatelům“. Not only is the word „násilně“ redundant; the word „každý“ is, in my opinion, rather rhetorical, and I also have troubles seeing women as equal to blacks – while both race and gender are certainly constructs, there are also huge differences, not mentioning the differences between black and white women, respectively (see e. g. the common phrase „mules and magnolias“). This may not be, however, Ms. Vejvodová's own simplification – she may have been way too influenced by Doreen Fowler's study listed in the bibliography.

On p. 14, Ms. Vejvodová states that „acting of the black males vice versa was considerably contributing to the interracial sexual intercourses however it was not the only way of spreading the black blood further“. Could she clarify the structure of the sentence, and namely its meaning and logic, please? A similar problem occurs on p. 28: „this stereotype was again artificially established due to the different body structure, claiming that a black man's muscles are as strong as the muscles of an animal“. Which source is Ms. Vejvodová relying on, and is she paraphrasing accurately? And finally, on p. 33 there is a statement that „there are numerous striking examples of anti-woman approach in Faulkner's novel“. Is that Ms. Vejvodová's own observation, and what are the examples she would provide here?

Depending on the review written by professor David Robbins and Ms. Vejvodová's performance during the oral defense, the suggested grade is in between velmi dobře and dobře.

Dr. Hana Ulmanová



Prague, Sept. 6, 2010