

POSUDEK DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Jméno a příjmení studenta: Bc. Denisa KAREŠOVÁ
Název diplomové práce: Voodoo in the Fiction of Charles Chesnutt and Zora Neale Hurston
Vedoucí diplomové práce: PhDr. Christopher KOY, M.A., Ph.D.
Oponent diplomové práce: PhDr. Kamila Vránková, Ph.D.

- I. Cíl práce a jeho naplnění: 2. Cíl práce byl naplněn s drobnými nedostatky
- II. Struktura práce: 1. Logická, jasná a přehledná
- III. Práce s literaturou: 2. Velmi dobrá práce s adekvátními prameny v patřičném rozsahu
- IV. Prezentace a interpretace dat: 3. Uspokojivá prezentace i interpretace dat
- V. Formální stránka: 1. Odpovídá všem stanoveným požadavkům
- VI. Jazyková úroveň práce: 2. Velmi dobrá
- VII. Náročnost zpracování tématu: 2. Vysoká
- VIII. Přínosy práce: 1. Originální zpracování a názory, předkládá nová zjištění

Vyjádření vedoucího diplomové práce:

This was a challenging topic. Not only is voodoo virtually unknown in Europe and therefore hard to relate to for Europeans, but the entire environment of African American slavery in which voodoo arose is alien to readers from here. On top of all that, much of the writing by Chesnutt and Hurston is written in African American Vernacular English, not standard American English. Nevertheless, a critique is necessary to make about this thesis of Miss Karešová that simply summarizing the plots and referring to secondary sources is not as strong as one needs for a mark of excellent. A feature common to most, if not all, diploma works is a theoretical background to the method of interpretation and an application of that theory to the texts. This lack of a theoretical application as a means of interpreting of the selected fiction weakens her effort greatly. It is the basis of much of her work merely restating the plot, offering character traits and characters' roles in the plot rather than a true analysis of the novel and short stories.

The experience of slavery, including the destruction of family bonding between man and woman or mother and child by the masters is presented nicely in the Chesnutt stories whereby voodoo is a means of coping, or in some cases retaliation. Much attention is made in one story of the trickster figure (in "The Goophered Grapevine") but in none of the many other stories trickster figures. Miss Karešová notes that there were two conjure men and a couple of conjure women. What were the differences in Chesnutt's conjure men and women, and why did Chesnutt create conjure men at all in a book entitled *The Conjure Woman*? Fundamental questions of revenge in, for example "The Marked Tree" might have been fully drawn out when the plot summary clearly would not suffice. Conjurers die in Chesnutt's stories, one even by a violent "patient." One conjure woman goes mad. Miss Karešová does not comment or analyze the significance of these endings, in particular the violent death of the conjurer in "The Gray Wolf's Ha'nt." Finally more detail to the role of the white couple, John and Ann, the Yankee carpetbaggers from Ohio, might be mentioned besides the manner in which Julius tries to trick them. They play a significant important role besides the economic one in their special relationship with Uncle Julius.

Zora Neale Hurston gets better attention, especially regarding her nonfiction which is interesting for this thesis on voodoo. *Tell My Horse* delves deeply into voodoo and the combination of Christian and African rituals in Hurston's fiction is missing altogether in Chesnutt's conjure tales, something that remained uncommented upon. The relationships and elements of voodoo in *Their Eyes Were Watching God* are covered well, though, along with her short stories, Miss Karešová might have enlightened us on the tremendous differences in writing style between Hurston and Chesnutt.

Navrhovaná známka: velmi dobře

Otázky k obhajobě:

1. There was not much analysis in some stories and a little too much plot summary or simple quoting from secondary literature. The infant "Mose" in the "Sis' Becky's Pickin'ny" conjure tale obviously refers to whom in the Bible? How can you see reflections of this biblical character in Chesnutt's story?
2. Besides the disbelief by whites in Voodoo, how was conjuring basically suppressed in the conjure stories by Chesnutt?

Podpis vedoucího diplomové práce diplomové práce*: 

Datum: 16. 5. 2018

*nehodící se škrtněte