

POSUDEK DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Jméno a příjmení studenta: Bc. Petra Holiková
Název diplomové práce: Bram Stoker and Sheridan LeFanu: an Analysis of their Irish Horror Fiction
Vedoucí diplomové práce: PhDr. Christopher Koy, M.A. Ph.D.
Oponent diplomové práce: PhDr. Kamila Vránková, Ph.D.

- I. Cíl práce a jeho naplnění: 1. Cíl práce byl stanoven a naplněn v souladu s tématem
- II. Struktura práce: 1. Logická, jasná a přehledná
- III. Práce s literaturou: 1. Výborná: zvoleny a použity vhodné prameny v patřičném rozsahu, přesná práce s citacemi, kritická analýza zdrojů
- IV. Prezentace a interpretace dat: 2. Velmi dobrá prezentace dat, úspěšný pokus o jejich interpretaci
- V. Formální stránka: 1. Odpovídá všem stanoveným požadavkům
- VI. Jazyková úroveň práce: 1. Výborná
- VII. Náročnost zpracování tématu: 1. Velmi vysoká
- VIII. Přínosy práce: 2. Práce je v daném oboru přínosná, ale neobsahuje originální a nová zjištění

Vyjádření vedoucího diplomové práce *:

The founders of Irish horror wrote difficult fiction, not only because the 19th century texts are sophisticated, often using archaic structural forms of English which can be challenging even to a native speaker, never mind the foreign reader, but also because themes such as sexual transgressions, medicine, religion, the historical British colonialism and imperialism expressed as metaphors, metamorphoses of characters from persons into animals (and the contortions of the human body to pass through walls), Christian symbolism of good and evil as well as such exotic notions of „undead“ and hypnotism. Literary aspects which challenged Miss Holikova include the multifaceted genre of Romanticism and the subgenre of the Gothic novel, intertextual relations of these two authors, the narrative techniques etc. There is much to chew on here, and the modest coursework offered does not prepare students to

address in a scholarly fashion most of these concerns. Yet Miss Holikova has dealt with these complex authors and their texts admirably, making outstanding use of secondary literature combined with her own insights to produce a splendid analysis.

Now to some criticism. If we consider lengthy quotes, taking for example one of the first in the analysis on p. 14 pertaining to the fruitless efforts to locate geographically Count Dracula's Castle and Jonathan Harker's mild success in learning basic information regarding Transylvania, there is much quoted but precious little regarding analysis of this paragraph outside that the lack of information builds up the narrative's mystery or better "suspense." Yet at that time, the British Museum was the principle source for British subjects for knowledge of the world, and Harker's discovery of virtually no detailed maps or useful information about Transylvania, "one of the wildest and least known portions of Europe," is certainly linked to the fact that it was never colonized by the British or by one of the historical allies of the UK. In essence, knowledge gained from the British Museum generally facilitated opportunities for cultural and economic exploitation of a region and its people by the British, in the paragraph cited, Harker sees that little is offered to him in what is essentially going to be a British business enterprise. The very next cited paragraph again shows Harker futilely attempting to obtain information from local people, but Miss Holikova merely discusses mystery and fear in the interpretation of this quote. This "knowledge is power" aspect might best be expressed before or after such lengthy quotes. As Miss Holikova properly asserts later in the thesis, in the Irish novel *Dracula* the British do not exploit the Other, but the Other exploits the British, and it soon becomes apparent that Count Dracula knows more about the British than the British know about him. Basically, I would prefer each quote to be analyzed rather than to have them help "tell the themes," as it were, that are being interpreted.

On the whole, the success in Miss Holikova's master thesis is her interpretation of the texts she approaches with a combination of her own insights and secondary literature, and I especially like her treatment of (the so-called "minor") female characters in for example *Dracula*, though thought-provoking analysis of female characters in both *Carmilla* and "Dracula's Guest" for example are masterfully presented as well. In many ways this thesis might be best renamed "a feminist treatment of LeFanu and Stoker's fiction" since it is here that Miss Holikova excels and writes especially skillfully and splendidly and constitutes the basis for my assessment ("excellent") of this master thesis.

Some errors appear, such as the repeated comparison of Stoker's fiction (treated earlier) with those works analyzed and presented later ("The Familiar" is repeatedly compared to "Dracula's Guest" even though that LeFanu story is analyzed last in the thesis). This chronology seems askew since LeFanu wrote his fiction first and profoundly influenced Stoker, yet LeFanu's fiction gets Miss Holikova's attention last. A minor issue is a modest number of English language errors made in the thesis which pop up every now and then (examples early in the thesis include informal forms "totally loose" misspelling „Ghotic," both on p. 11) but on the whole the English written here is really fine.

Práce splňuje * základní požadavky kladené na tento typ prací, a proto ji doporučuji* k ústní obhajobě.

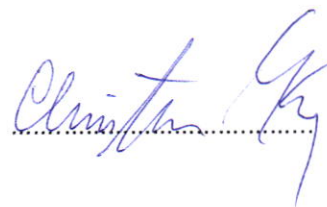
Navrhovaná známka: výborně*

Otázky k obhajobě:

1. An issue not addressed in this thesis: In what way is science and the Gothic novel tradition (i.e., in *Frankenstein*) evident and exploited – why is science interesting for these Irish Gothic novelists?

2. Could you explain the Romantic philosophy of „death“ expressed in „The Familiar“ ?
3. Regarding folk medicine (besides the possession of a crucifix), why of all things does garlic (pp. 20-21) protect a person from Dracula's bite? (It cannot be because of the stench since Dracula himself stinks)

Podpis vedoucího diplomové práce/oponenta diplomové práce*:



Datum: 17. 8. 2016

*nehodící se škrtněte