

POSUDEK DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Jméno a příjmení studenta: Bc. Kristýna Šottová
Název diplomové práce: **Literary Portraits of Louisiana Women by Novelists George W. Cable, Kate Chopin and Ernest J. Gaines.**
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: 1. Systematická, logická prezentace, originální a důsledná interpretace
- V. Formální stránka: 1. Odpovídá všem stanoveným požadavkům
- VI. Jazyková úroveň práce: 1. Výborná
- VII. Náročnost zpracování tématu: 1. Velmi vysoká
- VIII. Přínosy práce: 1. Originální zpracování a názory, předkládá nová zjištění

Vyjádření vedoucího diplomové práce diplomové práce*:

Beginning with the unique history of a former colony and slave state, Louisiana stands unusual also as a Catholic state (only Maryland is likewise Catholic). Ms. Šottová properly offers a brief yet thorough review of the history of this state (pp. 7-17) including the sale of the Louisiana Territory to the United States (in what many of the French-speaking locals the worst form of colonialization – being bought). She follows this through with a subchapter entitled „Women in Louisiana History“ from the colonial to the present eras, including the quadroon or octoroon placage system. I can only state that the attention and care to detail offered by Ms. Šottová demonstrates not only her love of history, but her excellent English continues to impress upon my mind how much she loves the English language as well.

Chapter three focusses on Cable and his work, and especially his most famous novel and still the top Louisiana novel of the 19th century, *The Grandissimes*, published in 1880. A multiracial and gender-mindful novel, Cable shows a humorous side as well as a critical eye of the French speaking Creoles of New Orleans, and also gives exceptional voice to African Americans, and Cable does so while making his best efforts to avoid stereotyping blacks which was so common in those years. Ms. Šottová handles the complicated plot of *The Grandissimes* brilliantly, including handling the two men both named Honoré Grandissime. Cable make a self-portrait of a Yankee in the form of Joseph Frowenfeld, who basically voices Cable's opinions on Creoles and their society. Agricola, named after the fierce Roman governor of Great Britain well after Julius Ceasar had abandoned the islands, becomes a target of African American female discontent. The combination of exotic names and exotic behavior and race-mixing and yet substantial racism and violence was analyzed by Ms. Šottová masterfully. The long novel gets an impressive reading, and it is a tough task to catch everything for a non-Native Speaker.

The chapter on Kate Chopin, the only writer not native-born to Louisiana, focusses on the now classic fictional work *The Awakening* (1899), a landmark feminist novel in which a wife awakens from her catatonic state (metaphorically-understood) as a dutiful wife. Chopin's life might be regarded as exciting as the plot of her novel, though her great novel ruined much of her happiness and some financial stability because of the criticism it received, resulting in cancelled contracts for further publications. Edna Pontellier, the heroine of this novel, has a family but feels discontented, and falls in love with another man. He releases many feelings though their love is never consummated – he departs for Mexico and through letters indicates that he was in love with Edna. The heroine seeks freedom and gets it by swimming in the Gulf of Mexico and drowning herself. Ms. Šottová recognizes the feminist approach but also within a Creole context.

Chapter 5 brings an African American voice in novel form through a novel by Ernest J. Gaines. Gaines grew up impoverish in Louisiana but as a teenager moved with his family to California where a black man had greater educational opportunities. After a number of years, Gaines returned to Louisiana and wrote about the rural areas he knew best. He steadily had a growing following though it took more than a decade of writing for Gaines to earn a decent enough amount from his writing of short stories and novels. The two great novels, *A Lesson before Dying* and *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman* made the greatest impact for him popularly and financially.

Catherine Carmier, Gaines's first novel, carries the female protagonist further in development than his best-selling novels and so it was chosen for Ms. Šottová. It is a novel with an overwhelming black cast with fewer white people included as characters. It is Raoul who wishes to dominate over everyone and some women manage to rebel under trying circumstances. Gaines takes the reader to another world just as successfully as Cable and Chopin did, though this novel was not and is still not considered as important. Ms. Šottová recognizes the power conflicts and presents them clearly and concisely.

All in all, this is a wonderful thesis written with a quite excellent level of English, and so there is precious little to criticize. On the whole, the success in Ms. Šottová's master thesis is her interpretation of the texts she approaches with a combination of her own insights and some secondary literature.

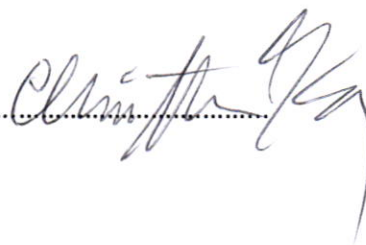
Práce splňuje základní požadavky kladené na tento typ prací, a proto ji doporučuji k ústní obhajobě.

Navrhovaná známka: **výborně**

Otázky k obhajobě:

1. What aspects of the Creole scene is different than for women in other parts of USA or, for that matter, in Europe?
2. Describe the placage system of Louisiana and how long that system continued past the state becoming a part of the United States.
3. Which novel to your mind showed women under greatest male domination?
4. Which novel was to your mind the least interesting and why?

Podpis vedoucího diplomové práce diplomové práce*:



Datum: 18. 8. 2023

*nehodící se škrtněte