



POSUDEK VEDOUCÍ BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Studijní obor: **Anglický jazyk a literatura (dvouoborové studium)**

Název práce: **A Comparison between John Steinbeck's Characters – George Milton from 'Of Mice and Men' and Mordeen Saul from 'Burning Bright'**

Autorka práce: **Aneta Dibďáková**

Vedoucí bakalářské práce: **Einat Adar, M.A. Ph.D.**

Oponentka bakalářské práce: **doc. PhDr. Mariana Machová, Ph.D**

Short characteristics of the thesis

The thesis compares one of John Steinbeck's most famous works, 'Of Mice and Men' with one of his less successful attempts – 'Burning Bright'. Despite the apparent differences between the setting and story of the works, the author shows important similarities in the moral dilemmas treated by these texts and particularly in the response of the two chosen characters. This work highlights the somewhat disturbing consequences of Steinbeck's vision of humanity in the context of evolutionary theory which sheds light on his oeuvre as a whole.

The comparison between the two works and the chosen character shows they share a form, the structuring of gender roles, and even aesthetic choices in the writing such as the choice of title and the presentation of the characters.

Overall assessment

This thesis grew out of Aneta's original idea that the two characters of George Milton and Mordeen Saul had much in common despite their obvious differences. From this initial insight she was able to develop a broader view of Steinbeck's aesthetic project and the play-novelle form, showing a continuity in his treatment of personal and ethical dilemmas within the framework of the theory of evolution. Throughout the work on the thesis, Aneta demonstrated an ability to conduct extensive independent research and develop new ideas in response to her readings and my feedback. Her close attention to the presentation of the arguments and the rules of academic writing are apparent in the final thesis.

For me, the most interesting topic was the discussion of the murders which are perpetrated in both texts. The murder of Lenny at the end of the famous 'Of Mice and Men' is often mentioned as an example of the justification of killing people with disabilities in literature and general culture. As this thesis shows, the plot and the inner logic of the novella inexorably lead to this murder of a helpless men, which is paradoxically seen as an act of heroism. The comparison with 'Burning Bright' creates a wider context for this 'solution' by showing that for Steinbeck, murder can be justified in other circumstances as well. The murder of Lenny has been construed as saving him from a worse fate, but the murder of the farm worker Victor is clearly perpetrated to promote the happiness of other people. The allusion to Blake's poem in the title clearly indicates that the novella explores not only the structure of the family but also the problem of evil. Therefore, if the author of this thesis intends to pursue and develop this research, I would recommend looking at the question of the sources of evil in John Steinbeck's work and expand the discussion to more of his works.



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Podpis