

## Master Thesis Evaluation

Author: Magdalena Císlerová

Title: *Blurring the Lines Between Reality and Fiction: Peter Carey's Engagement with Australian History and Identity*

Thesis Supervisor: Dr. Soňa Nováková, PhD., CSc.

External Assessor: Mgr. Klára Kolinská, M.A., PhD.

### External Assessor's Evaluation:

Magdalena Císlerová's Master Thesis addresses a very interesting, complex and productive topic: the representation of Australian history in the novels by Australian writer Peter Carey with particular focus on his novels *Illywhacker* (1985), *Oscar and Lucinda* (1988), *True History of the Kelly Gang* (2000), and *My Life as a Fake* (2003), plus the travel memoir *30 Days in Sydney* (2001). And it has to be noted right away that the author approaches her task very competently, responsibly and thoroughly.

First of all, the text of the dissertation is clearly grounded both in the author's detailed knowledge of the chosen subject matter and literary material, and in substantial theoretical and historical research. Moreover, the author proves to be able to read her sources critically and to formulate her own interpretive and argumentative position. This approach results in a well-informed and well-articulated thesis, which is the more valuable considering the fact that, as the author herself notes, Australian literature is not typically in the focus of theoretical and critical attention, not even in Australia itself, and even less so in the context of the Czech academic context. The thesis thus forms a qualified contribution to the study of Australian literature for any professional purpose.

The text of the thesis is clearly, logically and carefully structured, making the argument easy to follow and convincing on all levels. It focuses on the works of a sufficiently representative author of Australian literature, and, quite rightly, does not satisfy itself with a mere biographical approach and method of close reading, but, instead, uses the chosen case study for making a larger, and at the same time deeper commentary about Australian literary culture and its historical context.

For this purpose, the approach of genre analysis proves quite pertinent; with detailed knowledge of theory and frequent, relevant references the author discusses Peter Carey's novels as modern historical fictions that use facts of the past and knowledge thereof for

reinterpreting and reformulating the nation's position in the present, and for a different – often ideologically charged – understanding of it.

In this sense, one of the most interesting chapters of the thesis is the one discussing the concept of lie and lying – in my view, it appears as an effective perspective for interpreting and contextualizing modern and postmodern historical fiction as such, of which Peter Carey is an influential and inspiring representative.

Another asset of the thesis is the fact that it is written in very good academic English, with hardly any blemishes on the levels of either syntax or stylistic register.

In view of the comments made above I recommend Magdalena Císlerová's Master thesis for defence with suggested evaluation of EXCELLENT.

Prague, May 18th, 2018

Mgr. Klára Kolinská, M.A., PhD.