

PÁTEK 16. ČERVNA 2017

UNIVERZITA KARLOVA – FILOZOFICKÁ FAKULTA

ÚSTAV ANGLOFONNÍCH LITERATUR A KULTUR

Posudek Bakalrské Práce(Vedoucky Report): “ Anarchy and Anarchism in the Works of James Kelman”

Report on Bachelor’s Thesis(Supervisor's Report): “Anarchy and Anarchism in the Works of James Kelman”

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Oponent: Zdenek Beran PhD

Zpracoval : Tomas Balvin

## General Remarks:

This thesis is an interesting and very readable consideration of a valid theme in the writing of an important modern British novelist, James Kelman. In considering a number of Kelman's texts, Balvin has drawn out some important issues and contentions, for example that Kelman's oeuvre is often misunderstood in terms of a Marxist perspective whereas he is more fruitfully understood as an anarchist. Balvin makes reasonable observations in the introductory section of this thesis which foreground the detailed political analysis to follow, stating for example that critics misrepresent Kelman as a: "strictly politically dogmatic point of view is not always taken to reproduce the anarchist position concerning the author's fiction". I found the application of Deleuzian theory to be particularly useful relative to a non-vertical and highly transgressive author such as Kelman especially in terms of the stultifying and arguably irrelevant and distracting dialectics of class and power structures in late 20<sup>th</sup> C Scotland as a subaltern component of the rump British Empire.

Kelman himself is highly politically engaged and Balvin has done a good job in referring to a number of useful texts on anarchism, both canonical and less orthodox and has constructed an interesting picture of Kelman by so doing.

Balvin's contention of 'non-standard English' I did think was inadequately drawn out however as it rather ignores the long history of Scottish linguistic 'resistance' to any such notion i.e. Leonard and Lochhead et al. Also, more consideration might have been offered as to why the 1990s were the 'peak of interest' in Kelman and why he seems to have rather dropped off the radar in literary culture of late. Was his message a limited chronotope? Has another author taken up the mantle?

While there are a number of grammatical and stylistic errors in this text, it is nonetheless well written and these do not substantially distract from the overall impression.

## Recommendation

Bearing in mind the foregoing comments, I would recommend that this work should be passed at a grade of 1 (Vyborne) and I commend it for consideration at that level.

Colin S Clark MA