Faculty of Arts, Master’s Thesis

Thesis Supervisor’s report

Thesis Title: Gender, Social Identity and Education in Thomas Hardy’s Later Fiction
Field of Study: FF N-SS AJU kombin. [sem 6, cyk 2]
Department: Department of English and American Studies
Author: Bc. Aleš Kozel
Supervisor: Stephen Paul Hardy, Ph.D.

Supervisor’s recommendation for overall mark: A

1. Evaluation of central idea, thesis, focus and purpose: B
2. Evaluation of organization, logic and arrangement: A
3. Evaluation of topic development, support and evidence: A
4. Evaluation of language, style, standard usage, citation and bibliographic standards: A

Comments and/or topics and questions for the thesis defence:
The thesis provides a very thorough, socially contextualised and oriented analysis of attitudes to gender, class and education as they relate to one another in the portrait of mid- to late-nineteenth century English society as critically dramatised in the late fiction of Thomas Hardy. The thesis provides not only a detailed analysis of the two novels considered but an extensive and helpfully researched introduction to the issues broached in terms of the discussion of elements of contemporaneous intellectual thought pertaining to the social questions broached in Hardy’s novels in the work of prominent thinkers of the period, notably John Stuart Mill. The thesis aptly and clearly synthesises a broad and pertinent range of secondary sources in relation to the pursuance of its analysis as well as linking them in subsequent chapters to a sufficiently detailed consideration of its primary focus in the chapters on the two novels by Hardy. For these reasons, while the thesis cannot be regarded as outstanding in terms of originality, since this is not a primary requirement at this level I can think of no good reason why it should not be regarded as an excellent piece of work in terms of those requirements which are pertinent to evaluation of a Master’s thesis.

V Brně 15th January 2016

Stephen Paul Hardy, Ph.D.