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~~Recenzent*)~~
Vedoucí*) diplomové práce
Ch.Koy,M.A.

POSUDEK DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

“Goethe’s *Götz von Berlichingen* and Walter Scott’s *Ivanhoe* – A Comparative Study”

(téma)

Format/Structure:

The formatting of this challenging diploma work is well-above average, but some mention of minor issues is necessary. On the “Table of Contents” chapters and subchapters are numbered (for example, 1.1 Sturm und Drang” but for some reason they are not numbered within the text. Some paragraphs could have been smaller, as multiple issues are addressed within the lengthy discourse of one paragraph and the division of main ideas into paragraphs is important to the English language reader. Hence, the first paragraph in the “Introduction” covers about 1 and 1/3 pages and is somewhat representative of this problem. Occasional misspellings occur which should have been cleaned up through more solid proof-reading, though imperfections of this sort are inevitable. The rendering of German into English of Goethe’s 18th century language by a Czech student is challenging to be sure, and Miss Dvořáková did a commendable job. The writing is generally a pleasure to read. In spite of my nitpicking criticism above, the formatting is on the whole excellent and the writing is concise and well wrought.

Content:

Chapter 1, besides indicating the purpose of the audacious study, gives an overview of the literary movements, biographies, influence of Shakespeare on Goethe and the fact that both works are historical (one historical drama and the other a historical novel), a subchapter on how both writers romanticized their respective histories. The overall introductory chapter covers about 27 pages, i.e., nearly half of the diploma work, which may appear excessive though the treatment in the thematic approach to these two famous literary works later prove quite thorough. Chapter 2 examines the future of the respective nations (England and Germany) in a political and economic sense, yet all through the lens of the chivalric code of honor as well. Miss Dvořáková shows accurately the ways in which high-level knights or noblemen fail to live up to the code and how - the characters responding to this as a major part of the conflict within the plot - this issue is rectified. The fall of the Saxons from power is also treated nicely in this chapter. Chapter 3 shows Miss Dvořáková’s independence and originality in comparing in Scott’s novel the title hero, Ivanhoe, with the main moral antagonist, Weislingen, in Goethe’s drama. Both characters appear disloyal to very people closest to them – Ivanhoe towards his father Cedric and Weislingen toward Götz, though of course the “happy ending” in *Ivanhoe* versus the tragic conclusion in *Götz von Berlichingen* obviously result in differing consequences: Ivanhoe returns to father (and betrothed) while Weislingen dies more or less expectedly. However, Weislingen ineluctably dies – his initial disloyalty toward Götz is venial but when he betrays both Götz and

Maria, his behavior becomes unpardonable.

Chapter 4 delineates the issues pertaining to the skillful political advisors to the major authority figures (the bishop in *Götz von Berlichingen* and Prince John in *Ivanhoe*), though we read much more of Fitzurse than we do of Liebetraut in this short chapter.

Chapter 5 is much longer and more substantive as to be expected, some 15 pages in length. The issues of romantic love, lust betrayal and extraordinary loyalty, and finally of disappointed love (which crossed religious barriers of the time) are masterfully treated by Miss Dvořáková's chapter. Clearly introducing and then linking the chivalric code of honor to the wooing and winning the hearts of the beloved women in both works, but also with the seduction and near-rape situation repeatedly experienced by the beautiful Jew Rebecca exclusively depicted in Scott's novel, Miss Dvořáková keenly analyzes the highly romanticized vision of love in both works, showing that the disloyalty of Weislingen to his betrothal Maria – a terrible misdeed to be sure – paled in comparison with the antics of the Templar Bois-Guilbert. The complicated triangular loves in *Ivanhoe* (Rebecca – Ivanhoe – Rowena) demands greater consideration than Weislingen's detestable disloyalty and the ultimate winning of Maria by Franz von Sickingen, and this was well prepared by Miss Dvořáková.

In chapter 6 the romantic motif of the “underdog” outlaw as hero in both works is analyzed whereby the insurrection perpetrated by the title figures and their associates of the corrupt authority figures are morally justifiable in both *Götz von Berlichingen* and *Ivanhoe*. Indeed, as Miss Dvořáková points out, they follow the code of honor better while the authorities appear morally the outlaws. The ambiguity of the “happy ending” that readers today feel about the terrible fate of the two good but forlorn Jews (Isaac of York and his beautiful daughter Rebecca) at the end of *Ivanhoe* is presented admirably and understood within the context of its times.

Chapter 7 goes into the historical issues of religion and intolerance in a time when religious conflicts caused myriad decade long wars in Europe. While not the central focus of either literary work, Miss Dvořáková precisely pinpoints the motif as a background to the other points of conflict, demonstrating conversancy by citing pertinent secondary literature.

The conclusion shows the multitudes of similarities between these two works. As advisor I originally conceived of the diploma work to be a study of influence, but found that task too difficult and demanding for a diploma work. The bibliography follows the format requirements and is thorough.

Given the fact that *Ivanhoe* is considered an adventure novel for children, perhaps some of the odiously unrealistic and almost inimitable feats of physical improbabilities which tend to be a big mark of criticism of Scott's novel (for example the resurrection of Athelstade) might have been contrasted with the more “down to earth” adventures within the drama *Götz von Berlichingen*. With regard to the personalities of the heroes, Götz also seems to be a more jocosely presented protagonist while Ivanhoe is much more somber and serious. Other than these minor issues, Miss Dvořáková has succeeded in rendering the aim of her study in an excellent manner.

Assessment: **vyborně (1)**

- výborně -

Návrh na klasifikaci diplomové práce:


podpis vedoucího diplomové práce

28.5.

V Českých Budějovicích dne 2009.....

Stupeň kvalifikace	výborně	velmi dobře	dobře	nevyhověl
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