

Příloha k protokolu o SZZ č.....
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Diplomant: Mikulejská Klára

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Recenzent*)

~~Vedoucí*)~~ diplomové práce

Ch.Koy,M.A.

POSUDEK DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Interpreting and Transforming Haida Cultural Heritage: The Life and Times of Bill Reid

(téma)

Format/Structure:

The diploma work under review is masterfully formatted, sensibly organized and offers logical and smooth transitions from one chapter to another. The quality of the writing is really commendable: the number of grammatical errors is insignificant, limited primarily to rare misusage of articles or particles. Given the fact that the focus is directed on an artist, the appendices containing (mostly color) photographs of the artist's work are useful and moreover offers the reader a much superior awareness of the subject matter, as does the map of the island where he resided.

Content:

Chapter 1 is the introduction which clearly delineates the aim of the diploma work as well as the initial motivation for the author to conduct research on this unusual topic. A minor bone to pick is the description of "Haida Gwaii" (p. 2) which takes poetic license – as I would put it – and is written in fragments (without verbs, for example). This is acceptable when quoting others, but should not be a part of the exposition of the author of this diploma work. Otherwise concise and smoothly laid out description of the background environment is depicted from which Bill Reid's maternal ancestors originated. A better transition would be useful when Miss Mikulejská skips from "the last Ice Age glaciers" to the logging controversy (1.4.4) in the history of the natural environment. Overall the action of the aboriginal inhabitants to safeguard the natural woods from loggers is well documented, showing the Canadian government's disregard for preservation of the unique nature (and unique wildlife) until direct action and mass arrests forced an end to massive logging, though small scale logging has persisted up to 2007.

Chapter 2 goes into general Amerind anthropological issues rather than delving only on the Islands. The unresolved issue of the origin of the native inhabitants is presented. Myths which play a role in Bill Reid's art is generously discussed. First contact with the islanders came some 250 years after most other Euro-Amerind first contact took place, allowing for both the islanders more time to maintain their native culture and thus experiencing less drastic encounters with colonialism than other tribes or nations experienced. Not until the second half of the 19th century did Christian missionaries set up camp there. Following this description of the island under study, the author offers a return back 250 years to the other side of Canada. A rather unusual divergence is made when comparing the Haido islanders with other island natives (from Newfoundland on the Atlantic) when their first contact experience with England is made. Perhaps she did this because they are "Canadian" natives though historically significantly better documented kidnapping and "showing of savages" in Europe was written up and published by

Columbus and his second in their four famous books.

Chapter 3 covers the ancestry of Bill Reid who was either half or one forth Haida. His mother assimilated into the white dominated British Columbia, became a Methodist and mastered English, determined to bring her child up with a white man's education, like most Amerinds in Canada (proving how insincere the myth of Canadian claim is to be more multicultural than other countries, particularly with regard to their treatment of racial minorities in the past). Miss Mikulejská truthfully confirms how difficult it was for Bill Reid to even learn of his ancestry, being ignorant of it at least until his teens. The biographical portion coping with his career with the CBC and his study of the techniques of making first European jewelry combined with meeting his grandfather on Haida is shown to have directed him to rediscover the native art in Haida. The shift to make works of art based on his native ancestors and the work involved in creating his art is thoughtfully and sympathetically presented.

Chapter 4 should concentrate, one would imagine, somewhat more toward art history rather than direct biography (excepting the logging campaign that Reid participated in) but besides some necessary information about other native artists, little mention is made of Reid concretely *influencing* other artists who would have followed his footsteps (or his artistic technique(s) or philosophy etc). The critique that Reid did not give due credit to his assistants is nothing original in art criticism. Further critical assessments question how really profoundly connected his art was to the myths of his Haido ancestors. Yet he did more than most artists in this regard and was celebrated when he attempted in his own way to return artistically to his cultural heritage.

Chapter 5, the conclusion, superbly notes historiographically that Reid's artistic blossoming took place when native art and culture was becoming the *trend* in Canada – in the 1950s, or as Miss Mikulejská puts it, "...at a time when Canadians began reassessing their attitude toward the First Nations and the Natives" (p. 53). This insightful point in her conclusion rounds out an excellent diploma work.

This diploma work is ever so slightly short of 60 pp of text which, as I have been told, must not include the bibliography. Yet it makes up for quantity with very high quality writing, originality in theme and thoughtful assessment. To sum up, this was one diploma work which was a real pleasure for me to read. My only significant problem is the issue of influence presumably under discussion in chapter four, so it will make up my **first and only question** for the defense at the state examination: *who among Native artists (or any other artists for that matter) was influenced by Bill Reid and in what way?*

Assessment: **vyborně (1)**

- výborně -

Návrh na klasifikaci diplomové práce:


podpis oponenta diplomové práce

25.5.

V Českých Budějovicích dne 2009.....

Stupeň kvalifikace	výborně	velmi dobře	dobře	nevyhověl
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