#### UNIVERZITA PARDUBICE

#### **Fakulta filozofická**

**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**

**Posudek vedoucího** **bakalářské práce**

**(Literárně-kulturní)**

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**Studijní obor:** AJOP

**Název práce:** The Influence of African-American Music on *Montage of a Dream Deferred*

**Akademický rok:** 2014/2015

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**Oponent práce:** doc.Mgr.Šárka Bubíková, Ph.D.

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| **Kritéria hodnocení** | | **Hodnocení**  **1 - 2 - 3 – 4** |
| **Všeobecná charakteristika** | Splnění zásad zpracování práce a naplnění stanoveného cíle | **1** |
| Logická struktura práce |
| Vyváženost teoretické a praktické části |
| **Teoretická část** | Kvalita uvedení do širšího kontextu | **1** |
| Tematická relevance teoretického úvodu k cíli práce |
| **Praktická část** | Vhodnost využití primárních zdrojů pro podporu/ilustraci argumentace | **1/2** |
| Rozsah a hloubka vlastní analýzy |
| Relevantní a srozumitelná argumentace a interpretace |
| **Práce s odbornou literaturou** | Kvalita, množství a relevance zpracované literatury | **1/2** |
| Kritický přístup ke zdrojům |
| **Formální stránka** | Dodržení doporučených pravidel a norem formální úpravy (směrnice FF UPa) | **2** |
| Kvalita vědeckého aparátu, příloh, tabulek a obrázků |
| Dodržení bibliografických norem ČSN ISO 690 |
| **Jazyková úroveň** | Gramatická přesnost a komplexnost | **1** |
| Slovní zásoba |
| Koheze a koherence |
| Interpunkce a stylistické aspekty |

**Slovní vyjádření k hodnocení bakalářské práce:**

The comprehensive approach throughout this fine BP combines elements of historical-cultural background with structural evaluations of the individual poems in *Montage of a Dream Deferred* in terms of the formal and thematic elements of urban blues and (mostly be-bop) jazz, then brings the discussion to the present by highlighting influences of Hughes on later writers and hip hop artists.

To begin with a negative aspect, one fundamental problem is that the primary works by Hughes that are analyzed are not presented in the bibliography. This creates potential confusion for researchers, as various versions of works with different publication dates contain changes made by the author and editors. It is assumed that this was merely an oversight on the BP author’s part stemming from lack of experience.

A historical-cultural context in which Hughes’ overall work can be placed is outlined clearly and concisely in pages 2-21. The discussion of Harlem Renaissance poetry, one feature of which is an appraisal of its (sometimes tricky) relationships to modernism, is supported by prose and poem references by Hughes along with other artists (e.g. Pound) and commentators. The influence of film montage on movements such as Imagism is described (4-6), with specific citations from Hughes’ and other works giving clear examples of the statements made regarding, e.g. “[r]epetitive rhyme patterns, fixed forms, and recurring themes concerning the questions of gender, race and sexuality.” (8) Next a tracing of musical styles is presented, again with lucid conclusions supplemented by specific examples, all of which makes for a broad cultural and formal context of blues and its influences on later forms (10-14) such as ragtime and jazz (13) and be-bop (14), with one current being the development of popular, dance-oriented swing toward be-bop’s listener-oriented “repeated broken rhythms that highlight the improvisation process.” (14) Later in the analytical sections the BP writer will correlate these cultural issues (e.g. “high” and “low” art, gender relations, slang) and formal features (cadence, structure, use of rhythms) to aspects of the poems in *Montage*. This approach creates a cohesive structure leading later to rich overall conclusions.

The sections “Literary and musical influence on Hughes” (15-18) and “Influence of African-American music on Hughes’ poetry” (18-21) both build upon information in the preceding chapters as well as introduce new issues, e.g. the Whitman-inspired Chicago Renaissance poets (16-18), American Romantic poetry through Longfellow; here key similarities and differences are touched upon. Interestingly, Hughes’ financial incentive in pursuing African-American forms, which were becoming part of mainstream popular culture by 1951, is highlighted, e.g. through references to Hughes’ 1956 essay “Jazz as Communication.”

The analyses of individual poems in terms of mainly blues, but also showing the influence of be-bop use the background material quite well as well as introduce additional concepts. Again the strength is the combination of formal elements (anaphora, sound and word play, montage, “onomatopoeic expressions and interjections” [34]) with cultural influences (“Boogie-woogie imagery” [39]; African-American English rhythms, phonemes and morphemes; jazz spoken idiom; representations of various modes showing a “transition from black to white” [39]) to create strong, precise readings of each work. Indeed the distinction between cultural and formal aspects is often pleasingly blurred through the examination of modes such as call and response as well as “scat language” (34); this demonstrates a hybridity of genre (end even the human subject itself, especially relevant to the African-American experience) which is an implicit theme throughout the entire BP, although it is only pointed out explicitly once or twice in the analytical section. Perhaps this overarching idea of multi-vocality or hybridity could have been reiterated in the conclusion (or in a master’s thesis?).

Along these lines, many of the striking conclusions in the BP come from the balancing and bouncing among discourses of modernism (e.g. surrealism, Stravinsky), “serious” vs. popular art (poetry to music) and African-American culture (“authenticity,” emotion and rhythm). This demonstration of the inseparability of form and content exemplified in simple statements like “blues poetry can be distinguished by its fixed repetitive form, whereas the form of jazz poetry is free, improvisational and seems to resemble spoken language” (26) is supplemented by copious evidence. The author is to be commended for his outstanding work.

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| **V ý s l e d n á k l a s i f i k a c e\***  (možnosti klasifikace - **výborně**, velmi dobře, dobře, nevyhověl) | výborně |

**Doporučuji / ~~Nedoporučuji~~ diplomovou práci k obhajobě.**

Dne: 29.7.2015 Daniel P. Sampey

Podpis vedoucího práce