

Opponent's Report

Ms Markéta Prunarová

BA thesis: "Issues of Translation in Miroslav Holub's Poetry"

Ms Prunarová's thesis is well written and structured to take into consideration multiple aspects of Holub's poetry, including its reception in both Czech and English, as well as specific issues related to the translation of his work. Her arguments are credible and clearly developed, and her use of secondary sources is judicious.

The "issues" referred to in the title of the thesis include the linguistically simplistic style in which Holub wrote and how that brings up a unique issue in translation, which is the tendency — or at least the temptation — on the part of translators to add embellishment. Using both primary and secondary sources, Ms Prunarová proves that Holub employed this simplistic style in order to produce a poetry that was international and readily translatable. This has led simultaneously to the admiration of Anglophone critics for Holub's work and his subdued reputation among Czech critics.

The two questions that present themselves to this reader have to do with how precisely Holub's poetry and his international reputation were affected by the Cold War, which Ms. Prunarová brings up in her introduction, but does not fully investigate. This reader also wonders how Holub's use of items in lists in his poetry "implies that they are interchangeable" as Ms. Prunarová states. If, furthermore, they are interchangeable, how does this affect the interpretation of Holub's poetry?

These questions notwithstanding, I have found Ms Prunarová's thesis to be excellent. It reveals a scholarly and linguistic competence that indicates Ms Prunarová has the ability to produce original research of quality were she to continue to a higher degree.

It is my recommendation therefore that this thesis be awarded a grade of excellent / 1.

Stephan Delbos, MFA
Prague, 12 June 2014