

UNIVERZITA KARLOVA V PRAZE
Fakulta sociálních věd
Institut mezinárodních studií

PROTOKOL O HODNOCENÍ DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE
(Posudek vedoucího)

Práci předložil(a) student(ka): Olga Staňková

Název práce: „Better Red Than Dead“: American Indians' Struggle for Sovereignty Rights in the 1960s and 1970s

Vedoucí práce (u externích vedoucích uveďte též adresu a funkci v rámci instituce):

Jana Sehnálková

1. OBSAH A CÍL PRÁCE (stručná informace o práci, formulace cíle):

In this thesis, Olga Staňková examines the Indian activism in the 1960s and 1970s. The goal of the analysis is to show that „the Native American activism of the 1960s and 1970s does not fall into the category of Civil Rights Movement because of its significantly different goals, and that the fundamentally different character of sovereignty rights also keeps the Indian struggle invisible in American understandings of U.S. political and social history.“ (p. 3)

2. VĚCNÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (náročnost, tvůrčí přístup, argumentace, logická struktura, teoretické a metodologické ukotvení, práce s prameny a literaturou, vhodnost příloh apod.):

The author decided to analyze an interesting and an important issue that does not get much attention in the study of U.S. history in the Czech Republic (although the Native American activism is covered in survey of U.S. history class at the Faculty of Social Sciences). The work is divided in three major chapters. In the first chapter, the author places the Native American activism in a broad context and examines the triggers and influences over this phenomenon. Her analysis looks at two levels – the international context (decolonization, Cold War and the Vietnam War) and the domestic context of the movement (Civil Rights Movement). All of these were important in inspiring the political activism of the Native Americans who could allude to the hypocrisy of the U.S. government which was supporting sovereignty all around the world as a means of fighting the injustice of the past as well as the spread of communism while ignoring the self-determination effort of its own people who, as patriots, served their country in multiple wars, including the one Vietnam. Seeing the achievements of the African Americans in the Civil Rights Movement, the Native Americans were inspired to claim their place in American society. Thus, the Native Americans quickly adopted some of the methods of the Civil Rights Movement to serve their purpose. The author then goes on to describe major events in the Native American struggle to increase their visibility and to draw attention to some of the issues that were crucial to them, such as the federal government's disrespect of their identity (through policy of termination), treaty rights etc. These include the fish-ins in the Pacific Northwest in 1964, occupation of the Alcatraz Island 1969-1971, Trail of Broken Treaties and the following occupation of the BIA Building in 1972, and finally the protest in Wounded Knee in 1973. All of these instances reveal substantially different nature of the Indian protest from the Civil Rights Movement – as the author points out, „American Indians' struggle in the 1960s and 1970s was not aimed at - in their eyes assimilationist – civil rights, but at political, more precisely sovereignty rights derived from their treaties with colonial powers and federal government... they fought for their rights to remain culturally different.“ (p. 4) The author also examines the short-term and long-term

goals of American Indian political activists, which reveals a number of problematic aspects of the movement, namely divisions among the activists with respect to selection of strategies (moderate v. radical, where the dividing line was often generational) and inability to formulate a clear goal (many protests were staged to draw attention, but there was no follow-up). The author however concludes that despite the often chaotic and radical nature of the Native American protest, it brought the Native American issues into the fore of national debate, as it drew media attention, and most importantly, „radical activism really pushed the federal government to endorse the moderate Native American organization and to negotiate with them on the federal support of Indian political rights“ (p. 47). In other words, while the radical protest achieved limited success, it prepared better negotiating position for the moderate representatives of the Native Americans who could then through negotiation with the federal government push for settlement of some of the key issues.

In the second chapter, the author explores the impact of Native American activism on federal legislation and judicial decisions. As in the Civil Rights Movement, the courts played a key role in furthering Native American goals. However, as the author points out on p. 42, „the heightened awareness did not always mean federal policy reform or a truer understanding of American Indians’ needs. It is difficult to assess the extent to which federal legislation was pushed by Native American activism of the 1960s and 1970s, and to what extent it was a product of predictable political development,“ by which the author alludes to favorable social policies of JFK and particularly LBJ. In my opinion, the increased visibility of Native American issues via their political activism in the national debate about the War on poverty etc. was - just like in case of the Civil Rights Movement – an important push factor for federal government action.

In the last chapter, the author contemplates why it is the case that Native American political activism is generally ignored in the mainstream historical and political discourse and offers a few explanations.

3. FORMÁLNÍ A JAZYKOVÉ ZPRACOVÁNÍ (jazykový projev, správnost citace a odkazů na literaturu, grafická úprava, formální náležitosti práce apod.):

The thesis is well organized, logical. In the introduction, the author explains the key terms, which is crucial for understanding of the work. While there are a few typos, the author should be commended for writing her thesis in very high level of English. The author uses sufficient amount of resources which she evaluates in the introduction. Besides secondary resources which provide a more complex look at the history of Native American activism, she also uses a lot of historical newspaper accounts of the individual protest events staged by the Native American activists.

4. STRUČNÝ KOMENTÁŘ HODNOTITELE (celkový dojem z bakalářské práce, silné a slabé stránky, originalita myšlenek, naplnění cíle apod.):

This thesis offers an interesting case study of Native American political activism in the 1960s and 1970s. The author systematically describes the basic roots and character of the Native American political movement, the major events associated with it, and the juxtaposition with the Civil Rights Movement. She correctly points out that the goal of the Native American movement was primarily achievement of self-determination, tribal sovereignty and respect to treaty rights. She defines all the outside sources that triggered and inspired the increase of activism, including the previous federal policies (termination, relocation), Civil Rights Movement and others.

Still, the author's goal to analyze the reasons behind the "invisibility" of Native American activism in U.S. history narrative however seems too ambitious and goes beyond the scope of the work, as it adds yet another research question to the thesis. While the third chapter is an interesting read, the author puts out too many questions (see p. 12) many of which remain unanswered – due to the space constraint as well as the scope of the primary research question. I also believe that the thesis would merit one round of proof-reading to organize the text in a more efficient way as the author tends to repeat herself.

5. SPOLUPRÁCE S VEDOUCÍM PRÁCE (komunikace s vedoucím práce, schopnost reflektovat připomínky, posun od původního záměru apod.)

The author consulted her work regularly and continuously perfected the text.

6. OTÁZKY A PŘIPOMÍNKY DOPORUČENÉ K BLIŽŠÍMU VYSVĚTLENÍ PŘI OBHAJOBĚ (jedna až tři):

- You mention the class-action lawsuit *US v. Washington* – what was the final ruling in this case? How did it help the Native American cause? How would it compare in importance to, say *Brown v. Topeka School Board of Education*? How about other important cases, such as *Antoine v. Washington*?
- What was the role of Ada Deer in Menominee Restoration Act? How did she contribute to its passage?
- What was the issue with Richard Wilson? In the text, you do not really explain the reasons for the dispute over his personality.

7. DOPORUČENÍ / NEDOPORUČENÍ K OBHAJOBĚ A NAVRHOVANÁ ZNÁMKA

(výborně, velmi dobře, dobře, nevyhově!):

The thesis by Olga Staňková fulfills the requirements of a Master's thesis. Therefore, I recommend the thesis for defense and propose grade excellent.

Datum:

Podpis:

Pozn.: Hodnocení pište k jednotlivým bodům, pokud nepíšete v textovém editoru, použijte při nedostatku místa zadní stranu nebo příložený list. V hodnocení práce se pokuste oddělit ty její nedostatky, které jsou, podle vašeho mínění, obhajobou neodstranitelné (např. chybí kritické zhodnocení pramenů a literatury), od těch věcí, které student může dobrou obhajobou napravit; poměr těchto dvou položek berte prosím v úvahu při stanovení konečné známky.