

TEZE DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Jméno:

Mariana Procházková

E-mail:

mary-anne@post.cz

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Název práce:

Bob Dylan in the context of American Protest Song

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Vedoucí diplomového semináře:

Doc. PhDr. Miloš Calda

Vedoucí práce:

Doc. PhDr. Miloš Calda

V čem se oproti původními zadání změnil cíl práce?

The original aim remains similar - to elaborate the protest song phenomenon in the United States with the special focus on the work of Bob Dylan in the 1960s. I will attempt to determine whether Dylan was, in contrast to his assertions, a "topical songwriter" writing about certain events or whether he was really an "apolitical" artist, whose personal insights, feelings and senses of reality just happened to fit the era's frame of mind. I believe his early songwriting provides a powerful commentary on the turmoil of the early 1960s, therefore the cornerstone of this thesis will be an analysis of 5-7 Dylan's songs.

The paper will also assess the role of Bob Dylan in the American protest song tradition. In order to do so, a broader context must be provided. He has absorbed many musical influences. His early work is most notably linked to the American folk music tradition, but he also drew inspiration from the Negro spirituals and the old Anglo-American ballads. Although this thesis is primarily focused on assessing Bob Dylan's songwriting, I decided to dedicate an entire chapter to Woody Guthrie as he was Dylan's role model and influenced his early artistic career, and the folk music scene in general significantly.

I decided to add a chapter introducing the phenomenon of the American folk music revival. Dylan's work was very important for the revival, yet only a few years later, he dissociated himself from the folk movement. A concluding chapter on the legacy of Dylan's work and his influence on the course of the 20th century popular music will be also added.

Jaké změny nastaly v časovém, teritoriálním a věcném vymezení tématu?

An attempt to embrace all these aspects of the immensely broad topic of American protest song would result in a shallow and predominantly descriptive work. The changes in the delimitation of the thesis were neither groundbreaking nor extensive, but they set certain firm boundaries to the coverage of my research. Both the 19th and the early 20th century will be dealt with more briefly in the historical chapter. The crucial 20th century, which brought along themes of civil liberties and rights, economic injustice and war will be introduced more deeply. Most of the artists of the 1960s were inspired by other songwriters and musicians who worked earlier in the 20th century. The core of this thesis lies in the 1960s, and thus this era will be elaborated most thoroughly. The following decades, from the 1960s up to the present times, will be outlined only very briefly. The territorial delimitation remains coincident with

the original one, i.e. the entire thesis focuses on the United States.

Jak se proměnila struktura práce (vyjádřete stručným obsahem)?

-A history of protest song in the United States - this chapter will elaborate the development of the American protest song from the colonial era up to the present times, special attention will be given to the 1960s. The selected artists (e. g. Pete Seeger, Lead Belly, Joan Baez etc.) will not be dealt with in a separate chapter as originally intended. Their lives and work will be introduced chronologically, when describing each era.

-A chapter introducing the phenomenon of the American folk music revival.

-A chapter introducing Woody Guthrie as a role model for Dylan's early years

-The next chapter will be wholly devoted to Dylan himself and his personal background, the events of his early life and personalities that influenced his work. In this chapter, Dylan's most important texts will be analysed in the context of American politics of the time being (e. g. "A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall" of 1962 in the context of the Cuban Missile Crisis). The events, mainly of the 1960s, such as Dylan's tour across the South of the United States will be discussed.

-The concluding chapter will examine Dylan's legacy and his impact on other artists and musical styles.

Jakým vývojem prošla metodologická koncepce práce?

I intend use number of primary sources. I assume I will mostly use qualitative research methods, such as content analysis. For the kind of research conducted in the thesis, interpretive textual analyses would be most appropriate. Such type of analysis enables to get beneath the surface (denotative) meanings and examine more implicit (connotative) social meanings. This approach view cultural movement as a narrative or story-telling process in which the particular texts consciously or unconsciously link themselves to larger stories at play in the society. These texts create subject positions (identities) for those who use them, e.g. making Bob Dylan a topical songwriter, whether he intended so or not (at least I understand it so). The texts will not be the sole primary sources of the thesis. I would like to incorporate testimonies of the direct participants and witnesses of the events. In my opinion this could provide for a very valuable source of insight.

Které nové prameny a sekundární literatura byly zpracovány a jak tato skutečnost ovlivnila celek práce?

I bought the "The Essential Bob Dylan", which is a compilation of Dylan's songs, released as a double-CD set in 2000 by Columbia Records. Each disc is dedicated to one his periods - the first acoustic one, and the following, electric one. Through this chronological organisation, I understood the concept of protest song, how the music and lyrics corresponded with the political situation at the time. I listened to number of other records, not only by Dylan, but also by other authors which broadened my horizons significantly. I watched several documents, where the artists themselves speak about their incentives for the work they have done, and how they set things in motion through their performances (Martin Scorsese, "No Direction Home: Bob Dylan"). I also read several chapters from Dylan's biography "Down the Highway: The Life of Bob Dylan" by Howard Sounes, which explain Dylan's motives for writing such songs, and the sources of his inspiration. I read a number of articles, the most significant for the development of my research would be the one from the New York Times, called "A history of Protest Songs.", which provided an overall image and context of the protest song phenomenon and introduced me to certain current authors, which I was previously not familiar with.

Charakterizujte základní proměny práce v době od zadání projektu do odevzdání tezí a pokuste se vyhodnotit, jaký pokrok na práci jste během semestru zaznamenali (v bodech):

-I decided to put a larger emphasis on the historical chapter to provide necessary context for assessing Dylan's role in the American protest song tradition, and to conduct a textual analysis of the song lyrics to determine whether he was a topical songwriter or not.

-I decided to change structure of the historical chapter, as mentioned above, and to add a separate chapter about Woody Guthrie, the folk music revival and a concluding part about Dylan's legacy.

-I have chosen the most relevant protest song writers and performers and elaborated a 3-5 page long study about each of them and their work.

Podpis studenta a datum:

Schváleno:	Datum	Podpis
Vedoucí práce		
Vedoucí diplomového semináře		