

Prof. David Robbins, Ph.D., thesis director

Tereza Brožová

M.A. thesis evaluation

Indians as the Imminent Threat: The Portrayal of Indians in Captivity Narratives

Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures

Charles University

This thesis concentrates on the portrayal of North American Indians in captivity narratives of the early seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the exemplar of which, according to Ms. Brozova is furnished by the *Narrative of the Captivity and Restoration of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson* (first published in 1682), which also constitutes the principal source material for the thesis. In addition, the thesis explores the relationship between Native Americans and settlers who, according to Ms. Brozova, saw Indians as a threat to their own existence and also as a threat to western expansion. Ms. Brozova's work also focuses on the confrontation of "savagery" and "civilization" from the point of view of common white presuppositions and prejudices about the Native Americans that are very often depicted in several captivity narratives. Moreover, the thesis aims to provide clearer definition of the genre of the captivity narrative with regard to the reaction of the reading public in the period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

One problem in this thesis is repeated over-generalization, about captivity narratives as a genre as well as about the material they present and the attitudes they embody, based on the actual source reading of only quite a small number of such works. Another is the frequent conflation of historical periods, of Native American cultures, and of very different epochs and strains within what the author—often inaccurately--labels "Puritanism." In addition, Ms. Brozova regularly underestimates the significance and shaping influence of Christian/Puritan types and typology on the captivity narratives and on their interpretation and application within a white colonial culture saturated with radical protestantism.

Ms. Brozova's work is often accurate on small details, but less reliable and useful on broad significances and attempts at general conclusions, although Ms. Brozova is generally and interestingly right on the use and abuse of captivity narratives for purposes and causes often far afield from the content, context, and dynamics of even the tendentious original narrative.

Overall, I would evaluate this thesis as deserving of an evaluation of between "1.5" and "2, velmi dobre."

Thesis evaluation: Between "1.5" and "2, velmi dobre."

Signed:

Prof. David L. Robbins, Ph.D.

Department of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures

May 20, 2015

If the reader has any questions or needs additional information, please contact me at drobbins22@netzero.net.

