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**David Zeisberger, the Missionary of the  
Moravian Church: The Scope and Limits of His  
Cultural Relativism**

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**TÉMA ČESKY:**

David Zeisberger, the Missionary of the Moravian Church: The Scope and Limits of His Cultural Relativism

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**SEZNAM DOPORUČENÉ LITERATURY:**

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Berkhofer, Robert F. Jr.. The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present. New York 1979.  
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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně a uvedla úplný seznam citované a použité literatury.

V Olomouci dne 8. prosince 2016

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## Introduction

The following thesis is about the missionary of the Moravian Church, David Zeisberger. First of all, I will introduce the concept of cultural relativism with relevant scholars and how this ties in with my work. In the next chapter, I will acquaint the reader with the Moravian Church, its' belief system and its' leadership, values and missionary work. In the main section of my paper, I will focus on David Zeisberger's beliefs and views and what influenced them, especially his views concerning the Native tribes he came into contact with and converted to his faith. I will search *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger, 1772–1781* for opinions and statements about Native Americans, which I will then analyze according to the theory of cultural relativism. Atwood (4-5, 2004) states that Moravians were very welcoming and tolerant. In my thesis, I will test the truth value of this statement using one of the most famous Moravians, David Zeisberger. The aim of this paper is to find out whether or not, and to what limit, could David Zeisberger view other cultures as different but equal, and which points of Delaware, Mingo, Shawnee and other tribes' cultures he viewed as valuable and positive, and which as negative. The Moravian Brethren of the time were a very progressive community in their tolerance and acceptance of all people who wanted to welcome Christ in their hearts and live in the closed commune, but very few of them had the spiritual strength and modern-day cultural tolerance to live among people of a completely different culture, respect their way of life and accustom themselves to it. These were the missionaries of the Moravian Brothers.

My reasons for choosing this research topic were two-fold. My main motivation is my prolonged interest in pre-Columbian cultures in the Americas and their overall relationship and meetings with Caucasian colonists and missionaries. The Indians of the Ohio Valley formed a loose community with interesting but complex interactions among tribes and also with colonial powers like France and Great Britain. These power dynamics and frequent conflicts in the region made it difficult to live in, and the Indians there tried to remain neutral as long as possible, which motivated them to convert to Christianity and the non-violent way of life Moravianism offered. They thought they would escape the clashes of the Ohio Valley by adopting the peaceful lifestyle of the Moravian settlements. On the

contrary, Moravians were seen as suspicious outcasts by the more mainstream Christian denominations not only in Europe, but also the Colonies.

The cause for choosing *The Moravian Mission Diaries* as my primary source was that I was raised in the Church of the Brethren, of which the Moravian Church is a sect. As such, I have an understanding of many key aspects of their religious life, as they are a part of mine. Important aspects of Moravian community life are singing and including children in the sermon were both carried over to modern day Pentecostal gatherings.

Although my church is not very involved in missionary work, we, like the Moravians, stress the importance of education. By this I mean both knowledge of the Bible, knowledge of practical crafts and intellectual growth. From childhood, church members are educated about how to live a peaceful and loving life and gathering together to share their experiences with Christ and people around them. Another shared characteristic of our churches is using music as the main form of worship. Moravians, from their beginnings, had many hymns and litanies. The Church of the Brethren has hymns dating back to the sixteenth century which have been preserved until today and are still sung in church gatherings, and young people are motivated to join the church's band.

# 1 Cultural Relativism

Cultural relativism, according to Mark Glazer, is an indispensable methodological theory which is generally accepted within anthropological studies. This theory is firmly based upon theoretical concerns, which are fundamental for the understanding of "scientific" anthropology as they are important for the comprehension of the anthropological thinking.<sup>1</sup> Cultural relativism is an anthropological method which claims that all cultures are equally valuable and need to be viewed from an unbiased perspective. The research of any culture must be performed open-mindedly so that a certain culture can be fully captured at its own worth and not another culture's.

According to the *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, cultural relativism is made up of two concepts, the first being that behavioral differences between populations are caused by cultural and societal variation. The second important notion is that "such differences as do exist are deserving of respect and understanding in their own terms."<sup>2</sup>

Cultural relativism has a parallel academic method, historical particularism. This is the hypothesis that the correct method to study any culture is to research only one culture profoundly. The ramifications of cultural relativism and historical particularism have been noteworthy to anthropology and to the social sciences in general.

The fundamentals of cultural relativism go to the dismissal of the comparative discipline of the nineteenth century on the basis of accurate and particular ethnological facts. This information renounced the comparative school's scientific method and as a result its evolutionary deductions.

Moreover, as the substance of cultural relativism is a scientific view of culture, it also refuses value judgments on cultures. According to this approach, there is no single hierarchy of values which is true for all cultures and by which all cultures can be judged and compared. Faiths, aesthetics, ethics and other cultural items can only be judged through their applicability to a given civilization. For instance, "good and bad" in a specific nation cannot be imposed in cultural

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<sup>1</sup> Glazer, "Cultural Relativism."

<sup>2</sup> Barnard, *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*, 478.



investigation because of the variety of what is "good" and "bad" among different cultures. This shows that every culture decides its own moral judgments to direct the appropriate behavior among its members. An outcome of this observation is that it considers that most human beings would prefer to live within the culture in which they have been brought up, since their moral values will rarely match with a different culture's. It should also be mentioned that the "cultural" in cultural relativism and historical particularism is about particular cultures and not about a more obscure, distinctive and widespread theory of culture.

### 1.1 Beginnings and Key Researchers

The interpretation behind all of this comes from two recognizable origins; one of them is the response to the mistakes of the evolutionary layouts of the comparative doctrine, the other the longing to analyze culture from an angle of unbiased values. To be a scientific theory, culture has to be studied as an entity without calculating deliberation. When we cannot accomplish that, we no longer have a science of culture. Some anthropologists connected with this opinion are Franz Boas and his students, Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, Melville Herskovits, Ruth Benedict, Paul Radin, Margaret Mead, Ruth Bunzel and many others. Franz Boas is the most important one of the above-listed.

Boas published his opinions on the comparative method in 1896.<sup>3</sup> The article "The Limitations of the Comparative Method of Anthropology," was the first explanation of cultural relativism. According to the teaching of cultural relativism, there are no lesser or better cultures; all cultures are equal.

There are four serious restraints to the comparative method according to Boas:<sup>4</sup> 1. It is unattainable to resolve similarity in all the sorts of culture by professing that they are so because of the unity of the human mind. 2. The existence like traits in various cultures is not as significant as the comparative school professes. 3. Similar attributes may have developed for very different intentions in contrasting cultures. 4. The observation that cultural dissimilarities are of unimportant is unauthenticated. The contrasts between cultures are of major anthropological importance. Boas did not stop his criticism of the comparative school at that point; he also described a methodology to replace it. His new method

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<sup>3</sup> Glazer, "Cultural Relativism."

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

highlighted the following: 1. Cultural traits have to be researched rigorously and within the cultural entity. 2. The distribution of a culture's trait within adjacent cultures should also be studied. This suggests that a culture needs to be examined within its full context.

Boas perceived that this attempt would benefit the anthropologist (1) to comprehend the environmental influences that form a culture, (2) to clarify the psychological influences that build the culture, and (3) to clarify the history of a local tradition. Boas was trying to find the inductive method in anthropology and to leave the comparative method. He insisted that the primary target of anthropology was to investigate individual civilizations and that generalizations could arise only based on collected facts. His significance within the area is that anthropology should be an unbiased and inductive science. In an era when the scientific approach was significant, this change within the discipline caused the establishment of anthropology at universities. Boas' students were among the first to found some of the most influential anthropology research fields on American campuses.

One point must be added to the above-mentioned facts, and that is that Boas attacked racism during all his life; he outlines his opinions on racism in "The Mind of Primitive Man (1911)". According to Boas, the sweep of cultures to be found in association with any sub species is so broad that there can be no connection between race and culture.<sup>5</sup>

Following Boas and his focus on investigating as many societies as possible, Alfred Kroeber, the best-known anthropologist at the time composed countless ethnography. In his "Eighteen Professions" (1915), which is a credo, Kroeber<sup>6</sup> confirms some of the basic teachings of cultural relativism: (1) all men are entirely civilized, and (2) there are no more and less significant cultures. Much later in his profession Kroeber creates three extra points on cultural relativism, 1) that science should commence with queries and not with answers, 2) that science is an attempt without passion which should not embrace any ideology, and 3) that sweeping

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<sup>5</sup> Glazer, "Cultural Relativism."

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

generalizations are not adaptable by science.<sup>7</sup> Another great cultural relativist of the era is Robert Lowie whose statements are most consequential.

Lowie very likely came closer to Boas' opinions on the proper usage of anthropology than any other anthropologist of his era. He was profoundly established in the philosophy of science and recognized cultural anthropology as a science. His observations and critique of theoreticians such as Morgan are based on this scientific world outlook. His criticism of Morgan's evolutionary hypothesis is based on epistemology. Particularly, that Morgan's evolutionary proposal of kinship was without a proof. Moreover, Morgan's documents frequently contained errors.<sup>8</sup>

One of the most influential practitioners of cultural relativism was Ruth Benedict. For Benedict, cultural anthropology is the study area that deals with the differences between cultures.<sup>9</sup> This approach is fully according to Boas. Interest has now changed from culture to cultures. The target has moved to a specific culture and what happens to the individual within that culture. In addition, a culture is integrated, and it is more than the total of its fractions. Every culture is different from another culture. Benedict grabs the Boasian agenda a step ahead. She does this through the notion of cultural formations of patterns. In spite of the fact that her use of this approach is radically reductionistic, it symbolizes a new direction in cultural relativism by surpassing the data collection of historical particularism and trying to arrange the data in an illustrative way.

The effort to understand cultures at their own terms and the effort to an objective ethnography are outstanding characteristics of cultural relativism.<sup>10</sup> These have occasionally led to a deficiency of theoretical profoundness and an undervaluation of the ethnographer's own culture. Nevertheless, the fight against ethnocentrism and the unbiased contemplation of cultures remain continuous contributions of cultural relativism.

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<sup>7</sup> Glazer, "Cultural Relativism."

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

## 2 The Moravian Brothers

The Moravian Brothers were a radical Christian group which combined their evangelizing activities with pain-focused worship. They were known in England as the *Unitas Fratrum*, the “Unity of the Brethren”, or more commonly, the “Moravian Brethren”. In German they were called the *Evangelische Brüder-Unität*, or the *Herrnhuter Brüdergemeine*.<sup>11</sup> Moravians lived a secluded life without much contact with outsiders. Their daily routines involved worship and working together while farming, weaving, cooking and other tasks which helped the closed towns live without need for sustenance or aid from outside.

### 2.1 Origins and Unification

The Moravians came from a long religious and cultural heritage. In the course of the seventeenth century, edicts of toleration were made by various European powers including the Emperor Rudolph II. (valid for Bohemia and Silesia) and Brandenburg in Germany. Whoever holds an estate can choose the religion practiced on it, so many people left their homes in search of a landowner who would let them practice their specific Christian denomination. The Thirty Years’ War (1618-1648) almost annihilated this movement, but Bohemian survivors traveled in the early 1700’s to Saxony where Count Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760) provided them with shelter. Zinzendorf restored the Church in 1722. A Moravian colony thrived in the small German town of Herrnhut<sup>12</sup> on Count von Zinzendorf’s estate not far from the Czech and Polish borders. Some of the people in Herrnhut believed themselves to be spiritual descendants of the Czech reformer Jan Hus (1375-1415), which is why they sought refuge on Zinzendorf’s land. This founding myth of the Church, which mostly takes from the legacy of Hus, acted as a unifying factor for this diverse group, especially once the Church was reformed a couple of centuries later. Despite these early beginnings, the time during which the sect spread most and had the most active missionary work was in the eighteenth century. Through the influence of the Count, a huge program of foreign missions to the “heathens” commenced. These included: the Caribbean (1732); Greenland

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<sup>11</sup> “Moravian Church.”

<sup>12</sup> *Unter des Herrn Hut* means “under the watch of the Lord”

(1733); Surinam (1735); South Africa (1737); and were followed by many other locations.<sup>13</sup>

When they arrived to the American colonies in 1735<sup>14</sup>, Moravians did not want to take part in wars or take sides due to their pacifist, peaceful lifestyle, so they were regarded as traitors and spies. This made their situation in North America difficult, as there were many conflicts raging in the eighteenth century, for example the French fighting English forces for territory control. Since Moravian Brethren maintained a neutral stance, they traded freely with the French and British. This led to suspicion and many false accusations from both sides that Moravians were deceitful. Moravians were driven out of colonial towns into the wild by the British military in Georgia and they moved to Pennsylvania, where they founded Bethlehem as a missionary center. Later, during the American Revolutionary War, Patriots and Loyalists were enraged by the Moravians' seeming lack of loyalty to their cause because they did not want to be enlisted in the armies of either side.

## 2.2 Count von Zinzendorf's Church's Formation

As stated above, Count von Zinzendorf gave protection to various religious refugees on his grounds. Under his leadership, these people formed a commune in Herrnhut where they followed Zinzendorf's prescribed manners of worship and daily life. He wrote many philosophical papers on his religious beliefs and his approach to Christianity and the Holy Trinity, which became key documents which identified the most important aspects of Moravian beliefs. One highly controversial topic was Zinzendorf's concept of the Holy Trinity as a family where God is the Father, the Holy Ghost is the Mother, Jesus Christ is their son and the brotherhood (church) is his bride. This vision of the Trinity and believer as one family repelled or fascinated the people exposed to it. As explained in a later chapter, Zinzendorf's take on Christianity did not involve mass conversions or forceful speeches, but rather he sought to touch people's hearts as individuals, through calm conversation and sharing their worries and troubles. In the Diaries, this is frequently called "the sharing of one's heart."

The three major aspects of Moravian life were education, music and mission work. Moravians were encouraged to learn practical trades which would help them

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<sup>13</sup> Demaree and Ogilvie, "The Moravian Missionaries at the Labrador Coast," 424.

<sup>14</sup> Eyerly, "The Music of the Moravian Church in America," 584.

survive on their own, build houses and farm successfully all over the world. Music was the most important aspect of worship for Moravians. Wherever they went, they translated their hymns into native languages to introduce worship through song to new converts. Finally, missionary work was the reason the Moravian Church spread all over Europe and North America so successfully in the 1700's.

Zinzendorf's concept of Moravianism interested and attracted people because it functioned as a refuge: from rationalism to the religion of the heart; from the dilemmas of individual decisions to life under instruction; from the world to an enclosed commune divided into choirs by age, marital status and sex. In Herrnhut, believers were presented an intricate system of supervision and pastoral care; a colorful spirituality, the closeness of fellow believers in separate choirs and a variety of liturgical and other services. Zinzendorf also included the importance of art, music and festival celebrations under his aristocratic patronage.<sup>15</sup> Eyearly notes the importance of music like so:

Following in the tradition of Thomas Aquinas and Martin Luther, Moravians believed that music, rather than spoken language, should be the principal means of conveying and guiding the understanding of theological truths. Music, with its power to elicit emotional responses from listeners and to strike directly at the heart without mediation by the rational mind, provided a perfect counterpart to the tenets of heart religion. With little separation between the sacred and secular, all musical activities, even the playing of secular chamber works, became religious pursuits. To be Moravian meant to approach your spirituality principally through music.<sup>16</sup>

Zinzendorf stressed that they need to help Native Americans, but he himself was not very optimistic about their options. He visited Bethlehem in America and experienced contact with Native Americans first-hand when he tried to preach to them. This did not go well as he showed his noble status and presented himself as better than the Indians. This is why they had high regard for Moravian missionaries – they did not create a hierarchical rift between themselves and those they were preaching to. Zinzendorf's bad experience with Native Americans made him regard

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<sup>15</sup> Rack, "The Moravian Church in England 1728-1760," 813-14.

<sup>16</sup> Eyearly, "The Music of the Moravian Church in America," 583.

Indian languages as primitive and raw, and he wrote that one cannot accurately describe Christianity in these “primitive” languages.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.3 Bethlehem

This town was founded as a beacon of hope in the wilderness, in close proximity to Native settlements. The purpose was missionary work, sending missionaries farther out west to found Moravian settlements and preach the Gospel to Indians. Zinzendorf encouraged Moravians in Pennsylvania to spread the Good News and played a key role in establishing the importance of missionary work. Bethlehem was also an important center of culture and an example to Indians in what a Christian town, community and family unit looks like.

The town flourished and became one of the most successful settlements of its time. Living in Bethlehem was not for the faint of heart. There was a set of rules which all inhabitants had to follow and every new person to join the Bethlehem commune was carefully chosen. Moravians let Jesus Christ make the decision of who would live there by casting dice.<sup>18</sup>

### 2.4 Missionary Work

Zinzendorf trained young men to be missionaries, stressed the importance of knowledge across many fields, including medicine and geography.

Moravian missionaries were exceptional in that they accepted other cultures as different but not inferior. This was unique among missionaries and helped Moravians spread the Gospel. They only preached to those who wanted to hear the Word of God, they never forced their way into an Indian settlement. Through their life among Indians in the wilderness, they adopted some of their customs and tried to understand them and live by example.

Needless to say, the Moravians were not the first missionaries in the Ohio Valley nor in North America. Many Christian missionaries traveled in the wilderness, but for these missionaries, it was a career. For Moravians like Zeisberger, it was a lifestyle, a calling. A Presbyterian minister needed “a hundred and twenty pounds sterling yearly, at least, let him be as frugal as he will . . . he

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<sup>17</sup> Hlavsa, David Zeisberger Apoštol Indiánů.

<sup>18</sup> Attwood, *Community of the Cross*, 7-8. I would like to add that the casting of lots or dice was a decision-making strategy which was normal for bigger church decisions, as it was believed that Christ would show his will in this way and no human could influence the lots or dice.

must keep three or four horses a Servant or a Negro Man, two would not be amiss, to guard him from Town to Town.”<sup>19</sup> A Moravian missionary, on the other hand, was not higher-ranked or separate from the rest of the congregation. Missionaries were part of the daily life of converts. They sowed the fields, harvested crops and built fences alongside Natives and Whites alike, man or woman, rich or poor. This must have been one of the reasons Moravian missions were exceptionally successful – new Christians received guidance and were shown how to live by their “teacher.” Other Christian missionaries only met Indians for Christian services. Moravians received no income and were expected to work for their own food and produce whatever they needed themselves. “Only cloth, writing utensils, tea, coffee, medicine, herbs, spices and a few other amenities of European civilization were sent to them from Bethlehem.”<sup>20</sup> These missionaries were not university scholars, they were practical people who learned trades and had apprenticeships so they could teach Native Americans crafts. The Moravians placed such emphasis on spreading the Good News that they founded a missionary school in Bethlehem which was open from 1744 to 1746 and which David Zeisberger attended. The missionaries led lives not differing from those of Indian members of the congregation. The missionaries had the same houses as Native converts and carved their own plates from wood. They did, however, have a few European luxuries in their homes, for example a tea kettle, a table and chairs. Their daily concerns were the same as every other members’ of the congregation, they were not on a pedestal or higher in the social hierarchy, unlike other Christian missionaries. They also did jobs that were considered by Indians to be women’s work, so that they would be seen as exceptional and noteworthy, attracting Indians who were not opposed to a peaceful lifestyle of hard work and prayer.

They also had a different approach to converting Indians to Christianity. While other Christian denominations attempted to convert as many as possible during one service or preaching of the Gospel, Moravians followed Count von Zinzendorf’s doctrine of “first fruits.”

The first fruits are those who have been set aside for salvation from the foundation of the world. All other people must be saved by their

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<sup>19</sup> Diary of William Richardson, “Presbyterian Mission to the Cherokees,” 136.

<sup>20</sup> Wellenreuther, *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger*, 65.



own acceptance of their redemption. This idea of first fruits was foundational for Moravian missions to non-Christian peoples, including the native tribes of America.<sup>21</sup>

Moravians met a challenge in the Colonies that other Christian missionaries did not face. Because of their good relations with the Native population, authorities suspected they could be generating or provoking hostility against white colonists. The main concern of the time was that Indians could try to work against the colonization of the continent, and the Moravian Brothers, in their effort to teach them arts, crafts and other useful things, would educate them too much and the Native tribes could rise up and try to drive colonists out of the land.

#### 2.4.1 David Zeisberger, the Moravian Missionary

Zeisberger's parents left Herrnhut to become missionaries in the New World. Their son followed them in 1738<sup>22</sup> at age fifteen to Georgia. After a war broke out in Georgia and Moravians remained neutral, they were expelled by British soldiers because they were considered traitors for not siding with the British crown. The family, with other Moravians from Georgia, made their way to Pennsylvania and founded a town in 1741<sup>23</sup> which Zinzendorf named Bethlehem. The goal of Moravian towns outside Europe was spreading the Word of God, therefore the entirety of the Bethlehem commune was focused on sustaining and supplying clothing and food for missionaries they sent out west.

As mentioned above, Zeisberger took part in Bethlehem's missionary school where he soon learned two Indian languages in order to preach to Indians in their native tongue. Because of this, he was later employed as a diplomat between the Colonies and the Six Nations.<sup>24</sup> Because of his extensive knowledge of Iroquoian and Algonquian, he translated many Moravian religious texts and songs into these languages.

#### 2.5 Zeisberger's *History of the Northern American Indians*

Apart from his translations and the *Mission Diaries* studied in this thesis, Zeisberger also wrote *History of the Northern American Indians*. This book is mentioned

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<sup>21</sup> Atwood, *Community of the Cross*, 49.

<sup>22</sup> "David Zeisberger."

<sup>23</sup> "David Zeisberger."

<sup>24</sup> Hlavsa, David Zeisberger Apoštol Indiánů.

several times in the footnotes of the *Diaries* and in the Introduction. From these footnotes, the *History* seemed less objectively written than the *Diaries*. I read a few chapters of the *History* to verify or disprove this. In the preface, Archer Butler Hubert notes the value of Zeisberger's unbiased writing about native tribes in his records of his time spent with them:

Mention should be made of Zeisberger's attitude toward the Indian legends, especially that of Iroquois conquest of the Delawares. It was only proper that this historian should include in his narrative the legends which were told to him ; that he did not examine them critically and pass upon their accuracy dogmatically is not, in the opinion of the editors, a discredit to him.<sup>25</sup>

### 3 Zeisberger's Cultural Relativism

While searching through Zeisberger's diary entries for any subjective statements about Native Americans proved to be without fruit, his notes for Rev. Henry Loskiel<sup>26</sup> which were published as the *History* seemed to be more relevant to answering my research question than the *Diaries* themselves. Hubert quotes Heckewelder's opinion on Zeisberger's character: "(...) the Indian converts, invariably looked to him; and his courage, his undaunted readiness to act, his comforting words cheered them all. (...) He had devoted himself to the service of the Lord among the heathen without any view of a reward, other than such as his Lord and Master might deign to bestow upon him."<sup>27</sup>

Benjamin Mortimer, a young missionary that assisted Zeisberger<sup>28</sup>, characterized him as "fully convinced that his vocation to preach the Gospel to the Indians (...) Nothing afforded him more satisfaction than the genuine conversion of

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<sup>25</sup> A. B. Hubert, Preface to David Zeisberger's History of Northern American Indians, 8.

<sup>26</sup> A. B. Hubert, Preface to David Zeisberger's History of Northern American Indians, 7.

<sup>27</sup> A. B. Hubert, Preface to David Zeisberger's History of Northern American Indians, 5, quoting from *The Life and Times of David Zeisberger: The Western Pioneer and Apostle of the Indians* by Edmund Alexander de Schweinitz, originally published: 1870

<sup>28</sup> "The mission board at Bethlehem had chosen the thirty-one-year-old Mortimer to be Zeisberger's new assistant." Earl P. Olmstead, *Blackcoats Among the Delaware: David Zeisberger on the Ohio Frontier*, 95.

those to whom he preached.”<sup>29</sup> These accounts of Zeisberger’s contemporaries give us insight into his views concerning cultural differences and whether or not he was a cultural relativist ahead of his time.

### 3.1 Indian Tribes in Ohio

In the late 1700’s, many tribes originally from the East Coast were resettling in the Ohio River Basin. The majority of the land there was claimed by the Six Nations, a group of Iroquoian-speaking tribes with one council of chiefs. The British government assigned the land to the Iroquois League, as the Six Nations were sometimes called, as hunting ground.

Other Native tribes moved to the Ohio River as well, but the area belonged to the Six Nations, therefore all other tribes were considered subordinate to the Iroquois League and had to obey their decisions and pay tribute. These dependent tribes were, in the time when David Zeisberger came to the Ohio River, the Shawnee<sup>30</sup>, Delaware and Mingo.

The Shawnee and Delaware belonged to one language group, Algonquian, while the Mingo belonged to the Iroquoian language group. The Algonquian-speaking Delaware hated the Iroquoian-speaking Mingoes. The two tribes had a long history of hatred, which was standard among tribes from different language groups.

The League council allowed Moravians to preach to these subordinate tribes.

### 3.2 Six Nations (Iroquois)

The Moravian mission, including Zeisberger, was directly influenced by decisions of the council of the Six Nations. The Iroquois League absorbed a few Indian tribes which had to flee from New England in response to migration from Europe. The Senecas, one of the “Nations,” were very much against Moravian missions in Iroquois land, thus making preaching on Iroquois League land very difficult.

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<sup>29</sup> E. A. Schweinitz, *The Life and Times of David Zeisberger: The Western Pioneer and Apostle of the Indians*, 1870, qtd. in Preface to *History of the Northern American Indians*, by A. B. Hubert (University of Berkeley Library 2016), 5.

<sup>30</sup> Treaty of Lancaster 1744, see Wellenreuther, *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger*, 14.

### 3.3 Delaware (Leni Lenape)

The first tribe they were invited to speak to was Leni Lenape. This once large tribe was diminished by smallpox, alcohol abuse, conflict with Europeans and, occasionally, encounters with the Iroquois.

When Zeisberger met the Delaware, they were going through an outbreak of smallpox. After one of his powerful sermons, the illness receded and the Indians believed that Zeisberger truly had a gift from God. Their chief, Netawatwes, embraced Christian philosophy. He became a key supporter and propagator of Moravian missionaries from then on until his death. Netawatwes dreamed of Christianity being embraced as their tribal religion, although this could not happen due to constant conflicts between Christian Indians and Delaware preachers and chiefs who took their side.

Chief Netawatwes took the missionaries' side in this struggle for power over the majority of the tribe. In 1772, there was a famine because an Indian preacher told the people there would be abundant corn even if the tribe planted little corn.<sup>31</sup> Many other similar cases which had a devastating effect on the population occurred and Netawatwes warned his people against these preachers and supported the Moravians because they set the example of working hard and reaping the benefits.

In one of his first diary entries, Zeisberger describes a Delaware man as "very reasonable"<sup>32</sup> and a critical thinker. David Zeisberger knew the Delaware language well and liked the pacifist and neutral attitude of the Delaware Indians; he adopted some of their opinions and took them into account when making decisions about traveling to other tribes or going new places.

### 3.4 Mingo

Mingo is the Delaware term for Iroquois who migrated to the Ohio region. I will be using this term in my thesis because David Zeisberger and other Moravian missionaries learned from the Delaware about the Mingo. The Delaware opinion was that the Mingo were thieves, drunks and lazy. This opinion led to missionaries sympathizing with the "good" Delaware and rejecting the "bad" Mingo.

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<sup>31</sup> Wellenreuther, *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger*, 94.

<sup>32</sup> Wellenreuther, *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger*, 95.

### 3.5 Zeisberger's Approach

Zeisberger did not try to only educate Indians, he was unique in that he also came to them to learn from them. As a person, he was humble and respectful, mindful of cultural differences but without the usual rejection of colonists.

Living in close proximity to Native Americans and, for a while, with them, made Zeisberger move away from Zinzendorf's opinion. He found ways to become close with Native Americans and understand their culture better. Zeisberger disagreed with Zinzendorf's opinion that Indian languages were not suitable for the Word of God. He learned two main Iroquois and Algonquin languages and several dialects, translated Moravian hymns and parts of the Bible into Delaware and compiled two grammars for Indian languages which help Native Americans today learn their language.

David Zeisberger lived in the heart of the Six Nations, the sacred Onondaga, to learn about the Iroquois culture and to learn their language. He served as their middleman in dealings with the colonial government and translated for them. He could not, however, found a mission settlement so deep in Iroquois country, so far from white colonists' towns. When he finally had most Iroquois chiefs on his side, his dream of creating a mission there was cut short by the beginning of the French and Indian War, which resulted in massive land gains for the British Empire and, as a direct result of this, colonists pushing further inland into Iroquois territory.

Before this war, he helped found the Moravian missions of Friedenshutzen, Gnadenhutzen and Shamokin, where he was the head missionary. Gnadenhutzen was burned to the ground and massacred by pro-French Indians in the French and Indian War in 1782<sup>33</sup>.

To prevent any revenge campaigns and massacres from the side of the white colonists, Zeisberger gave shelter to Christian Indians in Bethlehem. Because he lived among them for so long, his sympathies and worries were, in the first place, for his Indian brothers, then for his fellow Moravian missionary coworkers.

During this time of conflict, he decided it was too dangerous to live so close to not only expanding British settlers, but also Indians participating in the offensive. He took a few missionaries and Indian converts and founded Friedenshutzen 2. Here

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<sup>33</sup> "David Zeisberger."

he continued preaching the Good News and there was a spiritual awakening in Friedenshutzen. Many local chiefs invited him to their villages to speak to their people about Christianity and Natives came to Friedenshutzen to hear him preach.

Despite these seemingly good signs, David Zeisberger soon moved west. Many tribes were fleeing to Ohio, so he moved there too. It was in Ohio that he met Netawatwes, a Delaware chief, who invited him to preach to his tribe. The chief himself was intrigued by Christian teachings and wanted his tribe to reject warfare and live a peaceful Christian life, for Christianity to become the tribe's official religion. He let Zeisberger chose any piece of land he wanted in the Tuscarawas River Valley and it was here that the mission town of Schönbrunn was founded. Soon afterwards, he founded Gnadenhutzen 2 by the same river.

Schönbrunn soon grew and became a sizable town of 400. The Delaware people came to love Zeisberger and his teaching, not only because he spoke their language fluently, but also because he accepted them and their traditions, for example Delaware dress. He influenced Delaware life in that women were taught about Christ just like men and, under Zeisberger's influence, women had say in community decision-making. His goal was to reach the hearts of the Delaware, not to change their appearance, and this is why they loved him.

### 3.6 Cultural Relativism

Since cultural relativism is an approach to learning about other cultures, I read Zeisberger's diaries with a critical eye and watched for signs of him using this method or, in the opposite case, if cultural relativism was still too much, even for a man of Zeisberger's capacity. What I found was very much in contrast to the goals and hypothesis stated in my introduction. In my search for Zeisberger noting someone's appearance, wealth or poverty and other social markers, I found myself at a loss as none or very few of these were present. I will illustrate with an example from the *Mission Diaries*:

*Echpalawehund*, the often-mentioned *Chief*, came here on his return journey from *Langundoutenüink* and brought me a letter from Brother Ettwein . . . The *Chief* spent the night with us and stayed in my house with me until midnight. He discussed various matters and shared his heart with me. He was now trying to free himself from

the *Affairs of Chief* and to come to our place, where he believed he would have a blessed life.<sup>34</sup>

From this excerpt, we can clearly see that Zeisberger made no mention of Echpalawehund's clothing or manners. Although this is not the first time he mentions Echpalawehund in the *Mission Diaries*, he never introduced the man other than stating his status among the Delaware and cases where the Chief helped the missionaries by sending horses or other help in their travels. In fact, the only social marker he notes in the *Diaries* is the status of certain Native Americans in their tribal hierarchy. Zeisberger had to be very aware of tribal leaders and relations, because the political situation in the colonies during the late 1700's was very tense, as this was the time between Dunmore's War and the American Revolution, and each tribe took a different side in the minor conflicts in between and had a different approach to colonists even before these history-changing conflicts. Before Dunmore's War, Delaware Indians hoped that they could remain neutral and retain their trade opportunities and hunting ground. When Virginia violated the Proclamation of 1763<sup>35</sup> (this was the beginning of Dunmore's War), many tribes lost all hope of retaining hunting grounds and they moved further west.

In the quotation above, Zeisberger writes that the Chief "shared his heart with me." In modern Christian terms, sharing one's heart means to reveal your innermost thoughts to your conversation partner. This shows that Zeisberger must have been very respected and trusted by Echpalawehund, both as the leader of the mission in the Ohio River Valley who understood the burden of leadership, and as a person who was wise and capable of helping others when they were in need, emotionally or otherwise. Evidence that the term "sharing one's heart" was used by Christians in Zeisberger's time with very similar meaning to the modern-day Christian meaning is found in many passages in the *Diaries*. One good example is from Zeisberger's meeting with a Shawnee Preacher: "Now he wanted to share his heart

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<sup>34</sup> Wellenreuther, *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger*, 101.

<sup>35</sup> This proclamation was issued by the British monarch after the Crown's acquisition of former French territory in the New World. It forbade all settlement past the Appalachian Mountains. The Native Americans of the Ohio Valley mostly had a negative reaction to this change of landowners because they had a good relationship with the French and were left to their own devices. The British did not have good relations with Indians and mostly drove them further west, especially with the colonists' want for monetary gain and land.

with us. He believed everything we preached was the truth.”<sup>36</sup> The Preacher elaborates on this, thus sharing his innermost thoughts and feelings with the missionaries that preached to him and the rest of the town. So Zeisberger gives his account of the emotions and conversations with the Indians he meets and preaches to. Since his mission’s goal is to convert only the “first fruits,” the emotional reaction to the Word of God is seen as more important to document here than the external appearance of the Native Americans, which Moravians had little interest in changing. The mission’s focus was on the heart, and the changing of the heart, not the body.

Another reason for Zeisberger’s omission of important details of the Natives’ appearance and daily lives in his diaries is also present. In the footnotes of the book, I saw many times that in his *History*, Zeisberger did write these subjective thoughts and feelings on various tribes and individuals. My focus is, however, his diaries, which, as my hypothesis indicates, I expected to be more personal in nature than the formal records that they turned out to be. The most probable reason for him maintaining neutrality in writing the diaries was the Moravian attitude towards diary-writing in general.

Moravians kept careful diaries and records of every event in each town. These diaries were, just like Zeisberger’s diaries, impersonal and objective, because they served the purpose of cataloguing and archiving the happenings within the commune. Having grown up among Moravians, Zeisberger would have known of the general style of Moravian diary-keeping and he kept his diaries with a similar purpose in mind – to document his travels and meetings for the church leaders and for future Moravians to study and to answer questions about how to lead possible future missions. E. A. Kessel mentions that he sent his yearly diaries to church officials in Bethlehem and Europe.<sup>37</sup> This was important for the Moravian Church to maintain religious and social cohesion.<sup>38</sup>

Another interesting passage from the *Diaries* which I would like to analyze was Zeisberger’s sermon in a Shawnee village. Upon his arrival there with the

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<sup>36</sup> Wellenreuther, *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger*, 110.

<sup>37</sup> Kessel, "The Moravian Indian Mission During the American Revolution: The Journal of David Zeisberger, 1772 to 1781," 1036-37.

<sup>38</sup> Eyerly, "The Music of the Moravian Church in America," 584.



Indian helpers, he started preaching the Word of God to the Natives who were not out hunting at the time. At first the evangelization was chaotic because his listeners had many questions as he spoke, but the next day when everyone gathered to listen to what Zeisberger had to say, he set down rules of the dialog so that he could make a clear and concise statement and not have his thoughts interrupted, as was the problem earlier. He told them that they did not need to answer or respond while he was speaking and that they should not interrupt with questions as they had the day before. They should listen quietly until the sermon was over. “Then they could ask as much as they wanted to. They did this and things proceeded very quietly and orderly.”<sup>39</sup>

He had the patience to learn their customs and adapt to them, or explain that he would like to do things differently. Zeisberger spent his entire adult life and senior years among Native Americans of his own will. He could have, but did not, travel back to Bethlehem, lay down his missionary work, and live in a secluded commune without contact with Native Americans and their culture. Instead, he chose to learn their language, listen to their stories, learn about their practices, and spend his life teaching those who would listen about all sorts of manual labor, the Gospel, and his own culture and way of life. With the neutrality I faced in *Diaries* and the direct but somehow gentle descriptions in *History*, I saw that David Zeisberger was a man ahead of his time in his culturally relativist thoughts and actions.

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<sup>39</sup> Wellenreuther, *The Moravian Mission Diaries of David Zeisberger*, 111.

## Conclusion

This thesis began with a brief study of cultural relativism, which at first seemed like a straightforward task. On the contrary, it turned out to be my first challenge as none of the famous dictionaries I checked and expected to have entries defining cultural relativism actually had an entry for the term at all. Mark Glazer's short introduction to cultural relativism and an entry on the topic from an anthropological encyclopedia seemed most comprehensive. I was surprised and perplexed as to how such a wide-spread and common topic upon which a lot of modern-day thinking is founded could elude the Oxford English Dictionary and the Encyclopedia Britannica and Americana.

After I had established these basic definitions, I started researching the topic of cultural relativism and studying David Zeisberger's *Mission Diaries* with the intent to find and use subjective markers and his expressed opinions to determine the degree to which his approach could be called culturally relativist. This presented another challenge in the beginnings of this thesis. Many phrases and expressions which Zeisberger uses in his diaries almost daily were unfamiliar to me as a modern person and non-Moravian who is only a beginner in German. Consequently, I had to delve into the inner workings of the Moravian commune and their belief system and improve my German. I studied Count von Zinzendorf's philosophy and theory of the workings of a commune, which shed light on many passages in the *Diaries* and explained some mission strategies employed by Zeisberger in practice. Visiting German churches in turn helped me understand German theological terms and their usage, so I could better understand the terms used by Zeisberger.

I had pinned down key passages and important meetings Zeisberger had with Native Americans, but another problem presented itself. As the reader can see from my introduction, I assumed the *Diaries* would be more subjective. Nevertheless, they turned out to be high quality chronicles of happenings at the time, but not a window into David Zeisberger's personal beliefs and strategies. As the cultural relativists of my first chapter said, my approach was incorrect in that I went into analysis thinking I already had the answers to my questions. I found the subjective, personal descriptions I sought in Zeisberger's *History of the Northern American Indians*, where he seems to let out all the feelings, all the new sights, sounds and traditions which were so strange and new to the colonists.

Thanks to *History*, I could finally see what Zeisberger was experiencing and how Native Americans of the time lived. Many Europeans condemned Native Americans and their way of life, and Zeisberger could have done so too and spent his days in the commune of Bethlehem, knowing very little about the Indians. But exactly because he did not do this, because he spent his life willingly among them, is he exceptional and his thinking culturally relativist. I wish to explore the *History* in more detail and analyze it carefully, but my thesis goal was to analyze the *Diaries*, so this analysis would be an interesting future project, promising to yield more fruit in culturally relativist judgements than the *Diaries* did.

## Shrnutí

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá analýzou deníků misionáře Davida Zeisbergera a zkoumáním, do jaké míry byl tolerantním člověkem. Práce je strukturovaná do kapitol podle mého postupu ve výzkumu. První velká část je věnována mému čtení a definování kulturního relativismu. Ve druhé části nastiňuji základy Moravské církve, jejich víry, života a teologických základů. Také zmiňuji důležitost určitých rituálů v jejich každodenním životě. Poslední část je zcela o Zeisbergerovi a jeho postoji k Indiánům. Analyzuji zde úryvky z jeho deníků a knihy o dějinách Indiánů a pomocí nich odpovídám na otázku mého výzkumu.

Nyní si shrneme podrobněji první část práce, kde na začátku objasňuji pojem kulturní relativismus. Základní pro kulturní relativismus je, že badatel nemůže hodnotit víru, estetiku, etiku a jiné kulturní položky jako „dobré“ nebo „špatné,“ protože mezi kulturami jsou značné rozdíly v hodnocení co je „dobré“ nebo „špatné.“ Mezi nejdůležitějšími zastánci tohoto stanoviska patří Franz Boas. Zkoumala jsem vědecké články a své získané znalosti jsem použila v první kapitole práce. Před zkoumáním samotných Zeisbergerových deníků bylo nutné si vytvořit jasnou představu o prvcích v jeho psaní, které hledám. Hledání ve slovnících bylo marné, kulturní relativismus jako samostatný pojem jsem našla až v *Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. Tento pojem jsem přidala do první kapitoly, aby jej čtenář mohl srovnat se stanoviskem Franze Boase a Marka Glazera.

Má bakalářská práce je kulturního zaměření, ale není antropologická. Z tohoto důvodu dále věnuji několik stran začátkům kulturní antropologie. Franz Boas vytvořil relativismus jako protipól komparativní analýze kultur. Nesouhlasil s evoluční doktrínou hodnocení kultur jako „lepších“ a „horších,“ Boas a jeho stoupenci toužili po nekritickém bádání, které nehodnotí kulturu okem jejich kultury. Další důležitý bod, kterým se relativismus zabývá, je zkoumání kultury v jejím plném kontextu. Tímto je míněn kontext prostředí, které tvoří kulturu, dále psychologické vlivy, které formují kulturu, a také objasnění historie místních tradic. Tímto zkoumáním, oproti komparativnímu přístupu, získá vědec fakta, a teprve na základě nasbíraných faktů může činit obecné závěry. V této době, na konci devatenáctého století, Alfred Kroeber vyjádřil souhlas s nutností začínat výzkum

s otázkami a ne s odpověďmi a položil základní kámen objektivitě ve vědě svým stanoviskem, že široce obecné tvrzení nepatří do vědeckého výzkumu.

Důležitým badatelem, který se věnuje kulturnímu relativismu, je Ruth Benedictová. Zkoumá rozdíly mezi kulturami a co se děje jednotlivcům daných kultur. Místo tradičního sbírání dat se snaží již získaná data uspořádat do smysluplných schémat, což je výraznou inovací v přístupu k Boasovým základům.

Další kapitola mé práce je věnovaná popisu radikálních Moravských bratří, kteří vynikali svou evangelizací a bohoslužbou, která se skládala ze zpěvu písní a výkladu biblických veršů, toto vše s velkým důrazem na bolest Ježíše Krista a jeho utrpení na Zemi. Žili v uzavřených komunitách, kde pěstovali vlastní potravu a učili se řemeslům, takže komunita nepotřebovala kontakt s vnějším světem. Církev byla obnovena hrabětem Zinzendorfem na sjednocujícím základě husitské tradice. Napsal hymny, kázání a modlitební knihu, a na tomto základě rostla církev po Evropě a dalších kontinentech. Ačkoliv v té době byl Zinzendorfův přístup ke křesťanství jedinečný a bezesporu atraktivní pro mnoho lidí, většinová společnost jej nepřijala. Pro mnohé byl však Zinzendorfův přístup vítaným útekem od racionalismu k náboženskému cítění srdcem, od stresujících vlastních rozhodnutí k životu, kde plnili pokyny.

Když se Moravští bratři dostali do amerických kolonií v roce 1735, měli potíže kvůli svému mírumilovnému způsobu života, protože v Novém světě zuřily války mezi Indiány, Francií a Anglií. Byli zde téměř vyhnanci a tak vytvářeli vlastní osady. Na rozdíl od zbytku přistěhovalců nevytvářeli Moravané naschvál hierarchickou propast mezi sebou a domorodým obyvatelstvem, což byla jedna z hlavních příčin úspěchu Moravských misíí oproti jiným církvím. Jelikož moravští misionáři nebyli misionáři povoláním, ale byli vyučení řemeslníci, učili také Indiány řemeslům, čímž se jim přiblížili a vyšli jim vstříc, což bylo v té době jedinečné. Také kázali jen těm, kteří měli zájem si poslechnout Evangelium, nikdy se nevnucovali tam, kam nebyli zváni. Ani ve vlastním sboru nebyli misionáři výše postavení než zbytek shromáždění, i přesto, že jejich práce byla pro Moravskou církev zásadní. U Indiánů spočívala atraktivita Moravské církve v její ochotě přizpůsobit se potřebám jejich kmene, naučit se jejich jazyk, respektovat místní zvyky. Důležitým faktorem bylo také, že Moravští misionáři byli ochotni vykonávat práci, která byla Indiány považována za ženskou práci, tj. setí, sklizeň a

veškerá práce na poli. Tímto se zavděčili Indiánům, kterým se líbil jejich mírumilovný a pokorný způsob života.

Třetí kapitola mé práce se týká samotného Zeisbergera a jeho vztahu s místními kmeny, včetně nastínění komplikovaných vztahů mezi nimi. Zatímco ostatní misionáři se snažili konvertovat co největší počet Indiánů za jedno kázání, Moravané se řídili Zinzendorfovou doktrínou „první sklizně.“ První sklizeň znamená, že každé lidské srdce uzraje pro Krista v jiný čas, a proto misionáři sklízeli jen zralé plody a ostatní nechali ještě zrát. Zeisberger často seděl s jedním Indiánem dlouhé hodiny do svítání a diskutovali o náboženství i životě. Kvůli svým úspěchům mezi domorodci a přátelství s mnoha kmeny ale měli Moravané problém získat si důvěru kolonistů. Ti se domnívali, že Moravané pomohou Indiánům v jejich odporu proti kolonizaci Nového světa, a že díky tomu, že Moravané Indiány učili umění a řemesla, se Indiáni budou schopni sjednotit a vyhnat kolonisty ze svého území.

Zeisberger vyrůstal v moravské komunitě v Herrnhut, a v patnácti letech odcestoval do Ameriky. Zde se účastnil výuky ve škole pro misionáře v moravské osadě Bethlehem. Naučil se mnoho dialektů místních Indiánů, ruční práce a zásady křesťanského života. Díky svým znalostem dvou indiánských jazyků přeložil mnoho písní a modliteb Moravské církve, napsal slovník a dějiny severoamerických Indiánů a také byl autorem mnoha deníků týkajících se jeho cest mezi kmeny a zakládání komunit.

Pár měsíců jsem strávila četbou Zeisbergerových deníků a hledáním citově zabarvených výrazů o lidech, kterým kázal z Bible. Také jsem se věnovala historii osady Bethlehem, která byla tehdy centrem a záchytným bodem pro misionáře. V Atwoodově knize *Společenství kříže* jsem se dozvěděla, proč jsou Zeisbergerovy deníky tak neosobní a objektivní. Moravští bratři totiž měli mnoho deníků a kronik, pečlivě udržovaných, které sloužily jako záznamy pro budoucí generace a vedení církve o dění v menších komunitách. Tudíž bylo hledání projevů citů, náklonnosti či nesnášenlivosti vůči indiánským zvykům v Zeisbergerových denících obtížné, ne-li přímo nemožné. Zkoušela jsem tedy číst Zeisbergerovu knihu o historii místních kmenů, a zde jsem našla daleko víc citově zabarvených prvků. Z naprosté neutrality jeho deníků a laskavých popisů v *Dějínách* lze říci, že David Zeisberger byl velmi tolerantní a přizpůsobivý. Svědčí o tom také skutečnost, že po prvních bližších setkáních s indiánskými zvyky se nevrátil do komunálního života

v Bethlehem, ale dál se pokoušel přiblížit, porozumět a pomoci všem, kdo o to stáli. Zeisbergerovy *Dějiny severoamerických Indiánů* určitě stojí za to dále zkoumat a použít v dalším výzkumu, protože na rozdíl od suchého popisu událostí se zde Zeisberger detailně věnuje popisu lidí a zvyků, mezi kterými strávil většinu svého života.

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## **Abstract**

**Author:** Hana Svoboda

**Department:** Department of English and American Studies

**Title of thesis:** David Zeisberger, the Missionary of the Moravian Church: The Scope and Limits of His Cultural Relativism

**Supervisor:** Prof. PhDr. Michal Peprník, Dr.

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**Key words:** Moravian Church, missionaries, Indians, North America, David Zeisberger, count Zinzerdorf, cultural relativism

This Bachelor thesis deals with the missionary work of the Moravian Brothers among North American Indians. The history of the Moravian Church is described from the pre-reformation, started by Jan Hus, to Moravians in Saxony. At the age of fifteen, David Zeisberger was one of the missionaries sent to North America. Zeisberger lived in the frontier wilderness among Indians. His daily duties were not only spiritual but also material (food, wood, clothes, crafts). During the eighteenth century, the mission was in danger from raids, massacres and whole mission towns being burnt to the ground. Zeisberger created many settlements in the Ohio River region and in Canada, but most were destroyed. Where other Moravians gave up, Zeisberger persevered. His approach was culturally relativist in that he saw the Natives not as inferior, but as equal and different. The research of any culture must be performed open-mindedly so that a specific culture can be fully captured in its' own worth and not through the lens of one's own culture. Zeisberger is called the Apostle of Indians for his contribution to the improvement of not only their spiritual, but also material lives.

## **Anotace**

**Jméno autora:** Hana Svoboda

**Katedra:** Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

**Název práce:** David Zeisberger, Misionář Moravských bratří: Rozsah a hranice jeho kulturního relativismu

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Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá misijní činností Moravských bratří působících mezi severoamerickými indiány. Dějiny Moravských bratří jsou popsány od doby před reformací, počínaje Janem Husem, po jejich život v Sasku. V patnácti letech byl David Zeisberger vyslán na misií do Severní Ameriky. Zeisberger žil na hranici divočiny mezi Indiány. Jeho denní povinnosti byly nejen duchovní, ale i materiální (jídlo, dřevo, oblečení, řemesla). V průběhu 18. století byly misijní úspěchy ohrožovány nájezdy, masakry a dokonce celé osady byly srovnány se zemí. Zeisberger založil mnoho osad v údolí řeky Ohio a také v Kanadě, ale mnoho z nich podlehl zkáze. Tam, kde ostatní Moravané vzdali své úsilí, Zeisberger vytrval. Jeho přístup byl kulturně relativistický v tom, že neshledával Indiány být podřadnými, ale rovnocennými a jinými. Zkoumání jakékoliv kultury musí být vykonáváno nezaujatě a bez předsudků, abychom mohli zachytit konkrétní kulturu v její vlastní hodnotě a ne skrz objektiv vlastní kultury. Dnes je Zeisberger nazýván Apoštolem Indiánů za svou zásluhu o zlepšení nejen jejich duchovního, ale i materiálního života.