

POSUDEK BAKALÁŘSKÉ PRÁCE

Jméno a příjmení studenta: Martin Kříž
Název bakalářské práce: London in Crisis: The Representation of the Plague Epidemic and the Great Fire of London in the Diaries of Samuel Pepys
Vedoucí bakalářské práce: Mgr. Renata Janktová, MA, PhD.

- I. Cíl práce a jeho naplnění:
- ~~1. Cíl práce byl stanoven a naplněn v souladu s tématem~~
 2. Cíl práce byl naplněn s drobnými nedostatky
 - ~~3. Cíl práce byl adekvátní, ale jen částečně naplněný~~
 - ~~4. Stanovený cíl nebyl naplněn~~
- II. Struktura práce:
1. Logická, jasná a přehledná
 - ~~2. Přiměřená~~
 - ~~3. Uspokojivá~~
 - ~~4. Nevhodná~~
- III. Práce s literaturou:
- ~~1. Výborná: zvoleny a použity vhodné prameny v patřičném rozsahu~~
 2. Velmi dobrá práce s adekvátními prameny v patřičném rozsahu
 - ~~3. Průměrná práce s literaturou~~
 - ~~4. Slabá, chybná nebo nedostačující~~
- IV. Formální stránka:
- ~~1. Odpovídá všem stanoveným požadavkům~~
 2. Obsahuje drobné formální chyby
 - ~~3. Nesplňuje některé zásadní požadavky~~
 - ~~4. Nesplňuje většinu stanovených požadavků~~
- VI. Jazyková úroveň práce:
1. Výborná
 2. Velmi dobrá
 - ~~3. Dobrá~~
 - ~~4. Podprůměrná~~
- VII. Náročnost zpracování tématu:
1. Velmi vysoká
 - ~~2. Vysoká~~
 - ~~3. Střední~~
 - ~~4. Nízká~~

Vyjádření vedoucího bakalářské práce:

The aim of the bachelor thesis was to examine and analyse Samuel Pepys' representation of the two major disasters that struck London in the 1660s and consider its historiographic value. I think that the main objective has been largely met as it demonstrates Pepys' seemingly dispassionate and down-to-earth way of recording his daily routine and experience, which, as if by accident, also captures some of the most significant events of his time. In this case, they are the Great Plague and the Great Fire of London, which are introduced in the theoretical part of the thesis. Mr Kříž begins with a description of the symptoms of bubonic plague and its way of spreading, and continues with an outline of the progress of the epidemic in London. At times, his narrative feels too detailed and repetitive. In some sections it tends to follow too closely that of Peter Ackroyd in his BBC documentary (2000). In addition, Mr Kříž should make a better distinction between historical research (e.g., Knowles et al.) and historical fiction (Defoe). On the other hand, Mr Kříž made a great effort to tackle the historical Bills of Mortality, which is comparable to working with authentic archive material. The presumably most difficult task was reading and understanding Pepys' diaries, mainly due to their condensed style of writing and archaic language. This is the reason why I rate the difficulty level „very high“. Alongside reading, Mr Kříž invested considerable effort in comparing Pepys' records with official mortality figures and sought to find explanations for the deviations found, which cannot but remain in the realm of speculation. The comparison of the 16th-century plague epidemic with the recent Covid pandemic is problematic from the point of view of crisis management and medical care as our biological and medical knowledge and understanding as well as our resources are far more advanced. On the other hand, the psychological and behavioural aspects, such as the population's fatigue and tendency to disregard rules and prohibitions in the advanced stages of the crises bear comparison. In the Great Fire section, Mr Kříž traces Pepys' personal involvement in and experience of tackling the fire of London in his records, nevertheless, little analytical thought is added. The prevalence of description and reproduction over analysis and interpretation is, in my view, the main weakness of the thesis. Having said that, I appreciate Mr Kříž's attention to some of Pepys' seemingly insignificant but very interesting observations, such as his reference to the injured or dying pigeons (p. 52). I wonder what such notes bring to the text? The final evaluation of the text emphasises the personal dimension of sharing a view of contemporary London and the events under scrutiny and communicating the writer's private thoughts and sentiments. Nevertheless, in respect to Pepys' prestigious public office, his records can also be approached as a portrayal of 17th-century English society, particularly its upper classes, and equally importantly, from the perspective of the upper classes. In relation to the events discussed here, Pepys' social position should also be considered as his conduct during the crises would have differed from that of ordinary London residents. Mr Kříž suggests that the personal nature of the text is detrimental to its value as a source of historical knowledge. I agree that a text designed for publication would probably contain more factual information, but it would also lose some of its unique qualities. Are there any other merits of the text in addition to being a historical record?

The thesis is written in good English, with some morphological and lexicological inaccuracies, e.g. in the use of articles, prepositions and verb tenses. There are also some stylistic issues, especially lapses into informal language.

Práce splňuje základní požadavky kladené na tento typ prací, a proto ji doporučuji k ústní obhajobě.

Navrhovaná známka: velmi dobře

Otázky k obhajobě:

1. Can we consider Pepys' way of behaviour (both relating to the disaster situations, and in general) a standard example in his social milieu?
2. Are there any other merits of Pepys' diary in addition to being a source of historical information?
3. If Pepys' diary were a work of fiction, what (sub)genre would it fall into based on its form? Can you name some other authors or texts that would fall into this category?

Podpis vedoucí bakalářské práce:.....



Datum: 18. 5. 2022

*nehodící se škrtněte