Tracing Early American Captivity Narratives (TEACaN)

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Captivity Narratives

- (1680-1716): „the first coherent myth-literature developed in America for American audiences“ (Slotkin 1973, 94-95)

- „[T]he captivity paradigm, as here articulated by a handful of survivors and their ministers, helped to shape and promote a particularly American discourse regarding our historical identity. And, in a twist on the conventional image of an untethered man conquering a ‘virgin’ wilderness, the American rhetoric of self-creation in these Puritan captivity narratives issued predominantly from women.“ (Fitzpatrick 1991, 3)

- „Most obviously, captivity narratives served potent ideological functions in fostering feelings of outrage against all those who suppressed liberty . . . anti-British, anti-Native American, anti-Muslim“ (Williams 2006, 7).
Captivity Narratives

1. inventories or surveys of specific historical moments
2. sensationalistic and propagandistic narratives
3. religious narratives
4. sources of information about colonial encounters and conflicts
5. narratives of immunity against the “Other”
6. early (quasi-)ethnographic depictions
Research

- Myth and Symbol School
- Cultural studies and Gender studies
- the “transnational turn”
- problem: research is based on a single work or a small selection of texts.

TEACaN aims to study:
- transnational developments in literary history,
- questions of authorship in relation to the narrating agency,
- the make-up of a particular captivity narrative “grammar” from transhistorical and transnational perspectives.
Best Practice Digital American Studies

- The Early Caribbean Digital Archive (Northeastern University)
- HyperCities (Harvard University)
- Chinese Railroad Workers (Stanford University)
- Global Currents: Cultures of Literary Networks, 1050-1900 (McGill, Stanford, Groningen, Montreal)
Digital Archives

- Early Americas Digital Archive
- Early American Imprints
- EVANS
- Text Creation Partnership
- Oxford Text Archive
Project scope

• 1500-1900

• 400 texts (1-200 pages)

• c. 100 images
machine-readable corpus of captivity texts

automated text analysis – methods and tools from computer linguistics

IT-visualizations and mappings

digital research environment and information platform

“grammar” and construction of literary texts

time-space dissemination and networks of literary texts
Manuelle und Digitale Codierung

Manuelle Analyse

Annotationsprinzipien

Transkriptionsregeln

Transkription mittels Text-Editor Oxygen + Manuelle Annotation

Computerlinguistische Verfahren

Flache Verfahren

Dariah-Geobrowser

OCR-Lesbarkeit

XML/TEI-Codierung

Publikation

Multidimensionales Web-Interface

Karten-Text Interface

Materialschau

Scalable Reading

Gläserne Werkstatt

Analoge Publikation

Output / Nutzung

Forschungsmodul

Soziale Beziehungen / Handlungsstrukturen

Autorschaft / Agency

Rezeption Übersetzung

Intertextualität

Forschungsumgebung TEACaN

Materialsichtung- und aufbereitung

Überprüfung der Urheberrechte

Digitization on Demand

John-F.-Kennedy Bibliothek
Harvard University
American Antiquarian Society

Kanon Fachbibliografien

Garland Library

Digitale Fachdatenbanken

EEBO
EVANS
Early American Imprints
Haiti-Trust

Kostenfreie öffentliche Transkriptionsdienste

TCP
Oxford Text Archive

Work Flow TEACaN / 2017
How can automated, IT-based methods and tools help us understand and represent the continuities and uncertainties of narrative patterns (characters, event structures, motifs, perspectives, etc.)?
Modules

- authorship
- typology
- intertextuality
- reception

- voice
- event
- community
- network
Mapping

- How can we represent intertextual connections digitally? How might this help us understand national and transnational disseminations of captivity narratives (adaptation, appropriation, modification)?
Digital Palimpsest Mapping Projects: Deep Maps

Are open-access digital archives that collect all manner of multilinguistic primary and secondary text, paratext, ephemera, oral and written history, critical studies, and interdisciplinary and mixed media… in a series of overlaying and overlapping palimpsests built on a specific geolocation manifest on the surface of a digital map that serves as gateway to the archive. (Fisher Fishkin 2011)
Mapping the Garland Library of Narratives of North American Indian Captivities
Mary Rowlandson’s Removes
Mary Rowlandson, *A Narrative* (1682)
John Williams, *The Redeemed Captive* (1704)
Account of the Captivity of Elizabeth Hanson (1728)
Narrative of the Life of Mrs. Mary Jemison (1824)
Challenges

„We will have to develop reading strategies that allow them [the reader] to navigate embedded archival material efficiently for specific scholarly purposes or more as cyberflâneurs, moving à la dérive through layers and layers of primary and secondary source documents that make up lived and literary history.“ (Bishop 3)
Thanks for coming!


