

Library as an Educational Institution 1918-1968: Construction of the "New Human" as a Discontinuity in Continuity

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Černý, M. (2023). Library as an Educational Institution 1918–1968: Construction of the "New Human" as a Discontinuity in Continuity. *Czech-Polish Historical and Pedagogical Journal*, 15/2023/1–2, 16–35.
<https://doi.org/10.5817/cphpj-2023-002>

The historiographical study analyses libraries as institutions that work with the collective memory of the nations in which they are located while educating all inhabitants. Libraries represent one of the crucial institutions of modern Czechoslovak society. This study focuses on their research from the perspective of the anthropology of institutions. Within the framework of Czechoslovakia, it analyses three stages of historical development: 1918–1938, 1938–1948 and 1948–1968. The study seeks to uncover anthropological patterns that implicitly shape the structure, meaning and methods of functioning of libraries and their social order. It also explains why libraries were essential institutions for Masaryk's Czechoslovakia and the totalitarian communist state. The study shows libraries as an institution with a high degree of historical continuity and, at the same time, discontinuously changing from a place of education for democracy into a means of propaganda and indoctrination.

Keywords: *library, Masaryk, anthropology of institutions, sociology of institutions, totalitarianism, Czechoslovakia, censorship, memory institutions, education*

Introduction

The study analyses the development of libraries in Czechoslovakia in three critical stages of its history: 1918–1938, 1938–1948 and 1948–1968. The study focuses on the first and the last epochs in which libraries and librarianship could develop independently (albeit with varying degrees of freedom). The study aims to point out discontinuities in the continuity of the historical development of libraries in this territory, especially concerning legislative, political and value changes. Specifically, it analyses the concept of the 'new human', to which political conditions differed. In all cases, there were to be means to achieve this ideal.

In 1951, Hanah Arendt published a monograph, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, for the first time, in which¹ she turned her attention to institutions. For Arendt, institutions become the key to understanding how people behave, make decisions, and structure human thought. She sees them as a formative element of society that can be the key to explaining many social and historical processes.²

The social constructivists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann also built on this concept in the mid-1960s.³ They show that institutions⁴ are fundamentally involved in shaping what we call reality. Institutions name problems structure society by forming divisions between good and evil, poor and rich, and citizens and strangers. The state can moderate what happens in the community through these institutions, shaping a new reality. They draw attention to the fact that the state – is the source of the existence of institutions. However, it also lives in a reality that the institutions themselves influence. This interdependence leads to a certain continuity of institutions that build a common concept of the state structure, its values and interrelations.

The second aspect of the constitution of institutions is what values the state puts into them, with what aim and in what thoughtful way it can build these institutions. Hanah Arendt was a proponent of the idea that a specific style of exercising power is linked to structures inscribed in institutions. Jan Sokol was already more nuanced in his trilogy, focusing on the philosophy of institutions (*Man as Person, Power, Money and Law, Ethics, Life, and Institutions*).⁵ He was aware that society shapes specific values which (intentionally or unintentionally) gradually imprint themselves on how individual institutions work. An institution is not a permanent and unchanging bureaucratic apparatus but a living organism within specific social conditions.

¹ Arendt, H. (2007). *The origins of totalitarianism*. Durnham: Duke University Press.

² Aschheim, S. E. (1997). Nazism, culture and the origins of totalitarianism: Hannah Arendt and the discourse of evil. *New German Critique*, 70/1, 117–139. & Tsao, R. T. (2004). Arendt and the Modern State: Variations on Hegel in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. *The Review of Politics*, 66/1, pp. 105–138.

³ Berger, P. L., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The social construction of reality*. New York: Anchor Books.

⁴ Brekhus, W. H. (2015). *Culture and cognition: Patterns in the social construction of reality*. New Jersey: Wiley. & Eberle, T. S. (1992). A new paradigm for the sociology of knowledge: "the social construction of reality" after 25 years. *Schweizerische Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 18/2, pp. 493–502.

⁵ Sokol, J. (2014). *Etika, život, instituce: Pokus o praktickou filosofii*. Praha: Vyšehrad. & Sokol, J. (2015). *Moc, peníze a právo: Esej o společnosti a jejích institucích*. Praha: Vyšehrad. & Sokol, J. (2016). *Člověk jako osoba: Filosofická antropologie*. Praha: Vyšehrad.

This study will focus on public libraries with an institution's character.⁶ An institution's operation is associated with different demands, discourses, norms and requirements. Libraries can be interesting to study for many reasons. We want to highlight at least two. It is one of the most accessible institutions in the Czech territory. There are more than schools; they form a unique infrastructure for transferring education and collective memory.

The second reason is that their position in historical development is much more fluid, unlike many other authorities and institutions. In the essay 'The School Will Make It Work',⁷ Hans-Ulrich Grunder draws attention to the demands that 20th-century society has gradually placed on the school and its transformation. However, libraries have undergone fundamental changes in their services, internal content, and the shift of social demand for their essential purpose.

But the common denominator of these changes has always been the constitution of a "new human"⁸ through education. In this respect, we can speak of a systematic continuity of the idea of librarianship at least between 1918 and 1989. However, this idea of the 'new human' and the paths to achieving it changed so much in the 20th century that we can simultaneously speak of turning points or discontinuous developments. This study aims to demonstrate how the idea of the library was reflected in the "new human" concept.

Methodology

The study is based on the philosophical anthropology of institutions.⁹ We believe that the state builds institutions as instruments for achieving its goals. The legislative and cultural environment influences institutions, the way they work, and the structure of values they imprint on society. At the same time, the institution is determined and structured by these influences. It draws on the insights of social constructivism, which emphasises that institutions are, on the one hand, fundamentally involved in shaping our ideas about the world in which we live but, at the same time, are themselves influenced by those ideas.

⁶ Martin, L. (1937). The American public library as a social institution. *The Library Quarterly*, 7/4, 546–563. & Evjen, S. (2015). The image of an institution: Politicians and the urban library project. *Library & Information Science Research*, 37/1, pp. 28–35.

⁷ Grunder, H. U. (2017). *Mythen-Irrtümer-Unwahrheiten. Essays über" das Valsche" in der Pädagogik*. Bad Heilbrunn: Julius Klinkhardt.

⁸ Hlavinková, L. (2007). Socialismus jako sekularizovaná společnost. „Být věřícím“ v době socialismu. Případová studie. In T. Bubík, H. Hoffmann (eds.). Pardubice: Pantheon, pp. 62-71.

⁹ Wright, S. (2004). *Anthropology of organizations*. New York: Routledge. & Baba, M. L. (2009). W. Lloyd Warner and the Anthropology of Institutions: An Approach to the Study of Work in Late Capitalism. *Anthropology of Work Review*, 30/2, 29–49.

We will show how interrelated legislative norms, specific library projects, and the person model libraries can help shape. The Czech Republic has the densest network of public libraries globally; these are prevalent institutions and can be found in many municipalities - in 2019, there were 5,307 libraries in the Czech Republic with 1,376,033 users. Over 13% of the population is registered as readers in public libraries.¹⁰ There are 6253 municipalities in the Czech Republic, so a simple estimate suggests that about 85% of cities have functioning public libraries. It is, therefore, one of the most widespread and accessible institutions. By comparison, there are 4 192 primary schools, significantly fewer than libraries.

Therefore, the study aims to observe how the anthropology of the institution differs between the First Republic and communist totalitarianism. Thus, the research will not work with individual examples of good and bad practices, with erroneous or, on the contrary, functional settings of various principles and approaches. But will seek to reconstruct the (unspoken, often only intuitively understood) ideal of the human being that these institutions aim to shape and form.

The research will open up a broader perception of this phenomenon to other institutions and thus help better understand the Czech environment's cultural-institutional transformation in the twentieth century. At the same time, this method allows us to offer a broader and more profound perception of the analysis of the development of libraries as institutions than a simple look at archival materials or statistical reports would offer. The anthropological study of institutions relies on approaches associated with phenomenology and the methodological foundations of discursive analysis. It¹¹ shares with phenomenology¹² the belief that how librarianship appears and how individual sources and documents grasp it can provide clues for understanding deeper connections and relationships. It communicates an approach to various sources (archival sources, journals, legislative documents) to construct a new interpretation of reality with discursive analysis.

¹⁰ NIPOS, ed. (2019) *KNIHOVNY 2019*. https://www.statistikakultury.cz/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Statistika_2019_KNIHOVNY.pdf

¹¹ Bucholtz, M. (2001). Reflexivity and critique in discourse analysis. *Critique of anthropology*, 21/2, 165-183. & Rogers, R. (2002). Through the eyes of the institution: A critical discourse analysis of decision making in two special education meetings. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 33/2, pp. 213-237.

¹² Desjarlais, R. & Throop, J. (2011). Phenomenological Approaches in Anthropology. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 40/1, 87-102. & Pedersen, M. A. (2020). Anthropological Epochés: Phenomenology and the Ontological Turn. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 50/6, pp. 610-646.

This research will compare anthropological ideas in librarianship in the First Republic and during communist totalitarianism (emphasising the period before 1968). This boundary is chosen given the situation of the Prague Spring, which fundamentally changed the understanding of the "idea of human".¹³ Normalisation is marked by a return to the anthropological starting points of the 1940s and 1950s but with less enthusiasm and avoiding heroic or eccentric actions. Nevertheless, it can be said that the fundamental constructs at the level of anthropology are preserved and, in some ways, petrified and rendered immobile by the activities of libraries.

The Library as an Educational Institution in the First Republic (1918–1938)

Two fundamental determinants carry the library as an institution in the time of the First Republic. On the one hand, the value ethos associated with Masaryk's conception of Czechoslovakia and the real problems of the newly emerging state are national and economic. Between 1918 and 1938, we can see the tension between these two movements shaping the lived practice of Czechoslovak libraries.

In 1885, Masaryk published a text entitled *How to Improve Our Scientific Literature in the Athenaeum*, which would become the programmatic basis of the First Republican librarianship. In it, Masaryk writes:

*"It is also necessary that as many libraries as possible should be established and that not only fiction but also scientific literature should be bought for them; it is not enough to teach a nation to read, but it must also be given to them to read."*¹⁴

The whole text is linked to a particular line of national emancipation. It focuses on the construction of specifically Czech literature, but the concept that draws attention to this short passage is crucial. Libraries are not places for entertainment or leisure but environments for intellectual work. This Protestant ethos¹⁵ is perhaps most clearly seen in Masaryk's relationship to libraries of all the institutions that would develop after 1918. Libraries are to form as dense a network as possible, for there are to be as many as possible,

¹³ Hauser, M. (2019). Pražské jaro 1968 jako progresivní konstrukce národní identity. *Paidea*, 16/1–2, pp. 1–6. & Vilímeček, T. (2008). Občanská společnost a její význam v období Pražského jara. *Paměť a dějiny*, 2/2, pp. 6–17.

¹⁴ Masaryk, T. G. (2012). O českou literaturu naukovou. In: K. Piorecká eds. *O českou literaturu naukovou: Diskuse o úloze a organizaci českých humanitních věd v letech 1885–1900*. Praha: Academia, p. 274.

¹⁵ Weber, M., & Strong, T. B. (2013). The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. *Routledge*, 5(3), pp. 9–18.

so many that each person can access them, but at the same time leading to work and education.

For Masaryk, the educational role of libraries is crucial. He is aware that the reform of schools cannot affect the population as a whole but that libraries should have a rational function through which they can change the destiny of the entire society. Here, a philosophical explanation must be made – why is it necessary to have an educated society? Masaryk adheres to a concept already emphasised by Augustine and followed by the tradition of scholastics and the Enlightenment.¹⁶ Man acts according to the information he has. Evil is the lack of sound; deviant behaviour is due to ignorance or inability to handle this information appropriately. For Masaryk, then, education is a moral issue. His idea of society is based on rationalistic reasoning. Libraries aim to educate and educate through education. He works with the concept that education is nothing but the projection of education into the moral plane of human existence. Therefore, throughout the First Republic, the term "popular education" will be used, but it will be associated with education.

In Masaryk, we can thus clearly identify a social concept of a new human who will achieve high moral quality through education. Education and moral quality are, at the same time, identity elements constituting the idea of Czechoslovakia.¹⁷ Suppose today it is commonly claimed that Czechoslovakism was a pragmatic concept that made an independent Czech nation possible or that Czechs and Slovaks within Czechoslovakism have nothing in common. In that case, we believe that this specific humanist ethos that Masaryk believed should shape the entire society of the new humanist nation.¹⁸ At the same time, this is to maintain the practical political significance of the idea of this national construct and the problems it created in real life in Czechoslovakia.

For Masaryk, the library needed to be accessible to everyone, which can be seen in the first library law (Act No. 430/1919 Coll., §4):

"A minimum programme shall be laid down by regulation, to be carried out in municipalities where there is at least a typical school within one

¹⁶ Capobianco, R. M., & Bostock, G. (1991). Heidegger and the Critique of the Understanding of Evil as Privatio Boni. *Philosophy and Theology*, 5/3, pp. 175–185. & Bostock, G. (2003). Origin: The Alternative to Augustine?. *The Expository Times*, 114/10, pp. 327–332.

¹⁷ Neudorfl, M. L. (1992). TG Masaryk's perception of Czech nationalism before 1914. *History of European Ideas*, 15/4–6, pp. 571–576.

¹⁸ Pitner, J. (2017). TG Masaryk - A Follower of Comenius in Humanistic Ideals. Nasledie Jana Amosa Komenského vzhlád iz 21 veka: Materialy meždunarodnogo naučno-praktičeskogo foruma. *Ethics*, 55/4, pp. 298–304. & Wellek, R. (1945). The Philosophical Basis of Masaryk's Political Ideals. *Ethics*, 55/4, pp. 298–304.

*year at the latest, but if such city does not reach a population of 400, within two years from the time when this Act comes into force."*¹⁹

This requirement for municipalities with over 400 inhabitants is essential. Thanks to this legislation, Czechoslovakia gained the densest network of public (municipal) libraries accessible to almost everyone. At the same time, the law also clearly supported libraries for minorities (§2), which supports our thesis of promoting the maximum impact of libraries on society. In the same vein, Masaryk again expressed himself in 1935 when he stated, "*We need libraries and not only large libraries in some few centres, but as many as possible in every village.*"²⁰

The basic thesis of librarianship in the First Republic is the accessibility of the service; a library is a place for all citizens, including minorities; it is not some elite research, collecting, or representational affair; it is not a question of the city but the general populace.

The law's text also clarifies that the library is linked to the school system in terms of the structure of institutions - the school and the library form one educational system. The Act states in section 11, "The supervision of the proper functioning of all public libraries shall be vested in the Ministry of Education and National Enlightenment,"²¹ so expect some coordinated educational action.

This is also clearly demonstrated in §1 of the Library Act: *'To supplement and deepen the education of all population classes, public libraries shall be established by political communities with educational, instructional and entertainment reading of intrinsic value.'*²² This idea is specified in the *Decree of the Government of the Czechoslovak Republic of 5 November 1919, No. 607 Coll., implementing the Act on Public Municipal Libraries*. It is provided in Articles 1 and 2 as follows:

"The purpose of the public library is to supplement and deepen the population's education by reading, both educational and entertaining, of real intrinsic value. Each library shall contain works of national interest, at least 20% of which shall be scholarly literature and works directly relevant to the interests and occupations of the local and surrounding population.

Writings of no artistic value or content, works of a sinful nature (pornographic works), so-called gore, detective and Indian stories which sensationally titillate the reader's imagination, pamphlets that

¹⁹ No, A. (430/1919). Coll., on public municipal libraries. In *ASPI system*. Wolters Kluwer.

²⁰ Masaryk, T.G. (1935). Několik poznámek k problému výchování dorostlých. In: *Masarykův lid*. Praha: Ústřední škola dělnická.

²¹ No, A. (430/1919). Coll., on public municipal libraries. In *ASPI system*. Wolters Kluwer.

²² No, A. (430/1919). Coll., on public municipal libraries. In *ASPI system*. Wolters Kluwer.

*tend to degrade entire states or classes of the population, as well as works directed against the existence and integrity of the Czechoslovak state, may not be admitted to public libraries. The Ministry of Education and National Enlightenment reserves the right to publish a list of writings and works to be excluded from public libraries."*²³

This excerpt shows that libraries are primarily educational institutions, supplementing and deepening readers' education through their collections. They no longer do so in a homogeneous way, as in the case of formal education, but in a differentiated way, according to interest and occupation. This dimension is crucial because it distinguishes the library from the school regarding education (primarily by lending books) and their objectives.

Two groups of books are excluded from libraries – not because of any a priori censorship, but because they do not allow the fulfilment of the "curriculum of moral humanistic education", i.e. "decadent" and anti-social books. The first books – detective or Indian stories – contradict the idea of man as a rational being who reads to educate and develop himself. Even entertaining reading is formative and leads to a person's transformation. Society was aware of this dimension. It declared (at least formally) that libraries were primarily used to form a new idea of man as an educated and moral being led to this selection. On the other hand, traditional censorship was not an issue since these works were both widely published and affordable.

Jiří Mahen also illustrates this social aspect of the library. A library is a place of social service in the broadest sense of the word, a transformative element of society that helps the poor, the weak, and the excluded through education to a better life. The correction of the imperfect human condition (economic, social and moral) is done through education and reading:

*"The social task of public libraries is a fundamental matter because the public library is a social institution. (...) To the sick and the prisoner who pass into it [the city], it serves bread and salt in a new form: a book of good selected reading."*²⁴

Another category is anti-social publications, excluded from libraries throughout history or have differential and limited access. The library is supposed to educate man as a social being; it is a social service whose output cannot be a person who is – according to the understanding of the First Republic – undemocratic or un-Czechoslovak.

²³ Coll., amending the Decree of the Government of the Czechoslovak Republic of. *Coll., Implementing the Act on Public Municipal Libraries Of, 607/1919.*

²⁴ Mahen, J. (1925). *Nutnosti a možnosti veřejných knihoven.* Brno: Kočí.

These remarks give us a precise model of the new human shaped by the literature, educated and continuously learning in his field. He is a moral, disciplined man, gradually developing his humanity. He is autonomous, rationally spending his free time responsible for himself and others. He is a citizen of the republic, a democrat, a humanist. In this way, we could briefly characterise the new ideal of man to which libraries contribute.

The intricately balanced equilibrium between the individual and the common is evident here. Masaryk understands it in the ancient tradition²⁵- education serves not to make a man an *ιδιώτης*, a useless private person who seeks only the benefit of himself, but a person who seeks to care for the soul, for the good of the whole *πόλις*. This community is common to all, for each active individual bears a specific responsibility. Such an ideal could not be fully realised through libraries, and it encountered many genuine problems, both partial and gradually fundamental (national). Still, it can constitute a particular ethos shaping the society of the twenties. It is essential for the functioning of libraries to have a clear socially shared value construct to which they can refer in their activities.

As Wolfgang Brezinka points out, it is only possible to practice teaching with social agreement over the ideal of the goal of education. At the same time, such a goal must be realistically achievable.²⁶ And here, Masaryk's high demands corresponded little to the situation in Czechoslovakia. In a condition of significant social problems and shifts, they reduced their view of the human as a representative of the middle class who, in his secure life, has space and time for self-development and education. A sufficiently educated human can set their schedule for further autonomous participation in the public sphere. However, developments after 1946 showed that this model had to be supplemented by other socially sensitive components.

The library as an educational institution during the Protectorate (1938–1948)

The war period brought a fundamental shift for libraries and their identity. It is clear that the emphasis on the multicultural concept of the collection, which in German-speaking areas is now purely Germanic, is coming to an end; Czech books are being discarded and either destroyed or transported to Czech libraries. Jewish literature is systematically removed, and the same fate is prepared for anti-Nazi or pro-democracy literature. The sensitive question

²⁵ Patočka, J. (2002). *Péče o duši: Soubor statí a přednášek o postavení člověka ve světě av dějinách; Kacířské eseje o filisofii dějin; Varianty a přípravné práce z let 1973- 1977; Dodatky k Péči o duši I a II*. Praha: Oikoymenth.

²⁶ Brezinka, W. (1996). *Filozofické základy výchovy*. Praha: Zvon.

of reflecting on Masaryk's legacy is typical of the Czechoslovak environment but is quickly and systematically suppressed.²⁷

Libraries in the war period fulfil several roles. First of all, as in the First Republic, they are places of entertainment. The library aims to entertain in a reasonably intellectually stimulating way. Of course, the Second World War period was difficult, but that does not mean it was a period in which people did not want to be entertained. Even though the Nazi regime had straightforward ideas about the culture of particular movements, the Czech milieu was something of a "lee". Emphasis on entertainment was based on the concept of Czechs' representatives of Nazi power as a working-class nation. And the worker unquestionably deserves entertainment (not too demanding or complicated).

Libraries also play a social role; gradual economic shortages are paralysing the publishing market, which increases the importance of libraries as a place where everyone can borrow a good book. Finally, the discourse is associated with understanding the library as a memory institution, which wartime librarianship takes over from the 19th century. It works with the idea that Czech culture can be collected, described in a certain way and preserved. Different from the 19th century, only the descriptive and archival elements are present, not the developmental ones.

The overall position of libraries during the Protectorate could have been more economically problematic. Libraries were not in good condition even in the 1930s,²⁸ and the Second World War would deepen their misery and, at the same time, link it to another aspect. While for Czechoslovakia as a whole, the Allied actions were a positive thing and the end of the war a kind of liberation, libraries are often marked by these wartime events destructively. Many libraries burned down or were destroyed, their spaces acquiring other – temporary but primarily devastating functions.

As a result, the libraries entered 1945 in an impoverished state. Their equipment and composition were fundamentally inadequate to the "new order" needs, especially for the German-speaking population's displacement. The period from 1945 to the beginning of 1948 can be spoken of as (from the libraries' point of view) moderately optimistic. Libraries here do not formulate great anthropologically oriented ideals but undergo a fundamental renewal, replenishment of collections, repair of buildings, etc. At the same time, however, they carry over all the discourses of the Protectorate years. They

²⁷ Báez, F. (2008). *A universal history of the destruction of books: From ancient Sumer to modern Iraq*. London: Atlas Books.

²⁸ Mahen, J. (1928). *Knihovna jako instituce národní*. Vyškov: Spolek veřejných obecních knihovníků. and Mahen, J. (1925). *Nutnosti a možnosti veřejných knihoven*. Brno: Kočí

change their forms.²⁹ The absence of the multicultural context of libraries, which was anchored in §2 of the first Library Act, had significantly impacted the further development of the library institution as an educational environment.

The Library as an Educational Institution during the Communist Totalitarianism (1948–1968)

The situation after 1948 changed radically in many respects. As early as 1 April, *Act No 194/1948 Coll. was passed, amending the regulations on state educational care and public municipal libraries, transferring the care of libraries to the Ministry of Information.* Here, we can see a clear discursive shift – from an educational to an indoctrination role.

At the first Librarians' Congress, held in May 1948³⁰, which was already under complete communist direction, we can see the emphasis on three components of the new librarianship – cleaning up the collection, helping workers and labourers, and working with the reader. The whole concept of communist librarianship will be carried out on this triad. Purification of the collection³¹ is the primary step that always begins a new social stage in librarianship - we could identify it (albeit more weakly) after 1919, after 1939, and now after 1948³² and the Velvet Revolution in 1989.

The process of cleaning the fund fulfils three essential functions. The library is a collective memory of society and forms the basic information structure with which the community can work. However, this collective memory is never an immutable objective structure but always has an interpretative role. Such as the stock libraries offer, such can be the reading of the national past. Secondly, libraries are educational and formative institutions, so they are not just about some abstract idea but, above all, about educating new citizens of a given system. Thirdly, the purging of the collection, however fundamentally a negative phenomenon, creates space for its restructuring and replenishment

²⁹ Kubiček, J. (2019). *Dějiny veřejných lidových knihoven v českých zemích*. Brno: Moravská zemská knihovna.

³⁰ Kubiček, J. (2019). *Dějiny veřejných lidových knihoven v českých zemích*. Brno: Moravská zemská knihovna. & Večeřová, P. (2017). Československé knihovnictví v letech 1939–1959: Vybrané problémy historického vývoje. *Knihovna*, 28/2, pp. 20–36.

³¹ Passerini, L. (2017). *Memory and totalitarianism*. New York: Routledge. & Finigan, T. (2011). “Into the Memory Hole”: Totalitarianism and Mal d’Archive in Nineteen Eighty-Four and *The Handmaid’s Tale*. *Science Fiction Studies*, 38/3, pp. 435–459.

³² Šámal, P. (2009). *Soustružníci lidských duší: Lidové knihovny a jejich cenzura na počátku padesátých let 20. Století (s edicí seznamů zakázaných knih)*. Praha: Academia.

in times of revolutions in the form of radical reconstruction and transformation.³³

In the Czechoslovak environment, this purging of the holdings had several phases. It resulted in the removal of mainly German and anti-communist literature, with the exact content of the second revised component changing over time. At the same time, it must be said that in contrast to the Protectorate, we can see a much more chaotic and eclectic management of the whole process, which has become considerably more disparate and inconsistent over time.³⁴

The inclination towards the workers is evident in two dimensions – the first is that the library industry in 1948 was in a deep crisis. There need to be more premises where a library can be run; unsuitable conditions hinder the operation of the various functions of libraries and damage those books that are still part of the collection. There need to be more books, and the revisions make the library collection even more impoverished. There is a staffing crisis; librarianship in the first republic is civic librarianship, often based on freedom and voluntarism; librarians usually have only courses, rarely a year's systematic training.³⁵ However, a totalitarian system cannot build on such a structure of librarians, so we are witnessing a generational and ideological transformation of the whole concept of the functioning of libraries, leading to the successful and clear professionalisation of the entire sector and its feminisation. This process needs to be more precisely described in the Czech literature. But it is evident, and its form is linked precisely to the operation of professionalisation on the one hand and the significantly increasing employment of women.

Professionalisation has several effects on the anthropology of the library institution. The first is improving the services' quality, their expansion and deepening. Librarianship and information studies is a university discipline,³⁶ and the fact that professionals carry it out is universally positive, just as doctors or teachers. At the same time, however, we must see that professionalisation is linked to the dependence on wages, which in Czechoslovakia after 1948 led to a clear disciplining of the library environment. The economic model of disciplining is attractive. On the one hand, it brings undeniable benefits for librarians, but at the same time, it reduces autonomy. This is also linked to another critical factor: hierarchisation -

³³ Wertsch, J. (2008). The narrative organization of collective memory. *Ethos*, 36/1, pp. 120–135.

³⁴ Šámal, P. (2009). *Soustružníci lidských duší: Lidové knihovny a jejich cenzura na počátku padesátých let 20. Století (s edicí seznamů zakázaných knih)*. Praha: Academia.

³⁵ Večeřová, P. (2017). Československé knihovnictví v letech 1939–1959: Vybrané problémy historického vývoje. *Knihovna*, 28/2, pp. 20–36.

³⁶ Bawden, D., & Robinson, L. (2015). *Introduction to information science*. London: Facet Publishing.

librarianship is no longer a locally anchored institution that can adapt to the local community's needs but is clearly structured and centrally managed.

Legislative norms following the 1948 Act, especially the *Directive on establishing a unified network of folk libraries in Czech regions*³⁷ from the end of 1950. This discipline will be linked to the hierarchical organisation of libraries. Libraries gain a clear, organised structure, methodological guidance and the possibility of central management. The position of the district libraries or even the National Library is fundamentally transformed; it becomes the main controlling element of the entire library system and still retains this role. Crucially, looking at the First mentioned above Library Congress of the summer of 1950, it is clear that this ambition has supported the librarians, or at least those attending the Congress. This transformation marks the opening of the way to the massification of reading policy. At the same time represents a particular breakthrough in the development of libraries as an institution in our territory. Paradoxically, a greater one than the one brought about by the second (in fact, third) Library Law (*Law No. 53/1959 on the Unified Library System*) of 1959 petrified the social and intentional transformations already made.

Massification and professionalisation also bring an anthropological shift – the aim is to form a new person as a member of the masses, a conforming member of a specific community, sharing values, social ethos and cultural experience. The competition for the *Fucik badge*, which was introduced in 1949,³⁸ is an example of this value transformation. The reader was presented with a set canon of books (and films) to read and make an orthodox interpretation of them. The competition did not track the individuals' partial interpretive abilities but their ability to demonstrate that they were members of a new social community with the same values. Reading and further education in libraries shape a unique human being, whose structure these institutions are to play an important part. According to Jaroslav Kuba, the library's free selection should include "the writings that we care most about reading: socialist fiction, edifying works, current reading, state political literature."³⁹

The basic idea is the same as in the First Republic. Changing the mindset of the whole society and transforming it into a new social order through schools would take much work. We need to use the infrastructure of libraries, which will be more efficient, faster and more amenable for this purpose. This assumption has been confirmed but is only possible with the professionalisation above of librarianship.

³⁷ *Directive on establishing a unified network of folk libraries in Czech regions, 1950. In: Collection of circulars for the KNV. Prague, Ministry of the Interior, 21 December 1950.*

³⁸ Šámal, P. (2009). *Soustružníci lidských duší: Lidové knihovny a jejich cenzura na počátku padesátých let 20. Století (s edicí seznamů zakázaných knih.* Praha: Academia.

³⁹ Kuba, J. (1949). Volný výběr v lidových knihovnách. *Knihovna*, 4/1, pp. 8–12.

The mass work with the reader is manifested in the attempt to reach out to all inhabitants of Czechoslovakia across age and demographic characteristics. For a totalitarian regime, the centralisation of institutions and the possibility of gaining control over the population through them is essential. In the case of libraries, it is not a question of transforming external structures of behaviour, a role played by the police, the army and other armed forces of the state, but of transforming internally, of educating to a particular worldview that the whole sociality was shared. The situation at the beginning of the 1950s seems evident in this layout. A working-class will be moulded through libraries, and each formation into a new person. The bourgeois class then finds itself outside the educational interest or structure of library services because it has to be fought.⁴⁰

However, massification is also manifested in the methods used, which no longer follow individuals' vital interests and preferences from whom it would be desirable to profile intellectual humanist personalities. Still, the firms aim to unify entire groups – all events for readers and all educational activities have a group character. Working with the individual is a social intervention to bring the "stray sheep" into the unified fold. This is also the source of the strong emphasis on statistical reporting of different activities – quantity implies quality.

Socialist librarianship, however, looks at the new person's level as a homogeneous group and realises that a particular component of lifelong learning or professional development needs to be reflected. Typical of this period is the establishment of factory libraries or the building up of the professional part of the collection in ordinary people's libraries to benefit the development of a particular population.⁴¹ We find all sorts of actions, such as reading to farmers in the fields, recommending books to workers entering factories, etc. Such systematic care should result in a worker who can perform all his tasks.⁴² Man is treated in a template-like manner, almost like a machine gradually improving through books. Here, too, we see a certain level of reporting that focuses more on how many books a particular worker borrows from the factory library (how active he is) than on the level of his reflection or ability to translate the knowledge gained into practice. *"In addition to this, every librarian must keep a record of registered readers and borrowings*

⁴⁰ Holzbachová, I. (1985). Škola" Annales" a marxismus. *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. B, Řada filozofická, 34/B32*, pp. 15–26. & Kozlovskij, V. J. (1973). Vzájemný vztah mezi marxistickou filosofií, vědeckým komunismem a sociologií. *Sociologický Časopis/Czech Sociological Review, 9/5*, pp. 451–458.

⁴¹ Svobodová, M. (1953). Literatura pomáhá přesvědčovat a získávat pro hornictví. *Čtenář, 5/4*, pp. 112–115. & Husák, J. (1952). Zkušenosti z našich knižních výstav. *Čtenář, 4/2*, pp. 67–68.

⁴² Novotný, F. (1960). Lidové knihovny, územní změny a zákon. *Čtenář, 12/10*, pp. 1710–173

and a record of library activity, which he records in a statistical journal,"⁴³ says Šolcová.

Socialist librarianship puts a different image of the man before us than librarianship in the Protectorate (the fun-loving worker without cultural ambitions) or the First Republic (the autonomous humanist, educated citizen). The focus is on the human being as part of the working class sharing Marxist-Leninist values, a docile human being, understanding himself as part of a higher well-organised order. Libraries are there to support the building of such a class and, at the same time, to help shape the working class as one equipped with sufficient knowledge to achieve progress.

This discourse is carried along by the specific characteristic of a totalitarian society, namely selective collective memory with only one permissible interpretation, the attempt to homogenise society and reduce the differences between its members.⁴⁴ As gradually professionalising institutions, Libraries certainly played a positive service in many ways, whether in the development of reading, the promotion of entertainment or leisure education. Still, they became part of indoctrination from the late 1940s onwards.⁴⁵

After several fund revisions, they acted as an information filter and a tool for constructing heuristically available experiences. This model, well described in social psychology, is fundamental to the functioning of these institutions. People often agree that the regime did not inform, did not tell the truth, and was not credible. But this may not be decisive in influencing people's behaviour and thinking. It is the structure, the thematic composition, and the internal construction of the documents that can be encountered at all.⁴⁶ These form the basic attitudinal system that influences the behaviour (along with social control) of individual members of society. In this respect, libraries were an essential tool of a totalitarian government from the revolution to the normalisation period.

This control over the availability of information can be seen in other areas, whether it is the effort to prevent the distribution of printed materials (the Kamion action⁴⁷). Another example was establishing a particular

⁴³ Šolcová, S. (1956). O nejdůležitějších seznamech. *Čtenář*, 8/5, p. 174.

⁴⁴ Mahon, S. M. B. (2001). *The politics of nationalism under communism in Bulgaria. Myths, memories, and minorities*. London: University of London.

⁴⁵ Černý, M. (2018). Vybrané kapitoly z masové práce se čtenářem: Sociálně-pedagogický experiment socialistického knihovnictví. *ProInflow*, 11/1, pp. 57-69.

⁴⁶ Roy, M. M., Christenfeld, N. J., & McKenzie, C. R. (2005). Underestimating the duration of future events: Memory incorrectly used or memory bias?. *Psychological bulletin*, 131/5, pp. 738–756.

⁴⁷ Šiklová, J. (2001). Ještě jednou o „kamionu": Jak to bylo s „Filipem". *Literární noviny* 12/23, p. 3. <http://archiv.ucl.cas.cz/index.php?path=LitNIII/12.2001/23>. & Mlynárik, J. (2001). Ještě

information centre on the Soviet model – the *Central Office of Scientific, Technical and Economic Information*, which conveyed all professional information in a centralised controlled form to the professional public.⁴⁸

Conclusion

The study shows that the assumptions of Arendt or Sokol can be applied to the library as an institution.⁴⁹ The library profiles itself as an educational institution in the studied period. Its practices differ from those of the school and rely primarily on the mediation of books, documents and other sources of information. This mediation is not a passive activity but has a fundamental impact on the meaning and concept of the library.

In both periods analysed (1918–1939 and 1948–1968), we can emphasise forming a new human, a state citizen with a clear ideological profile. While the first republic focuses on individual development and education, the good citizen is an individually profiled humanistic educator and democrat. In the case of the communist totalitarian system, there is an apparent inclination towards education for the masses and scientific-atheistic value beliefs.

The individuality-collectivity ratio constitutes one of the fundamental distinguishing features between the two anthropological conceptions. The second crucial polarising value is hierarchisation. While the First Republican librarianship is based on the idea of the autonomous democrat, the communist model works with the individual as a member of a well-hierarchical unit. The third distinguishing feature is the approach to heterogeneity. On the one hand, there is an emphasis on diversity, adapting to conditions and preferences, including (at least declared) multiculturalism as a necessary value for the functioning of society, so in the case of the communist model, we see a clear emphasis on homogeneity as a key and desired value for libraries to emphasise.

These value ideals were then naturally reflected in how libraries operate, in specific projects and concepts for their development and functioning. We see it as essential to understanding individual phenomena in the development of libraries as institutions in isolation from this value ethos. The professionalisation of librarianship, its feminisation or the change

jednou o "kamionu": Akce „Delta” a fyzlové. *Literární noviny*, 12/23, p. 3. <http://archiv.ucl.cas.cz/index.php?path=LitNIII/12.2001/23>.

⁴⁸ Horváth, D. (2013). Vývoj informační základny v ČR. *Ikaros*, 17/5.

⁴⁹ Byrne, A. (2015). Institutional memory and memory institutions. *The Australian Library Journal*, 64/4, 259–269. & Hjørland, B. (2000). Documents, memory institutions and information science. *Journal of Documentation*, 56/1, pp. 27–41.

in the collection structure cannot be understood as isolated activities – it is a manifestation of the anthropology of library institutions.

Acknowledgement

I want to thank my students who have been working on libraries during the communist totalitarianism and the First Republic, and without their work with archival and other materials, this study would not have been possible. Namely, I would like to thank Karolína Kurečková, Michaela Kašíková, Marina Valášková, Magdalena Učňová, Sona Pin, Zuzana Chlupová, Jana Pekárková and Petr Kovář.

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