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**Special Issue:** Libraries in Times of Crisis

**Guest Editors:** Steven Witt and Kerry Smith

## Aims and Scope

IFLA Journal is an international journal publishing peer reviewed articles on library and information services and the social, political and economic issues that impact access to information through libraries. The Journal publishes research, case studies and essays that reflect the broad spectrum of the profession internationally. To submit an article to IFLA Journal please visit: journals.sagepub.com/home/ifl

# Libraries in times of crisis

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As 2019 begins, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) is working to implement a bold program to provide a vision for librarianship and information professions globally through an ongoing series of workshops, meetings, and research activities aimed at helping to articulate future aspirations and challenges. Concurrently, IFLA is fully engaged in supporting the UN2030 Goals to ensure that the information access, educational structures, and social role of libraries is both integrated into solutions for the world's pressing problems and available to the people, societies, and cultures served by the collections, services, and leadership of the library community. As IFLA seeks to boldly secure the future of libraries in society, IFLA Journal is taking an historical view of the symbolic, practical, and wider social role of libraries in periods of crisis. Working with the IFLA Library History Special Interest Group, this issue builds upon past scholarship, meetings, and fora dedicated to important pursuit of library and information history as a means to understand both the past and the future of libraries as they evolve to serve contemporary and future society. Specifically, papers in this issue build upon the Library History SIG's 2017 program in Wroclaw, Poland. Participants in this program were invited to expand upon their scholarship to further pursue the theme of: Libraries in Times of Crisis.

The library has always been an institution that reflects societal trends and cultural practices. During times of crisis, the collections, services, and cultural activities facilitated by libraries and librarians often take on new meaning as people re-negotiate national, cultural, and personal identity amidst disruptive forces that range from war, revolution, displacement, natural disaster, and economic turmoil. Social tumult causes books and reading culture, public spaces for discourse, cultural heritage, and memory to become

more evidently transformative. Crisis may add value to access to collections once thought secure. Alternatively, collections, libraries, and cultural institutions may become sites of contention as cultures negotiate the meaning, value, and utility of certain types of knowledge and ideas. Social crisis often exposes areas of contention, providing both opportunity and peril to libraries as they seek to support the people and societies they serve. As Rayward notes, both "social continuity and social change are dependent on and supported by" the information infrastructure provided by organizations such as libraries (Rayward and Jenkins, 2007, p. 362). This special issue seeks to examine historically the manner by which the information infrastructure of libraries has contributed to social change in the past. As the profession looks to the future, the historic role of information and information organizations as agents during challenging times needs to be considered as future crises and problems are imagined and addressed.

The five articles in this special issue represent the contemporary and longer term impacts of social crisis to reflect on the role of information, cultural transmission, and the institution of libraries within periods of social and political upheaval. Buenrostro and Cabbab's work on transitional justice in the Philippines documents the role libraries play as "memory activists" as a nation heals in the wave of years of martial law (Buenrostro and Cabbab, 2019). Smart provides another view of memory and justice in a work that asserts the role of oral transmission of culture and knowledge amidst the transatlantic slave trade (Smart, 2019). Both of these works speak to the

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need for memory institutions such as libraries to contribute to seeking justice and providing mechanisms for reconciliation.

The 20th Century history of Eastern Europe plays a prominent role in three articles that situate libraries in three periods of social change and crisis: the aftermath of World War II, the Cold War, and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Each of these papers documents the work of librarians and libraries in periods of great social change and political experimentation. Sroka shows the power of international library networks to help rebuild libraries destroyed by war, documenting the manner by which civil society groups, organizations such as the ALA, and individual libraries worked to replenish book collections that were devastated during World War II (2019). Following this period, Serbanuta provides a compelling narrative on the development of a national public library system in Romania amidst authoritarian governance and harsh controls on information dissemination (2019). The transition from socialism toward liberal democracy is presented by Sabolovic-Krajinaitle in a paper that describes the complexity of transforming a public library system after civil war (2019).

These papers document the resilience of the institution of libraries amidst difficult social conditions. At the same time, they provide compelling evidence of the role of transnational collaboration within the development of library systems coping with circumstances that challenge the ability to maintain collections, preserve cultural heritage, and make information accessible.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

## Funding

## References

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# Libraries and their role in transitional justice in the Philippines

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## Abstract

The stories of the University Library of the University of the Philippines Diliman, Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, and Bantayog ng mga Bayani (Monument to the Heroes), the libraries that survived during and after the martial law years in the Philippines under the late strongman President Ferdinand Marcos, are told as part of the country's direction towards transitional justice. The authors argue that the Philippines is experiencing an 'extended' transition and that libraries play an important role as memory activists. The narratives and experiences of the librarians and staff show various memory work, reconciliation activities, redress practices, and collaborations.

## Introduction

> "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting"
>
> Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*

Libraries are responsible for the preservation of both community and national memory, without which the understanding of our past would be incomplete (Taylor, 1995). Along with other memory institutions such as archives and museums, libraries collect traces of the past and devise ways to communicate memory in order to avoid collective amnesia (Lloyd, 2007; Manzŭch, 2009). Aside from situating the libraries in the realm of memory work and heritage preservation, progressive issues concerning social justice and human rights are increasingly becoming the focal points of librarianship (Chaparro-Univazo, 2007; Jaeger et al, 2016; Morrone, 2014; Samek, 2005, 2007). Libraries now play an important role in social movements in addressing societal inequality, recognizing the marginalized sectors, and responding to the call of justice.

Despite the existing recognition and performance of the libraries' agenda as memory institutions and partners of social movements, little specific work has been done in the Philippines in terms of investigating how libraries perform these roles – or rather the amalgamation of these roles leading to memory activism. While some studies have shown the significance of libraries and archives in the Philippines in preserving local memory and history as well as intangible cultural heritage (Buenrostro, 2010; Perez and Templanza, 2012; Villanueva, 2016; Yap and Barsaga, 2018), there is still a lack of research that demonstrates how libraries in the Philippines engage in activism and remembrance of contested pasts. This gap is a cause for interest and concern given that many librarians are struggling against the traditional notion of librarianship being neutral and apolitical (Morrone,

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2014). Moreover, this investigation is particularly important for societies, such as the Philippines, which are still undergoing post-conflict resolution and democratic transition. To address this gap, we use the cases of three institutions that have played important roles in the preservation and documentation of the events and effects of the past dictatorial government on the people – the University Library of the University of the Philippines (UP) Diliman, Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, and *Bantayog ng mga Bayani* (Monument to the Heroes). We argue that libraries have a capability to utilize memories not only to combat collective forgetting and historical revisionism, but also to call for and launch collective actions that will help establish truth and reconciliation, initiate collective healing, and rectify (and learn from) past mistakes. Thus, this study links memory studies and social movement work, and further strengthens the role of libraries as memory activists in times of transition.

### Libraries as spaces of memory activism

There have been socially responsible library initiatives launched by library organizations and progressive groups of library workers and stakeholders. The American Library Association (ALA) recognizes the duties of libraries in upholding democracy and promoting equal access to information. ALA underscores diversity, intellectual freedom, public good, and social responsibility as some of the core values of librarianship that should be the foundations of library practice and services (American Library Association, 2004). Sharing the same values and advocacy, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) formed a Social Responsibilities Discussion Group and Freedom of Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE) Advisory Committee to address pressing issues related to social justice, human rights, literacy, access to information, and promotion of cultures across the globe (Kagan, 2005). In relation to the promotion of literacy, culture, and equitable access to information, former IFLA President Alex Byrne argues that censorship and other forms of information restrictions fail to see the needs of the people, and "in disempowering many, they promote the advantage of a few" (Byrne, 2004: 146).

Libraries are therefore encouraged to work with different members of the community and organizations to serve the underserved and examine the critical issues of society. This participatory approach can bring about "desired political and social transformations" (Flinn, 2011: 4). One initiative is the Radical Reference (RR) project. Founded in New York in 2004, RR has been providing online information and reference services to activists, journalists, and researchers as they reject the "neutral stance and the commercialization of data and information" (Morrone and Friedman, 2009: 372). There have also been efforts to meet the diverse needs of the different sectors of society. The American Library Association Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Roundtable came up with a set of guidelines and toolkit that can be used by libraries in serving the GLBT communities (ALA GLBRT, 2016). There are also library and information programs designed for people who have limited access to information such as those in women's correctional facilities in Canada (Lang and Sacuta, 2014), and grassroots communities in Brooklyn (Fair, 2014). Libraries have also become meeting places where people can share and develop radical ideas for the anarchist movements in North America, Europe, South America, and Australasia (Moran, 2014), and dependable institutions where political and demonstration materials are archived just like in the Quebec Public Interest Research Group (Teetaert, 2014).

Indeed, libraries are vital players and partners of social movements. Moreover, the collective memory that the libraries preserve and communicate are important in the continuation of various public actions and advocacy. Social movements do not only rely on and respond to current circumstances, but they significantly depend on past events, experiences, and specific local and national contexts (Abăseacă, 2018). Memory activism covers the selection of objects of memory and construction of different spaces of memorialization that will influence public discussion and political discourse (Gutman, 2017; Holc, 2012). As libraries and other allied memory institutions collect and preserve evidence such as human rights-related records, the memories and information contained in these materials are important for historical accountability, resolution of cases, confrontation of the past state-sponsored crimes, and building of new democratic governments (Montgomery, 2004). Memory work also operates as counter-memory that challenges normative, yet limited representations of marginalized groups (Besley, 2016). Through these exchanges of public and personal memories, social and political engagement materializes where proper acknowledgment and political redress are sought (Nikro and Hegasy, 2017). This engagement transforms the libraries into living witnesses and testimonies of the people's fight and struggle, especially during political and social transitions.

## The Philippines and its "extended" transition

Transitional justice is "the attempt to deal with past violence in societies undergoing or attempting some form of political transition" (Bell, 2008: 7). It also involves retribution or punishment (Hampton, 1992, cited in Murphy, 2015), and setting the right standards for dealing with past atrocities and trauma (Rush, 2013). This transition commonly takes place in societies that experienced dictatorship. In the Philippines, it was on 23 September 1972 that the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos publicly declared martial law. Placing the country under martial rule was justified by the Marcos Government as its constitutional response to the prevailing disturbances and nationwide unrest brought about by threats to the country's security, outbreak of communism, instability in Mindanao, series of demonstrations and riots, and the alleged ambush of the then Defense Secretary Juan Ponce Enrile (Brillantes, 1987). However, the dictatorial government left the country with foreign debts amounting to US$26bn alongside the thousands of human rights violations (Bello et al., 2004; McCoy, 2001). Approximately 70,000 people were imprisoned, 34,000 were tortured, and 3240 were killed during this period (McCoy, 2001). Different kinds of physical and psychological tortures were inflicted on the victims in undisclosed detention centers or safe houses. Some of these included electric shock, beating, water cure, Russian roulette, sexual assaults such as rape, and other forms of psychological and mental tortures (Hapal, 2016; Robles, 2016).

On 22–25 February 1986, the EDSA People Power Revolution overthrew Marcos, and became the link to the transitionary government led by Corazon "Cory" Aquino, the widow of the assassinated Senator Benigno Aquino Jr, Marcos' staunchest opponent. While some consider her government as a redeemer, a number of scholars and political analysts also see the transitionary government as a "restorationist" of elite democracy where the old oligarchs were brought back to power, and those who embezzled the country's wealth and committed human rights violations were never prosecuted (Anderson, 1988; Bello et al, 2004; Claudio, 2013; Curaming and Claudio, 2010; David, 1996).

In his study on truth commissions, Christie (2000) revealed that the Philippines was one of the few countries that did not successfully complete the report, despite the Government's initiative to transition to a democratic regime. The Commission on Human Rights (CHR) was created in 1988 to investigate the past violations but its power is limited to making recommendations for prosecution and not to

prosecute any party (Wahyudi, 2014). Another agency, the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) was established to investigate and recover the ill-gotten wealth of the Marcos family and its cronies. Until now, the PCGG has not fully completed its task, and as of 2015 there were still civil cases filed against 19 parties to recover illegal assets worth PHP 32bn (Lustre, 2016).

To summarize, many years have passed since the Philippines transitioned to democracy, yet reparations and investigations of the past wrongdoings are still incomplete. Human rights violations are still being committed under the succeeding administrations (Human Rights Watch, 2018; Karapatan, 2010, 2015, 2017; Karapatan and TFDP, 1997; Kessler, 1989), and the battle cry, *nunca mas* or "never again", which is supposed to be a unifying theme in contesting dictatorial rule does not completely resonate with the memories and views of all Filipinos (Claudio, 2010).

Given this context, we argue that the Philippines is undertaking an "extended transition" – we accept the other scholars' interpretation of the restored democracy being elite and imperfect, and at the same time recognize the enduring struggle of the people in giving justice to the victims of the previous regime's wrongdoings and extending this advocacy for the subsequent regimes beset by the same old issues and problems. When transitional justice either fails or moves slowly, the need for credible evidence surfaces even more than ever. Being more than repositories of evidence, how do libraries perform as spaces for memory activism, reconciliation activities, and redress practices to advance transitional justice?

## Methods

This paper employs qualitative interviewing, which involves open-ended questions. In open-ended interviews, Noaks and Wincup (2004) observe that participants have the "freedom to talk and ascribe meanings"(cited in Silverman, 2006: 110). As the participants can spontaneously share their personal perspectives, involvements, and experiences with their institutions during and after the martial law period, the interview outputs increase the thoroughness of the information to be presented in each of the three cases. We interviewed librarians and staff, four from the University Library of UP Diliman, one from the Task Force Detainees, and two from the *Bantayog ng mga Bayani*. The number of participants varies based on their availability and concurrence to be interviewed. There may be other libraries or private collections that likewise existed to keep records and memorabilia

related to this regime, but for the confines of this paper, we focus on these three key institutions that have the largest collections. The participants also gave us permission to include and quote them in our study. For ethical considerations, we informed them of the possible use of the information to be gathered from our interviews with them. This approach of identifying the participants gives them the authority over their data and empowers them as active contributors in the research process (Kaiser, 2009). In addition to the interviews, we also made use of and cited the information posted in their official websites and social media accounts.

## The Philippine libraries and the "extended" path to transitional justice

The following libraries operate as memory spaces and repositories of evidence during and after the martial law years. These libraries did what they had to do because of the shared values of librarians – to provide materials for informational, historical, and legal inquiries. They did not collect materials or document the atrocities and violence for the purpose only of that time (during martial law), but for the future (now and in the succeeding years). This is a way of ensuring that when there is no longer dictatorship, these materials will be used for the transition and for giving justice to those who suffered in the past. These materials will also be reminders to not commit the same mistakes again in the present and future.

### The University Library, University of the Philippines Diliman

The University Library, the main library of which is situated at the Gonzalez Hall of the University of the Philippines Diliman, holds as its mission to "provide library users the best possible access to information in support of instruction, research and extension; and the best possible information services . . . " (University of the Philippines Library, n.d.c). In further articulating this mission through functions, the University Library vows to make continuing efforts in providing both physical and virtual learning spaces to support individual and collaborative learning as well as creative and critical thinking; enhancing information literacy and research skills through library instruction programs; collecting, organizing, and providing access to information resources in support of teaching, research, creative work, and extension work; modernizing library functions and services, with emphasis on new information technologies; and ensuring the protection and longevity of the University Library's

resources through effective archiving and digitization programs (University of the Philippines Library, n.d.d). According to recent data, the University Library houses about 1,180,214 book and non-book titles and 18,534 serial titles spread throughout the Main Library sections and 26 college and unit libraries (University of the Philippines Library, n.d.b). The University Library has been serving the academic community and the public for many years now; users range from faculty, students, and staff of the university to outside local and foreign researchers and media personnel. Aside from providing information services, it also helped in saving historical materials especially *Filipiniana*.

The library was established in 1922 with Miss Mary Polk as the first university librarian (University of the Philippines Library, n.d.a). After World War II, Professor Gabriel A. Bernardo, the doyen of Philippine librarianship, initiated the rehabilitation and rebuilding of the university library or the main library when the distressed campus transferred from Padre Faura to Diliman Quezon City in 1951 (Vallejo, 2007). During martial law, the University Library was not exempt from the steely eye of the Marcos Government. One of the reasons is that the University of the Philippines was and is still known to be a spawning ground for political activists and militant students and professors. Despite the censorship and punishments meted out to those in possession of subversive materials, the library audaciously managed to keep and preserve radical papers coming from the underground and progressive groups. While the student dormitories and faculty alcoves were being raided, the library continued its services and kept the books and other reading materials that were considered rebellious. Examples of subversive books that were banned by the government were Karl Marx's *Das Kapital*, Quotations from Chairman Mao- Tse-Tung (aka *The Little Red Book*), and *Philippine Society and Revolution* by Amado Guerrero, nom de guerre of Jose Maria Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines (RB Faderon and VVM Aguirre, 2016, personal communication). In addition, Clinton L Rossiter's *Marxism: The View from America*, and other books about Communism and Marxism were being confiscated and at times burned in military camps (SM Arlante, 2015, personal communication). Salvacion Arlante, who was then the head of Reader Services, recounted that they had to photocopy some of these books to ensure that there would be enough access copies for student leaders.

A lot of subversive materials were brought home by professors and activists, flushed down the toilet or hurriedly buried in the ground. Some of these were

clandestinely left on library tables or anonymously sent by mail. Several librarians would go out of their way to collect these materials even if they were in the trash. They would then clean them and keep them in the library. Some librarians were also sent to different anti-government demonstrations and teach-ins to collect *polyetos* or various handbills, leaflets, and pamphlets from different progressive and underground groups. The librarians gathered them and kept them in the Rare Book Section without any identifiers to avoid military scrutiny and arrest. These were all under the directive of the then University Librarian, Marina Dayrit (RY Tarlit, 2016, personal communication).

The library had evolved into a safe haven for the underground, anti-government publications and other unpublished materials such as leaflets, brochures, speeches, and writings. These documents now constitute the *Philippine Radical Papers*, which were preserved and hidden from the public eye for more than 30 years.

In 1996, a decade after the end of the Marcos regime, the Philippine Radical Papers gained the attention of foreign scholars. Cornell University and the University of Wisconsin financed a joint collaborative project with the University of the Philippines to process and microfilm the collection. A team of librarians from the University of the Philippines also created a subject guide to the collection and published it in 1998 (Lee, 1998). The Philippine Radical Papers are now with the University Library's Special Collections and are available for use. The efforts did not stop there. Years later, in 2002, through the endowment of Bayan Muna partylist representative Satur Ocampo, a well-known activist and ex-political detainee during the Marcos regime, the University Library launched its Human Rights Reading Room. The reading room makes the papers and memorabilia of the Society of Ex-Detainees Against Arrest (SELDA)[1] available to faculty, students, and researchers for various human rights activities and studies.

In 2012, SELDA and Karapatan or the Alliance for the Advancement of People's Rights,[2] together with the University Library, mounted an exhibit to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the declaration of martial law. The commemoration, attended by various stakeholders of the university together with outside guests, featured martial law memorabilia, artworks, and poetry from political prisoners and activists. Of note were the exhibition of the typewriter of Joe Burgos (journalist and publisher of *We Forum,* an alternative newspaper during the martial law years), and *polyetos* made by the striking workers of Tanduay Distillery. These memorabilia symbolically illustrated the pockets of resistance against the regime's oppression of press freedom and exploitation of the working class.

In keeping with its continuing commitment to collect information resources, the University Library has acquired books not only from purchase but also from donations. Some notable donations through the years reflect the political and social consciousness of the university like *Paalam Cory: An ABS-CBN Commemorative Special*, *Corazon C. Aquino 1933–2009: Five Days of Love and Hope* and *Cory Magic: Her Peoples' Stories*, books about the late former President Corazon Aquino donated by Benjamin R Lopez, Vice President for Corporate Communications of First Philippine Holdings Corporation, in 2012; *A Thousand Little Deaths: Growing up under Martial Law in the Philippines* by Vicky Pinpin-Feinstein, a memoir of her time as a political prisoner during martial law, donated by her sister Dr Cynthia Daniel in 2013; copies of *Not On Our Watch: Martial Law Really Happened. We Were There*, a compilation of stories on martial law by 14 student leaders and anti-Marcos activists who were members of the College Editors Guild of the Philippines (CEGP), donated by the League of Editors for a Democratic Society–College Editors Guild of the Philippines 1969–1972 (LEADS CEGP6972 Inc.) through Professor Ramona Flores in 2012 (UP Library Bulletin Online, n.d.).

Recently, the *Bulwagan ng Dangal* University Heritage Museum, located at the basement of the University Library, played host to "Super Robot – Suffer Reboot", an exhibit by Professor Toym Imao of the UP College of Fine Arts, from 11 May to 11 July 2018. The 1970s-heavy exhibition was a collection of nearly a decade's work of the artist with a curious mix of robots, dictators, and martial law (Bulwagan ng Dangal, 2018). This exhibition was mounted because, according to the artist, these are times of uncertainty and creeping authoritarianism with history repeating itself 30 years after the Marcos dictatorship. It is the artist's attempt to "introduce a parallel level of discourse of dissent and resistance" (Imao, 2018).

Hand in hand with all these and other various collaborators, the University Library addresses the challenge of safekeeping the accounts of events, evidences, and artifacts of the past. They have also continued addressing the challenge of communicating memories as well as engaging the current generation in its discussion.

## Task Force Detainees of the Philippines

In 1974, two years after the declaration of martial law, the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (TFDP)

was formed by the Association of Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) with the primary goal of assisting victims of the oppressive regime. During the martial law years, it was difficult for the victims to go directly to the police to look for their missing relatives. They usually sought help from the church which acted as a liaison between the state and the victims.

According to Sunshine Serrano, TFDP Museum of Courage and Resistance part time curator, and Research, Documentation and Information Program staff, the TFDP initially had two separate groups: Task Force Detainees and Task Force Documentation. Task Force Detainees conducted jail visits and gave assistance to families of detainees while Task Force Documentation documented the human rights violations done by the state. Later, the two merged and continued to be the mission partner of AMRSP (S Serrano, 2017, personal communication). TFDP was first headed by Fr Mel Brady and Sr Mariani Dimaranan, who was also an ex-political detainee. Along with their fellow priests and nuns, TFDP provided moral, spiritual, and material support to the political prisoners and their families, documented their situation and helped them to have a fair trial and a speedy release though the assistance of the Free Legal Assistance Group (FLAG) lawyers and other concerned groups (Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, 2010). Through all the years of documenting human rights violations, TFDP also helped establish other human rights organizations such as the Families of Involuntary Disappearance (FIND), Society of Ex-Detainees Against Arrest (SELDA), KAPATID (the Filipino term for sibling), an organization of families of political prisoners, and Mothers and Relatives Against Tyranny and Oppression (MARTYR) (Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, 2009). At present, the TFDP is working with several national and international organizations that have the same advocacy on human rights, such as the Philippine Commission on Human Rights and Amnesty International (S Serrano, 2017, personal communication).

In documenting the human rights violations committed by the state, TFDP focuses on the core elements of human rights; then they reach out to the victims and provide paralegal services. Serrano made it clear that even though their organization's name connotes more "political detainees", their thrust extends to human rights work (S Serrano, 2017, personal communication). As part of these human rights thrusts, TFDP built its museum in 1999 with the intent of educating and encouraging the public to assert their rights and understand the importance of freedoms that were lost during the years of dictatorial rule by President Marcos. The Museum of Courage and Resistance has a Documentation Section which holds thousands of recorded cases and photos of martial law victims. TFDP was able to keep all these documentations because, luckily, TFDP was never raided during Marcos' reign of terror. An attempt was made at the TFDP office, which was then located at the third floor of their former office building, but the nuns secured the accessways on the ground floor and foiled the raiding team. Because of this, it was their mother organization, the AMRSP, that was ransacked. Letters from parish priests containing accounts as relayed by members of their congregations were confiscated. These letters were part of the early efforts of Task Force Documentation and could have been part of their present collection (S Serrano, 2017, personal communication).

The museum also contains books and newspapers related to the martial law period as well as several mementos such as campaign posters, handwritten letters, and poems composed by some prisoners. There are also memorabilia such as prison shirts, pendants made of cow bones, and handicrafts that were produced by the detainees while inside the jail and were being sold to help support the financial and material needs of the prisoners and their families. Because of TFDP's reputation of being one of the first human rights organizations in the Philippines and its active engagement in human rights activities, the museum has received donations from families, ex-political detainees, human rights advocates, and photojournalists. TFDP therefore has acquired a rich collection of primary sources from these donations, affiliates, and from their own research and documentation projects. (S Serrano, 2017, personal communication).

The Human Rights Victims Claims Board (HRVCB) was formed and given the task of identifying beneficiaries when the Philippine Government started reparation processes (Doyo, 2015; Human Rights Victims' Claims Board, 2018). To aid the HRVCB to identify beneficiaries, the Philippine Government started documenting human rights violations during the martial law years via the Martial Law Files Project in 2014 (Frialde, 2014). Besides enlisting the help of lawyers and paralegals, they also referred to TFDP for supporting data. The TFDP had documented thousands of human rights violations cases and helped detainees and their families during the martial law years (Doyo, 2015).

TFDP's efforts do not stop with just the martial law years. Their human rights agenda continues to this day by documenting extra-judicial killings of the current administration's ongoing war on drugs. TFDP monitors the situation by compiling news articles and

documenting both state and non-state perpetrated cases, this due to the possibility of supposed state-perpetrated killings masquerading as otherwise. Of the 6000 reported cases (at the time of the interview), TFDP has only documented around 50 (S Serrano, 2017, personal communication). Quite recently, as a means to recapitulate their human rights agenda with the current administration, TFDP launched a campaign during the 45th commemoration of the declaration of martial law. The campaign, launched in a press conference last 19 September 2017, was dubbed "*Mamamayan Ayaw Sa Karahasan* (MASK)" (People against violent policies) and is meant to oppose President Rodrigo Duterte's violent policies and resist dictatorship. Sr Crescencia Lucero, SFIC, TFDP Chairperson, noted during the conference that they are:

> ...deeply concerned that as we remember the martial law atrocities in its 45th Anniversary, we now have a President who repeatedly expressed his obsession with declaring martial law under his term. We are saddened that we are again under an administration with violent policies and tyrannical ways of leadership. (Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, 2017)

At present TFDP's records are being digitized by the De La Salle University (DLSU) for posterity and future access. DLSU has already completed five batches of documents. (S Serrano, 2017, personal communication). TFDP's documentation is available for everyone, but the challenges they face in compiling these documents are quite different. TFDP must convince people involved, such as family members of victims, to step forward and talk to them about human rights incidents and then later serve as witnesses. Fully-documented cases are becoming few and far between due to apprehensions of people involved to provide witness accounts out of fear for their own lives. As such, TFDP staff themselves feel unsafe due to current circumstances and note that it is harder to document cases now compared to during the martial law era (S Serrano, 2017, personal communication).

### Bantayog ng mga Bayani

Bantayog ng mga Bayani Center or Monument to the Heroes, also known as the Bantayog Memorial Center (BMC), was founded after the EDSA Revolution in 1986 to give honor to the martyrs of martial law. The late Senator Jovito Salonga in 2009 explained in an interview that "Bantayog" is used to refer both to the monument and the organization behind it (Claudio, 2010: 38). The monument is a giant statue entitled "Inang Bayan" (Mother Philippines) with a black granite Wall of Remembrance with names of martial law martyrs and heroes (Bantayog ng mga Bayani – Remembering Martial Law Martyrs and Heroes, n.d.b). Researchers can acquire martial law information from Bantayog from three of their departments: (1) The Bantayog Research and Documentation Committee, (2) The Bantayog Museum, and (3) The Bantayog Library.

The Research and Documentation Committee is responsible for the preparation of the biographies and nomination of martyrs and heroes for inclusion in the Wall of Remembrance. The Research and Documentation Committee generates the majority of the records holdings of BMC in the form of case files and statements (C Panaligan-Manglinong, 2017, personal communication).

The Bantayog Museum displays memorabilia of the events, the resistance movement, and victims in the wake of martial law under Ferdinand Marcos. The Bantayog Museum also houses some original historical archival materials from this period such as newspaper clippings, posters, and photographs. It also displays a replica of a detention cell as described by former detainees who survived the regime.

The Bantayog Library intends to serve as a repository of library materials on the Philippine experience during the martial law period. It started out in June 2008 and with the help of volunteers, it opened its doors to the public on 24 February 2009. The library started off with borrowed, scanned, and photocopied books relating to martial law. There was then a call for donations and a lot of materials came from walk-in donors. The book holdings are comprised mostly of martial law books with the serials comprised of martial law and Marcos era newspapers and magazines such as *Malaya*, *We Forum* (1982–1984), *Who Magazine* (1982–1984), *Mr & Ms*, and *Veritas* to name a few. They also have pamphlets from martial law, updates from TFDP underground publications, and statements of individuals and anti-government organizations. To preserve and provide access to the collection, the library has started scanning brittle printed materials such as newspapers and case files, and their photocopies serve as access copies to protect the originals (S Ferdinez and C Panaligan-Manglinong, 2017, personal communication). The Bantayog Research and Documentation Committee and the Bantayog Library are intended to be consolidated into a bigger resource center that will house both their collections as well as the archival holdings of the museum (C Panaligan-Manglinong, 2017, personal communication).

There are administrative issues related to the Bantayog Library's goal of providing service to

researchers. At present, Sarah Ferdinez is the volunteer who is in charge of the continuation of the provision of library services. She is supported by on-the-job trainees rendering practicum hours for university credits. They have no full-time librarian and are relying on volunteers on top of the trainees, the acquisition of materials is dependent on donations from the public and concerned stakeholders, the organization of the collection is rather rough, and they lack a working OPAC. There is also emotional exhaustion on the part of volunteers who process materials due to secondary trauma. Ferdinez, for instance, related how one volunteer indexer in the Bantayog Library suddenly broke down in tears and started cursing while indexing an article about military atrocities. The article chronicled how a six-year-old girl was raped and killed, and how siblings were forced to have sex before being murdered. She said those were times they realized how fortunate we all are to be alive; these victims whose ordeals are chronicled in the literature were young and did not survive (S Ferdinez, 2017, personal communication).

Despite all these challenges, the Bantayog ng mga Bayani received the coveted Manuel L Quezon (MLQ) Gawad Parangal Most Outstanding Institution for 2017 last 12 October 2017. The MLQ Gawad Parangal Award is Quezon City's highest honor and is bestowed on individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to society (Bantayog ng mga Bayani, 2017). The citation, quite appropriately, read:

- For upholding justice and recognizing the heroic deeds during the martial law era;
- For immortalizing the memory of unsung heroes, so that they may serve as an inspiration to keep the flame of democracy alive in the hearts of everyone;
- For relentlessly educating and empowering the public on issues about freedom and guarding against historical revisionism;
- For proving that "the Filipino is worth living and dying for". (Bantayog ng mga Bayani, 2017)

Last 26 January 2018, Manuel C Lahoz's *Of Tyrants and Martyrs*, his political memoir, was launched at the Bantayog. On 24 February 2018, the 32nd anniversary of EDSA People Power, Ramces M Dili's *Bayani Lubid at ang dekada ng martial law*, a play about the lives of ordinary people who fell victim to the abuses of the police under the Marcos regime, was restaged at the same venue. Last 21 July 2018, #KAARA1, written and directed by Rommel Linatoc,

was also staged at the Bantayog (Bantayog ng mga Bayani, n.d.,a). These all support the observation of Claudio (2010), who points out that the "Bantayog represents the most concerted effort at public memorializing of resistance to the Marcos regime, making it a crucial lieu de mémoire [site of memory]" (Claudio, 2010: 36). Up to this day Bantayog maintains the Wall of Remembrance where names of heroes and martyrs are still etched on the black granite. They still serve as a point of convergence where one can conduct fora, hold exhibits, book launchings, stage plays, and concerts, etc. for the benefit of like-minded advocates or for those seeking answers to questions and looking for justice.

## Conclusion: The fight shall go on

The discussions above have illustrated how memory activism in libraries has been used for actions and advocacy, and in facilitating redress practices and transitional justice. The libraries have extended their agenda to continuously look for records detailing the lives of the martyrs, help the survivors to deal with trauma and obtain restitution, and document human rights violations committed not only during the martial law years but also in the succeeding administrations. The ideal transition coupled with peace, reparations, and reconciliation may be a long wait, but these memory institutions continuously reinforce the possibilities for a better future where people and government can jointly deal with the root of the abuses. The truth-seeking initiatives, narratives, and materials of evidence housed in these institutions intend to aid memory and help educate people as to exactly what transpired in the past with the hope of not letting these cruelties happen again.

## Notes

1. It was founded in 1984 by former political prisoners during the martial law period. For more information about SELDA, visit https://seldapilipinas.wordpress.com
2. Established in 1995, KARAPATAN is a non-governmental organization in the Philippines that advocates the protection of human rights. For more information visit http://www.karapatan.org

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# African oral tradition, cultural retentions and the transmission of knowledge in the West Indies

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## Abstract

For three centuries Africans were trafficked to slave for Europeans in the West Indies. Forcibly uprooted from their homes, they carried only recollections of a way of life as they faced an uncertain future while enduring gruelling conditions. Unversed in the enslavers' language and custom, their past was mentally retained and transmitted through oral expressions and cultural products. Yet, the history of libraries as repositories of knowledge gives credit to all newcomers except these Africans. This paper proposes the modern concept of a library supports African slaves' cultural retention and transmission of knowledge as important in the development of life in the West Indies.

## Background

Boromé (1970) traced the first appearance of libraries in the West Indies to the ecclesiastics of Spain who followed on the heels of Christopher Columbus' rediscovery of the islands. His depiction of a library was a collection of books brought by Bishop de las Casas in 1517 during his second sailing to the New World. By the 17th century, the Spaniards had been vanquished, the native Amerindians annihilated, and the British, French and Dutch were jostling for control and power to extract the wealth from the islands. They too brought their libraries; some were private while others were subscription-based, intended for use by other elites, and managed by their own librarians. In those days, sugar was king (Williams, 1969).

As time progressed, these collections were expanded to incorporate library service to the, by then, emancipated Africans, a group that had been forcibly recruited to provide labour in the cane fields. However, these libraries served the interest of an elite minority, telling the story of Europe, while ignoring the 'lives, struggles, products, institutions of "ordinary folks"' of the dispossessed and the enslaved

(Higman, 1985 quoted in Alleyne, 1999: 21). This class history viewed the masses as objects and not agents of this shared past. Certainly, there was little in these library collections that served as culturally relevant to this ethnic group or their lost heritage. Unlike their overlords, the Africans' manner of departure forestalled the ability to pack books or parchment (Niane, 1982). Yet Africa was not a stranger to books. In fact, Singleton (2004) wrote a comprehensive and concise examination on book culture at the intellectual pinnacle of Timbuktu from the 15th to 16th century, when this West African city was a respected centre of learning. The presence of books, bookmaking and libraries highlighted stratifications within the societies; but more importantly, it demonstrated the impact of Islam which was an important conduit of learning for literate Africa as 'virtually every mosque

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possessed a library of some size within its confines or nearby' (Singleton, 2004: 7).

Historically, the western world's definition of a library has given limited credence to the African's oral tradition. But the perspective was indicative of a common 'refusal to see Africans as the creators of original cultures which flowered and survived over the centuries in patterns of their own making' (M'Bow, 1999: xxiii). It is important then that organisations such as UNESCO embarked on an undertaking, through its history project, to shed some light on Africa's underserved darkness. Additionally, several cultural projects with national, regional and multinational organisations served to untangle the weave of cultural heritage and traditions as they impact indigenous peoples (Ruggles and Silverman, 2009).

This paper suggests that, in retrospect, given the broadening of the concept of a 'library' in the contemporary setting, and given that it is now accepted that the transportation of millions of Africans across the middle-passage was one of the most traumatic experiences in human history, the memories of enslaved Africans brought to the West Indies between the 1650s and the 1850s should be seen as a 'library in crisis'. This work presents the unorthodox view that African slaves who were transported to the West Indies, despite being shackled, bound and thrust into an alien world, subtly accomplished the installation of a massive store of knowledge and culture within the New World. Embodied within their physical frames, African slaves transported a repository of indigenous knowledge and skills which they transmitted to subsequent generations through oral and epic traditions, many of which are still in practice today. The Africans' skills and talents were used singularly or merged with the technology of their enslavers to produce new technologies for human advancement. This is a significant accomplishment that should undoubtedly be counted among the contributions to the development of libraries in the West Indies.

To support this proposition, I present three main lines of argument: first, the concept of a library within the context of its representation in the 21st century; second, an overview of the intellectual status of Africans in Africa during the period of the trans-Atlantic slave trade; and third, the manifestation of Africans' contributions to the advancement of life in the contemporary British West Indies.

## What is a library?

According to Eberhart (2006: 2), a library is:

> a collection of resources in a variety of formats that is (1) organized by information professionals or other

experts who (2) provide convenient physical, digital, bibliographic, or intellectual access and (3) offer targeted services and programs (4) with the mission of educating, informing, or entertaining a variety of audiences (5) and the goal of stimulating individual learning and advancing society as a whole.

In this 21st century, the physical format of libraries seems to be less crucial than the intent of the contents, which is to facilitate the provision of information. In some cases, the advancement of electronic technology sidelines the librarian as intermediary in the information process as elements of the taxonomy may not necessarily be conducted by a librarian. Persons also have access to cloud computing, which allows the sharing and use of resources to accomplish tasks without worrying about ownership or management of these resources (Bansode and Pujar, 2012). The technology has its advantages and disadvantages; but one of the more pressing concerns revolves around ownership and security of data in this ethereal application. White (2012: para. 1) noted that in 'a world without libraries, it would be difficult to advance research and human knowledge or preserve the world's cumulative knowledge and heritage for future generations'. He went on further to elaborate that:

> libraries represent different things to different people – from a place where mothers can take toddlers to read their first stories and students can study, to a service allowing anyone to borrow a book, access the Internet or do research. Quite simply, libraries offer a means by which we can gain access to knowledge. (para. 3)

This includes tangible and intangible cultural heritage which are important for self-identity and contribute to the informal education system on which most societies thrive. Libraries provide access to tangible as well as intangible heritage which are defined as the 'attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations' (Chibuzor and Ngozi, 2009: 46). Ruggles and Silverman (2009) cited William Logan (2007) as defining intangible cultural heritage as 'heritage that is embodied in people rather than in animate objects' (Ruggles and Silverman, 2009: 1). They noted that, while most conventions focused on defining the concept, it is sometimes best explained by the provision of examples.

While Logan's definition admittedly aligns with my argument as it relates to preservation, I want to distinguish the concept with respect to the library, using Eberhart's somewhat generic definition. African slaves' indigenous knowledge was further developed in response to the new environment in which they were placed. This expertise was applied to

local-level decision making in the West Indies and served to improve and enhance processes in conjunction with the technology of the Europeans and the Amerindians. This knowledge was not only traditional cultures, language or performance which are regarded as cultural heritage and which governments and international government organisations seek to protect. Instead, they were wilful applications of forms or processes for human advancement, the re-engineering of knowledge based on circumstances, available resources and time.

For the purposes of this paper, Eberhart's definition of a library is conceptualised within the contemporary notion of a library as a storehouse of knowledge in diverse formats. This expanded treatment of a library aligns with the suggestion that African slaves' indigenous knowledge, coupled with techniques learned from the Amerindians and Europeans enabled the development of skills and knowledge as if gleaned from any traditional library.

## The people who came: Their origins and skills

Tales of enslaved Africans who came to the West Indies often depict a conquered race with a myriad of perceived cultural characteristics: 'docile and agreeable . . . proud, brave and rebellious . . . timorous and despondent . . . lazy' (Dunn and Nash, 2012: 236). For some, there is the belief that the lives of these displaced groups began when they crossed the ocean during the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Crawfurd, 1866). However, this sea passage spelled the continuation of a journey disrupted but not broken as it relates to the traditions and history of their recent past. Brathwaite (1974: 73) noted that 'African culture not only crossed the Atlantic, it crossed, survived, and creatively adapted itself to its new environment'. Despite being situated in colonies of exploitation, enslaved Africans still thrived. Oliver and Atmore (1989: 88) connected the trans-Atlantic trade to the West Indies during the 1630s with the development of plantation agriculture, a purpose for which they were thought to be eminently suited. Ironically, Malowist (1999: 7) noted pre the trans-Atlantic passage, slaves exported to Portugal and Spanish countries served as 'domestic servants and artisans', and were not credited with the important foundational role in European agriculture. Therefore, the emphasis placed on the African's physicality and his/her ability to withstand tropical diseases and arduous labour seemed mischievous propaganda and only served to contribute to the racial stereotyping that Africa had little or no culture (M'bow, 1999).

West Africans recruited for the sugar plantations in the New World were captured from different points at different periods of Africa's development. Areas identified as popular points of transhipment during the trans-Atlantic slave trade were the 'Slave Coast' (Benin and Nigeria), 'West-Central Africa' (Zaire, Congo and Angola), and the 'Gold Coast' (Ghana) (Nunn, 2008). Nunn (2008) as did Barry (1999) earlier, noted that prior to the slave trades,[1] complex state systems were in the process of evolving. He provided evidence of research that attributed the disassembling of rule and order in West-Central Africa to the impact of the Portuguese trade in African slaves in the 16th century (Nunn, 2008: 144). Similar patterns of instability were documented in East Africa (see Isaacman, 1989; Mbajedwe, 2000) with the disintegration of the Shambaa kingdom, the Gweno kingdom, and the Pare states in the Pangani valley in the 19th century (see Kimambo, 1989; Mbajedwe, 2000). People were being enslaved and kidnapped daily, 'even nobles, even members of the king's own family' (Vansina, 1966: 52). Slavery in those times was not uncommon among Africans. In fact, it was a practice common among other great civilizations; the trans-Atlantic slave trade, however, represented human trafficking on an unprecedented scale (Eltis et al., 1999).

Human beings were not the only commodity up for trade, however, as authors recount trade in goods from the African interior of items such as Senegambian mats, textiles and salt (Curtin et al., 1978). At the Bight of Benin, excavations revealed archaeological evidence of artistry such as *Nok* figurines. Curtin et al. (1978) wrote about reflections of cultural diffusion among the trade routes, and evidence of advanced metallurgy. In the Dahomey Gap (Accra) Curtin et al. (1978) also mentioned political structures, again, an indication of some form of systematic organisation as they documented the role of the Oba or ruler who, although the supreme official, was not free to act singularly but instead, had his rulings strictly circumscribed by a set of councils consisting of lineages and professional groups (p. 241). This is not an uncommon form of governance in some West Indian (Caribbean) states. Links were highlighted in political rule – personal ties to kinship; ties to fellow members of a professional or occupational group (Masonic lodges) and then finally, loyalty and obedience to the Oba.

Curtin et al. (1978) wrote of the *Sanga* from the Congo, acknowledging their works in metal, iron and copper which were thought to be astonishing; where they had established communities of caste and guild societies. They highlighted potters, who were also skilled at making vessels. Special artisans were identified, showing evidence that a surplus in food

production made specialisation possible. Barry (1999: 266) referenced men skilled in boat building and women who 'devoted themselves to farming, fishing and house-building'. Similarly, Diagne (1999) referenced the erection of houses, palaces and mosques on the East African coasts, along with the bodies of 'mason, cabinet-makers and decorators' (p. 30) who developed into fraternities and castes. Leatherwork artisans flourished most in Nigeria (Diagne, 1999).

In some regards, Islam was a religion of contradiction in Africa. On the one hand it supported wars and counter-wars, following which conquered factions were converted to Islam. At the same time, the rise of Islam saw the establishment of schools, the teaching of the Quran through recitation or memorisation but also in writing, as it brought literacy to Africa. The history of the Niger was reported as written by Abd-al-Rahmanal-Sa'di (1596–1655) and Mahmoud Kati (1468–1570), both famous Islamic historians (Belcher, 1999). It is important to note that Islam was a religion of a minority caste of merchants and couriers in the royal courts, which transitioned to become a popular resistance movement against the arbitrary power of the ruling aristocracies. When European presence in Senegambia began to negatively affect the trans-Saharan trade through the redirection of slaves and cereal to the trans-Atlantic efforts, it sparked this holy war led by the *marabout* Nasir Al Din (Boubacar, 2002). Barry (1999: 275) noted: 'With the connivance of indigenous Muslims and popular support, the *marabout* movement swept away one after the other of the ruling aristocracies in Futa Toro, Waalo, Kayor and Jolof without any great resistance'. Barry also claimed that the practice of domestic slavery doubtless lay behind the cultural revolution at Futa Jaloon where the *marabout* and political class, freed from agricultural work, came to devote themselves to teaching. He wrote: 'According to the account of Winterbottom, who visited Tibo in 1794, the new regimes set up many Qur'anic schools throughout the country' (Barry, 1999: 299). The revolution resulted in plentiful and rich literature in Fulfulde and deeper Islamisation of the masses. During the second half of the 18th century, civil war during the Torodo regime saw Futanke sold to trans-Atlantic slavers, which constituted a breach of a covenant that Muslims were not to be sold to slavers. In a nutshell, the extracts demonstrate that writing was not a skill offered only to African elites. Because of greed, agreements were broken and slaves with writing capabilities were transported to the West Indies.

Although this may be a debatable claim, there was, however, one indisputable commonality among all Africans. Their oral cultures were amazingly rich.

Niadie (1982), for example, referred to Africans learning 'to recite the Koran' (p. 106), a factor Illife (2009) observed as he noted the 'veneration of the book' which emphasised the difference between Islam and indigenous religions. In fact, he went further to expound on the richness of African oratory, debate, poetry and conversation 'when unconfined by written texts' (p. 94) and the amazement by traders of the Africans' power of recall (p. 98). Alternatively, the transmission of messages through 'drum calls or clusters of natural objects' (p. 95) are lasting symbols or representations of African heritage that have survived the transatlantic passages, and which have only now been documented in texts and audio despite the absence of vehicles of books or writing in the past to ensure their survival (Illife, 2009). While it could be said that few West Africans were literate, a parallel claim could not be ascribed to their orality (Illife, 2009) or their resourcefulness in the epic traditions (Belcher, 1999). This element speaks to the importance of orality as a vehicle for the transmission of heritage and the embodiment of the individual as a vehicle to house this orality. The African griot has been promoted in recent African historiography as a conveyer of African history and tradition although Belcher (1999) disputed their value and authenticity as historians. While he acknowledged their multilateral role as diplomats and intermediaries in negotiations, he cautioned that not all served such laudable positions as some were also scamps and miscreants (p. 8). Still, they emerged as important transmitters of African culture and tradition.

Despite the sometimes negative depiction of African slaves, Africa at the time of the slave trade was a civilized continent with a system of theology, education, social, cultural and political organisation. Although the oral culture was pervasive among its people, a system of education, to include writing, was also established. Africans who possessed writing skills were also shipped to the West Indies.

## African contribution in the West Indies

Much of the contemporary publications by researchers such as Warner Lewis, Carney and Rosomoff, Schiebinger, and others have provided new insights, by, in some cases, simply reframing the question on slave contributions. Dunn and Nash (2012) distinguished between slaves shipped to the West Indies and those shipped to the Americas. They explained that the latter were 'thrown into close association with white people and their European ways' (p. 250) and so did not preserve as much of their native culture as those slaves who were shipped to the islands. It did

not mean that Afro-Caribbean societies escaped the 'indelible impressions of European imperialism and colonialism' (Crahan and Knight, 1979: 16), which was endorsed by an educational system that taught an ahistorical and inferior past. Fortunately, West Indian slaves' African retention was captured in works such as 'Africa and the Caribbean: The Legacies of a Link,' an edited text by Crahan and Knight who produced an amalgam of linguistic, familial and other cultural aspects of retentions. In a similar themed work, Warner-Lewis (2003) used mainly qualitative methods to confirm the occupation of the peoples of central West Africa as agriculturalists, hunters and fishermen with specialists who were smiths and long-distance traders (2003: 88). Correspondingly, in an historical study of women in Jamaica during 1655–1844, Mair (2006) identified a wide range of skills on an estate owned by William Beckford. Enslaved African males had occupations as 'sawyers, carpenters, stone masons and boilers, as well as a blacksmith, a farrier and a cooper' (p. 203) while women 'with skills' consisted of seamstresses, doctresses, field nurses and midwives. While she could find no accounts for specific training periods, she did note the occurrence of apprenticeships as in the case of *Dido* who was learning to be a washerwoman, *Essey* who was learning to be a seamstress and *Sophia* who was 'with the midwife' (Mair, 2006: 205). Historical records were available of the noise slaves would make with trumpets and hollow-log drums, and the music they made with calabash gourds equipped with twine or horsehair strings (Dunn and Nash, 2012). They further cited accounts by Hans Sloane, Douglas Taylor and Richard Ligon[2] of 'elaborate and mournful funeral rites' (p. 250), and frequent instances of vigorous resistance by field slaves and organised bands of runaways in the various islands – the Maroons in Jamaica and Garifunas (formerly Black Caribs) in St Vincent and the Grenadines (Dunn and Nash, 2012). These accounts excoriate anti-African claims that slaves had 'no philosophy, no military organization, no social life, no family structure, no arts, no sense of personal or civic responsibility' (Brathwaite, 1974: 74). It also debunks the inference that Africans had nothing of worth to contribute to their new land; that their captors were the ones responsible for the making of the West Indies.

An important area of African retention was subsistence farming. While some farming tools and methods were clearly provided by the Europeans, the 'short-handled hoe', for example, was credited to the Africans (Berleant-Schiller and Pulsipher 1986: 20). Berleant-Schiller and Pulsipher (1986) also posited that the Antillean variation of gardening evolved as an outcome of 'a syncretic adaptation worked out by African slaves who incorporated African and European elements into aboriginal systems that already existed in the islands' (p. 20). Their test islands, the British colony of Montserrat and Barbuda, showed evidence of a cultivation system that antedated emancipation, supporting in part the argument of the contribution of the early arrivals to current day systems.

Slaves not only contributed to agricultural techniques but also introduced provisions, to include cereal, vegetables and rootstocks. Earlier, I mentioned the cereal trade was redirected to trading posts to feed captives and also to stock ships on the long sea journey (Boubacar, 2002), spurring the *marabo*-led incursions. Foods brought from Africa included items such as yams, rice, okra, plantains, lima and kidney beans (Holloway, 2006), and livestock. On arrival in the West Indies, surplus stocks were fed to the enslaved who managed to plant the tubers and grains in the small grounds allotted to them for food cultivation. During the journey, seeds may have been embedded in animal furs, soils or hair (Schiebinger, 2017), thus introducing new plant species to the islands. Slaves also supplemented their diet with familiar looking green leafy herbs and vegetables found growing on the islands. Unintentionally, fortune smiled on these plantation owners and freewill settlers who, unable to cultivate their own temperate grains of oat and barley in the tropical soils, were forced to rely on the ingenuity of African slaves and the produce from their provision grounds. African Hill rice, credited to the Merikins, West Africans slaves who came to the island from Georgia, south America some 200 years ago, was recently found to be growing in Moruga, Trinidad. Planting of hill rice versus regular swamp rice avoided malaria traps as it could be grown in garden patches and so sustained generation of slaves who were taken from that rice growing region of West Africa (Severson, 2018). The significance of the find adds to another bit of the puzzle about the African experience in the New World. Such inputs by African slaves thus 'revolutionized' the food systems in the West Indies (Carney and Rosomoff, 2009). Slaves not only introduced indigenous plant life to West Indian soil but also developed creative culinary fares. 'Memory dishes' based on African culinary traditions (Carney and Rosomoff, 2009) such as foo foo (pound yam), peanut porridge and rice dishes merged with 'survival dishes' such as pig foot souse,[3] black pudding,[4] ackee[5] and saltfish, and cassava products such as farine and bammy.

Enslaved African slaves were also instrumental in medical cures. Schiebinger (2017) argued that no 'pure' African medical regime was transplanted wholesale to the West Indies (p. 45) mainly because

of the wilful, chaotic separation of slaves held in captivity by slavers. Instead she explained, these practices resulted from medical, traditional and cultural traditions. In the absence of medical care, slaves drew upon their knowledge of medicinal plants and herbs, sometimes fusing these with Amerindian techniques thus creating new remedies (Schiebinger, 2017). In his work, Mahomoodally (2013) described ten potent medicinal plants used in Africa, some of which were found in the West Indies. Examples of common flora were the *Aloe ferox Mill. (Xanthorrhoeaceae)* or bitter aloes (sinkle bible) which was used as a laxative to purify the stomach and as a bitter tonic, alongside its commercial use in beauty products. The leaves of the *Momordica charantia Linn.* (*Cucurbitaceae*) – bitter melon (gourd, cerasee, carailli) was brewed as a tonic, and the gourd is prepared as a vegetable. Laboratory experiments continue to explore its use against plasma insulin levels, while it is marketed commercially as an herbal tea. If one follows the naming convention slavers gave to botanical plants transplanted to the West Indies, then the guinea hen weed (*petiveria alliacea L.*) is another such important transplant. Once used by slaves to control the tick population on animals; and possibly unwanted pregnancies, since ingestion can cause spontaneous abortion (Honeyghan, 2017), the weed is now being explored as a treatment for cancer (Williams et al., 2007) and HIV (Lowe et al., 2014).

Modern medicine's recognition that African traditional plants might be influential in the treatment of chronic and other health conditions was prompted by living subjects, who were used as guinea pigs (Schiebinger, 2017) or bestowed benefits of knowledge passed down over the years. Mair (2006), for example, mentioned the presence of a 'Miss Kitty' who attended Lady Nugent in Jamaica during her first 'lying in'. In *Secret Cures of Slaves* Schiebinger (2017) highlighted a case where a slave was called to administer to a sick sibling with bowel complaints, whereupon she 'administered a cure 'communicated to her by her mother' and used in Africa' (p. 47) after which the sibling made a full recovery. Because this slave was unwilling to reveal the secret of her cure, the physician resorted to trickery, recreating a fake scenario, as he enlisted her help again and secretly observed the herbs she collected. He then applied the plants to other cases 'with much satisfaction' (p. 48). It was subsequently revealed the herb, *Xanthoxylon* was not native to Africa but was apparently either a concoction gleaned from the Amerindians or developed independently by the Africans. These instances showcase practical application of oral traditions as cogent examples of knowledge transmission. African

slaves can therefore be identified as 'heirs to a body of knowledge that included tropical agriculture, animal husbandry, and the skills to recognize wild plants of food and medicinal value' (Carney and Rosomoff, 2009: 2).

Medical cures for physical ailments were often linked to the supernatural. Obeah emerged in the West Indies as a strong medical tradition whose practice was a form of purification and guard against malevolent spirits. Illness was often linked to some sin or misdeed (Brathwaite, 1971). Although the concept of the supernatural or mystical in the healing process was not unique to African society, as European societies dabbled with their own use of magic and witchcrafts, 'what whites wrote tended to stress the anti-social or evil dimensions of what they perceived Obeah to be' (Handler, 2000: 65). Yet in his article on Obeah and slavery in Barbados, Handler (2000: 80) concluded that 'African cultural influences' was extremely influential in the development of slave medicine in that island. Handler (2000) cited Bilby (1993) who wrote against the miscasting of Obeah as a negative practice because of poor understanding by white slave masters or European physicians, an understandable assumption given the period. In African and Caribbean folk practice, Brathwaite (1971: 219) explained that the Obeah-man was 'doctor, philosopher, and priest' because religion had not been 'externalized and institutionalized' as in Europe. Schuler (1979) noted the importance of religious movements in islands like Jamaica. She identified Myalism, which commenced in 18th century Jamaica, as 'the first documented Jamaican religion cast in the 'classical' African mold' (p. 66); a forerunner for the study of later Jamaican religious movements to include Bedwardism, Revival and Rastafarianism. In an article which examined the continuity and survival of African religious beliefs in Jamaica, Besson and Chevannes (1996: 212) explained that Myalism and Obeah were the results of African slaves' forging of an indigenous cosmology prior to Christianity. Subsequent Christian incursions led to upheavals that affected the very institution of slavery, while it transformed African cosmologies, conflating with European customs to result in movements such as Jamaica's Revival cults – Revival Zion (Baptist Christianity) and Pocomania (Myalism). Although these practices have changed because of evolving world views, elements of certain traditions have been maintained, for example 'set ups' where community members visit and sit with the household of the deceased (Besson and Chevannes, 1996).

Shelter follows the quest for food and good health. Housing policies for the enslaved varied from the way

shelter was constructed and the economies that arose from their presence. Canizzo (1994) noted the paucity of African artefacts of housing and household implements was as a result of the material with which they were constructed and the paltry items owned by them. In their observation of slave housing in Barbados, Handler and Bergman (2009: 8) noted the 'rectangular, single-storey, wattle-and-daub structure with a packed earth or dirt floor' and thatched roof were common to what was seen in West Africa and widespread throughout the Caribbean. Essential to the argument on African retention was Handler and Bergman's (2009) citing of Vlach (*Afro-American Tradition in Decorative Arts*) who noted that, 'black builders constantly responded to changes in climate, both natural and social, as well as to changes in technology and design' (p. 23). The lack of concrete evidence stems from the fact that construction of houses with perishable materials meant they also deteriorated with time. The absence of these elements affected the stories and narratives about their living conditions. For instance, the fact that slave housing was not only about plantation life but also the start of urbanisation in many Caribbean cities.

Until the 17th century in Barbados, slaves were on their own as it related to housing (Handler and Bergman, 2009). Bundled together in Negro Yards, they were the responsibility of the plantations who left them to design, construct, repair and furnish their homes with whatever material was available, although the planters determined the actual locale of the Yards. In Jamaica, Negro Yards near the more commercialised Kingston were organised and fenced in accordance with legislation, so as to control the movements of free, absconding or enslaved Negros (Austin, 1979). Situated as they were at the perimeters of the city, Negro Yards also housed animals, fuel and carriages (Brodber, 1976 cited in Austin, 1979). Their positioning as itinerant, blighted-areas have attributed to socio-political categorization of class within Jamaican society. Conversely, the Barbadian 'chattel house' was seen as one of the more positive elements of post-emancipation development (see Henry Fraser et al*., A–Z of Barbadian Heritage*), not only for its unique designs, which conflated West African with European designs (Potter, 1989) but also because it represented one of the earliest rights to African home ownership and independence. Following the end of the slave trade, plantations would rent pieces of lands to workers for construction of a home with a caveat that it must be moveable, hence their wooden construction without nails to enable easy disassembling. As in Trinidad and also observed in West Africa, chattel houses were raised off the ground to prevent

destruction and infestation by ants, vermin and other insects (Potter, 1989).

The African embodiment also affected West Indian literature and performances. In this regard, I note Brathwaite's disagreement with biased writers of traditional African culture but I also disagree that much of West Indian literature has been watered down through 'education, communication and sales processing' (Potter, 1989: 78) by Europeanisation. Cultural traditions continually reinvent themselves, and lack the capacity to commit suicide, as Kambon (1982) so astutely proclaimed. Even unintentionally, creators (writers and performers) showcase the strength of the African retention, through expressions of familiar themes, populated throughout the genre which are inherently 'African'. In the fast-rising theatre arts, Stanley Niaah (2004) aligned Dancehall's antecedents to the slave ship's Limbo and to Jamaica's Jonkonnu, Dinki Mini, Gerreh, Revival and Brukins Party. Music and dance perpetuated because it also served as a form of exercise onboard ship, with the *Limbo* specifically arising from the cramped conditions aboard ships (Rice, n.d).

According to the Jamaica Cultural Development Commission, Dinki Mini originated from the Congolese word 'ndingi' and like the Gerreh were performed at 'Wakes' (keeping the company of relatives of the deceased). Bruckins was a mixture of African and European influences, with a 'stately, dipping-gliding . . . typified by the "thrust and recovery" action of the hip and leg' (Jamaica Information Service [JIS], 2018: para 1). The Maypole or Long Ribbon Pole formed a part of outdoor social activities of England and Jamaica (JIS, 2018). It involved a team of dancers interweaving different coloured ribbons around a pole from the top creating different patterns. It now forms the national dance of St Vincent and the Grenadines. Dancing in Africa, took place 'in the centre of a ring of spectator-participants' (Brathwaite, 1971: 221) with male dancers expressing themselves acrobatically. The drums which were used for entertainment, and in religious and ritualistic performances are inherently identified with slavery. Musical instruments were adaptations of Africa's versatility in the arts. Murdoch (2009) in reviewing the cultural disruption and transformation that was the slave trade showcased the African influence in musical instruments such as the *tambou* drums, the *abeng* (blown cow horn), tcha-tcha (West African *shekere*) and the *lanbi* (blown conch shell). Additionally, the calypso, with its roots in satire and parody, arose from dissent by Africans on the plantations (Murdoch, 2009: 69). *Crick Crack . . . monkey break he back . . . for a piece of pommerac . . . .* The folktales of Africa served not

only to ridicule the unaware *Massa* to his face as identified by Murdoch (2009) but were also reminiscent of the spoken literary forms as proverbs, animal tales (Anansi – the trickster, conman spider), tales of the supernatural and other creation myths (Papa bois, duppies, etc.).

The remnants of African origins cannot be entirely eradicated from the culture of the peoples of the British West Indies or the Caribbean as it is now called. Nettleford (1995) correctly identified the African as having had a living history which pre-dated centuries before Columbus entered the West Indies. It would seem unlikely that slavery, heinous as it was for its maiming of the African continent and displacement of millions to the New World, could so succinctly eradicate the soul of the African people.

## Conclusion

V S Naipaul, author of fiction, wrote: 'Sugar is an ugly crop and it has an ugly history' (1969: 129). Similarly, Udofia (2013: 12) claimed 'cane is bitter because it doomed Africans to a life of hard toil, poverty, ignorance, illiteracy, subservience and dependence'. It was the penalty for being black and alive. The discovery of the great economic potential of sugar in the global market saw the consequent importation of Negro slaves to the West Indies which decimated an entire continent and saw the largest historical migration of human trafficking.

Nettleford (1995: 283) claimed there were people who 'believe that the Caribbean people who happen to be largely of African ancestry have created nothing'. Such a myth continues to be perpetuated because, according to Crahan and Knight (1979: 16), 'during the long period of the social disintegration, reconstruction, and nation building that took place during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the legacies of Africa became distorted, diluted and subordinated'.

Yet Nettleford (1995) went further to argue that while Caribbean peoples cannot claim the construction of monuments in their history, they have created 'thought systems, ontologies, and cosmologies and from this a Caribbean way of knowing' (p. 284). This suggestion by Nettleford drives home the point that enslaved Africans should be counted as one of the primary contributors to libraries (broadly defined) in the British West Indies. The examples presented in this paper are perhaps insufficient and simplistic in their representation of the depth of African retention in the Caribbean. More importantly, the idea I attempt to put forward in no way discounts the efforts and achievements of archivists, historians and literary scholars who have worked tirelessly to record the narratives of African slaves. The results of their work can be accessed through social history portals of West Indian, American and European universities and national repositories such as the Jamaica Memory Bank. Preservation of these voices is important if one must interpret Foucault's philosophy on power over the memory of a people as 'the key to controlling their dynamism, their experience, and their knowledge of their struggles' (quoted in Reinhardt, 2008: 8). It is important that the Caribbean has its own slave narratives (*The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave, Olaudah Equiano*, etc.), representing its own voices in this important part of its history (Aljoe, 2004).

Some 'voices' were collective, however, and manifested in subtler but equally powerful results for their ability to effect change and so affect the course of history. It is also important, in the preservation and development of one's own cultural values that there is an ability to defy conventional historiography (Nettleford, 1979). Accordingly, I contend that the 'cerebral repositories' of African slaves, their *libraries*, which survived despite the trauma of the Middle Passage followed by 400 years of enslavement, have complemented the more formal approaches to archiving and supported the successful transmission of African knowledge (religion, history, medicine, magic, astrology, pedology, technology, science, etc.) (Niane, 1982: 106). This is especially noteworthy given the fact that slaves were 'literally less materialistic' (Canizzo, 1994: 30) than their owners resulting in a paucity of tangible artefacts. The disintegration of tangible evidence makes the argument even more potent as these dispossessed chattels, these living repositories, were able through oral tradition and other means of cultural retention, to facilitate the transmission of indigenous knowledge to current generations. Their legacies have contributed to the sustainable, continued development of West Indians and the West Indies.

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## Notes

1. Nunn identified three major exoduses of forced African migration but the trans-Atlantic slave trade was the largest and most detrimental.
2. True history of Barbados.
3. Pickled pig foot that is boiled and marinated in seasoning and cucumber.
4. Pig intestines stuffed with the blood from the pig which had been seasoned with bread or rice, green seasoning and then steamed – somewhat like English sausage.
5. The ackee tree came to Jamaica from West Africa in 1778. The tree produces a red pod like fruit which bursts on ripening to reveal three shiny black seeds and a yellow aril which is used for cooking. Unripe or forced-open ackee are poisonous.

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## Author biography

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# The American Library Association and the post-World War II rebuilding of Eastern European libraries

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## Abstract

The topic of the destruction of libraries during World War II has been well publicized. However, the American Library Association's assistance with postwar cultural rehabilitation of Eastern European libraries remains relatively unknown. The paper examines the "Aid to Libraries in War Areas" program, funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and administered by the ALA, with respect to Eastern European countries, including Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia (Soviet Union), and Yugoslavia. The program consisted of two parts: the first, which ran from 1941 to 1947, dealt with periodicals; the other, in operation from 1944 to 1947, focused on books. Its goal was to replenish, though on a limited scale, devastated collections with American publications unavailable to most European and Asian libraries during Axis occupation.

## Introduction

As World War II was ending, the American Library Association (ALA) was becoming more and more aware of widespread losses of library collections and the destruction of numerous libraries in Europe and Asia. One of the most dramatic accounts about devastated libraries came from a Russian librarian, Anna Kravczenko, who reported the destruction of the Korolenko Library in Kharkov (Kharkiv) in the Soviet Union (today's Kharkiv State Scientific Library of Vladimir Korolenko). Kravchenko (1944) described the bombing of the library that caused the roof and "all the four walls" to collapse, but left the shelves intact "with no roof over them." She and her colleagues considered it a powerful symbol of perseverance and survival, and concluded that "no wars whatever can destroy the aspiration of mankind after genuine knowledge, wars are powerless to destroy the books in which this knowledge is stored." Other stories of destruction came from Czechoslovak and Polish academics, diplomats, and librarians. For example, in his letter to the ALA Josef Velíšek (1946), university

professor from Edward Beneš University of Technology in Brno, stated that "any precious materials or books were taken away or partially destroyed." That was confirmed by Vladimir Hurban (1945), Czechoslovak ambassador to the United States, who in his letter to the ALA, written shortly after the end of the war, reported that "during the war most of the Czechoslovak libraries were either totally destroyed or seriously depleted of all valuable scientific and other individual works." He added that during the war "Czechoslovakia was also cut off from every access to all available sources" making the rebuilding of library collections one of the top priorities of the Czechoslovak Government. Similar reports of devastation and wartime isolation came from Poland. For example, Józef Pastuszka (1946), Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the Catholic University of Lublin, alerted ALA

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to the fact that Poland "has been completely cut off for six years from any contact with the West," and consequently "we have no means to know what was published during that time" as western literature and publisher book lists were banned by the Germans. The information about the wartime devastation of European cultural and educational institutions was often publicized in ALA publications such as *ALA Bulletin* or *Library Journal*. For example, the June 1944 *ALA Bulletin* article about the destruction of Russian libraries, which "was cabled to the American Library Association by the Soviet Scientists Antifascist Committee, Moscow, in answer to an ALA request," provided some dramatic examples of war damage sustained by Soviet libraries and heroic efforts of Russian librarians to salvage various collections (Segalov, 1944). Likewise, the May 1945 *Library Journal* article titled, "Library situation in Europe," authored by Grayson Kefauver, United States Delegate to the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education in London, and Carle White, Director of Libraries and Dean of the School of Library Service at Columbia University, provided ample evidence of the destruction of libraries in many European countries, including Czechoslovakia, Germany, France, Italy, Poland, etc. (Kefauver and White, 1945).

Important information about the depravation of a library was often included in the requests for books that the ALA received from European librarians, scholars, and institutions. For example, Margaret Demchevsky (1945), Chief Librarian of the National Library of Bulgaria, described her ordeal following the destruction of her house in Sofia by the Allied bombing. The bombing, which she described as a "cruel blow" coming "unwittingly from friends," destroyed the collection of books and materials that she "had been so painstakingly trying to collect for years with the generous aid of the Carnegie Endowment for the Library Economy Book in Bulgarian" (Demchevsky, 1945). In his letter to the ALA, Professor DI Mangeron (1948), director of the Central Library and the Mathematical Department of the Polytechnic Institute of Jassy, Romania, reported that "our Central Library and the Mathematical Department" were "destroyed during this tremendous war," and were "wanting for necessaries for a serious scientific production." His colleague, Gheorghe Macovei (1947), director of the Geological Institute of Romania in Bucharest, reported that the Institute's library "suffered very much through bombardments and its building is now under repair." Yugoslavia also suffered the destruction of many libraries. Nikola Dobrović (1946), director of the Institute for Urban Planning in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, in a letter to the ALA, stated that "as our library, as well as the other libraries, has been looted and destroyed by the invader, our work is gravely hindered by the lack of technical books." Furthermore, in February 1945, the ALA received an English translation of the December 1944 *Politika* article about "the status of libraries in Belgrade," including examples of the destruction of many libraries and book collections (Politika, 1944). The article's findings were later confirmed by the UNESCO Library Section delegation that visited Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in 1946. They found that "the book situation, particularly in Yugoslavia, is just terrible, and that nearly all the important libraries have completely lost their collections" (Zuckerman, 1946). Finally, in 1948 the ALA received a photo album about the destruction of Budapest, *The Mutilated Budapest*, which made many ALA officials "most sympathetic and shaken by the evidences of ruin to so many lovely buildings" (Mauseth, 1948a).

As the war intensified and the number of damaged and destroyed libraries increased, the ALA began to design an assistance program for libraries in war areas. The "Aid to Libraries in War Areas" program was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation grants and was administered by the ALA's Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas in collaboration with the ALA's International Relations Board. The program consisted of two components: the first, which ran from 1941 to 1947, dealt with journals (periodicals); the other, in operation from 1944 to 1947, dealt with books. Its goal was to replenish, although on a limited scale, devastated collections with American publications unavailable to European and Asian libraries during the war. The total Rockefeller Foundation grants awarded for the entire program amounted to $588,000 and affected over 30 countries in Europe and Asia, including Eastern and Central European countries such as Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, the Soviet Union, and Yugoslavia (Kraske, 1985). In addition, the Rockefeller Foundation provided some supplemental funding to the ALA to purchase selected titles in response to "special request" received from individual scholars and libraries in Europe and Asia (Mauseth, 1948b).

The war not only caused the physical destruction of libraries, but also interrupted ongoing subscriptions to American scientific literature, including numerous technical journals. The ALA's periodical purchase program involved "the acquisition of wartime issues of outstanding journals in all important subject fields," based on "printed lists and recommendations of specialists" (Rockefeller Foundation, 1947). Eventually, some 400 journals were selected for possible inclusion in the program and by June 1947, 6037 titles

and 9320 sets of journals had been sent to 33 countries (Mauseth, 1948b).

As previously mentioned, thanks to the generosity of the Rockefeller Foundation, the ALA developed a book purchase program for libraries in war areas. The 1947 *Rockefeller Foundation Annual Report* stated that "collections in many libraries in war areas were seriously damaged or completely destroyed" (Rockefeller Foundation, 1947). Therefore, "the hunger for books is second only to the hunger for food in many parts of the world" (Rockefeller Foundation, 1947). The purchased books would represent "the most important American reference [subject] works published during the war years" (Kraske, 1985). The selection and purchase of books published from 1939 to 1943 was based on a list compiled by Charles McCombs, Chief Bibliographer of the New York Public Library (American Library Association, 1945). The selection and acquisition of books published in 1944, 1945, and 1946 was based on the lists prepared by Foster Palmer, Reference Assistant of the Harvard College Library (American Library Association, 1946a, 1947a). According to McCombs, "the aim of the list was a selection of books generally considered significant contributions to knowledge in their respective fields, or books embodying the results of recent research" (American Library Association, 1945). Palmer applied the same selection criteria used by McCombs and insisted that the titles be of "scholarly character or otherwise of more than passing value for reference libraries" (American Library Association, 1947). By the time the project ended, approximately 45,600 volumes were sent to over 200 institutions in 31 countries (Mauseth, 1948b). "The number of readers, students, of physical and spiritual architects of the future, who received practical assistance in the rebuilding of their ruined countries through the material sent" could not be estimated (Mauseth, 1948b). The bookplate to identify the books of the War Areas project carried the insignia of the American Library Association and the legend suggested by Dr William Warner Bishop, a member of the ALA Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas: "Ad rem publicam litterarum restituendam" (for the restoration of the republic of letters) (Mauseth, 1948b) (Figure 1).

However, as will be demonstrated, the amount of aid varied (sometimes considerably) from country to country (Figure 3).

## ALA Assistance program and Eastern European libraries

### Czechoslovakia and Poland

Czechoslovakia and Poland were two of the greatest beneficiaries of the ALA journals assistance program,
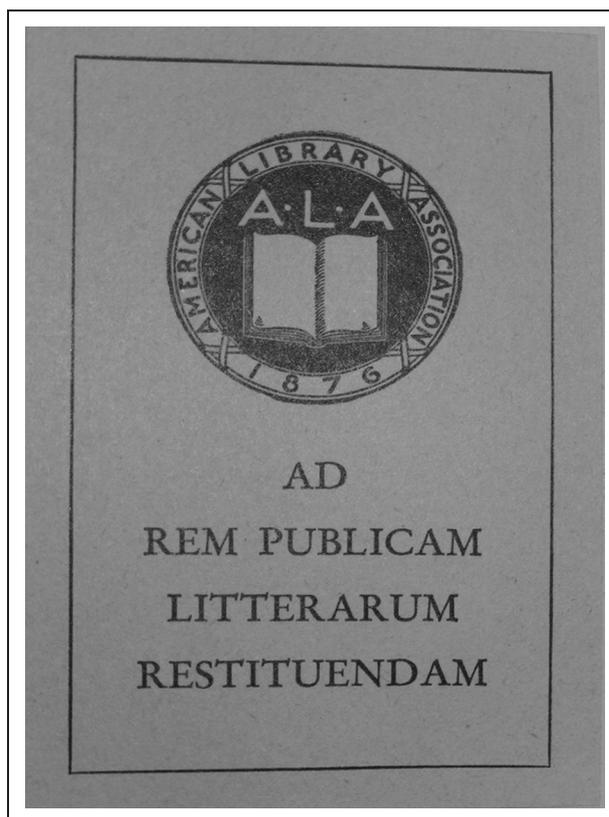


**Figure 1.** The donated books were identified by the bookplate carrying the ALA insignia and the legend in Latin. Courtesy of the ALA Archives at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

with Czechoslovakia receiving 336 journal titles and 631 sets of journals, the fifth largest number of titles (after France, China, USSR, and the Philippines), and Poland presented with 311 journal titles and 675 sets of journals, representing the third largest gift of sets (after China and France) (Sroka, 2017). The journals represented a wide range of subjects, including a significant amount of medical literature, as evidenced by the large number of sets of periodicals received by the medical library of Charles University in Prague and the University of Warsaw. The former received approximately 100 different medical journals, in most cases complete sets published during the war. Markings on the packages shipped to Prague read: "Gift of American Library Association" (Ernst, 1945). The donation represented the first substantial contribution of medical literature to Charles University since 1938 and was described by Jan Bělehrádek (1945), the University's Rector, as "a token of real friendship of the American nation towards the free Czechoslovakia." The journals were a typical sample of American medical literature, including publications such as *American Heart Journal*, *Archives of Internal Medicine*, *Journal of Immunology*, and *Quarterly Cumulative*

**Figure 2.** An exhibit of American library practice held at the Soviet State Library for Foreign Literature in December 1945 (today's M. I. Rudomino All-Russian State Library for Foreign Literature, Moscow). *Courtesy of the ALA Archives at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.*

*Index Medicus* (Charles University, 1945). The ALA ordered 112 wartime sets of periodicals for the University of Warsaw, including humanities, medical, and scientific journals such as *American Historical Review*, *American Literature*, *Journal of the Infectious Diseases*, and *Journal of Chemical Physics* (Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas, 1946).

Czechoslovakia and Poland received the same number of sets of American books published from 1939 to 1946. These included 771 titles in 858 volumes (published in 1939–1943), 187 titles in 196 volumes (published in 1944), 153 titles in 177 volumes (published in 1945), and 144 titles in 146 volumes (published in 1946), totaling 1255 titles in 1377 volumes, which made Czechoslovakia and Poland among the top 10 receivers of the ALA's donation ((Mauseth, 1948b). The titles represented a wide range of subjects, including agriculture, economics, education, language and literature, medicine, philosophy, political science, religion, sociology, and technology. Moreover, Czechoslovakia and Poland received 731 and 574 items, respectively, from the special request fund (Mauseth, 1948b). The books were sent to more than 30 different university departments, research institutes, and libraries, including

colleges outside of major academic centers such as Prague and Warsaw. The requests received from Czechoslovak and Polish cultural and educational institutions underscored the great postwar needs for western books, especially American publications.

### Bulgaria

Bulgaria received 191 titles and 206 sets of journals under the ALA periodical purchase program (Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas, 1947). Journals were sent to the Library of the University of Sofia and the National Library for distribution or allocation. Many titles sent to the Library of the University of Sofia were complete runs published from 1940 or 1941 to 1945 or 1946, including *American Heart Journal*, *American Journal of Pathology*, *American Journal of Psychology*, *American Journal of Surgery*, *American Journal of the Medical Sciences*, *Astronomical Journal*, *Biological Abstracts*, *Chemical Abstracts*, *Journal of Modern History*, *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, *Journal of Philosophy*, *Reviews of Modern Physics*, and *Transactions of the American Mathematical Society* (University of Sofia, 1947). Wartime runs of various journals sent to the National

Library included *American Economic Review*, *American Journal of Science*, *American Political Science Review*, *Annals of Mathematical Statistics*, *Journal of Forestry*, *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, *Journal of Political Economy*, *Library Quarterly*, *Pacific Affairs*, *Political Science Quarterly*, etc. (Narodna Biblioteka, 1947).

Although Bulgaria did not receive any sets of American books (1939–1946) from the ALA book purchase program, some gift and "special requests" items were sent to libraries and research institutes in Sofia and Varna (Mauseth, 1948b). For example, the Bulgarian Bibliographical Institute in Sofia received a selection of library science and press law publications, including a two-year subscription to *Library Quarterly*, Margaret Mann's *Introduction to Cataloging and the Classification of Books* (1943), Keyes D Metcalf's *The Program of Instruction in Library Schools* (1943), Emily Miller Danton's *The Library of Tomorrow* (1939), Frederick Seaton Siebert's *The Rights and Privileges of the Press* (1934), and Lucy Maynard Salmon's *The Newspaper and Authority* (1923) (Bulgarian Bibliographical Institute, 1947). A brief announcement about the gift was published in Bulgarian newspapers, including *Otechestven Front* and *Zemedelsko Zname* (Borov, 1947). Other institutions that received small donations of books included Direction Générale de la Statistique [Bulgarian General Direction of Statistics] and the University Library in Sofia, and Institut D'Économie Planifiée [Institute of Planned Economy] in Varna. For example, the Bulgarian General Direction of Statistics received 26 books about mathematics and statistics, including Paul Rider's *Analytic Geometry* (1947), Albert Waugh's *Elements of Statistical Method* (1943), and CB Davenport's *Statistical Methods in Biology, Medicine, and Psychology* (1936) (Mauseth, 1947). The ALA also ordered a small collection of books on economics for the Institute of Planned Economy in Varna, including Eugene Staley's *World Economic Development* (1944), F. W. Taussig's *International Trade* (1936) and *Principles of Economics* (1939), J. P. Warbasse's *Cooperative Democracy* (1942), and Edmund Whittaker's *A History of Economic Ideas* (1940) (Kipp, 1947).

## Hungary

Hungary received 234 titles and 333 sets of journals under the ALA periodical purchase program (Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas, 1947). Journals represented a wide range of topics, including titles such as *Art Quarterly*, *Journal of Agricultural Research*, *Journal of the American Chemical Society*, *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, and *The Yale Review* (Gál, 1947a). Although Hungary did not receive any sets of American books (1939–1946) from the ALA book purchase program, some gift and "special requests" items were sent to universities and research institutes in Budapest, Pécs, Sopron, and Szeged. For example, the Hungarian Libraries' Board in Budapest received 74 items, including a three-year subscription to *The Publishers Weekly*, and various reference and library science books such as *Webster's New International Dictionary* (1945), Harold Wentworth's *American Dialect Dictionary* (1944), Grace O Kelly's *The Classification of Books* (1937), and Henry E Bliss' *A Bibliographic Classification* (1940) (Hungarian Libraries' Board, 1947). The donation of American journals was acknowledged at the "Rockefeller-celebration" organized by the American Legation and the Hungarian Libraries' Board in June 1947. The event drew many university professors and dignitaries, including Dr Stephen Gál (Gál István), Acting Director of the Hungarian Libraries' Board, who stated that, "these journals will always remind us how important freedom of thought and freedom of research are to every country" (Gál, 1947b).

## Romania

Romania received 211 titles and 290 sets of journals under the ALA journals assistance program (Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas, 1947). Journals requested by various institutions were sent to the Romanian Academy Library (*Biblioteca Academiei Române*) for distribution. Journals represented a wide range of topics, including titles such as *American Economic Review*, *American Journal of International Law*, *Biological Abstracts*, and *Botanical Review* (American Library Association, 1947b). Romania did not receive any sets of American books (1939-1946) from the ALA book purchase program. Neither did it get any "special requests" books.

## Soviet Union

The Soviet Union received 347 titles and 633 sets of journals under the ALA journals assistance program, which represented the fourth largest gift of sets (after China, France, and Poland) (Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas, 1947). Many journals were sent to specific libraries in response to requests; others to the Lenin State Library and the Central Medical Library in Moscow. The latter received the bulk of medical journals, including *American Heart Journal*, *Annals of Surgery*, *New England Journal of Medicine*, and *War Medicine* (American Library

| Country | Periodicals | Books | "Special Requests" Items |
|---|---|---|---|
| Bulgaria | 191 journal titles and 206 sets of journals | None | 88 |
| Czechoslovakia | 336 journal titles and 631 sets of journals | 1,255 titles in 1,377 volumes | 731 |
| Hungary | 234 journal titles and 333 sets of journals | None | 314 |
| Poland | 311 journal titles and 675 sets of journals | 1,255 titles in 1,377 volumes | 574 |
| Romania | 211 journal titles and 290 sets of journals | None | None |
| Soviet Union | 347 journal titles and 633 sets of journals | 3,763 titles in 4,129 volumes | 25 |
| Yugoslavia | 201 journal titles and 341 sets of journals | 1,028 titles in 1,112 volumes | 48 |

**Figure 3.** Number of periodicals, books, and 'special requests' items sent by ALA to Eastern European libraries in 1945–1948.
Source: Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas (1947) *Periodical Purchase Program, July 1941 to June 1947*. Washington, DC: American Library Association.

Association, 1946c). In a letter to the Lenin State Library, Harry M Lydenberg (1945), director of the Board of International Relations of the ALA, explained the nature of the ALA donation of American journals "as tokens of our pleasure at this first step towards restoration of international intellectual exchanges we hope soon may be accepted as normal and universal."

The Soviet Union was one of the largest recipients of sets of American books published from 1939 to 1945. These included 2403 titles in 2637 volumes (published in 1939–1943), 748 titles in 784 volumes (published in 1944), and 612 titles in 708 volumes (published in 1945), totaling 3763 titles in 4129 volumes, which represented the second largest number of donated titles and volumes (after China) (Mauseth, 1948b). Russian librarians were not only grateful for the ALA donation of journals and books, but they were also eager to learn more about American librarianship. In December 1945, the Soviet State Library for Foreign Literature organized an exhibit about American libraries (Figure 2). William Nelson (1946), editor of *Amerika Illustrated*, sent pictures of the exhibit to ALA informing the Association that the library's director, Margarita Rudomino, "is most anxious to receive news of American library practice and is striving as hard as she can to build up her collection of American books."

### Yugoslavia

Yugoslavia received 201 titles and 341 sets of journals under the ALA periodical purchase program (Committee on Aid to Libraries in War Areas, 1947). Journals were sent to the University of Zagreb for distribution to "all the important libraries in Yugoslavia" (Comins, 1947). The periodical represented various topics, including titles such as *American Journal of Nursing*, *Engineering Index*, *Food*

*Research*, and *Hispanic American Historical Review* (Stampar, 1947).

Yugoslavia also received 1028 titles in 1112 volumes of American books published from 1939 to 1946, including Richard Hofstadter's *Social Darwinism in American Thought* (1944), George Pullen Jackson's *Spiritual Folk-Songs of Early America* (1937), John von Neumann's *Theory of Games and Economic Behavior* (1944), and Robert Freund's and Edgar P Richardson's *American Romantic Painting* (1944) (Mauseth, 1948b). Books were sent to the Yugoslav Committee for Schools and Science in Belgrade for distribution to Yugoslavian libraries; some sets were also shipped to the University of Zagreb Library, including some special requests items (American Library Association, 1946b).

## Conclusion

The ALA's reconstruction efforts helped to break European and Asian libraries' wartime isolation by providing them with recent works of American scholarship. Despite the varying amount of aid distributed, many Eastern European libraries were able to enrich their depleted collections and offer their academic communities scholarly publications that otherwise would have been impossible to obtain. The ALA's actions represented support and solidarity with war-devastated libraries in Eastern Europe. That pledge of solidarity was probably best expressed by Carl Milam, ALA executive secretary, who in a letter to Josef Bečka, Librarian of the National and University Library in Prague, assured him of ALA's "continuing solidarity with our colleagues in Czechoslovakia" and lamented "the continued lack of opportunity for personal contact with our colleagues in Europe" (Milam, 1947). It should be noted that the ALA's aid program for libraries in war areas included both former Axis powers and the newly emerging Communist countries

of Eastern Europe, which was consistent with the Rockefeller Foundation's apolitical stance. The latter's position was eloquently expressed by Robert Morison, the Foundation Assistant Director of Medical Sciences, who stated that, "Our responsibility is to aid in the accumulation of knowledge and in making it as widely available as possible" (Kraske, 1985).

In a similar fashion, Harry Lydenberg, director of the Board of International Relations of ALA, explained the ALA's position in his letter to a librarian of the Akron Public Library, who asked Lydenberg whether "the policy of the ALA in sending aid to libraries in war areas was contingent on the political views of their government." Lydenberg (1946) replied in most strong terms: "the answer is, "NO." One may argue that the ALA's cultural engagement with Eastern Europe was a right strategy as it contributed to the reconstruction of many library collections helping Eastern European librarians to recover, if only for a while, from dark years of wartime intellectual isolation. The result was the spreading of American ideas and scientific research through the printed word so desperately need by many of Europe's devastated cultural and educational institutions. Regrettably, the division of the European continent into the Eastern and Western blocs resulting in the Cold War would arrest further progress of the development of cultural ties between Eastern Europe and the United States.

This article builds on the earlier publication, "A Book Never Dies," that deals with the subject of the ALA's postwar assistance to Czechoslovak and Polish libraries (Sroka, 2017).

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

## Funding

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# A public library cannot live on books alone: A lesson from history

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## Abstract

For almost half a century Romania was under a totalitarian regime. In times of severe censorship and information control the communist regime promoted public libraries. This paper will present the main phases of the public library system development and discuss how the state's emphasis on providing large collections of books influenced library services. As part of an oral history project, this paper will use memories of people who worked in public libraries of various sizes in the 1970s and the 1980s, archival documents and secondary sources to contribute to a more nuanced discussion about the recent history of Romanian public libraries. What were the phases of the development of the national library system and how important was the library collection for the institutional survival of the public library? The paper will also discuss the collection development policy and contrast it with the impoverished professional development within the library system.

## Introduction

Public libraries represent institutions historically located at the crossroads of educational, cultural, and ideological interests, and this position heavily influenced over time the development of the systems of libraries at local, regional and national level. Among the Eastern Bloc countries, this is especially true for the era of the communist regime (Anghelescu, 2014, 2015; Sroka, 2017, 2000). The communist regimes had a direct and powerful influence over all public institutions, but we are only beginning to understand the lasting effects that the communist policies and the practices regarding libraries had on librarianship and library services (Şerbănuţă, 2017a: 260). During communism, the libraries were considered institutions that had the power to educate people. The primary tools that librarians were expected and instructed to use, the books, were the central focus of library services. Having services focused on collections rather than on people provided librarians a safe professional environment sheltered from direct political pressure. This reality influenced the development of library services

in a profound way and the consequences of this are visible to this day.

This article will focus on the policies regarding the development of the public library system in communist Romania. At the same time, using oral history to document the professional practices in public libraries during the last decades of the regime, this article will discuss the focus of the policies that influenced the library system and how this focus changed profoundly the professional priorities and values of librarianship. The library users and the ways in which the public library could reach them and provide support for them were far less important than the professional practices related to collection organization.

After presenting the methodology of this research, the article will introduce the context of the Romanian national public library system, the decision that led to

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its creation, and the educational system that supported it. The article will then compare and contrast the policies related to library collections and the practices of library services as they were remembered by librarians of the 1970s and 1980s in Romania. The conclusion of the article will inquire about the medium- and long-term consequences of exclusive focus on library collections and of altering the values of librarianship as a profession.

## Methodology

The empirical research for this paper draws on the work that I carried out as part of my doctoral dissertation project, which documents the development of Romanian public library services within the context of the cohabitation of the communist state and its public librarians during the last two decades of the communist regime (Şerbănuţă, 2017a). I used mixed historical methods for the research. Archival sources and analyses of documents from the era were complemented by oral history interviews with librarians who worked in public libraries during the 1970s and 1980s.

Documents came from the following sources and repositories:

- personal archives
- archives of local libraries
- archives of central institutions like the Centre for Continuing Education (the institution that inherited the archive of the institution that oversaw the training of librarians)
- archive of the Ministry of Culture
- archive of the National Library of Romania (the institution that continued the work of the Central State Library, but under a different name).

I also analysed documents about public libraries that were produced by institutions such as county and central level cultural and educational committees. These documents anchor in printed documents the voices of librarians that I interviewed. I conducted, coded and analysed 28 oral-history interviews that focused on librarians' understanding of their profession, and on details about the everyday practices in public libraries at that time. I conducted the interviews in four different counties across Romania, in libraries of different sizes (county libraries, branches of county libraries, city libraries, and rural libraries). In the process of finding the interviewees I was helped by people who were still working in many county libraries. For the selection of interviewees, I used the snowball sampling method.

While the documents presented the policies and the settings within the national system of public libraries, the interviews were essential in understanding the professional practices that were common in public libraries in the era. Because of the methods employed, the paper is able to detail specific ways in which library services became focused solely on book collections and ignored the public's needs.

## The system of Romanian public libraries: A communist legacy

The early history of Romanian libraries resembles, to a certain extent, the history of other European libraries. It began with the first institutionalization of libraries within monasteries (starting from the 15th century) and in princely courts (16th century) and continued with the creation of school libraries (beginning in the 19th century). In the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries Romanian libraries have played a significant part in defining national identity and in educating the populace (Anghelescu, 2000; Buluţă, 2000). Library development in modern Romania was started with the creation of school libraries and continued with the creation of a network of public libraries and the opening of the Romanian National Library. Between the World Wars, the Royal Foundation 'Prince Carol' invested in local cultural houses that hosted public libraries in rural areas and thereby initiated the widespread implementation of this type of institution throughout the country (Buluţă, 2000; Paliu, 1970: 292). The history of libraries on Romanian territory suggests a strong influence of French cultural models. The dramatic changes of the middle of the 20th century, however, instituted in Romania, just like in other Eastern Bloc countries, a new model: the soviet library model (Anghelescu, 2000: 244; Sroka, 2000: 106).

The Communist Party came to power in 1945, and throughout its internal changes, it maintained an open interest in cultural policies that contributed to an effective national system of cultural institutions that were helping spread the official political views. Institutions and artistic manifestations (like theatres, live shows, cinema, libraries, archives), publishing houses and media outlets were all under the strict political control (Petcu, 2005). There were however different approaches in how this control was set within each institution and was used to serve the Party's needs.

The system of public libraries initiated before World War II became centralized and grew vigorously during the Romanian communist regime. This holds true for all public libraries – named and counted as such during the communist regime
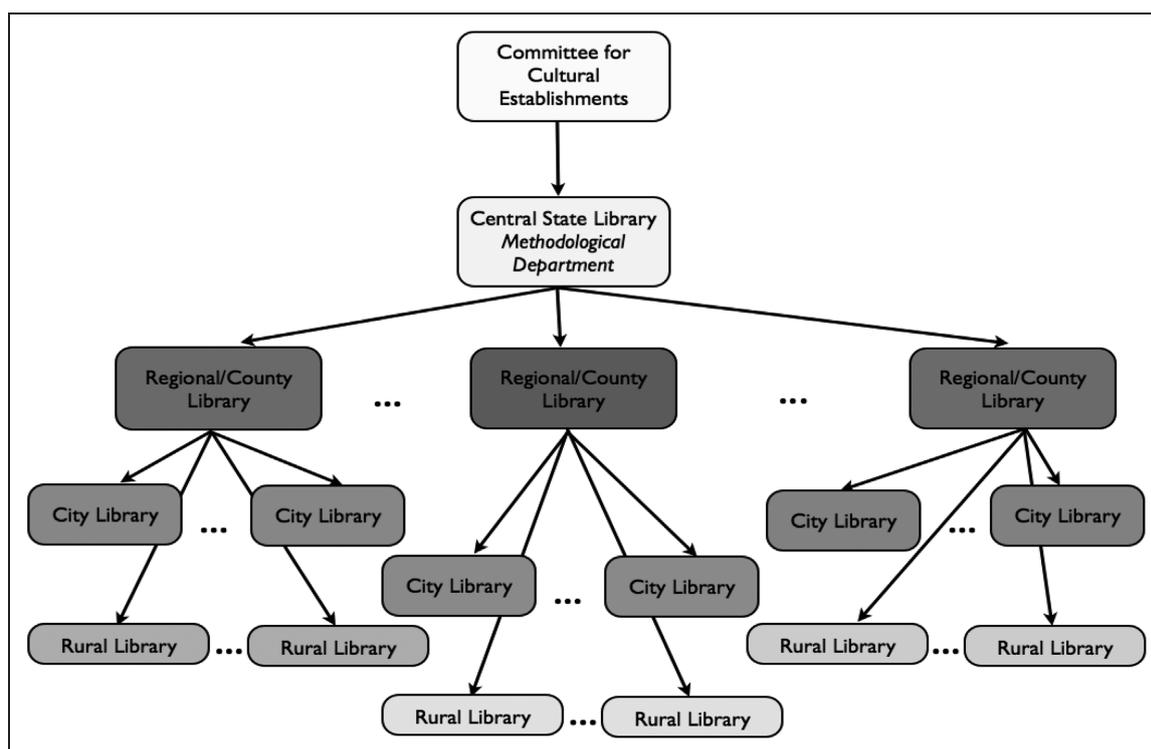
**Figure 1.** Pyramidal structure of the professional support within the public library system.

(Direcţia Centrală de Statistică, 1971, 1987). Libraries organized in craftsman's cooperatives and union libraries were considered public for statistical purposes but were not professionally connected with the legally defined public library network (Mătuşoiu and Dinu, 2001: 140). The focus of this study is on public libraries that existed at local, regional and national level and were connected in a national system through national policies.

The systematic effort to create institutional support for the communist regime included direct and methodical investments in libraries. That required for public libraries to be developed and remodelled as part of the national cultural system according to the ideology of the new party. Starting with 1949, public libraries became part of the functioning frame for the printing and circulation of books.[1] In this frame libraries were important actors that received books through centralized/regional acquisition procedures and donation of books that had been confiscated by the state institutions in the first decades of the regime. At the same time, a 1951 decision[2] called for libraries to contribute to developing 'the interest in reading, the wide distribution of books, and the satisfaction of the masses' thirst for culture' (Mătuşoiu and Dinu, 2001: 23).

Public libraries were institutions coordinated by local political and administrative actors that participated in the propagation of the socialist agenda. Slowly but steadily the library system grew into a centralized, hierarchical system (see Figure 1). With the creation of the Central State Library (BCS) in 1955 at the top of the public library pyramid was placed an institution that had professional/methodical responsibilities for the other libraries in the system (Bercan, 1996: 5). The BCS had a Methods Service Department that was created to provide professional assistance to all public libraries. In the pyramid structure of the library system the regional and district libraries responded directly to the supervision and control of BCS and, at the same time, coordinated the smaller libraries in their area (Anghelescu, 2000: 296). These libraries also had methods service responsibilities to rural libraries from communes in their district[3] or region.[4]

The pyramidal structure of the public library system created through the legal regulations of the first two decades of the communist regime remained in place until the 1990s. Each library had multiple political, administrative and professional authorities that supervised it and influenced its activity and existence. This pyramidal and centralized structure allowed for national policies to be implemented in cascades (with the help of local party and cultural authorities). That made the implementation of policies very effective. At the same time, because the whole communist apparatus was based on the type of connections that

existed at each level of the hierarchy, in the case of public libraries this structure allowed also for local or regional contexts to influence the degree of commitment presented by the librarians in implementing the policies. That is to say that, in the public library system, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, there was room for locally adapted solutions in implementation of national policies.

The 1960s were considered a period of the 'relative liberalization' of education, culture and the arts in Romania (Hitchins, 2015: 293). This reality was drastically changed after the leadership of the regime imposed on both the party and the country at large new restrictions on national culture. Following a visit to a number of socialist/communist Asian countries (China, North Korea, Vietnam, Mongolia) in 1971 Ceauşescu called for a Cultural Revolution in his 'July Theses' (Cioroianu, 2005: 143; Tismăneanu, 2003: 241). The proposed changes were intended to create a stronger presence for the party in all cultural and educational activities by using the arts and literature, media and print production for the promotion of socialist activism and reflecting the socialist realities of ordinary people (Ceauşescu, 1971: 14). The political changes that took place in the early 1970s brought numerous changes in how the state approached propaganda and public education. The party's strategy was to increase its coordination, command and control of education, culture and the arts by forcing these fields to better conform with the ideology and 'shared' beliefs of socialism (Comisia Prezidenţială pentru Analiza Dictaturii Comuniste din România, 2007: 502; Mocănescu, 2017; Oancea, 2007). This 'cultural revolution' put culture and art in a position of underfunding and strict over-regulation. Through various changes in library administration and education, administrative support for the development of the national system of public libraries was also put on hold for decades.[5] Through severe reduction of financial support (especially by reducing the number of paid rural librarians) and by closing formal library and information science (LIS) education opportunities, the public library system failed to develop. Moreover, this also meant that the system was isolated from the international practices and could not keep up with the professional changes that took place within LIS of those decades.

## Education

From the beginning of the communist regime, the interest of the Communist Party in the role of librarians was predominantly political. A 1951 ministerial decision to enhance the activity of the system of libraries states that librarians should meet the required 'political, cultural, and professional qualifications' (Mătuşoiu and Dinu, 2001: 23). Placing the 'professional' requirement at the end of this list of qualifications and highlighting 'political' and 'cultural' at the forefront signals the importance given to library professionalism. Throughout the first decades of development of the system of public libraries during communist regime the need for qualified people to work in the newly opened libraries was recognized and addressed.

The classical library education programme that existed before the 1950s focused on bibliographical description and collection organization and conservation. (Simonescu, 1971; Şerbănuță, 2017b). The professors who taught at the LIS formal education programmes that existed before 1971 (at high school or undergraduate level) were educated in this spirit.

Among the short-lived programmes that existed at the time, the Post-High School for Librarians was a well-integrated programme in the communist apparatus. To enter this programme there was a national selection process and social and merit scholarships were offered to students. Passing the entry exam ensured the future librarian not only a place in the programme, but also a job upon graduating.

In a couple of decades there were frequent changes to the programmes available for educating librarians (Table 1). The administrative and legal efforts made to sustain the growth of the national network of public libraries included an interest in LIS education. The variety of options in LIS education created in the 1950s and the 1960s ceased to exist after 1974 (Şerbănuță, 2017b). After that year, until 1989, public librarians could only participate in short-term trainings if they wanted to develop professionally.

For libraries to contribute to the party-imposed building of socialism, they needed to continue to train their staff accordingly and thus created a 'national scale legal and organized system for recycling [training] that was a combination between improvement of political training for all working staff and improvement of specialized training that was aware of the large social and cultural information [available]' (Drăgan, 1980: 341). Starting in the early 1970s, a five-year training plan for librarians began to be implemented with the help of the Central State Library and some of the regional/county libraries. Librarians were expected to go through some training programme every five years or so. While the documented records of these library training sessions are thin (as the archive of the centre responsible for the training of people working in cultural institutions was partially destroyed) we know that, for the librarians

**Table 1.** Library education programmes in Romania until 1990.

| Starting Year | Ending Year | Name of the library education programme | Observations |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1925 | 1950 | Practical School for archivist-paleographer | Section on librarianship[10] (2 years) |
| 1932 | 1960 | Library Science course, University of Bucharest | Conference (4 years, 1 class/year) |
| 1932 | 1939 | Library Science course, University of Cluj | Docent (conference)[11] (4 years 1 class/year) |
| 1951 | 1956 | Technical School for Library in Bucharest | High-school level (4 years) |
| 1956 | 1963 | Technical School for Cultural Activities, Bucharest | Reorganization of the Technical School for Library High-school level (2 years) |
| 1953 | 1958 | Library Science section within the Faculty of Philology, University of Bucharest | Bachelor Degree (4 years) |
| 1960 | 1970 | Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, University of Bucharest | Library-related courses (optional) |
| 1963 | 1970 | Faculty of Philology of Pedagogical Institute in Bucharest | Bachelor Degree (3 years) |
| 1969 | 1974 | Post-High-School for Librarians | 2 years programme |

interviewed, this training was part of their professional development and, as such, intrinsic to their professional life.

The training programme in 1972 included training for four distinct groups: rural librarians, regional trainers (that were librarians working in public libraries), librarians (non-trainers) and library directors (Iordachescu, 1972: 405). Resembling a 'train the trainer' format, the programme employed trainers from former LIS programmes in Bucharest but also from larger public libraries. The topics covered in a five-year training plan covered cataloguing, classification, activities for the public, or relations with readers, included a final project and required practical work in a nearby library (Şerbănuţă, 2017a: 106). This training programme was insufficient to respond to the need for up-to-date professional training (Şerbănuţă, 2017b: 632) and so, learning the profession was done also through a more direct local process: apprenticeship.

Interviewees that were hired in public libraries in the late 1970s and 1980s remember getting a job they knew nothing about. They had to learn on their own and take advantage of the guidance and mentorship their colleagues offered. The situation was more dramatic for librarians in rural or small city libraries where librarians did not have anyone around to guide their initiation in the profession. As one rural librarian remembers:

> At the beginning, it was very hard. To be alone in the library, with no one around, 60km away from the nearest larger library that could coordinate your work – it was terribly hard. Learning from my own mistakes, that is how I learned most – from mistakes. (VB – city librarian)

Lacking transportation or budget for professional development activity, the small libraries were dependent on the county or municipal libraries for Methods service and professional guidance. And at least some of the larger libraries were providing that support:

> They taught me this profession. They came from Galaţi and taught me and together we organized this library twice. They stayed here for two weeks. They commuted [sometimes]and [other times they] stayed here for weeks. A team of five people came here every day, and this is how we succeeded. (VB – city librarian)

The colleagues who helped new librarians were those with professional experience and those who, in most cases, had completed their LIS education in the early decades of the regime. Directors boasted about how many people with LIS education they had on staff, or that a certain head of department was very good, adding that she graduated from a certain LIS programme. These LIS graduates were important actors in the informal practice of learning the public librarian profession. Through apprenticeship, more experienced librarians mentored and helped inexperienced librarians. This practice allowed more experienced librarians to teach the practices they knew but left the new/inexperienced librarians with increasingly little room for professional/intellectual inquiry. Public library work sustained itself through the sharing of not only good practices (Şerbănuţă and Chiţimia, 2014a, 2014b), but also unquestioned and problematic practices (Şerbănuţă, 2017a: 259). Moreover, the shared practices of communist public libraries were left unquestioned until years after the fall of communist regime.

The severe reduction of financial support for libraries in the 1970s and 1980s influenced significantly how librarianship as a profession developed and how library services had to be adapted to the economic and political realities of the times. As librarianship was isolated from the international community and the centralized system of public libraries lost support and power through economic cuts and limited staff education, the practice of the profession was altered in some significant ways. In what follows I will focus on the policies and mechanisms that established library collections as the main reason for the existence of libraries.

In the absence of a free publishing market, librarians were forced to engage in propaganda for the Communist Party and disregard the reading and informational needs of the public. Librarians focused on services that involved the public in minimal ways and the development of library collections was often done only with the size of the collection in mind.

## Communist libraries and their collections

Libraries in communist society were intended 'to serve as an instrument to ensure the propagation of advanced socialist science and technology, of Marxist-Leninist doctrine, and of the principles of dialectic materialism' (Gruia, 1960: 27). These characteristics were inspired by soviet librarianship and were perceived as contributing factors in support of the communist education of the masses. In the first part of the 20th century, soviet policies in Russia introduced the term 'massovaia biblioteka,' or 'library for the masses' (Richards et al., 2015: 38) and imposed the concept of 'partiinost,' or the propagation of party ideology, at the core of soviet librarianship (Knutson, 2008: 10). The development of libraries for the people was one part of the process of establishing control under the communist regime. Among the characteristics of this development, the focus on collection organization and growth was central. As I present various facets of this focus on collection, I will also discuss the ways in which this focus affected the profession of librarianship.

From the beginning, the very reason for the existence of public libraries was for their collections to serve as resources for the education of the masses: 'The book collection of a library constitutes the golden collection of socialist culture' (Comitetul pentru aşezămintele culturale din RPR, 1952: 7). There were two major emphases associated with these collections: controlling the collection content (by cleansing and restricting access to them) and gathering the collections (with approved books). These aspects developed together through time and defined the activity of public libraries.

### Control of collection content

As efforts to build up a public library system emerged early in the history of the regime, there were simultaneous efforts to 'clean' the collections of pre-World War II libraries (Corobca, 2010: 39). In many libraries throughout the country balancing official requests to cleanse collections with local efforts to save library collections was difficult and depended on local librarian participation (Corobca, 2010: 39; Nazare, 2013: 224).

A 1951 decision guided library activity, including the purging of collections, and described how library collections should be arranged to accommodate the separation of collections based on their content.[6] A public library collection was separated into:

> 'Free' collection – 'printings that, regardless of the era they were published in, do not oppose the ideology of the working class and are useful for socialist education, for the cultural enrichment of the masses';
> 'Documentation' collection – 'printings that, without being hostile, do not fit the Marxist-Leninist ideology but, because of their content, can be useful in the documentation process of scholars and researchers';
> 'Special' collection – 'with printings that have as a whole or in part, an antagonistic, fascist, undemocratic, anti-communist character but are needed for documentation on some issues by a category of researchers' (Corobca, 2010: 372).

This collection reorganization created in public libraries a structured collection where access was limited to parts of the collection. A 1963 evaluation of the majority regional public libraries illustrates that 'some libraries have not fully operated the ejection of books from public collections, as some titles were still not only searchable in the library catalogue but some were available in the collections as well' (Corobca, 2010: 374). Even though more research needs to go into fully understanding this process, through this decision, public libraries, while taking care of the books (in one of their prescribed collections) began to limit the access to these books based on political requirements.

### Gathering the collections

The collection development of public communist libraries was rarely determined or performed by librarians. The communist regime, through its control of the national library system and of the systems of publishing and distribution of books, determined

collection development in public libraries (Anghelescu, 2000: 242).

The initial working model for library collection development was created in 1952 through the State Fund for Books (FSC).[7] This central national provider of books for newly created libraries also served as a collector and distributor of book collections that the communist state nationalized in the 1950s (Regneală, 1997). This model made it possible for new libraries to receive their initial collections and develop them with very little professional involvement. Regulations for libraries included instructions on exactly what books to purchase and how. Dedicated budgets and national mechanisms were put in place to assure that public libraries' collections developed according to the Party's plans.

In 1957 the procedure of how public libraries were to be supplied with books was put into effect.[8] Regional collectors were partners of public libraries in their relationship with the General Direction of Publishing and Book Distribution (DGPT). Libraries would receive pre-ordered sheets from collectors that they would have to fill out and send back in 15 days. Based on their knowledge of local and regional needs and on their methods service role, libraries were encouraged to revise these pre-orders. They could add extra titles for the collections of new libraries and add or delete titles for rural or cultural houses' library collections. The centralized request went to DGTP. Libraries could receive ready-for-use copies and, when needed, works that were pre-bound. Moreover, to ensure that libraries had access to bookbinding facilities in as many regions as possible, local paper producers were directed to have binding tools available for repairing books from any type of library.

The control and centralized management of library collections also continued for publications coming from outside the country. For those publications, the Ministry of Culture would prepare lists of titles and a number of copies to be acquired and sent to libraries. Out of the imported titles, no more than 40% of those in the language of national minorities (Hungarian, German) would reach public libraries (Mătușoiu and Dinu, 2001: 66). These regulations from 1950s and 1960s that refer to development of library collections illustrate that collection development in public libraries was secured through the local administration and conducted only under party supervision.

This interest in collection development of public libraries continued also after the Cultural Revolution of the early 1970s. County libraries' first role according to the 1986 regulation of public libraries was to 'collect books, periodicals, and other graphic and audio/visual documents with encyclopedic content'
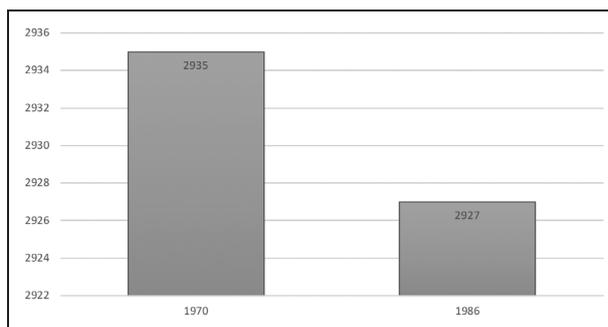


**Figure 2.** Number of public libraries in 1970 and 1986.
*Source*: Direcţia Centrală de Statistică. (1971, 1987).
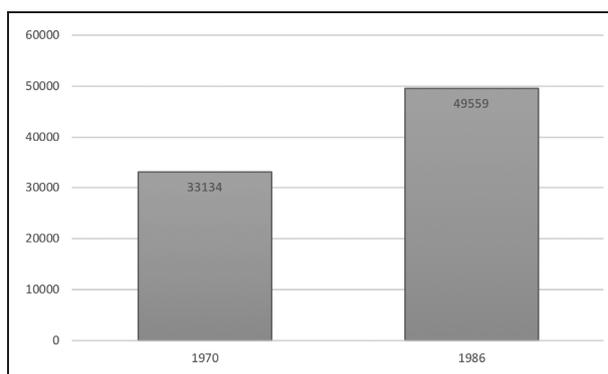


**Figure 3.** Number of volumes in public libraries in 1970 and 1986.
*Source*: Direcţia Centrală de Statistică (1971, 1987).

(Consiliul Culturii şi Educaţiei Socialiste, 1986: 5). Moreover, county libraries had among their responsibilities the coordination of collection development for smaller libraries in their counties (Consiliul Culturii şi Educaţiei Socialiste, 1986: 7). The era was characterized by constant growth in the development of public library collections, mediated by county libraries as part of the larger publishing scheme.[9]

While the overall number of public libraries was not significantly smaller (eight libraries were reported as closed in a16-year interval, the size of the collection grew significantly (with almost 30%) as is illustrated in Figures 2 and 3. At the same time the number of users dropped significantly. Figure 4 illustrates the drop with one-third in the number of users.

This statistical data shows tendencies in the system of public libraries. In spite of limited support provided to the public library system, the development of collections continued to be not only prioritized but also successful. Moreover, the formal procedures of book acquisition continued to be encouraged in the system.

Larger libraries became directly responsible for collection development. They were thus expected to 'be responsible for the completion of the book collections of public or rural libraries in their region'
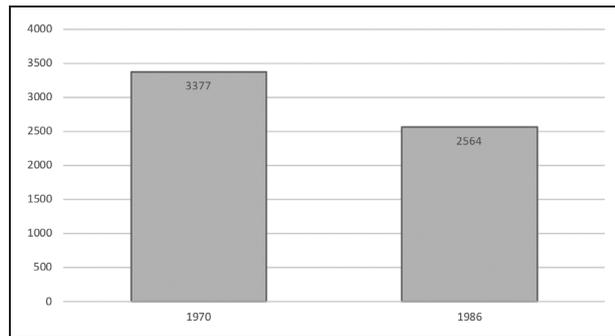
**Figure 4.** Number of users in public libraries in 1970 and 1986.
*Source*: Direcţia Centrală de Statistică. (1971, 1987).

(Mătuşoiu and Dinu, 2001: 108). This responsibility for library collections extended to verifying the ways in which the libraries under supervision acquired books (Mătuşoiu and Dinu, 2001: 113). In a censored and controlled publishing market, libraries had limited options or acquiring and working with books. In addition to this, whenever a library decided on what to purchase, the process ensured that their requests met party requirements.

### Collection development and librarians: Policies and practices

The collection development tasks are at the core of the library profession: 'Collection development refers to decisions concerning what is and what is not collected, what is merely stored but not catalogued (and hence made intellectually accessible), and what is thrown away' (Brown and Davis-Brown, 1998: 23). In the case of Romanian public libraries, these decisions were not made entirely by librarians. For small libraries, the city and county libraries would decide what would be bought. For county and city libraries, they would express their desire about what to buy but could not be sure of what they would eventually get.

> Another dissatisfaction presented by librarians was the lack of editorial plans. They do not receive all of them in appropriate time. That is why, what is bought is sent their way and they cannot compare what they preordered with what entered the library. (Mureteanu, 1981)

While the theoretical knowledge behind library collection development policies and practices existed (Păpurică, 1973), librarians, for the most part, had little agency in controlling their library's collections. The structure of public library collection directives was meant to form encyclopedic collections but the selection of books for collections was determined either by someone else in the system or by the priorities of central bookstores. Librarians did not really have a voice in what books they collected.

Collection development decisions were often referred (partially or totally) to librarians from larger libraries. In this case, the routine practice was to have books delivered directly to the smaller libraries rather than the libraries themselves making decisions on what to buy based on the resources and the offers available. As such, professional involvement in one of the most important tasks in librarianship was designated to advisors from other libraries. This introduced an important vulnerability in the public library system. It looks as if the final decisions of what was bought for public libraries' collections was rarely in the hands of librarians. As larger libraries would be responsible for the collection development of smaller libraries and as larger libraries often did not receive the books requested, a case can be made that libraries were not in control of their collections. While their collections were growing in numbers, the librarians' task of providing books for the public was narrowed during the communist regime to simply providing books that they received as a result of the mechanisms of the publishing system.

During interviews, however, librarians talked also about some practices they had related to book acquisition. One additional option for collection development was direct acquisition from booksellers and book deposits that were outside the central publishing market. Regardless of the pressure to buy party-supported books, librarians made the effort to also buy books in which they were interested (for example, local bibliographies). It was possible to get books from book deposits, but this was not a widespread practice in the national system of public libraries:

> . . . we brought many books from the national reserve where confiscated books from great people were stored. There were three main deposits where we would get books. (DP – county librarian, director)

Besides central bookstores and book deposits, antique bookstores were places where even foreign books could be purchased by larger libraries that could access money from the local budget for these types of acquisitions. These were public deposits created after the nationalization process. Even though these deposits were available for institutions like libraries, access was not easy and they were not widely used because they were not part of the set acquisition system for libraries:

Before the Revolution, [we] bought mostly French books from antique bookstores. Few German or English – those came in time. This is how we would fill our book fund. (VB – county librarian, cataloguing)

There were no clear, written collection development policies, just accepted practices and general guidelines like:

At that time, there was an order to keep a balance between fiction and nonfiction. (NS – city librarian)

The heads of libraries or the employees responsible for filling out book orders based on the yearly plan did talk about some general guidelines that they used when ordering books. The smaller the library, or the further the librarian from the decision-making position, the more limited were his/her choices in this process. What books could one choose? When would a given book reach them? Which titles would get to the library? These were all questions that were hard to answer. As a response to the unknown context in which collection development was operating, librarians could influence how many books were ordered. Based on their take on the local community's needs, librarians would aim at focusing on the quantity of books:

One copy of almost all books [ordered] would be received. [ . . . ] In the second part of the year the [publishing] plans for next year came out. Everything was well organized. Now, of course the editorial production could not be controlled [by us]. But, in our branch, the books [ordered] would come the following year. It would take some time . . . but [books] would get [here]. (AT – county librarian)

To this day, the investments in library collection development in those decades are remembered as crucial for establishing the foundation for present holdings. Ensuring a rich collection was the primary (and sometimes only) measure of a library's success.

Even though collections were expected to be encyclopedic, there were topics that were requested by the public that libraries knew about but had difficulty supplying and offering. These topics were related to school bibliographies, volumes with exercises, mystery and adventure books, as well as books (of authors) that were recognized at the time as potentially subversive to the regime (Şerbănuţă and Chiţimia, 2014b: 432).

Books with classical literature were in high demand. And they were not published very often. [ . . . ] Classical and adventure books or espionage, which were published at the time, were [circulating]. People were

looking for things like that, to incite and attract them. Then there were the specialized books that were valued at the time. So, the good books were the novels of well renowned writers, not of those that came overnight. At least when *Cel mai iubit dintre pământeni* (*The Most Beloved of Earthlings*) and *Shōgun* came out, these were titles that you cannot forget, how people fought for them. (MP – county librarian, worked on bibliobus)

When discussing collection development practices, librarians mentioned what genres they would have liked to be able to provide to readers. Since few non-Romanian books entered the library, the size of foreign literature collections was not meeting the needs of the public. Even though librarians wanted to develop their collections in that direction, they had little agency to do that. If efforts were made to get at least a copy of a requested book, that book became part of reading room collections. Providing access to a book, even confined in the reading room of the library, was a better alternative to not having access at all:

We were having a hard time with universal literature, with books in English. English professors were looking for them for their exams on jobs or promotions. They were looking for English literature authors and they were very hard to find. These titles were in reading rooms but those collection were not circulating [ . . . ]. (VC – country librarian, worked with the public)

Due to their limited understanding of international literary markets, and the control over publishing markets in Romania, librarians often felt powerless:

We did not have that much information at our disposal to realize [what was going on] . . . we were used to what was offered to us. Besides, even when we asked for more we would not be given more. For example, I asked for a popular romance novel, or for adventure books – what I would have given to be able to offer them [to the public]. But even the publishers did not [have them]. (VB – city librarian)

There was, however, a feeling that library collections were inadequate to meet patron needs.

The inclusion of party propaganda books in library collections was non-negotiable. These books would arrive at county libraries and be distributed to public libraries in the area together with other acquisitions, but in a quantity that, from the beginning, exceeded real need:

For pupils, the Romanian literature [that we received] was very good. We would receive some foreign literature but far less. But we had two packages with

Romanian and foreign literature and two packages with [political] Oeuvres. (VB – city librarian)

Collection development in public libraries contributed to significant quantitative improvement of collections but, for the most part, left librarians powerless in assuring collection quality based on the general public's requests. How collections were formed, how they were talked about, how they were cared for, how their development was addressed by the professionals, are all aspects that highlight how collections were and remained the reason of existence for public libraries. Librarians' training was mostly developed around working with the books (organizing, cataloguing, arranging on the shelf).

While reducing libraries only to their role as deposits for books is not new, in the case of Romanian libraries, they were understood as deposits (since even closed libraries were counted as functioning libraries) and supported to be just that (as budget for books was covered).

At the same time, the Party claimed that they were doing something else, that they were supporting the continual development of cultural and educational institutions (Jinga, 1975: 80). The book continued to be placed in the centre of library activity; however, at the same time libraries were, by the end of the 1980s, rarely engaging the public in their activities. In the absence of strong evidence that the general public did engage with the library collections, public libraries were, for the public as well as for the central and local authorities, no more than collections of books that were not expected to circulate that much. The library users and their needs, non-traditional collections (vinyl discs, slides), and building instruments that facilitated access to collections even though they existed were not common interests throughout the system of public libraries (Şerbănuţă, 2017a: 245).

## When the public is not part of collection development

For 'satisfying the information, reading, and study needs' of the population, libraries were expected to provide, besides collections, free-of-charge reading and lending rooms, children's branches and regular branches. As part of their services, county libraries were to contribute to the 'bibliographical information and documentation of social-democratic activity, research, and production' (Consiliul Culturii şi Educaţiei Socialiste, 1986: 7). In addition, they were expected to provide activities related to 'book and library propaganda' and to prepare patrons to better use the library as well as the library's tools and information resources.

What happened in libraries, however, was different. The large collections continued to grow while the expected services for the public did exist, but their efficiency was questionable. Libraries were made to look as if they were fulfilling the expectations for which they were created but failed to be sustainable outside the communist support system.

### Divergent statistics

After being developed in the previous decades, the public library system continued to exist until 1989 with little regulations imposed on it. The figures describing the system of public libraries illustrate that, in the last decades of the communist regime in Romania, the collection sizes continued to grow. What was curious to observe is that the overall tendency of collections to grow was paired with a decrease in the number of users (Figure 4).

The decrease in the number of users was a consequence of the change in focus after the Cultural Revolution. For the national, county and municipal libraries there was no other systemic measure that impeded or helped their activity. However, there was a renouncement of full-time paid librarians in rural libraries that happened in the early 1970s as a consequence of the Cultural Revolution. This was the most severe change produced in the system. As these libraries were considered open for the public and continued to run, even though they were run by part-time teachers in their free time, they were reported as actually being used more than in the early 1970s. Librarians interviewed recognized inflating statistics for circulation as a generalized practice in the 1980s (Şerbănuţă, 2017a: 115). As such while we know that there were about the same number of libraries with larger collections and fewer users, we cannot rely on trustworthy statistic evidence to say how these collections were used. The librarians' memories cannot provide statistical relevance.

Nevertheless, the continued investment in developing collections that were used far less than in the 1970s signals a systemic problem. Printed materials were added to the collections, but they were used by fewer users. The policies and mechanisms put in place by the communist regime for developing library collections continued to function until 1990s regardless of their effectiveness.

### Difficult users

While policies and practices during communism were not aimed at satisfying the public's needs, there are examples of individual librarians trying to meet these

needs. Librarians made efforts to bring together books for the public. Often, librarians had little power to respond to specific reading requests, thus having the feeling that patrons were 'hard to please'. However, these efforts were made at the individual level:

> Especially before 1989, when I would do a book presentation [to children], I always tried to take the copy from the [Reading room] collection, in order to present the most special books. After the reading, patrons would come and ask for the book. [But] we did not have that book for lending home. Many times, this happened to me: I would present the book but that title was not [available] for lending. (AM – county children's librarian)

The development of public library collections in the last two decades of the communist regime was more quantitative than qualitative. That is, attention given to the number of books in collections far exceeded that given to what titles and genres were available in collections:

> Quantitatively there were enough books compared to now. [ . . . ] Qualitatively I would have wanted more. For example, children would have wanted to read *One Thousand and One Nights* and we did not have it. We received a lot of books with nationalistic poetry. And kids in school were learning about these things . . . Anyway, we satisfied better the needs [of the public] than we do now. (VB – city librarian)

In development policies, especially, the system's structure offered financial support but at the same time disempowered library directors, contributing to a system that was slow to respond to other publishing market schema:

> We were used to receiving, to being told even what we had to do, what they wanted us to do. After 1989, it seemed like we were no one's. (VB – city librarian)

Considering the way library collections developed, a crucial but systematically ignored factor was the general public. The public's interest reached librarians, but seldom influenced library collection development practices. On the contrary, public requests were silenced if not ignored in acquisition practices while propaganda books invariably reached library shelves. These books were more required to be present in the library than to actually circulate:

> And we had to arrange libraries according to shelving guidelines. The higher-ups from the culture [committee] used to check up on us to make sure shelves were aligned and in keeping with strict guidelines: Karl

> Marx . . . etc., that's all they knew . . . books had to be nicely aligned . . . they didn't look at the [classification] codes. (MP – county librarian, worked in a branch)

Public libraries were expected to serve the general public. However, collection development policies and practices reveal that they were not working toward that goal in practice. Librarians had little power to assure that their collections would be enriched with genres requested by the public. Young readers who were looking for adventure books or comics and elderly Hungarian minority readers who wanted to read novels in their native language were 'difficult' patrons simply because the library did not carry the books they requested. Despite their efforts, librarians had little to no agency for acquiring books that would satisfy their readers.

## Propaganda for library users

Propaganda was recognized by the communist state as a political educational technique. However, for researchers of the era, communist propaganda was considered incoherent because of lacking 'resonance between the official messages about everyday life it diffused and the bleak realities of daily experience that people lived' (Kligman, 1998: 118). The divide that is recognized in the literature between the state and the people becomes more nuanced when the people's everyday activity is expected to be exactly that propaganda activity. The relation between propaganda and the public libraries is a direct one; the librarians had to assume a public position about this relation. The official position in which the state placed libraries was that of propaganda tool (Şerbănuţă, 2017a: 258). This role was not fully recognized by the librarians interviewed in this study. The public libraries did not challenge their expected roles but rather accommodated their services to leave the impression that they were accomplishing them. Librarians recognized that readers could be influenced in the direction desired by the Party through reading certain literature. Nonetheless, I found no signs that librarians engaged in the active promotion of such literature. Quite the opposite, librarians were keen on talking about and recommending 'good books' to the public. Novels like Marin Preda's *The Most Beloved of Earthlings* (*Cel mai iubit dintre pământeni*) or James Clavell's *Shōgun* were recognized by librarians as books that the public was interested in reading. And those books were not the ones promoted by the party.

What surfaced however was an active resistance to providing services to the general public and a

special attention paid to services for various types of publics. School age population, party representatives, engineers and technicians are just a few examples of library users that were offered special attention by the librarians of the era. While it may be beneficial to differentiate groups within the public in order to provide targeted services for those groups, this kind of differentiation becomes problematic when basic library services like access to collection are also provided selectively. Indeed, the situation becomes precarious when the librarian provides exclusive access to particular services for certain populations.

The propaganda work expected from public libraries, instead of disseminating through the library services to reach the public, imploded within the library activities and affected the professional behaviour of librarians. The propaganda that public libraries engaged in was not towards the public but rather towards librarians as they became, without aiming to, promoters of unequal, selective access to information and knowledge. As a consequence, while not directly promoting the development of knowledge about the communist policies, they contributed to ignorance about the rest of the world.

Moreover, through the practices related to collection development and access, practices that existed in the libraries, the users became only rarely central to library policies and decisions. As such, the focus on books defined the core activities in communist public libraries.

## Conclusion

In early 1990s, while the book market escalated in size and the map of local administration and partners changed for libraries, the librarians panicked as they could not provide means to continue their collection development (Anghelescu, 2006: 438). As the publishing market was privatized and the mechanism of centrally run collection development was dismantled, the public librarians were left with small budgets to make acquisitions on their own. Without clear collection development policies and efficient practices, without experience in understanding the needs of the public, libraries were left alone to survive the hard transition to a free market economy and a participatory democracy.

Public librarians' practices related to collection development and to propaganda activities positioned books in the centre of library activity. In the last decades of the regime the state failed to show support for other services. In the early 1970s, formal library education was replaced by a national plan for professional training, rural librarians were replaced by local teachers who received small stipends, professional resources were greatly reduced and new libraries were seldom built and opened. The only permanence through all the changes in the public library system was the state's interest in the development of library collections. Even in the middle of severe economic restrictions the communist state supported the development of these collections.

As a consequence that profoundly influenced librarianship, librarians themselves placed books higher on their professional priorities than other values like the users' needs and inquiries. Now, more than two decades after the fall of communism, public librarians are struggling to re-learn how to pay attention to the needs of their public.

The reality of public libraries in Romania looks grim. The number of library users is low with only 7% of the whole population reported as using the public libraries and the number of libraries is continuously declining (National Institute of Statistics, 2017: 346). The connection between library services and the needs of communities is seldom part of the management plans and the national reports continue to favour the quantitative aspects of collections over qualitative results obtained at local level. Moreover, the new library services introduced in the last decades were most often influenced by outside the library support, as was the case with Biblionet Program (Diacenco, 2014).

While the current economical and socio-political context of Romania are different, the medium- and long-term consequences of exclusive focus on library collections are not only visible but also lead the practice in the profession. As the values of librarianship as a profession have been defined through systemic pressure in the communist decades it is unrealistic to expect a self-reevaluation and reposition of the librarianship profession on its own. That is why sharing of good practices and the values that are held by the profession is needed to continue to be discussed at international level.

## Notes

1. Decree 17/1949.
2. Decision 1542/1951 of the Ministers' Council, the most influential legal structure made for the Romanian library system (Regneală, 1997).
3. Methods service was expected to 'direct, control and provide professional assistance to public libraries in the district in all areas of their work' (Mătuşoiu and Dinu, 2001: 113).
4. The methods service activity was to be coordinated by a special department but was to be done by librarians from all departments (Mătuşoiu and Dinu, 2001: 114, 120).
5. Law no.703 of 1973 established that the number of full-time librarians hired, the collection size and the number of branches was determined by the size of the population served by that library. The law was soon amended through Decree 189/1974 that drastically reduced financial support for all rural libraries.
6. The normative act was Decision 1542/1951.
7. In 1952 the State Book Fund (FSC) was created and it was closed and replaced in the 1970s by the Office of Supply and Services for libraries (OASB). The OASB was abolished in 1971 and some of its responsibilities were taken over by the Book Centre.
8. Order 105/1957 from the Minister of Culture.
9. To get a sense of the size of the publishing market in 1975: '3911 titles were published, with a print run of 65 million, 31 newspapers with a print run of 3560 thousand, and 444 magazines with a print run of 7.7 million' (Petcu, 2005: 89).
10. Preparing librarians for special and research libraries.
11. In Romanian Docenţă and Conferinţă.

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**Claudia Şerbănuţă** has a PhD and an MS in Library and Information Sciences from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her main research interest is understanding how information cultures are transformed by prolonged and severe information control and censorship practices. Claudia is also interested in understanding how memory and community institutions in Eastern European countries are adapting and contributing to the global information ecology of our times. Her publications include articles on information history and the usage of new technologies at the community level. For the past eight years she has been promoting library services that adapt to community needs and advocating for a meaningful transformation of the educational services offered by memory institutions. She has been a consultant on leadership and community development programmes for librarians in Romania and Republic of Moldova, and served as the interim manager of the National Library of Romania during 2014–2016. Claudia's current professional involvement includes implementing the CODE Kids national initiative in rural public libraries (as part of the Progress Foundation) and serving as a member on the executive board of the Romanian National Association of Public Libraries and Librarians.

# Croatian public libraries in time of crisis

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## Abstract

Croatian public libraries faced complex processes in society at the turn of the 20th into the 21st century – a time of transition and transformation in Croatia. During this period, Croatia shifted towards democracy and modernization. Its constitution (now seen as a geopolitical and cultural entity), extraordinary conditions of war disaster in the Homeland War 1991–1995, and conditions of the post-war period all presented unique challenges for public libraries in Croatia. In addition, Croatian libraries have also been influenced by characteristics of the information society that occurs trans-nationally and trans-societally (among all globalization processes and permeating all aspects of life with information and communication technology). Croatian libraries had to transform their traditional role of lending books and acting as cultural heritage institutions to follow international modern library trends in the information age as multifunctional information, educational, cultural and communication centres of their local communities. The aim of this article is to give a historical review of public libraries' accommodation to these turbulent changes in Croatian society, as well as in the world in the last few decades.

## Introduction

Croatian public libraries can be distinguished from libraries in many other countries by their tradition and history. Katalenac (2003: 14) argues that, due to significantly different historical circumstances, the driver for constituting Croatian public libraries was not primarily a social one connected with industrialization and democratization from the second half of the 19th century, as in the West, but a national one. Namely, Croatian public library tradition dates back to the 1830s when so called Illyrian reading rooms were founded within the framework of the Croatian National Revival. In opposition to Austro-Hungarian rule, their primary purpose was to nurture the Croatian language and culture, as well as national awakening and identity.

Stipanov (2015: 195–206) divides the foundation and development of public libraries in Croatia into three phases or _waves_. After the first wave with the founding of Illyrian reading rooms in the late 1830s and 1840s, the second phase or wave was in the period 1870s–1900 with the founding of Croatian reading rooms as a prominent library function. The third wave in the establishment and development of public libraries in Croatia happened at the beginning of the 20th century. The First World War interrupted and stopped this process. After the war, Croatia found itself in the newly created state, the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which was based on rigid centralism and unionism from its beginning with restriction of individual and national rights. According to Stipanov (2015: 207–208), that slowed down the establishment of public libraries in Croatia.

Mesić (1990: 87–100) states that public libraries in the true sense of the word – that is as, publicly funded institutions – appeared and spread in Croatia in the

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20th century. It was particularly the case after the Second World War when Croatia became one of six republics of the new socialist and federal state of Yugoslavia under the rule of the Communist Party. Stipanov (2015: 223–315) divides this period into three phases. In the first phase, 1945–1960, public libraries were established in great numbers, even in the smallest settlements, as an expression of post-war enthusiasm on one hand, as well as the broad enlightenment movement in the service of industrialization, and the ideological and political authentication of the new state, on the other hand. It was marked by a campaign: unplanned activities in founding public libraries, usually based on voluntary work, without a systematic plan and financial conditions for the work of public libraries.

In the second phase, 1960–1990, development of public libraries in Croatia was marked by professional standardization and following international trends in library development, especially after Croatia adopted the first Library and Librarianship Act in 1960. According to Stipanov (2015: 246), 1960 was a decisive year in Croatian librarianship, because the legal and professional framework for all types of libraries was set, and funding was strictly defined and regulated, as was their work, activities, role and tasks in society. The tasks of newly established central regional libraries were also determined in order to improve the library networking.

Stipanov (2015: 256–257) also points out that the status of public libraries in Croatia began to improve considerably after 1968, when special funds for culture were established in local government units. Attention was paid to the availability of a network of public libraries, professional staff, space and equipment. Despite the fact that the libraries in that period were more and more organized, spatially and technically equipped, and were increasing in trained staff and good experts, they were not sufficiently functional in networking on a national level that could influence their effectiveness (Stipanov, 2015: 264). The National and University Library in Zagreb has implemented computers and automated its work since 1980, as well as spreading education on the implementation of new information and communication technology in public libraries.

## Turbulent changes in Croatian society at the turn of the 20th into the 21st century

The turn of the 1980s into 1990s was marked by turbulent processes all over Europe. Cvjetičanin (1990: 20–24) states that it was during this period that the integration processes in Europe and the world were at a turning point. The ideas of socialism became devalued in all the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, where the communist parties were in power, with an overall structural crisis coupled with the fall of the party socialism model. The crisis also affected the concept of prosperity in Western European states where democracy has traditionally been in power. According to Županov (1990: 45–63), the crisis in Yugoslavia was perceived as the fall of a self-managing socialist model and the collapse of a common state of six republics (including Croatia) in 1990. The former socialist states all over Europe became so-called transitional societies.

According to Cifrić (1998: 48–52), the term *transition* in scientific and professional literature means accepting reforms as a mechanism of social change that occurs after the historical collapse of a society based on real socialism. Transition changes include transformation of the political structure (democracy), economic structure (ownership), social structure (social layers) and normative structure (values). The goal of these changes has been the establishment of a market economy, multi-party system and rule of law, i.e. the creation of a democratic society. The changes were not only about transition from an authoritarian regime to a liberal-democratic one, but also about transformation of a pre-modern society into a modern one.

According to some authors (Puljiz, 2001: 157–183; Štulhofer 1998a: 167, 1998b: 161–172, 2001: 219–252; Šundalić, 2001: 65–81), the phenomena accompanying the transition and transformation of Croatian society over the nearly last 30 years have been social insecurity and the growth of the poor, a large number of unemployed and non-salaried employees, unemployed young people between 25 and 34 years, the number of retirees compared to employed, social deprivation, social exclusion, the societal polarization of society, the growing amorality of society in economic transformation (an increase in organized crime, abuse of official position, etc.), moral vacuum or anomie and a low level of socio-cultural capital.

Unlike western countries where public libraries traditionally have an information and educational role, libraries in Croatia have been traditionally considered as cultural institutions. Therefore, they have also been influenced by the processes of cultural transition and the creation of a specific cultural policy transition. According to Lukić (2008: 11–27) there are problems and questions about subsidizing in culture, the transition from the model of democratization of culture to the model of cultural democracy, the importance of human resources, etc. The need for education in the field of cultural management, cultural policies and cultural studies has been emphasized, as well as

advocating for nonlinearity of the concept of culture, which takes into account the principles of cultural democracy and the orientation of cultural policies towards real consumers of cultural content.

## Adjustments of Croatian public libraries to societal changes

Major changes in the socio-political and economic life of Croatia in the 1990s have also influenced the work of public libraries and their collections. They have been starting to purchase more books on topics such as religion and Croatian national history, especially books of authors proscribed in the ideology of the former socialist regime. These were, for example, books of Croatian dissidents such as historian Franjo Tuđman, the first Croatian president, economist Marko Veselica, the poet Vlado Gotovac, writers Zlatko Tomičić and political emigrant Vinko Nikolić, a student leader in the Croatian national movement in 1971, Dražen Budiša, as well as books of the Catholic Church publisher 'Kršćanska sadašnjost'. At the same time, Marxist and socialist ideological literature was moved to shelves in the library storage facilities.

An important factor which affected all spheres of life, including the performance of public libraries in the first half of the 1990s, was marked by adjustment to extraordinary conditions of war disaster, the Homeland War 1991–1995 in Croatia, with extensive human casualties and material suffering. According to the Croatian Encyclopaedia (*Domovinski rat, Hrvatska enciklopedija*, 2017) it was a defensive war for the independence and integrity of the Croatian state against the aggression of the associated Greater Military forces – extremists in Croatia, the Yugoslav People's Army, and Serbia and Montenegro. Some libraries in Croatia experienced great starvation and destruction; as the war brought stagnation to the parts that had not been directly affected by military operations (Aparac-Gazivoda and Katalenac, 1993; *Hrvatske knjižnice na meti/Croatian libraries on target,* 1992). The libraries provided customer services despite their operating under conditions of a constant threat of war. Šapro-Ficović (2012) points out that libraries in the cities under siege were the only public, cultural institutions constantly working and serving users. Libraries existed and acted not only as information institutions but as a prop to people in their desire for a normal life, to support their hard times.

As the Croatian public libraries were marked by adjustment to extraordinary conditions of war disaster in the first half of the 1990s, so the second half of the last decade of the 20th century was marked by redefining the position and role of the Croatian public

libraries in society due to a number of changes in the immediate and wider environment. According to Stipanov (1998: 197) the most important changes were: completion of the Homeland War; the problems of transition; a general decline in living standards and national income; restoring and rearranging the library and its space in cities and small towns of Croatia, especially those that were destroyed and damaged in the war; a new administrative-territorial organization of Croatia; the introduction of new technologies and media in public libraries (Internet, CD-ROMs); and the new Act on Libraries (1997). Since the 1990s, the development of public libraries in Croatia was significantly influenced by the new territorial-administrative division of Croatia into 20 counties, plus the City of Zagreb, and about 500 administrative local units and self-government. Despite the Library Act from 1997 prescribing that every local community with over 5000 inhabitants has to establish a public library, implementation has been difficult because of the disproportion of financial and organizational resources in some local communities.

Based on this new territorial-administrative division of Croatia, a new network of public library county centres was established in 1995. The Croatian public library network consists today of 20 central county libraries and the Zagreb City Library system, the largest library in the country. Nine public libraries serve ethnic minorities. The Library Act was adopted in 1997 to improve librarianship in Croatia, as well as its approach to world trends. The goals were: availability of library materials to each inhabitant; the autonomy of the public libraries from other institutions (open universities, cultural centres, etc.); networking of libraries and establishment of the Croatian library system to make the effects of public libraries greater; increasing library funds (1.5–3 books per capita, depending on city or municipality size, on average 2 books); increasing population coverage in membership of libraries.

Extraordinary change has been related to computerization. Croatian public libraries started to use computers in library processing in the late 1980s. These first steps created preconditions for direct, fast and high-quality access to information, library funds of various types and databases. The increasing use of the most advanced communications and information technology has greatly affected future operations and organization of the work of Croatian public libraries.

According to some works (Kraš, 1998; Šegota-Novak and Turčin, 1997) topics that dominated Croatian public library discourse in the period 1995–2000 were: education of librarians to use new technologies (Internet, CD-ROMs); future of the

library profession; users in the 21st century; Croatian public libraries in the context of international library practices; new management tools in the public libraries of the new millennium.

In the first decade of the 21st century (2001–2010) a series of new themes entered the discourse of Croatian librarianship, influenced by social, cultural and political development on national and international levels. The key themes were: free access to information; change management in libraries; libraries as active factors in the Croatian accession to the European Union (EU); cultural tourism and the local library as an informative cultural centre and a promoter of local distinctiveness, cultural heritage and modernity.

That period was marked by the intense pre-activities for Croatian accession to the EU (which took place on 1 July 2013) and the public libraries' active information role in these activities. One of the first projects in Croatian public libraries financed by the EU was realized in the Fran Galović Public Library in Koprivnica in 2006. It was the service for blind and visually impaired persons in cooperation with the County Association of Blind Persons. According to Sabolović-Krajina (2007), the main activities in the project were procurement of special reading material and technical equipment for the print disabled, training of staff in delivering the new service, organization and delivery of educational and animation programmes for target groups, and promotion of the service. The aim of the project was to ensure a library service that would provide blind and visually impaired persons with better access to sources of knowledge and information in their local environment for the purposes of having better education and information, completing their formal education, obtaining professional qualifications, finding employment and contributing to the life of the community and society, in general, in a more valuable way.

The Ivan Goran Kovačić City Library of Karlovac was included in two EU projects (*Gradska knjižnica 'Ivan Goran Kovačić' Karlovac: EU projekti*). Project BeRi (Besede in rieči) was realized in cooperation with the one Slovenian library in the border area. Organized activities were courses for learning Slovenian and Croatian languages, exchange of education and cultural programmes, encouraging cross-border exchange of books between the two libraries involved in the project. Its second project, named Mobill, was based on purchasing two mobile library vehicles for the purpose of lifelong learning in rural communities of Karlovac County in Croatia and Una Sana Canton in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The City library of Vinkovci was the holder of the project 'Knjižnice za novo doba/Libraries for a new age' in the framework of the Cross-Border Programme Croatia–Serbia in which eight public libraries from Croatia and Serbia participated in 2012–2013 (*Gradska knjižnica Vinkovci: Knjižnice za novo doba*). Activities were based on the increasing of libraries' and librarians' capacities, education of marginalized social groups and development of intercultural network of libraries.

The Ivan Vidali City Library of Korčula participated in the project 'Library. I love it!' in partnership with libraries from Austria, Italy, Spain, the Czech Republic and Turkey in 2014 (*Gradska knjižnica 'Ivan Vidali' Korčula: Library. I love it*!). It was realized in the framework of the EU Grundtvig programme for lifelong learning of adults. Since 2017 this library has been participating in the project 'Migrate to library' together with libraries from Poland, Spain and Lithuania. Its aim is to support migrants – refugees, immigrants, repatriates. Activities are focused on learning how to effectively involve them in the community and how to work with adults and children.

The accession of Croatia into the EU has benefitted public libraries in providing opportunities to apply for alternative financial sources for library infrastructure and staff professional development, in addition to funding ensured by the local authorities and the Ministry of Culture. Librarians also have more opportunities for international cooperation and mobility – for example study visits to foreign libraries to increase their professional skills and competencies in work with library users to support community empowerment through engagement with local libraries.

As Horvat has stated (2008: 9–10), the transformations experienced by the umbrella international library organization, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions – IFLA, also affected Croatian librarianship. As a traditional professional association, IFLA has become an organization that wants to take social responsibility into the wider world community. In line with that, Croatian public libraries tried to undertake an active social role in their local communities. According to the proceedings of the symposium on socially inclusive library services (Sabolović-Krajina, 2018) there are examples of programmes and projects relating to the active social role of libraries in their local communities. For example, the City Library of Zagreb offers services to people experiencing homelessness and library services for refugees. This library also offers programmes for the deaf. The Fran Galović Public Library in Koprivnica, besides the services for the blind and visually impaired, provides programmes

that support Roma people, the most unprivileged group of citizens in the local community. The mobile library of Petar Preradović Public Library in Bjelovar provides services to prisoners. Rijeka City Library has launched a service, 'Library at your doorstep!', that provides book delivery to seniors and disabled citizens; who, due to their limited or non-existent mobility, cannot visit the library themselves.

The most significant changes that public libraries have experienced in the global information society, such as free access to information and the attitude towards customers, actual and potential, are also reflected in the Croatian public libraries. Katalenac (2003: 15) notes that public libraries have adopted a proactive, engaged treatment of all categories of users, which is conceptually based on the respect of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations.

In the second half of the first decade of the 21st century (2006–2010) new themes appeared in Croatian public librarianship: digitization of Croatian cultural heritage; library concepts and architecture; digital and virtual collections, electronic books and electronic journals, databases, a repository; public library – a place of research and lifelong learning; teens in the library; reading and literacy as basic competences in modern society; the role of library in the community.

Local digital initiatives (projects) involving public libraries in Croatia were undertaken in the framework of the national project 'Croatian Cultural Heritage' that has been led by the Ministry of Culture since 2006. For example, the Marko Marulić City Library Split (*Gradska knjižnica "Marko Marulić" Split: Zavičajna zbirka Spalatina*) has been digitizing books, periodicals, manuscripts, maps, notes, postcards, photographs and soundtracks from its local history collection and storing them in a repository called Spalatina.

Zagreb City libraries (*Knjižnice grada Zagreba: Digitalizirana zagrebačka baština*), as the largest public library system in Croatia, have the most extensive repository base of digitized local cultural heritage: graphic material, cartographic material, books, books for children and young people, notes, manuscripts, serial publications, small print, sound records. Zagreb City Libraries have been participating in the project 'Significant and Meritorious Croatians' together with the Library of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the National and University Library in Zagreb. It is a very important example of a thematic portal, because of the cooperation of various institutions in gathering and aligning metadata, rationalizing development costs, providing the foundation for joining other Croatian libraries, archives and museums, and creating new services for users.

From the beginning of the 2010s topics on the library as a place of inclusion and intercultural understanding; the library as a communication and multicultural community centre; the library as a third space, etc. have entered the discourse of the Croatian public library system.

## Major obstacles to the development of Croatian librarianship

According to Sabolović-Krajina and her analyses and findings in her doctoral thesis 'Public library as a local community centre in contemporary society' (2016: 96) major obstacles to the development of Croatian librarianship in the last few decades, which remain identical to today despite adjustments to the changes in society and the application of information and communication technology in their work, have been as follows: an insufficient number of qualified staff; insufficient space; lack of cooperation; lack of coordination; unevenness and non-functional library network systems; uneven development and availability of information technology; lack of a strategic plan for automation, and incoherence of national library information infrastructure development. Until now there has been no common information library system in Croatia, but there are currently six library programmes in public libraries (BiblosAM, CROLIST, Medved, Metelwin, OSA ISIS, ZaKi) and in a smaller number of libraries a library programme still does not exist.

Membership in the library encompasses 12% of the population, as it did in 1995, while the world standard is 20% of the total population. Sabolović-Krajina (2016: 99) has concluded that the potential contribution of public libraries to the development of society is not fully recognized in Croatian society. In the Croatian government strategic document, the prevailing traditional role of public libraries is primarily to contribute to the development of cultural and national identity, and to be places for lending books and encouraging reading. This prevailing traditional concept aligns neither with international library and policy documents from the late 1990s onwards, nor with the contemporary practice of Croatian public libraries that are intended to be multifunctional public institutions that: support the development of democracy and civil society in their local communities; are must-see places in the organization and implementation of lifelong learning programmes; are institutions that contribute to social inclusion, social integration, and social cohesion and the economic prosperity of their communities. On the other hand, citing traditional public libraries' functions such as lending books and encouraging reading in national strategic documents

provides a basis for relatively stable financial government subsidies and support for the purchase of media for library collections. This has been particularly important for the survival of Croatian libraries during the Homeland War as well as during the recession from 2008 onwards, when many local communities, which are the founders of libraries, saw public funding reduced. Public libraries have not been abolished in comparison with many other countries. Namely, the survival of public libraries has been threatened even in economically developed countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Numerous articles report the closing of hundreds of libraries due to cutting public costs, and many librarians were replaced by volunteers (Jaeger et al., 2017; Swaffield, 2017; Wainwright et al., 2016).

Croatian public libraries apply to the annual tender of the Ministry of Culture for financial support in the procurement of library reading materials, IT equipment, international cooperation, programmes for encouraging reading, organizing professional conferences, etc. Insight into the budget of the Ministry of Culture for the public library sector in Croatia (*Ministarstvo kulture Republike Hrvatske: Financiranje – Arhiva*) does not show significant deviations in the last 10 years (2006–2016), except in reduction in financing central county development services and central libraries of national minorities in last few years. There was a significant increase in the financing purchase of library reading materials in 2017. The Ministry of Culture allocates finances for compensation to authors for public lending of their works in 20 county public libraries. Stable financial support of the Ministry of Culture is very important for user statistics, the size of collections and the development of library services, especially when the main problem is in local funding of the library service. It means that cities and municipalities, as the founders of public libraries, often do not follow libraries' needs. There is also the problem of the lack of strategy in financing the purchase of new mobile library vehicles that demands cooperation between the Ministry of Culture and local authorities.

## Comparison with some other countries

Sabolović-Krajina (2016: 101–107) has made a comparison between the position of public libraries in strategic and political documents in Croatia and some other countries (UK, Denmark, Finland). She has pointed out that, unlike Croatian society which has suffered the burden of the post-war period, transition and transformation processes towards democracy, the UK and the Nordic societies are highly developed democratic and information societies. In Croatian

**Table 1.** Numbers of public libraries and book copies in Croatian libraries 1989–2013.

| Year | Public libraries | Book copies |
|---|---|---|
| 1989[a] | 286 | 4,723,000 |
| 2004[b] | 256 | 6,824,000 |
| 2007[b] | 257 | 7,764,000 |
| 2010[b] | 249 | 8,288,000 |
| 2013[b] | 269 | 9,359,000 |

[a]The Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Croatia (*Statistički godišnjak Republike Hrvatske*, 1990: 319).
[b]The Croatian Central Bureau of Statistics (*Hrvatska u brojkama – Croatia in figures*, 2017: 34).

society, the potential contribution of public libraries to the development of society is not fully recognized. On the contrary, both the UK and the Nordic countries have clearly defined expectations, functions and missions of public libraries. In the UK, the position of public libraries in the national strategic objectives is primarily linked to the prosperity of a neoliberal consumerist society. Their role is also to combat the consequences of social polarization, unemployment, migration, social tensions and inequities in society. In the Nordic countries, the public libraries' role is primarily to mediate in linking citizenship with the new information and communication technologies and new ways of access to information needed in everyday life. In Croatia, public libraries are primarily expected to contribute to the development of cultural and national identity.

The heritage of Croatian public libraries can also be recognized in Christine L Borgman's comparison of international and inter-cultural differences in information infrastructure. She noticed (2002: 202) that one of the features of libraries in Central and Eastern Europe is the focus on preserving cultural heritage, rather than access to information. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe have not developed in their history a society where information is of high value. According to Borgman (2002: 205) the task of the countries in this area is to educate the people about the value of information in decision making in all spheres of life and libraries have a great role and task in this segment alone.

## Statistical data on Croatian public libraries

The comparison of statistical data on the number of public libraries between 1989 and 2013, i.e. before and after 1991, when Croatia as a geopolitical and cultural entity was constituted, shows that there were 269 public libraries in 2013 – 17 less than in 1989 (Table 1). The reason for the smaller

**Table 2.** Numbers of public libraries, library members, physical visits to the libraries, and adults participating in library activities 2015 and 2016.

| Year | Public libraries | Members | Physical visits | Loans | Adults in library activities |
|------|-----------------|---------|-----------------|-------|------------------------------|
| 2015 | 198 | 514,463 | 7,598,719 | 10,817,958 | 338,823 |
| 2016 | 198 | 531,514 | 7,825,376 | 10,157,007 | 485,958 |

number of libraries was mainly due to the closure of those in small municipalities that did not meet the requirements of new standards for public libraries.

According to the Croatian Central Bureau of Statistics (*Hrvatska u brojkama – Croatia in figures,* 2017: 34) there were altogether 1781 libraries in Croatia in 2013, including the National and University Library, faculty, academic, special, public and school libraries.

Statistical analysis of the current state of library services undertaken by the Commission for Mobile Libraries of the Croatian Library Association (*Pokretne knjižnice RH – stanje 2017*, 2017) indicates that Croatia has not yet regained the state of library services before the break-up from Yugoslavia. Namely, in 1986 there were 17 mobile library vehicles and around 30,000 library members. In 2017 there were 13 vehicles organized in nine counties and 21,000 mobile library members. However, the situation has improved compared to the 1990s when the number of vehicles in Croatia fell to only seven and the number of users was around 10,000.

As Stričević and Pehar state (2015: 680), Croatia, with a population of nearly 4,300,000 (2011 population census), has a relatively large number of libraries for its size, despite the fact that particular libraries vary greatly one from another, not only in size, content, space and number of patrons, but also in the degree to which their collections and services have been expanded. This heterogeneity indicates that the Croatian library system as a whole requires further cultivation.

Table 2 presents the data collected in the statistics of the National and University Library in Zagreb (Hrvatski zavod za knjižničarstvo, Centar za razvoj knjižnica i knjižničarstva: Članstvo, posjete, posudbe i sudjelovanje u aktivnostima narodnih knjižnica u RH u 2016. godini, 2017). There were 198 public libraries opened to work with users in 2016. The total number of members in 2016 was 531,514, which represents an increase compared to the previous year (2015) of 514,463 members, i.e. slightly more than 3%. The total number of physical visits was 7,826,376 which also represents an increase in comparison to the previous year by 226,657 visits, i.e. an increase of approximately 3%.

The number of loans in 2016 was 10,157,007 – a decrease of 660,951 units compared to the previous year indicating about 6% less borrowing. However, the total number of adults participating in library activities in 2016 was 485,958 – higher by 147,135, or about 30% more adults participating in the activities conducted in public libraries in comparison with the previous year.

Services provided by public libraries to Croats, as well as the social impact of public libraries on local communities have been evaluated by using qualitative and quantitative methods (Dragija Ivanović, 2012: 83–100; Gabriel and Bišćan, 2017). Despite numerous local surveys, there is a lack of a systematic approach to evaluation of library work as a part of management and the decision-making process. There is also a lack of national surveys on the social impacts of public libraries in Croatia.

## Conclusion

A historical review of Croatian public libraries' accommodation to the complex changes in society in last few decades, at the turn of the 20th into the 21st century, analysed the context they have been operating in, i.e. specific transitional and transformational social processes from Croatian independence in 1990, the Homeland War and the post-war period until today. Free access to information, as well as the pro-active attitude towards customers as the most significant changes that public libraries have experienced in the global information society, is also reflected in Croatian public libraries. The range of library services has expanded from lending books and reference and information services to those related to the use of modern information and communication technologies and new media, as well as in taking proactive roles in local community development. A historical review also suggests that the effectiveness of public libraries in contemporary Croatian society could be much stronger if policy makers at all levels (local, regional, national) recognized their full contribution to the development of Croatian society.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

## Funding

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## Author biography

**Dijana Sabolović-Krajina** is a director of the city and county 'Fran Galović' Public library Koprivnica, Croatia. She is a library consultant and research assistant. She holds a PhD in Information and Communication Sciences from the University of Zagreb, Croatia and an MA in Philosophy, BSc in Librarianship, BA in Philosophy and Sociology from the University of Zagreb, Croatia. She has written about 40 articles and had about 60 conference presentations on librarianship, literacy and reading (including presentations at the IFLA congresses and meetings). Fellowships in Denmark, UK, Germany, Finland and Iceland. She was a president of the Croatian Reading Association 1997–2006 and a member of the European Committee of the International Reading Association 1997–2006. She has been an active member of the Croatian Library Association since 1985. She has received national awards for outstanding results in promoting Croatian librarianship.

# Abstracts

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قتطفات

المكتبات ودورها في مرحلة العدالة الانتقالية بالفلبين

Iyra S Buenrostro, Johann Frederick A Cabbabitle

مجلة الإفلا المتخصصة، العدد رقم 1،45:

المُلخص:

تُعد قصص مكتبة جامعة الفلبين "دليمان" وفرقة العمل المعنية بالمحتجزين في الفلبين، ونصب الأبطال، والمكتبات التي استمرت في العمل خلال وبعد سنوات الأحكام العرفية في الفلبين تحت حكم الرئيس فرديناند ماركوس ضمن اتجاه الدولة للعدالة الانتقالية، ويقول أصحاب البحث أن الفلبين تعيش مرحلة انتقالية مُمتدة وتلعب المكتبات دورًا هامًا في حفظ الذاكرة، ويوضح الرواة ومن خبرات المكتبيين مُختلف الأعمال الخاصة بالحفظ، وأنشطة المُصالحة، وتصحيح المُمارسات، والتعاون.

التراث الشفهي الإفريقي والحفاظ عليه وتناقله: منطقة الكاريبي:

Cherry-Ann Smart

مجلة الإفلا المتخصصة، العدد رقم 1،45:

المُلخص:

على مدار ثلاثة عقود، تمت المتاجرة بالأفارقة كعبيد للأوروبيين في جزر الهند الغربية، يُقتلعون من جذورهم بالقوة يحملون معهم ذكريات حياتهم في مواجهة مستقبل مجهول في ظل ظروف قاسية، غير مُلمين بلغة وثقافة مُستعبديهم، احتفظوا بتاريخهم وتناقلوه شفاهيةً، ومع ذلك تعترف المكتبات كمستودعات للمعرفة بكل القادمين الجُدد ماعدا الأفارقة.

يطرح هذا البحث المبدأ الحديث بأهمية دعم المكتبات الحفاظ على ثقافة العبيد الأفارقة ونقل المعرفة في تطور الحياة في جزر الهند الغربية.

جمعية المكتبات الأمريكية وإعادة بناء مكتبات شرق أوروبا بعد الحرب العالمية الثانية:

Marek Sroka

مجلة الإفلا المتخصصة، العدد رقم 1،45:

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المُلخص:

يعلم الجميع بالدمار الذي حل بالمكتبات خلال الحرب العالمية الثانية، ولكن مازالت جهود جمعية المكتبات الأمريكية مجهولة في إعادة تأهيل مكتبات أوروبا الشرقية بعد الحرب، تنظر الورقة البحثية في برنامج "مساعدة المكتبات في مناطق الحرب" الذي مولته مؤسسة روكفيلر وأدارته جمعية المكتبات الأمريكية، من أجل بلاد أوروبا الشرقية ومنها، بلغاريا، تشيكوسلوفاكيا، المجر، بولندا، رومانيا، روسيا (الاتحاد السوفيتي)، يوغوغوسلافيا، ويتكون البرنامج من جزأين، الأول من سنة 1941 حتى 1947 وتناولت الدوريات أما الجزء الثاني فكان من عام 1944 حتى 1947 وركز على الكتب، كان هدف البرنامج هو إعادة بناء المجموعات التي تحطمت بالإضافة إلى المطبوعات الأمريكية غير المتاحة لمعظم المكتبات الأوروبية والآسيوية أثناء احتلال المحور.

لا تستطيع المكتبات أن تحيا على الكتب وحدها: مثال من التاريخ:

Claudia Serbanuta

مجلة الإفلا المتخصصة، العدد رقم 1،45:

المُلخص:

لقد عانت رومانيا على مدار ما يُقارب النصف قرن من حكم شديد الدكتاتورية، وفي ظل الرقابة الشديدة والتحكم في المعلومات روج النظام الشيوعي للمكتبات العامة، يُقدم هذا البحث مراحل تطور نظام المكتبة العامة ومُناقشة كيف أثر إصرار الدولة على تقديم مجموعات كبيرة من المُقتنيات على الخدمات المكتبية.

وكجزء من مشروع حول التاريخ الشفهي، تستند هذه الورقة البحثية إلى كلام من عملوا في المكتبات العامة بمختلف أحجامها خلال السبعينيات والثمانينيات، والوثائق، ومصادر أخرى للوصول للتاريخ الحديث لمكتبات رومانيا العامة، ما هي مراحل تطور نظام المكتبة الوطنية ومدى أهمية مُقتنيات المكتبة لبقاء مؤسسة المكتبة العامة؟ كما سيُناقش البحث سياسة تنمية المُقتنيات وتناقضه مع التنمية المهنية الضعيفة في مجال المكتبات.

المكتبات العامة الكرواتية في وقت الأزمات:

Dijana Sabolovic-Krajinaitle

مجلة الإفلا المتخصصة، العدد رقم 1،45:

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المُلخص:

واجهت المكتبات العامة الكرواتية العديد من التعقيدات أثناء التحول وانتقال كرواتيا من القرن العشرين إلى القرن الحادي والعشرين، اتجهت كرواتيا خلال هذه الفترة إلى الديمقراطية والحداثة، ودستورها (الذي يُنظر له الآن ككيان جغرافي وسياسي وثقافي)، والظروف غير العادية من وابل الحروب بين 1991 و1995 وما بعدها، كل هذه الظروف شكلت تحديات أمام المكتبات العامة الكرواتية، كما تأثرت المكتبات الكرواتية بسمات مُجتمع المعلومات العابرة للمُجتمعات

والجنسيات (في ظل العولمة وتكنولوجيا الاتصالات والمعلومات)، فكان على المكتبات الكرواتية أن تخرج عن دورها التقليدي من إعارة الكتب وكونها مؤسسات للتراث الثقافي لتسير على نهج المكتبات المُعاصرة في ما تلعبه من أدوار مُتعددة في عصر المعلومات من أدوار معلوماتية، وتعليمية، وثقافية، وكمراكز للتواصل في المُجتمعات المحلية، يهدف هذا المقال إلى تقديم لمحة تاريخية عن مواكبة المكتبات العامة لهذه التغيرات الكبيرة في المُجتمع الكرواتي والعالم بأسره على مدار العقود القليلة الماضية.

# 摘要

## Libraries and their role in transitional justice in the Philippines

菲律宾图书馆及其在正义转型期的作用

伊拉·S·布兰罗斯托，约翰·弗雷德里克·卡巴比特尔

### Iyra S Buenrostro, Johann Frederick A Cabbabitle

国际图联杂志，45-1，5—15

摘要：

本文介绍关于菲律宾大学迪利曼分校图书馆、菲律宾政治犯救援小组以及英雄纪念碑的相关内容。菲律宾大学图书馆在已故铁腕政治家费迪南德·马科斯总统领导的菲律宾戒严期间得以幸存，并被视为该国走向正义转型的进程之一。两位作者认为菲律宾正在经历一段"延长"转型期，而图书馆在其中作为记忆活跃分子扮演着重要的角色。图书馆工作人员的叙述和经历，让我们获知发生在这个国家的故事、曾经的和解行动、采取过的补救措施以及各方的合作。

## African oral tradition, cultural retentions and the transmission of knowledge in the West Indies

非洲口头传统、文化保留和知识传播：加勒比

查理安·斯玛特

### Cherry-Ann Smart

国际图联杂志，45-1，16—25

摘要：

三个世纪以来，非洲人被贩卖到西印度群岛，成为欧洲人的奴隶。他们被迫背井离乡，未来飘渺不定，条件艰苦难耐，曾经的安宁生活仅仅成为回忆。由于不了解欧洲的语言和习俗，他们的历史只保留在他们的记忆里，再经由口头相传和其他文化产品进行传播。然而，作为知识宝库的图书馆一直 都没有正视非洲人的价值。

本文提出现代图书馆的概念，以支持非洲奴隶的文化保留和知识传播对西印度群岛的发展做出的重要贡献。

## The American Library Association and the post-World War II rebuilding of Eastern European libraries

美国图书馆协会和二战后东欧图书馆的重建

马里克·索卡

### Marek Sroka

国际图联杂志，45-1，26—33

摘要：

二战中图书馆遭到摧毁已广为人知。但人们对于美国图书馆协会(ALA)在战后对东欧国家图书馆的重建伸以援手的故事却知之甚少。本文主要介绍"战区图书馆援助计划"。该计划由洛克菲勒基金会资助、ALA管理，涉及的东欧国家包括保加利亚、捷克斯洛伐克、匈牙利、波兰、罗马尼亚、俄罗斯(前苏联)以及南斯拉夫。该计划由两部分组成：第一阶段的主要任务是处理期刊，时长为1941年到1947年；第二阶段为1944年到1947年，重点放在书籍处理上。其目标是在轴心国占

领期间，利用大部分欧洲和亚洲图书馆无法获取的美国出版物作为补充，替换遭到破坏的藏书，但规模有限。

## Public libraries cannot live on books alone: A historic example

公共图书馆不能仅依赖图书：一个历史性的例证

克劳迪亚·斯巴由塔

### Claudia Serbanuta

国际图联杂志，45-1，34—47

摘要：

本文将介绍公共图书馆系统发展的主要阶段，并讨论国家对藏书量的重视如何影响图书馆的服务。

作为口述历史项目的一部分，本文将根据上世纪70和80年代各种规模的公共图书馆工作人员的回忆、文献档案和二手资料，对罗马尼亚公共图书馆近年来的发展作更详细的阐述，其中包括：国家图书馆系统的发展阶段；馆藏数量对于公共图书馆的重要性。本文还将对馆藏发展政策进行探讨，并与图书馆系统内落后的职业发展进行对比。

## Croatian public libraries in time of crisis

危机时刻的克罗地亚公共图书馆

堤亚纳·斯波罗维克·克雷吉内特

### Dijana Sabolovic-Krajinaitle

国际图联杂志，45-1，48—56

摘要：

二十世纪之交，克罗地亚处于过渡转型期，国家走上了民主和现代化道路，而公共图书馆也经历了这一复杂的社会进程。国家宪法(现被视为地缘政治和文化实体)、1991-1995年国土战争期间的灾难性环境以及战后的情况都给克罗地亚的公共图书馆带来了独特的挑战。此外，图书馆还深受跨国界、跨社会的信息社会影响(信息和通讯技术渗透到全球化进程和生活的方方面面)。克罗地亚图书馆必须做出改变，不再只是充当传统的书籍借阅和文化遗产机构，而是顺应信息时代下现代化国际图书馆的发展趋势，努力成为当地社区多功能的信息、教育、文化和交流中心。本文旨在对公共图书馆如何适应克罗地亚社会和全球的动荡变化进行历史回顾。

## Sommaires

### Libraries and their role in transitional justice in the Philippines

[Les bibliothèques et leur rôle dans la justice transitionnelle aux Philippines]

Iyra S Buenrostro, Johann Frederick A Cabbabitle

IFLA Journal, 45-1, 5–15

Résumé :

Cet article évoque les cas de la bibliothèque universitaire de l'université des Philippines Diliman, de Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (organisation nationale de défense des droits de l'homme), de Bantayog ng mga Bayani (Monument aux Héros), des bibliothèques qui ont survécu pendant et après les années où régnait aux Philippines la loi martiale imposée par Ferdinand Marcos, ex-homme fort et président du pays, racontés alors que le pays s'oriente vers une justice transitionnelle. Selon les auteurs, les Philippines connaissent une transition prolongée et les bibliothèques jouent un rôle important en tant qu'activistes de la mémoire. Les histoires et expériences des bibliothécaires et du personnel des bibliothèques illustrent divers travaux de mémoire, activités de réconciliation, travaux de redressement et collaborations.

### African oral tradition, cultural retentions and the transmission of knowledge in the West Indies

[Tradition orale africaine, préservation de la culture et transmission du savoir: les Caraïbes]

Cherry-Ann Smart

IFLA Journal, 45-1, 16–25

Résumé :

Pendant trois siècles aux Antilles, des Africains furent soumis à la traite des esclaves par les Européens. Arrachés par force de chez eux, ils ne purent emporter

avec eux que les souvenirs d'un certain mode de vie, tout en devant affronter un avenir incertain dans des conditions extrêmement pénibles. Ignorant la langue et les coutumes des esclavagistes, ils durent retenir leur passé mentalement et le transmettre par tradition orale et par le biais de produits culturels. Pourtant, l'histoire des bibliothèques en tant que dépositaires du savoir reconnaît l'importance de tous les nouveaux venus, à l'exception de ces Africains.

Cet article propose que le concept moderne de bibliothèque reconnaisse la préservation de la culture des esclaves africains et la transmission du savoir comme étant tout aussi importants dans le développement de la vie aux Antilles.

## The American Library Association and the post-World War II rebuilding of Eastern European libraries

### [L'Association des bibliothèques américaines et la reconstruction des bibliothèques d'Europe de l'Est après la Seconde Guerre mondiale]

Marek Sroka

Résumé :

Le thème de la destruction des bibliothèques au cours de la Seconde Guerre mondiale a été très bien documenté. Cependant, l'aide apportée par l'Association des bibliothèques américaines (ALA) à la réhabilitation culturelle des bibliothèques d'Europe de l'Est après la guerre demeure relativement méconnue. Cet article examine le programme d'aide aux bibliothèques dans les zones de guerre (« Aid to Libraries in War Areas ») financé par la fondation Rockefeller et administré par l'ALA, puis déployé dans les pays d'Europe de l'Est, à savoir Bulgarie, Tchécoslovaquie, Hongrie, Pologne, Roumanie, Russie (Union soviétique) et Yougoslavie. Ce programme s'est déroulé en deux parties: la première, de 1941 à 1947, portait sur les périodiques; l'autre, mise en œuvre de 1944 à 1947, portait sur les livres. L'objectif du programme était de reconstituer, bien que de façon limitée, les collections dévastées avec des publications américaines dont la plupart des bibliothèques d'Europe et d'Asie ne pouvaient pas disposer pendant l'occupation par les forces de l'Axe.

## Public libraries cannot live on books alone: A historic example

### [Les bibliothèques publiques ne peuvent pas vivre uniquement des livres: un exemple historique]

Claudia Serbanuta

Résumé :

Pendant près d'un demi-siècle, la Roumanie a connu un régime totalitaire. À une époque de censure et de contrôle sévère de l'information, le régime communiste favorisait les bibliothèques publiques. Cet article présente les principales phases de développement du réseau de bibliothèques publiques et examine comment l'importance accordée par l'état à la fourniture d'importantes collections de livres a influencé les services bibliothécaires.

Dans le cadre d'un projet d'histoire oral, cet article utilise les souvenirs de personnes ayant travaillé dans des bibliothèques publiques de tailles diverses au cours des années 70 et 80, ainsi que des documents d'archives et des sources secondaires, pour contribuer à une discussion plus nuancée à propos de l'histoire récente des bibliothèques publiques roumaines. Quelles ont été les phases de développement du réseau bibliothécaire national et quelle a été l'importance des collections bibliothécaires pour la survie institutionnelle de la bibliothèque publique ? L'article évoque également la politique de développement des collections et montre combien elle contraste avec l'appauvrissement du développement professionnel au sein du réseau bibliothécaire.

## Croatian public libraries in time of crisis

### [Les bibliothèques publiques croates en temps de crise]

Dijana Sabolovic-Krajinaitle

Résumé :

Les bibliothèques publiques croates ont dû faire face à des situations sociales complexes lors du passage du 20e au 21e siècle, qui a été une période de transition et de transformation pour la Croatie. Au cours de cette période, la Croatie a opéré un virage vers la démocratie et la modernisation. La constitution de l'État (considéré maintenant comme une entité géopolitique et culturelle), les conditions particulières suite au désastre de la guerre civile de 1991 à 1995 et les circonstances de la période d'après-guerre, ont constitué des défis uniques pour les bibliothèques publiques croates. Par ailleurs, la Croatie a aussi subi l'influence de la société de l'information, avec ses caractères spécifiques qui touchent tous les niveaux de la société et vont au-delà des

frontières nationales (notamment l'ensemble des processus de mondialisation et la pénétration des technologies de l'information et de la communication dans tous les aspects de la vie). Les bibliothèques croates ont dû transformer leur rôle traditionnel – celui d'institutions chargées du prêt de livres et du patrimoine culturel – pour s'adapter aux tendances bibliothécaires internationales à l'ère de l'information actuelle, et devenir des centres d'information multifonctionnels, d'éducation, de culture et de communication pour leurs communautés locales. Cet article donne une analyse historique de la façon dont les bibliothèques publiques se sont adaptées à cette période agitée de changements survenus au cours des dernières décennies, aussi bien au sein de la société croate que dans le monde.

## Zusammenfassungen

### Libraries and their role in transitional justice in the Philippines

### Bibliotheken und ihre Rolle für die Übergangsjustiz auf den Philippinen

Iyra S Buenrostro, Johann Frederick A Cabbabitle

Abstrakt:

Die Geschichten der Universitätsbibliothek der University of the Philippines Diliman, der Häftlinge aus der Task Force der Philippinen und vom Bantayog ng mga Bayani (Denkmal der Helden) sowie der Bibliotheken, die während und nach der Zeit des Kriegsrechts auf den Philippinen unter der strengen Herrschaft des Präsidenten Ferdinand Marcos bestehen geblieben sind, werden vor dem Hintergrund der Entwicklung des Landes im Hinblick auf die Übergangsjustiz erzählt. Die Autoren argumentieren, dass die Philippinen einen als erweitert bezeichneten Übergang erleben, bei dem Bibliotheken als Gedächtnisaktivisten eine wichtige Rolle spielen. Die Erzählungen und Erfahrungen der Bibliothekare/-innen und Mitarbeiter/-innen sind Belege für ganz verschiedene Ereignisse der Verarbeitung und Aufbereitung, der Aussöhnung, der Wiedergutmachung und Zusammenarbeit.

### African oral tradition, cultural retentions and the transmission of knowledge in the West Indies

### Die afrikanische mündliche Tradition, kulturelle Vorbehalte und die Wissensvermittlung: die Karibik

Cherry-Ann Smart

Abstrakt:

Drei Jahrhunderte lang wurden Afrikaner in Westindien als Sklaven für Europäer verkauft. Gewaltsam aus ihrer Heimat verschleppt, besaßen sie nur Erinnerungen an eine Lebensweise, während sie sich mit einer ungewissen Zukunft konfrontiert sahen und gleichzeitig unter menschenunwürdigen Bedingungen litten. Unbekannt mit der Sprache und den Gewohnheiten ihrer Peiniger, haben sie ihre Vergangenheit in Geschichten bewahrt und durch mündliche Berichte und kulturelle Produkte weitergegeben. Die Geschichte der Bibliotheken als Aufbewahrungsort des Wissens zollt jedoch allen Neuankömmlingen – mit Ausnahme dieser Afrikaner/-innen – Anerkennung.

In diesem Dokument wird die moderne Auffassung einer Bibliothek vorgeschlagen, die die kulturelle Bewahrung und Vermittlung von Wissen über afrikanische Sklaven als wesentlichen Aspekt des Lebens in Westindien gewährleistet.

### The American Library Association and the post-World War II rebuilding of Eastern European libraries

### Die American Library Association und der Wiederaufbau osteuropäischer Bibliotheken nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg

Marek Sroka

Abstrakt:

In Bezug auf die Zerstörung von Bibliotheken während des Zweiten Weltkriegs wurden umfassende Darlegungen publiziert. Über die Unterstützung der American Library Association (ALA) bei dem kulturellen Wiederaufbau osteuropäischer Bibliotheken nach dem Krieg ist jedoch noch relativ wenig bekannt. In dem Papier wird das von der Rockefeller Foundation finanzierte und von der ALA geleitete Programm „Aid to Libraries in War Areas" (Hilfe für Bibliotheken in Kriegsgebieten) in osteuropäischen Ländern wie Bulgarien, der Tschechoslowakei, Ungarn, Polen, Rumänien, Russland (der Sowjetunion) und Jugoslawien untersucht. Das Programm umfasste zwei Abschnitte: Der erste, der von 1941

bis 1947 dauerte, bezog sich auf Zeitschriften, im zweiten, der von 1944 bis 1947 dauerte, ging es um Bücher. Dadurch wurde darauf abgezielt – wenn auch in begrenztem Umfang – zerstörte Sammlungen mit amerikanischen Publikationen zu ergänzen, die für die meisten europäischen und asiatischen Bibliotheken während der Besetzung durch die Achsenmächte nicht zugänglich waren.

## Public libraries cannot live on books alone: A historic example

### Öffentliche Bibliotheken leben nicht vom Buch allein: ein Beispiel aus der Vergangenheit

Claudia Serbanuta

Abstrakt:

Fast ein halbes Jahrhundert litt Rumänien unter einem totalitären Regime. In Zeiten einer strengen Zensur und der Kontrolle von Informationen förderte das kommunistische Regime öffentliche Bibliotheken. In diesem Dokument werden die wichtigsten Phasen in der Entwicklung des Systems öffentlicher Bibliotheken dargelegt, bevor erörtert wird, welchen Einfluss der staatliche Schwerpunkt, große Bücherkollektionen anzubieten, auf das Leistungsangebot der Bibliotheken hatte.

Im Rahmen eines Oral History Projekts werden in diesem Papier die Erinnerungen von Menschen, die in den 1970er und 1980er Jahren in öffentlichen Bibliotheken unterschiedlicher Größe gearbeitet haben, Dokumente aus Archiven und Sekundärquellen für einen Beitrag zu einer differenzierteren Diskussion über die jüngere Geschichte der rumänischen öffentlichen Bibliotheken genutzt. Um welche Phasen ging es bei der Entwicklung des nationalen Bibliothekssystems und welchen Stellenwert hatte der Bibliotheksbestand für das institutionelle Überleben der öffentlichen Bibliothek? In dem Dokument wird zudem die Politik bezüglich der

Entwicklung einerseits und der professionellen Entstehung einer Verarmung im Bibliothekssystem aufgezeigt.

## Croatian public libraries in time of crisis

### Öffentliche Bibliotheken in Kroatien in Krisenzeiten

Dijana Sabolovic-Krajinaitle

Abstrakt:

Die öffentlichen Bibliotheken Kroatiens sahen sich an der Wende des 20. zum 21. Jahrhundert mit komplexen gesellschaftlichen Prozessen konfrontiert: dem Übergang und Wandel Kroatiens. In dieser Zeit wurde die Demokratie ausgebaut und das Land modernisiert. Der Zustand des Landes (das heute als geopolitische und kulturelle Einheit betrachtet wird), die außergewöhnlichen Bedingungen der Kriegskatastrophe im Bürgerkrieg der Jahre 1991 bis 1995 und die Gegebenheiten der Nachkriegszeit stellten die öffentlichen Bibliotheken in Kroatien vor besondere Herausforderungen. Darüber hinaus wurden die kroatischen Bibliotheken auch durch typische Merkmale der Informationsgesellschaft beeinflusst, die auf transnationaler und gesellschaftsübergreifender Ebene zu verzeichnen sind (in allen Globalisierungsprozessen und bei allen Aspekten des Lebens mit Informations- und Kommunikationstechnologie). Die kroatischen Bibliotheken mussten ihre traditionelle Rolle als Verleihstelle von Büchern und als Institution des Kulturerbes aufgeben, um den internationalen modernen Bibliothekstrends im Informationszeitalter als multifunktionale Informations-, Bildungs-, Kultur- und Kommunikationszentren ihrer örtlichen Gemeinschaften zu folgen. Dieser Text zielt darauf ab, einen historischen Abriss über den Umgang der öffentlichen Bibliotheken mit diesen turbulenten Veränderungen in der kroatischen Gesellschaft sowie auch in der Welt in den letzten Jahrzehnten zu bieten.

## Рефераты статеи

### Libraries and their role in transitional justice in the Philippines

### Библиотеки и их роль в правосудии переходного периода на Филиппинах

Ийра С Буэнростро, Иоганн Фредерик А Каббабитл

Аннотация:

Истории библиотек Университета Филиппин Дилиман, организации помощи задержанным спецподразделениями на Филиппинах (Task Force Detainees of the Philippines), и Монумента Героям (Bantayog ng mga Bayani), библиотек, которые существовали как в годы военного положения на

Филиппинах при власти авторитарного президента Фердинанда Маркоса, так и после его отмены, рассказываются в контексте движения страны к правосудию переходного периода. Авторы рассуждают о том, что Филиппины переживают "затянувшийся" переходный период, и что библиотеки выполняют важную функцию пропагандистов памяти. Рассказы и впечатления библиотекарей, а также работников других специальностей доносят до нас различную информацию о сохранении памяти, примирительных мерах, деятельности по возмещению ущерба и примерах сотрудничества.

## African oral tradition, cultural retentions and the transmission of knowledge in the West Indies

### Африканские устные народные традиции, сохранение культуры и передача знаний на Карибских островах

Черри-Энн Смарт

IFLA Journal, 45-1, 16–25

Аннотация:

В течение трех столетий жители Африки вывозились в Вест-Индию в качестве рабской рабочей силы для европейцев. Насильственно оторванные от родного дома, они сохраняли лишь воспоминания о своем образе жизни, оказавшись перед лицом неопределенного будущего и пребывая в суровых жизненных условиях. Их прошлое, не сочетающееся с языком и укладом поработителей, хранилось в сознании и передавалось при помощи устных выражений и предметов культуры. При этом история библиотек как хранилищ информации воздает должное всем новоприбывшим, кроме этих африканцев.

Настоящая работа предлагает современную концепцию, заключающуюся в поддержке библиотеками сохранения культуры африканских рабов и передачи их знаний как имеющих большое значение для развития общественной жизни Вест-Индии.

## The American Library Association and the post-World War II rebuilding of Eastern European libraries

### Американская библиотечная ассоциация и восстановление библиотек Восточной Европы после Второй мировой войны

Марек Срока

IFLA Journal, 45-1, 26–33

Аннотация:

Тема разрушения библиотек в ходе Второй мировой войны освещена очень широко. Однако относительно неизвестным остается содействие, оказанное Американской библиотечной ассоциацией (ALA) в рамках послевоенного культурного восстановления библиотек Восточной Европы. В настоящей работе рассматривается программа "Помощь библиотекам в зонах военных действий", которая осуществлялась за счет средств Фонда Рокфеллера и управлялась ALA, в части, касающейся стран Восточной Европы, включая Болгарию, Чехословакию, Венгрию, Польшу, Румынию, Россию (Советский Союз) и Югославию. Программа состояла из двух этапов: первый, продолжавшийся с 1941 по 1947 годы, был посвящен периодическим изданиям; второй, включавший в себя период с 1944 по 1947 годы, касался книг. Задача программы заключалась в пополнении разоренных коллекций, пусть и в ограниченном объеме, американскими изданиями, недоступными для большинства библиотек Европы и Азии во время оккупации странами "оси".

## Public libraries cannot live on books alone: A historic example

### Публичные библиотеки не могут жить только за счет книг: пример из истории

Клаудия Сербанута

IFLA Journal, 45-1, 34–47

Аннотация:

В течение почти полувека Румыния пребывала во власти тоталитарного режима. В период жесткой цензуры и информационного контроля коммунистический режим содействовал развитию публичных библиотек. В данной работе будут описаны основные этапы развития системы публичных библиотек, а также будет обсуждаться влияние усилий государства, направленных на обеспечение обширных книжных коллекций, на услуги библиотек.

Являясь частью исторического проекта, основанного на устных повествованиях, документ представит воспоминания людей, которые работали в публичных библиотеках различного масштаба в 1970-е и 1980-е годы, архивные документы и дополнительные источники информации для ведения конкретизированной дискуссии о событиях недавнего времени в истории публичных библиотек Румынии. Какие этапы включало в себя

развитие национальной библиотечной системы, и насколько важной была роль коллекции библиотеки для выживания публичной библиотеки как института? В работе также будет обсуждаться политика развития коллекций, противопоставленная жалкому профессиональному развитию в рамках библиотечной системы.

## Croatian public libraries in time of crisis

### Хорватские публичные библиотеки в период кризиса

Дияна Саболович-Краинаитле

Аннотация:

На рубеже 20-го и 21-го веков хорватские публичные библиотеки столкнулись со сложными процессами в обществе: преобразованием и трансформацией Хорватии. В ходе этого периода Хорватия стала на путь демократии и модернизации. Ее устройство (рассматриваемое сейчас как геополитическое и культурное образование), чрезвычайные, катастрофические условия в ходе войны 1991-1995 годов, а также обстоятельства послевоенного периода - все это поставило перед публичными библиотеками Хорватии ни с чем не сравнимые задачи. К тому же хорватские библиотеки подвергались влиянию и особенностей информационного общества как в транснациональном, так и в транссоциальном планах (в условиях всех процессов глобализации и проникновения информационных и коммуникационных технологий в любые сферы жизни). Библиотекам Хорватии пришлось изменить своей традиционной роли, которая заключалась в выдаче книг и деятельности в качестве учреждений, занятых сохранением культурного наследия, и следовать современным международным течениям в области библиотечного дела в век информации, превращаясь в многофункциональные информационные, образовательные, культурные и коммуникационные центры своих местных сообществ. Цель настоящей статьи состоит в том, чтобы представить исторический обзор приспосабливаемости публичных библиотек к этим бурным переменам в хорватском обществе, равно как и в мире, в течение нескольких последних десятилетий.

## Resúmenes

### Libraries and their role in transitional justice in the Philippines (Las bibliotecas y su papel en la justicia de transición en Filipinas)

Iyra S. Buenrostro, Johann Frederick A. Cabbabitle

Resumen:

Los relatos de la biblioteca universitaria de la Universidad Diliman de Filipinas, la Task Force Detainees of the Philippines y el Bantyog ng mga Bayani (monumento a los héroes), las bibliotecas que sobrevivieron a los años de la ley marcial en Filipinas bajo el mando del finado presidente Ferdinand Marcos, se cuentan para señalar el camino del país hacia la justicia de transición. Los autores señalan que Filipinas está experimentando una transición «ampliada» y que las bibliotecas desempeñan un papel importante como activistas de la memoria. Las anécdotas y las experiencias de los bibliotecarios y del personal demuestran que existen actividades de reconciliación, trabajos de recuperación de la memoria, prácticas de reparación y colaboraciones.

### African oral tradition, cultural retentions and the transmission of knowledge in the West Indies

### (Tradición oral africana, retención cultural y transmisión de conocimientos: el Caribe)

Cherry-Ann Smart

Resumen:

Los africanos fueron utilizados como esclavos de los europeos en las Indias Occidentales durante tres siglos. Arrancados a la fuerza de su hogar, únicamente se llevaron consigo los recuerdos de una forma de vida mientras se enfrentaban a un futuro incierto y a trabajos extenuantes. Ignorantes de la lengua y las costumbres de los esclavistas, mantuvieron en su mente su pasado y lo transmitieron a través de expresiones orales y productos culturales. La historia de las bibliotecas como depósitos de conocimiento reconoce a todos los recién llegados excepto a estos africanos.

En este artículo se propone el moderno concepto de una biblioteca que ayude a mantener la cultura y la transmisión de conocimientos de los esclavos africanos como parte importante del desarrollo de la vida en las Indias Occidentales.

### The American Library Association and the post-World War II rebuilding of Eastern European libraries

### (La American Library Association y la reconstrucción de las bibliotecas de Europa Oriental después de la II Guerra Mundial)

Marek Sroka

IFLA Journal, 45-1, 26–33

Resumen:

El tema de la destrucción de bibliotecas durante la II Guerra Mundial es de sobra conocido. Sin embargo, no se conoce tanto la ayuda que la American Library Association (ALA) prestó para la rehabilitación cultural de las bibliotecas de Europa Oriental después de la guerra. En el artículo se analiza el programa «Aid to Libraries in War Areas» (Ayuda para bibliotecas en zonas de guerra), financiado por la Rockefeller Foundation y administrado por la ALA, con respecto a los países de Europa Oriental, entre ellos Bulgaria, Checoslovaquia, Hungría, Polonia, Rumanía, Rusia (Unión Soviética) y Yugoslavia. El programa constaba de dos partes: la primera, que se desarrolló de 1941 a 1947, se centró en las publicaciones periódicas; la segunda, de 1944 a 1947, se centró en los libros. Su objetivo era reponer, si bien a escala limitada, las colecciones devastadas con publicaciones estadounidenses no disponibles en la mayor parte de las bibliotecas europeas y asiáticas durante la ocupación.

### Public libraries cannot live on books alone: A historic example

### (Las bibliotecas públicas no pueden vivir solo de libros: un ejemplo histórico)

Claudia Serbanuta

IFLA Journal, 45-1, 34–47

Resumen:

Rumanía vivió bajo un régimen totalitario durante casi medio siglo. En épocas de censura férrea y control estricto de la información, el régimen comunista promovió el uso de las bibliotecas públicas. En este documento se presentan las principales fases del desarrollo del sistema de bibliotecas públicas y se explica cómo influyó en los servicios bibliotecarios el interés del estado por proporcionar extensas colecciones de libros.

Este documento, enmarcado en un proyecto de historia oral, se servirá de los recuerdos de las personas que trabajaban en bibliotecas públicas de diversos tamaños en los años setenta y ochenta, documentos de archivo y fuentes secundarias para contribuir a un debate con más matices sobre la reciente historia de las bibliotecas públicas rumanas. ¿Cuáles fueron las fases del desarrollo del sistema nacional de bibliotecas y cuán importante fue la colección bibliotecaria para la supervivencia institucional de la biblioteca pública? En el artículo también se debate la política de desarrollo de colecciones y se compara con el depauperado desarrollo profesional en el seno del sistema bibliotecario.

### Croatian public libraries in time of crisis

### (Las bibliotecas públicas croatas en tiempos de crisis)

Dijana Sabolovic-Krajinaitle

IFLA Journal, 45-1, 48–56

Resumen:

Las bibliotecas públicas croatas se enfrentaron a complejos procesos sociales en el paso del siglo XX al XXI, la época de la transición y la transformación de Croacia. Durante este período, Croacia avanzó hacia la democracia y la modernización. Su constitución (considerada ahora como una entidad geopolítica y cultural), las excepcionales circunstancias de la guerra civil de 1991-1995 y las condiciones del período de posguerra plantearon retos únicos para las bibliotecas públicas de Croacia. Además, las bibliotecas croatas también se han visto influidas por las características de la sociedad de la información que se desarrolla a escala transnacional y transocial (entre todos los procesos de globalización e impregnando todos los aspectos de la vida con la tecnología de la información y la comunicación). Las bibliotecas croatas tuvieron que transformar su papel tradicional de prestar libros y actuar como instituciones de patrimonio cultural para seguir las tendencias internacionales modernas de la era de la información y convertirse en centros culturales, educativos, de información y de comunicación de sus comunidades locales. Este artículo tiene por objeto ofrecer un repaso histórico de la adaptación de las bibliotecas públicas a los turbulentos cambios de la sociedad croata y del mundo en las últimas décadas.