

Private Archives in the Czech Republic

MARIE RYANTOVÁ, Doc. Ph.D.

The Institute of Archival Science and Auxiliary Historical Sciences of the Faculty of Arts at the South Bohemian University in České Budějovice
e-mail: ryantova@ff.jcu.cz

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ABSTRACT

Although private archives are among the most important and often the oldest (e.g., church, aristocratic archives), they are currently a specific group in the Czech Republic. According to the current law, private archives are archives established by natural or legal persons, while they may act as self-contained archives if they achieved the accreditation granted by the Department of Archival Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. The granting of accreditation presupposes the fulfilment of a number of conditions. Currently there are only 11 accredited private archives in the Czech Republic. The accreditation is not mandatory, the other possibility is to take over the private archives into care of their owners, or to deposit these on the basis of a custody agreement in the state archives (which is rather often used). The state archives even perform over both self-contained private archives and the archives administrated by their owners the mandatory supervision.

Key words: Czech Republic, Private Archives, Archive legislation, Accreditation of archives, Public archives, State archives, Archives of Church Institutions, Family (aristocratic) archives, Personal archives, Deposit agreement, National Archival Heritage

Archivi privati nella Repubblica Ceca

SINTESI

Anche se gli archivi privati sono tra i più importanti e spesso i più antichi (ad es., Chiesa, aristocrazia), sono attualmente un gruppo specifico nella Repubblica Ceca. Secondo la legislazione attuale, gli archivi privati sono archivi fondati da persone fisiche o giuridiche, mentre possono agire come archivi autonomi se hanno ottenuto l'accreditamento concesso dal Dipartimento dell'Amministrazione Archivistica del Ministero degli Interni. La concessione dell'accreditamento presuppone l'adempimento di una serie di condizioni. Attualmente ci sono nella Repubblica Ceca solo 11 archivi privati accreditati. L'accreditamento non è obbligatorio, dato che un'altra possibilità è quella di prendere in consegna gli archivi privati nella cura dei loro proprietari, o depositarli sulla base di un accordo di custodia nell'archivio di stato (procedura usata piuttosto spesso). Gli archivi di stato hanno anche l'obbligo di eseguire il controllo.

Parole chiave: Repubblica Ceca, archivi privati, legislazione archivistica, accreditamento degli archivi, archivi pubblici, archivi di stato, archivi ecclesiastici, archivi familiari (dell'aristocrazia), archivi personali, contratto di deposito, Archivio del Patrimonio Storico Nazionale

Zasebni arhivi na Češkem

IZVLEČEK

Čeprav so zasebni arhivi med najpomembnejšimi in pogosto najstarejšimi (npr. cerkveni, aristokratski arhivi), so ti na Češkem trenutno specifična skupina. Zasebni arhivi so v skladu z veljavnim zakonom arhivi, ki jih ustanovijo fizične ali pravne osebe. Lahko so uveljavljeni kot samostojni arhivi, če so dosegli akreditacijo, ki jo je izdal Oddelek za arhivistično upravo Ministrstva za notranje zadeve. Dodelitev akreditacije predpostavlja izpolnjevanje številnih pogojev. Trenutno je na Češkem le 11 akreditiranih zasebnih arhivov. Akreditacija ni obvezna - obstaja druga možnost, da skrb za zasebni arhiv prevzamejo lastniki ali pa se jih na podlagi pogodbe o skrbništvu preda v državne arhive (kar se pogosto uporablja). Državni arhivi izvajajo obvezen nadzor tako nad samostojnimi zasebnimi arhivi pri lastnikih kot pri arhivih pod lastno upravo.

Ključne besede: Republika Češka, zasebni arhivi, arhivska zakonodaja, akreditacija arhivov, javni arhivi, državni arhivi, arhivi cerkvenih institucij, arhivi družinskega (aristokratskega) arhiva, osebni arhivi, pogodba o predaji, nacionalna arhivska dediščina

Soukromé archivy v České republice

ABSTRAKT

Přestože soukromé archivy patří v řadě zemí mezi nejvýznamnější, ale mnohdy i nejstarší (např. církevní, šlechtické archivy), v České republice představují v současné době specifickou skupinu. Podle současné legislativy České republiky jsou soukromé archivy zřizované fyzickými nebo právníckými osobami, přičemž mohou působit jako samostatný archiv, pokud jim byla udělena akreditace ze strany ministerstva vnitra. Udělení akreditace předpokládá splnění celé řady podmínek. V současné době existuje v České republice 11 akreditovaných soukromých archivů. Akreditace však není povinná, další možností je převzetí soukromých archiválií do péče vlastníka, nebo jejich uložení ve státním archivu na základě smlouvy o úschově (které je využíváno dosti často). Státní archivy současně vykonávají dohled jak nad akreditovanými soukromými archivy, tak nad archiváliemi převzatými vlastníkem.

Although private archives are among the most important, but quite often the oldest (e.g., church, aristocratic archives) in the Czech Republic also, they are currently a specific group consisting of only a few independently functioning archives, and most of the private archives are in the custody of the state archives. At the same time, these archives even perform over self-contained private archives supervision. The starting point of this approach is that all archival records located in the archives, or more precisely recorded in the archives in the territory of the Czech Republic, constitute the National Archival Heritage (*Act, Section 16, § 2*).

1 Types of archives in the Czech Republic

1.1 Public Archives

The legislation of the Czech Republic (i.e., the Archives and Records Service Act No. 499/2004, with other amendments and regulations) distinguishes two basic types of archives - public and private (*Act, Section 42, § 1*). Public archives are further divided into archives of state, specialised, security and archives of territorial self-governing units (*Act, Section 42, § 2*). The state archives - the National Archives in Prague and seven state regional archives (SRA, in Prague, Třeboň, Plzeň, Litoměřice, Zámorsk, Brno - with the historical name Moravian Provincial Archives, and Provincial Archives in Opava - as the archives for Silesia), cover all the regions of the Czech Republic and bring together 72 originally (1960-2003) independent state district archives (*Act, Section 45-49*).¹ The archives of various institutes, scientific ones,² universities,³ media archives⁴ and other important institutions⁵ belong to a group of specialised archives and as such these archives can operate on the basis of the accreditation granted by the Department of Archival Administration of the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic under which archival services fall within the Czech Republic (*Act, Section 51, 52*). Some of these are among the oldest organised archives in the Czech lands and some of them have been designated as accredited specialised archives by law (*Act, Section 80, § 4*), just like the National Film Archives and the Central Archives of Surveying and Land Register, which have a specific status (*Act, Section 80, § 2*). Security archives keeping archival records containing classified information may be established by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Security Office and the intelligence services of the Czech Republic; these archives are governed by special regulations (*Act, Section 53*).

1. Act, Section 45, 46 (National Archives), Section 47, 48-49 - state regional archives; Annex 4 - internal organisational units of state regional archives, i.e., state district archives.

2. E.g. Archives of the Czech Academy of Sciences, National Museum Archives, Archives of the National Gallery, Literary Archive of the Museum of Czech Literature, Archives of the National Library of the Czech Republic, Archive of the National Technical Museum, Archive of the Moravian Gallery in Brno.

3. Charles University Archives, Czech Technical University Archives in Praha, Masaryk University Archives in Brno, Technical University Archives in Brno, University of Hradec Králové Archives, Palacký University Olomouc Archives, Academy of Fine Arts in Prague Archives, VŠB - Technical University in Ostrava Archives, Silesian University in Opava Archives, Mendel University in Brno Archives, University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno Archives.

4. Czech Radio Archives, Czech Television Archives.

5. Military Historical Archive (Armed Forces History Archives), Archives of the President's Office of the Czech Republic, Archive of the Prague Castle, Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Archives of the Chamber of Deputies, Archive of the Senate, Archive of the Czech National Bank.

The archives of five cities (Prague City Archives, the Archive of the city of Pilsen, the Archive of the city of Ústí nad Labem, Brno City Archive and the Archives of the City of Ostrava), which are considered accredited by law, are currently among the archives of territorial self-governing units (*Act, Section 79*). Other possible archives that may establish territorial self-governing units (e.g., regions) must apply for accreditation (*Act, Section 54, 55*).

1.2 Private archives

According to the current law, private archives are “other archives established by natural or legal persons”, while “private archives may act as archives if they have been granted by accreditation”. This accreditation is not mandatory; however, the accreditation of the private archive is the right of its founder to be entitled to free professional assistance from the National Archives or the relevant state regional archive. The founder of a private archive that has been accredited is additionally entitled to provide a one-off annual state contribution to the operation of a private archive. Its amount, in view of the possible costs of operating the private archive, the care of the archives stored in it and their protection shall be determined by the implemented legal regulation. Private archives have various obligations according to the law, similar to other archives (*Act, Section 57*): 1) keep records of archival records within the records of the National Archival Heritage; 2) allow, under the conditions laid down by law, to inspect stored archival records; 3) submit to the National Archives or to the relevant state regional archive for consents proposals for shredding; 4) care for the archival records of their founder and, alternatively, its legal predecessors, can also take care of the archives of other legal or natural persons who have deposited them in a private archive under a custody agreement; 5) perform a physical check of archive cultural heritage and national cultural heritage, if stored; 6) participate in the preparation of national thematic lists of archive materials organised by the Ministry; 7) perform an inventory of archival records announced by the Ministry.

2 Accreditation of private (and specialized public) archives

The Archives and Records Service Act sets out all the requirements related to the granting of accreditation - the content of the application for accreditation, its validity, withdrawal or termination. While the natural person may be the founder of the accredited private archive, the heirs may continue to operate the archive (the rules for archiving before the end of the inheritance procedure are defined) if all the conditions for archiving are still fulfilled (the heirs are, however, obliged to notify the Ministry of all changes), in the event of the dissolution or abolition of the legal entity that is the founder of the archive, the accreditation ceases and does not pass on to the legal successor (*Act, Section 58, § 4, Section 60*).

The Archives and the Records Service Act specifies the conditions for the granting of accreditation in detail (*Act, Section 61*). They include the construction, technical, space, security, material, financial and personnel conditions.

2.1 Construction and technical conditions

The construction and technical conditions stipulate that the archive building may not be located in areas at risk of flooding and airport take off and/or landing corridors; it must be located outside the areas of gas and dust pollution, and cold water, hot water, steam and gas pipelines and rain and sewage systems must not run through archive areas; the archive building shall be located above ground water level, their natural or artificial ventilation shall be guaranteed to maintain the specified temperature and relative humidity, and spaces shall be equipped with instruments to measure these values (*Act, Section 61, § 1*).

2.2 Room conditions

According to spatial requirements, the archive spaces must be divided into spaces with public access and spaces without public access, and the communication routes of the two separate parts must not intersect. In rooms without public access, there should be a room for the reception and processing of archival documents, a room for storing archival documents, a room for cleaning, disinfection, preservation, restoration and reprographic processing of archive materials and a room for archival materials reserved for study; in spaces with public access, a room to view archival records must be established and designed (*Act, Section 61, § 3*).

2.3 Safety requirements

Safety requirements are very precise: archive buildings must have fire and security documentation, be equipped with electronic fire alarms and hand-held fire extinguishers (only with powder in the storage rooms), spaces without public access must be protected by mechanical and electronic security devices against unauthorised access and intrusion, etc. (*Act, Section 61, § 4*).

2.4 Material conditions

In order to meet the material conditions, it must be ensured that the equipment of the research room allows for the use of portable computers and that the archive is equipped with equipment for the copying of archival records and, if it manages micrographic records, with microfilm readers also. Archival spaces where archival records are stored must be equipped with shelves for storage of archival records and, if necessary, with special storage means for storing maps, plans, technical documentation and archival records of large formats, film and photo recordings, audio and audio-visual archives and archival records in digital form (*Act, Section 61, § 5*).

2.5 Financial conditions

Fulfilment of financial terms means the provision of mandatory minimum annual average costs in the budget of the founder for the operation of the archive (which corresponds to the product of the average cost of one standard meter of archival records and the total amount of stored archival records, calculated in linear meters; *Act, Section 61, § 6*).

2.6 Personnel conditions

Finally, to meet staffing conditions, it is required that the archive staff be occupied by university graduates in the archive or historical direction or in a particular specialty field (e.g., technical) to have at least one employee to handle 2000 linear meters of archival material and so that there are a sufficient number of staff in the research room so that one employee could supervise ten researchers per day (*Act, Section 61, § 7*).

All these conditions apply not only to private archives, but also to specialised public archives - and precisely with regard to them, very detailed and quite strict instructions were specified during the preparation of the new law prior to 2004: these archives, at that time, included many of the conditions relating to the modern archives which they did not meet, and their definition, in law, was intended to ensure that the founders of these archives (e.g., museums, universities) paid appropriate attention to their archive institutions and equipment. At the same time, specialised archives have received a three-year deadline to meet all conditions - both those archives that have been declared specialised by law (see above) and others that were required to request the Ministry for accreditation within six months. The same rule applies to private archives. If the accreditation was not requested or if the accreditation was not granted, the archives were deposited on the basis of a decision of the Ministry of the Interior on the basis of a custody agreement (deposit) with the National Archives or with the relevant territorial state archive (*Act, Section 80, § 5, Section 81*).

3 Archives in the owner's care - out of archives

The same applies so far, with natural or legal persons who have not requested the establishment of a private archive or have not been accredited; and may retain their archives or archive material in their own care, in which case there are archival records stored outside the archives. Given that these archival materials form part of the National Archival Heritage and are subject to the obligation to keep their records, the National Archives and the state regional archives, according to their competence, maintain it in the case of non-accredited archives.

At present (2018), a total of 181,196 archive files with a total range of 833,569.69 linear meters (lm) are recorded in the National Archival Heritage, of which 179,488 archive files (824,207.78 lm) are stored in archives or cultural institutions. There are only 1708 archive files (9361.91 lm - i.e., 0.94 and 1.12% respectively) out of archives. Certain church and nobility owners have requested their archives

(see below), usually after termination of the custody agreement; but the National Archives or the state regional archives also supervise them.

4 Accredited private archives in the Czech Republic

While specialised public archives are relatively abundant in the Czech Republic, only 11 are accredited private archives - and there are 1414 archive files totalling 11,052.05 lm. Most often, these are from business archives (6), archives of political parties (or one political party), one trade union archive, two archives of various other organisations and one archive of the Church. Information was obtained on the basis of a questionnaire and available information (internet, annual reports).⁶

4.1 All-branch archives of the Czech-Moravian Confederation of Trade Unions (Prague)

The mission of the All-branch Archives is to collect, professionally process and make available archive material, documenting the development of the trade union movement in the Czech lands (or Czechoslovakia). In particular, it serves the needs of its founder, handles inquiries from state and other organisations and is open to anyone interested in the history of trade unions. It also participates in the all-round promotion of the Czech trade union movement and represents the only workplace in a country that has been consistently engaged in studying the history of trade unions in the Czech lands.

The archive holds 97 archive material files, especially from various trade unions and organisations, especially from 1945 onwards, as well as a collection of old trade unions, associations and central offices from 1889-1959 and a number of personal records. The archive has two employees, the year of accreditation was not detected.

4.2 The Archive of the Jewish Museum in Prague

The archive was accredited in 2008, its main part being the archives of the individual Jewish religious communities of Bohemia and Moravia, which represent a valuable source for the history of the Jewish people in the Czech lands, roughly from the second half of the 18th century. The most important of these is the record of the Jewish Religious Community in Prague. There are also records of some Jewish associations and organisations, as well as personal records. Part of the archive is a smaller collection of patents and circulars, a collection of seals and a collection of music. The archives also contain documentation on individual Jewish communities, which includes photographs of synagogues, ghettos and cemeteries, reports on the exploration of these monuments, references to literature, or other sources of the history of Jewish settlement (*Sedlická - Vitámvásová*). In total, the archive stores 345 files (621.35 lm) and has three workers.⁷

4.3 The Archives of the Czech Social Democratic Party (Prague)

The archive of the Czech Social Democratic Party (CSSD) ensures the professional administration of the archival documents concerning both the activities of the current CSSD party and its historical predecessors - the social democratic parties in the past, the social-democratic movement in general, in Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia, and the former Czechoslovakia. The archive serves both the needs of the party and the study of scholars from the public. At present it is the only accredited archive of a political party in the Czech Republic, the accreditation was granted in 2007. The archive contains a total of 11 files (66.13 lm), which contain documents demonstrating the activity of the party since its founding in 1878 (including the German Social Democratic Party of Workers in Czechoslovakia, 1900-1935), although the archival records are not in a complete state up to 1948 (4 files are paradoxically owned by the National Archives and the CSSD Archive administers it by the depository agreement). The public have practically unrestricted access to the historical materials (except for those files that contain private information and personal data). Modern archival materials from the leadership of the party, which were created after 1990, are deposited in the CSSD Archives in Prague on the basis of the selection of archival records in shredding proceedings, possibly from their own acquisition activities and up to exceptions (e.g., pro-

6. Basic information about the archives in the Czech Republic and their records are contained in the archive collection and collections database in the Czech Republic: <http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/archivni-fondy-cr/Default.aspx>.

7. See <https://www.jewishmuseum.cz/sbirky-a-vyzkum/sbirky-a-fondy/archiv-sbirky-a-fondy/>.

motional and electoral prints, convention protocols, etc) are not accessible to the public. The archive has two staff members.⁸

4.4 The Archives of the Firefighting Centre (Přibyslav)

The Archive was accredited in 2007. It cares for the documents from the activities of the Association of Firemen of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia and its predecessors (from 1873) and has historical records and collections related to the documentation of the history and presence of fire protection in the Czech Republic, as well as taking care of the CTIF archive (International Technical Committee for the Prevention and Extinction of Fire). In total, it manages 15 archive files.⁹

4.5 The accredited Archive of ArcelorMittal Ostrava a.s. (Ostrava)

The archive follows the company archive established in 1953 (for the Nová huť of Klement Gottwald), it achieved its accreditation as a private archive for the first time in 2006, the second due to organisational changes following the change of the founder and the name of the archive in 2010. It keeps 38 archive files (1162.83 lm, some are borrowed from the Provincial Archives in Opava), apart from the materials of the previous originator, these are mostly documents originating from the activities of ArcelorMittal Ostrava a.s. and its subsidiaries. From the older period, the archives keep the documents of some mining and ironmongery companies from the 1920s. The archival materials are used mainly for administrative purposes and mostly for the needs of the founder. Studying the archival records stored in the archive must not jeopardise the interests of ArcelorMittal Ostrava a.s. and its subsidiaries, nor the socially or legally protected interests of living persons. The archive has one worker.¹⁰

4.6 The Archive of OKD, a. s. (Ostrava)

The OKD archive was awarded its accreditation as a private archive in 2006. Nowadays, a new accreditation application has been submitted due to the change in the founder. There are 2531.46 lm of archival records in the archives, which are divided into 157 records. The archive contains a number of maps and other technical documentation (drawings and plans of buildings, technical documentation of machinery connected with mining activities, etc.) related to the history of black coal mining in the Ostrava-Karviná district. The archival materials are, therefore, also used for technical purposes, besides being historians, they are also interested in the history of mining and Ostrava. There are two permanent employees in the archive.¹¹

4.7 The Archive of Sokolovská uhelná (Sokolov)

The archive has been accredited since 2007. It manages 1108.16 lm of archival records in 85 archive records and 2 collections (of which 748.8 lm are borrowed from SRA Pilsen - these are archival records from the activities of state-owned enterprises and their predecessors to privatisation in the year 1994). This archive also holds a valuable collection of more than 3.5 thousand maps dating back to 1794-1994, mostly mining and geological, as well as cadastral and survey maps mainly from the Northwest Bohemia. The archives are mostly used for official matters (mining, geological, construction and property rights), both by the founder and the state administration (building authority, water authorities). The archive has two staff members (*Hadáček, pp. 60-93; Bystrický - Hrubý, p. 116*).¹²

4.8 The Archive of Škoda Auto (Mladá Boleslav)

The archive was created in the 1950s and it has been an accredited private archive since November 2007. The archive preserves materials that document the development of the company from the very beginning (cca. 1894) until recently (2005), and in the case of promotional materials up to the present

8. See <https://www.cssd.cz/aktualne/aktuality/archiv-cssd/>.

9. See http://www.chh.cz/vismo/zobraz_dok.asp?id_org=200266&id_ktg=53&n=archiv%2Dchh&p1=1127.

10. See <https://ostrava.arcelormittal.com/o-spolecnosti/akreditovany-archiv.aspx>.

11. See <https://www.okd.cz/cs/o-nas/archiv-okd>.

12. See <https://www.suas.cz/index.php/41-suas/spolecnost/podnikovy-archiv>.

day, but also contain the materials of the companies that merged or cooperated with the Mladá Boleslav automobile company. In addition to the documents of an official nature, the archives include documentation for the company's products (not only for motorcycles and cars, but also for trucks, buses, ploughs and tractors, etc., including prototypes), photographs, posters, technical drawings and several three-dimensional archival materials; In total, there are 23 records and collections (approx. 1000 lm). From the point of view of the researchers, the most popular is information about classic cars, i.e., searching through the engine manuals (2105 pieces, but not part of the National Archival Heritage) and the type documentation, which usually make it possible to determine the date of production and the colour of the bodywork and upholstery at the time the car left the factory; this information is most often used by collectors, but also by journalists. The Archive has two experts and several other staff. Significantly, it cooperates with foreign countries - with other archives of the Volkswagen Group (Volkswagen, Audi, Porsche).¹³

4.9 The Archives of Vitkovice, a. s. (Ostrava)

The Archive is one of the oldest and largest corporate archives in the Czech Republic - it was established in 1954, accredited as a private archive in 2004. It keeps a total of 61 archive records (1719.89 lm), special types of archival materials are mainly represented by technical documentation and maps and plans. The archive has three employees.¹⁴

4.10 The Central Archive of Plzeňský Prazdroj, a. s. (Pilsen)

The archive of the Plzeňský Prazdroj joint stock company, based in Pilsen, together with the Brewery Museum in Pilsen, is part of the Pilsner Urquell Department of Historical Collections. The first mention of the preservation of documents dates back to the 1840s, as the private archive gained accreditation in 2009. At present there are 116 archives and collections of archival records (574.25 lm). Documents cover the period from the mid-19th century to the present. The most important ones are the records of the old Pilsen breweries, the archive holds archives of a number of small breweries, various interest associations and trade unions. Valuable documents are included in the collection of photographs and the collection of documentation. In 2009, a technical archive (225 lm) was added to the archive, containing technical documentation for objects, building plans or machinery. Since 2017, the record office is also part of the archive, with three employees taking care of everything. The archive is used, not only for the purposes of the company, but also for professional and scientific work.¹⁵

4.11 The Diocesan Archives of the Bishopric of Brno (Rajhrad)

The archive is the only ecclesiastical archive in the territory of the Czech Republic, which took over the majority of church records from South Moravia, belonging to the Bishopric of Brno (while in other dioceses documents are stored in state archives on the basis of a custody agreement), accredited in 2011. It maintains a total of 462 archive files in the range of 1506.31 lm (including dean and parish offices), carries out their professional care and processing, at the same time administers the central record office and carries out expert supervision of records service performance at the Bishopric of Brno as well providing methodical assistance in the field of pre-legal entities whose founder is the Brno Bishopric. The administration of the parish and dean archives, which were previously preserved (and in particular processed) in state district archives, was the source of some tension, but they were eliminated by mutual cooperation and helpfulness in the interest of archival materials. In total, the archive has three employees.¹⁶

All private archives make material available to researchers, process and inventory, where possible, some of them provide digitisation of archival materials and their restoration (especially the Škoda Auto Archive), even though most archival records are in good condition (according to their staff). Cooperation with state archives (especially supervisors, but others also) is valued as successful by the staff of pri-

13. See <http://museum.skoda-auto.cz/muzeum/archiv-spolecnosti/>.

14. See <https://www.cylinders.cz/archiv>.

15. See <https://www.prazdroj.cz/nas-pribeh/archiv>; <https://www.prazdroj.cz/en/our-story/archive>.

16. See <http://www.biskupstvi.cz/diecezni-archiv>.

vate accredited archives; they appreciate, in particular, the methodical assistance and mutual contacts at various workshops, as well as cooperation in the production of exhibitions (especially the Vítkovice Archive, the Plzeňský Prazdroj Archive) and in the processing of various archival materials, advisory activities, mutual exchange of information, etc. Problems are usually not mentioned, only in a few cases, where a smaller amount of finances has been observed, even though the founder's support is stated at the same time, but most archives do not encounter problems in this respect. Of course, the interest of the founders is already proven by the successful accreditation.

5 Private archives deposited in State Archives under a deposit agreement

Contrary to the situation in other countries, it may be surprising that private archives do not include, in particular, other church and also aristocratic or family or family member archives or archive materials. Most of the owners of these archives use the above-mentioned possibilities of storing archival records in the National Archives or in the relevant territorial state regional archive on the basis of a custody agreement (deposit). This situation is the result of historical developments in the former Czechoslovakia, especially in the period after the Communist coup in 1948, when private property (including the church and aristocracy) was gradually abolished and the property, including archival records, was taken over by the state (*Babička 1994; Řeháček 2016, 2017*) - it was rather their rescue with the given political situation, as some church leaders have said after the restoration of the democratic conditions in 1990 (*Vlk 2012, p. 208*).¹⁷ Many owners of archival records have also visited in recent times, i.e., on the basis of the Act on Property Restitution, and after the publication of the Archives Act, decided to keep the materials in state archives and chose to conclude a custody agreement (*Babička 1994; Řeháček 2016; Müller 2007*). At present, a total of 4835 archive files are, this way, stored (30534.69 lm, i.e., 2.66 and 3.66%, respectively of the National Archival Heritage).

5.1 Archives of Church Institutions

These deposits make up a large part of the National Archives today - a total of 59 archive files of 4762.43 lm. The largest part of them is represented by the records of ecclesiastical institutions (a total of 33 ensembles, 4130.72 lm), especially the Roman Catholic churches - almost 87% of all archival records stored in the National Archives under contract. Among these archival materials, two important units can be distinguished. The first is the Archive of the Prague Archbishopric, the second is a group of archives from the monastic orders. The Archives of the Archbishopric of Prague comprise a total of 9 archive files of a total size of 2234.05 lm. These archival materials (or part of them) first operated in the so-called "operational administration" from 1956, the first deposit agreement with the Archbishopric of Prague was concluded in 1994, currently the depository agreement of 2004 and its 2014 amendment. The Archives of the monastic orders (the Capuchins, the Elizabethans, the Benedictines, the Dominicans, the Franciscans, the Mercy Brothers, the Redemptorists, the Ursulines, the Crusaders, the Premonstratensians, the Knights of Malta) are archival records that were taken over by the then Central Archive of the Ministry of the Interior and placed into the state archives after the liquidation of the monasteries in Czechoslovakia in 1950. There are 14 archive files in total in the range of 1741.83 lm (*Křečková 2007*). The only order of the Church, which took over archives from the National Archives into their care, is the Salesians (4.52 lm, in 1995), the others concluded deposit contracts. Over the past ten years, it is also possible to note the interest of some owners of the archive records of the merger of their documents, so that some smaller records deposited in the state regional archives at the request of their owners are gradually delimited into the National Archives and included in the relevant archive files (about the Crusaders, the Ursulines, the Capuchins, the Redemptorists, the Augustinians, or the Franciscans).¹⁸ However, part of the archival records of the Church orders remain in SRA, respectively the Moravian Provincial Archives. Besides the archives of the Salesians, the archive of the Cistercian Monastery in Vyšší Brod is another archive stored outside the state archives from 1994; the entire archive is at the same time an archival cultural monument (*Act, section 17, 19, 21, 30-33*) and, therefore, subject to control and methodological oversight by the

17. Cardinal Miroslav Vlk (1991-2010 archbishop of Prague) studied at the Faculty of Philosophy of the Charles University in Prague in the years 1955-1960 in the field of archival science and then he worked as an archivist at the archives in South Bohemia (in Třeboň, Jindřichův Hradec and České Budějovice) until 1964, he also worked in the archive of the State Bank of Czechoslovakia at the time when his state approval for the priestly profession was withdrawn from 1986-1988.

18. In other cases, materials remain in SRA - for example, the Premonstratensians Želiv and the Český Krumlov Minorites are stored in the SRA Třeboň, and 11 sets of ecclesiastical orders are stored in the SRA Litoměřice, etc.

territorially competent SRA Třeboň from this point of view also; cooperation with conserving the archives, in particular, is developing successfully.

Likewise, Archives of the Archbishopric of Prague, other archives of the Roman Catholic Church were taken over by the state archives in 1956: while the bishops and the capitulars transferred to the state archives (SRA today), the parish, dean and vicarial archives were transferred to the district archives, which are deposited there today with the exception of the South Moravian depositories (Řeháček 2016). These include, for example, the České Budějovice Bishop's Archive (SRA Třeboň), the Plzeň Bishopric Archive (SRA Plzeň), the Litoměřice Bishop's Archive (together with the cathedral chapter - SRA Litoměřice) or the Hradec Králové Bishop's Archive (State District Archive of Hradec Králové). The materials of the Chapter of Stará Boleslav and Karlštejn are stored in the SRA Prague. The Archives of the Metropolitan Chapter at St. Vitus in Prague are stored on the basis of a custody agreement in the Archives of the Prague Castle, which is a specialised archive. The above mentioned accredited independent private Archives of the Brno Bishopric, including parish archives, is an exception in the Czech Republic.

Archives of other churches, especially the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren,¹⁹ are also deposited in the state regional archives, but part of the archival records are administered by a separate Central Archive of the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren.

5.2 The nobility or the respective family archives, personal archives

As for the aristocratic, or the respective family archives (*Smíšková 2001*), they were still in the care of their owners until 1948, then nationalised and taken over by the relevant territorial state archives (or some state archives were connected with former aristocratic archives - e.g., the archives in Třeboň). However, some of these archives were restituted after 1990 and deposited in state archives on the basis of a contract. One of them is the Lobkovice family archive Dolní Bečkovice, which is deposited in SRA Litoměřice. Originally, they included the Lobkowicz Family Archives of Roudnice nad Labem and Lobkowicz Family Archives of Mělník, but these are among the private archives, where the owners cancelled the deposit contract in 2010 and demanded their ownership (*Kopička, 2011*); the relevant archival records are stored outside state archives - the others are, for example, the Černín Family Archive (SRA Prague Supervision), the Vratislav from Mitrovce Family Archive (SRA Třeboň) or the Kolowrat Family Archive (SRA Zámorsk).

However, a number of aristocratic archives no longer have the status of a private archive and are a direct part of state archives - the largest number of them being in the National Archives: 13 in total, the most famous and the largest being the Archives of the Tuscan Habsburgs (132.32 lm) and the Family Archives of Metternich 149.52 lm).

Under the custody agreement, personal collections may also be stored in the archives - but most were usually bought or donated. For example, in the National Archives, which holds a total of 518 personal records (which, together with family archives, make up about 26% of all archive files of this archive), only six are stored under the custody agreement. One of the deposited records is Václav Havel's personal archive, which was handed over to the National Archives by the Václav Havel Library in 2012.

5.3 Archives of political parties, movements, organisations and associations

A similar situation exists in the archives of various political parties, movements, organisations and associations, which are again mainly stored in the National Archives (59 archive files, 5484.6 lm), though mostly as a part of it. The most important and most extensive of these are the records of the former Central Archives of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia and the Archives of the Institute of Marxism-Leninism of the Communist Party, which were transferred to the National Archives in 1990 and 1991.²⁰ After 1990, some new or renewed political parties, some of which have already ended their activities, have started to store their archive records in the National Archives. As a deposit, only one of the parliamentary parties, the Christian and Democratic Union - the People's Party of

19. The South Bohemian Synodal Senior of the Evangelical Church of Czech Brethren is deposited in the SRA Třeboň, 6 groups also belonging to the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren are included in the SRA Litoměřice, etc.

20. Based on Constitutional Act No. 496 on the 16th of November 1990 on the Restitution of KSČ Property to the People of the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic).

Czechoslovakia, has stored its digital archives in the National Archives. However, it manages its other archives, as well as other parties (such as the Civic Democratic Party). The Czech Social Democratic Party currently has the only aforementioned accredited archive.

5.4 Other archives and archive materials

Other archives, which are stored in the National Archives, constitute an interesting and valuable group of archive collections from the provenance of the Czech community in Switzerland: there are a total of 17 archive files that were gradually submitted to the National Archives in 2001-2016, eight of which are kept as a deposit (such as the Union of Bohemian and Slovak Societies in Switzerland; the Masaryk Archive, Switzerland) and others as donations. Another interesting deposit includes the Collection of Photographs of the Union of Czech Photographers (116 lm) and the collection of archival materials of the members of the Scout Movement (31.14 lm) or the records for the Office for the Victims of Nazism of the Czech-German Future Fund (340 lm) and the Union of Czech Philatelists (17 lm).

Professional Chambers of Commerce (Chamber of Auditors, Chamber of Commerce of the Czech Republic) also use the possibility to store their archival records in the National Archives, but only the Czech Chamber of Stomatologists (45.85 lm) deposits their material on the basis of a deposit agreement.

The codicological valuable manuscripts (in particular hymn books or song books for holy mass) are a specific example of the deposits, whose owners are cities (e.g., Třebenický hymn book from the property of Třebenice, deposited in SRA Litoměřice).

As far as the archives of different businesses are concerned, in many cases after the death of the originators, the archives were removed and transferred to State ownership and under care of the respective SRAs per the owner's wishes. Some contemporary companies also deposit their materials in state archives, other materials are kept outside state archives, but under their supervision (e.g., Temelín Nuclear Power Plant).

Even in these cases, the depositories of archival records undergoes changes in some cases - some owners of archive materials are determined to donate to the state (e.g., the Syndicate of Prague Journalists or the Czech National Social Party, both in 2003), others, upon leaving or the termination of the contract, will take over their archive files (e.g., Antonín Švehla's personal records, deposited in the National Archives in 2004 and returned in 2014, or the Family Archive of Lobkowicz Roudnice, returned in 2010).

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SUMMARY

Private archives are currently a specific group in the Czech Republic - besides public archives, including the state, specialised and security archives and the archives of territorial self-governing units (cities). According to the current law, private archives are archives established by natural or legal persons, while they may act as self-contained archives if they achieved the accreditation granted by the Department of Archival Administration of the Ministry of the Interior. The granting of accreditation assumes to meet a whole range of requirements that include the construction, technical, space, security, material, financial and personnel conditions. Currently there are only 11 accredited private archives in the Czech Republic - and there are 1414 archive files totalling 11,052.05 lm. Most often, these are from business archives (6), archive of one political party, one trade union archive, two archives of various other organisations and one archive of the Church. The accreditation is not mandatory, the other possibility is to take over the private archives into care of their owners, or to deposit these on the basis of a custody agreement in the National Archives or in the state archives. This possibility is used from most of the owners of these archives, especially church, but another institutions also. Certain church and nobility owners have requested their archives, usually after termination of the custody agreement. There are only 1708 archive files (9361.91 lm) out of archives. The state archives even perform both over self-contained private archives and the archives administrated by their owners the mandatory supervision.

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