

Minority Influence on Engineering Technology in Shaping Industrial Education Policy

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Abstract

The objective of the following research is to convey data to understand, to what extent do immigrants influence the technical education policy of a public school system, and in turn, how the immigrants change as the result of their participation within the public school system. Information is presented to investigate links between the immigrants, the city of Chicago, and the public school system. Reports, letters, and documents are presented in an attempt to uncover connections between the variables: public schools, immigrants, and Industrial Technology. The aim of the study is to identify where and how an immigrant sub-culture can influence the direction of educational policy in a large metropolitan area. In doing so it would be useful to take these findings and transfer them to modern educational issues of minority disenfranchisement through broad macro-level educational policy decisions and mandates. The intention is to bring out the strong influence immigrants have on American Industrial Technology.

Introduction

Chicago is a diverse city that has been built by the many influences of a variety of immigrant groups that have made this area home [1, 2]. Ethnic communities have had different impacts and contributions to the city and its systems. The Board of Education is the municipal department that changed the newcomers and transformed as the result of the settlers. One ethnic population was the Czechoslovaks from Central Europe, who were concentrated in Illinois [3]. What is interesting about the Czechoslovaks is that their legacy can be seen on the different buildings and even neighborhoods that bear Slavic words: Sokol, škola, Tabor, Vojta and Pilsen.

Investigating how ethnic groups pass down skills and survival capabilities can help identify the important factors that make them successful at certain skills rather than others. Isolating vocational skills and aptitudes that are transferred from a minority group and acclimated into the host society can facilitate the development of new technology training programs. The investigation can give an understanding of affirmative components of traditional idiosyncrasies through the assorted records of achievement of various Czechoslovaks.

Background of the Problem

Who are the Czechoslovaks? These immigrants originated in a small area of a very large empire [4]. They came from central Europe, an area with fluctuating borders and warfare. The region was at one time part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, The Holy Roman Empire, The Byzantine Empire, Czechoslovakia, and recently the Slovak Republic. Constant change defined the people coming from this region of Europe. One way or another, these people (Kysilka) made their way to America was:

They were poor people, uneducated, nearly illiterate, who were hardly able to undersign, and in any case politically unripe, backward individuals who were leaving Bohemia. But they had their own sound rational core and, being faced to the American reality, they were able to learn fast and to mature.[5, p. 1]

The history of Czechoslovaks is one of conflict and religious domination. “During four centuries of our history, the leading idea was a religious one. The idea constitutes the essence of our history; it exhausts the meaning of our past,” writes Tomáš Masaryk, founder of the modern state of Czechoslovakia, of Czech history [6, p. 124]. The nations of central Europe were frequently warring [7]. The Czechoslovaks were in the middle of Europe, the crossroads between the Asiatic tribes to the East, the Nordic tribes to West and in the path of the Roman conquerors coming up from southern Europe. The conquerors would use the Czechoslovaks as forced labor. One example is the Avars, as Gilbert Oddo in 1960 writes, “the Slovanic people...were forced to go with them on rampages into neighboring territories” [8, p. 8].

In *A History Of The Czechs And Slovaks*, R.W. Seton-Watson [9] describes the area, “there were no settled conditions. Tribes and nations rose and fell, frontiers swayed to and fro, in all the lands between the Baltic and the Adriatic and Aegean” (p. 11). The Huns were one tribe that ravaged Central Europe. Erwin Lessner (1961) quotes St. Eusebius Hieronymus, referring to the Huns:

Their fastness outpaces even rumors. They do not respect religion, age, or station, they won't even spare helpless children. they put to death infants who have hardly begun to live . . . Roman blood is spilled everyday . . .Cruel despair spreads everywhere; terror and death have many variants . . . but I could not tell it all, even if I had a hundred tongues, a hundred throats, and a voice of iron.[10, p. 64]

The Czechoslovaks wanted a better life and moved to a foreign land, learning and forcing themselves to do better [11]. They coordinated themselves to have a voice in their future [1]. The Czechoslovaks wanted a better life and they knew to have a better life they needed to get involved in the government. The Czechoslovaks became very active in the political system of Chicago [12]. Organizing gave the Czechoslovaks power and influence. They could help build and structure the system that would pass information to their children and future immigrants [13]. The schools were seen as the “transmitter of the immigrant language, traditions, and personal values” and the public school was seen as the “logical instrument of elementary and secondary education” [12, p. 147].

Statement of the Problem

It is not known to what extent Czechoslovak immigrants contributed to technology education in the Chicago public school system between 1875 and 1935? Immigrants settled in many areas of the United States and Czechoslovaks gravitated toward the Chicago area, where they became involved in the public educational system. They are a small ethnic group that is not as well recognized as are the Italians, Irish, English, or German immigrant groups.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose for this study is to identify where and how an immigrant sub-culture, specifically the Czechoslovaks, can influence the direction of educational policy in a large metropolitan area. In doing so it would be useful to take these findings and transfer them to modern educational issues of minority disenfranchisement through broad macro-level educational policy decisions and mandates.

Observation of surroundings and published facts begin to lead to questioning of where or how things came to be a certain way. Why is there Central European language on a building in a predominantly Hispanic neighborhood in the middle of Chicago? Who built these buildings? Why did they build these buildings? How could some immigrants who came over from a small area in Central Europe and settle in a large urban area such as Chicago be able to put their names and ideas on buildings?

Immigrants generally leave their homelands for a better life and a desire to create what they need to fulfill this goal, according to the *Lebensraum* doctrine [14]. They form a network among themselves to promote their values that lead to both success and failure in their intentions [3]. Ethnic communities thrive in different areas of expertise and in different locations [15].

The Czechoslovaks came to the Chicago area in the late 1800's and organized their community to create the changes that would help guide the future. They came from a place with no voice, to a land where they empowered themselves to become involved in the decision-making process. The research shed light on the influences of this rural immigrant group on the educational system of a metropolitan area of an industrialized society.

Research Questions

The research generated information to help identify answers to the problem: To what extent did Czechoslovak immigrants contribute to vocational education in the Chicago public school system between 1875 and 1935? During the course of the research, it was expected that data and information on human behavior and tendencies would be uncovered. Researching human behavior can lead off to many directions [16]. To help refine the inquiry and eliminate irrelevant information the following hypotheses were used to guide the investigation:

1. How and to what extent did Czechoslovak immigrants help build the infrastructure of the Chicago school system?
2. How and to what extent did Czechoslovak immigrants contribute to the development of technology education in the Chicago public schools?
3. How did Czechoslovak immigrants organize themselves to affect policy changes in the Chicago school system?
4. How and to what extent did Czechoslovak immigrants have long-term institutional effects on the Chicago educational system?
5. How did Czechoslovak involvement in the educational system affect their assimilation into American society?

Nature of the Study

The research needs to break the form of any traditional inquiry or approach for reasons of time past between written records and time of subjects observed, no existing subjects, language of written records, availability of written records, and relevance between the variables of the research [17]. Kvale wrote “truth is whatever assists us to take actions that produce the desired results” [18, p. 28]. The possibilities of cross-discipline examination are exciting as Runyan in 1988[16] points out on page three of *Psychology and Historical Interpretation*:

The conceptual logic for utilizing psychology in historical analysis seems unassailable. A serious concern exists within the study of human action and experience in circumstances of the past; psychology is the scientific study of human behavior, hence experience in psychology could usefully be employed in analyzing the psychological component of historical events and processes, rather than relying solely on implicit commonsense and psychological assumptions.

The method and type of disciplinary examination of the motivations of the subjects studied needs to be determined for simplicity of studying such a diverse group of individuals. Omissions and prevailing circumstances of the research material will affect the interpretation of the past events as Charles Everett in 1870 makes clear in *The Science of Thought: a System of Logic*:

The subject of world-- meaning by this the world of our human thought-- is always limited. It does not correspond with the objective in its fullness. Yet this limitation is by the process of thought and experiment always lessening. The subjective is constantly becoming more completely one with the objective, that is, more completely answering to it. Those we see are what the limits of thought are in this direction [19, p. 387].

Data was gathered first hand, categorized, and labeled to indicate relevance to the qualitative research of the Czechoslovak immigrants in Chicago from 1875 to 1935. In *Going to the*

Sources, Anthony Brundage [20] writes, “What is important is that our firmly held convictions be the result of our scholarly labors and not a set of prejudices resolutely fortified by turning a blind eye to contrary evidence” (p. 69).

Significance of the Study

The significance of the inquiry of the stated problem, “To what extent did Czechoslovak immigrants contribute to the Chicago educational system?” is to understand the background and history of the researcher who was born in Czechoslovakia and immigrated to United States as a young child. In the article *Problems Of Possibilities In The Study Of American Immigration And Ethnic History* in the spring of 1985, Tomas Archdeacon [21] explains that “A corollary exists ... that most histories about immigrant groups are written by people of that nationality.”

The research helped to locate and uncover the motivating forces of the Czechoslovaks who immigrated to the Chicago area and how they contributed to the Chicago educational system. The research exposed information that could lead to understanding present day learning cultural discord. Data from past instructional difficulties and encumbrances can enlighten intellectual conceptions of solutions adaptable to existing pedagogical paradigms. Particulars of a specific population within an institutional system can be analyzed for patterns of behavior that could illuminate understanding of social actualization. Institutional changes that occur in a society affect both the empowerment and disenfranchisement of certain groups, and the research could shed light on the balance between powers of ethnic groups.

Definition of Crucial Terms

The nature of the research leads to many terms and ideas that need defining. A few of the most common terms are defined:

1. Manual Training – combines laboratory (practical) exercises with a variety of mental exercises: such as, arithmetic, geography, and language [22]
2. Industrial Education – teaching of vocations or trades. Schools include instruction in simple educational exercises in drawing, modeling, and wood working, to schools which turn out the skilled designer, dyer, or mechanical engineer [23].
3. Industrial Arts – study of industry, its materials, tools, machines, processes, products, and occupations by planning, designing, and constructing projects [24].
4. Technical Training – emphasizes instruction in applied sciences, mathematics, and drawing but does not give manual instruction to develop skill in the mechanical trades or in trade processes [25].
5. Manual Arts – the instruction of youth in those branches of education not usually taught in the public schools: such as, mechanics, manufacturing, and farming [26].
6. Škola – school.(Translation from native language, Slovak)

7. Czechoslovak- Slovaks, Bohemians, Czechs, Moravians. “Czechoslovakia is a revival of the former Bohemian (and Great Moravian) state. Originally the Czechs were united in one state with the Slovaks, but the latter, on the arrival of the Magyars in ancient Pannonia, fell for centuries under foreign rule. The Czechs and Slovaks are one nation and have one language” [27].

Assumptions

Inquiry into immigration of a particular ethnic group can shed light upon the disposition of individuals to influences of environmental conditions that lead to geographic relocation. Clarification of involvement within the infrastructure and institutions of the new host society can expose current social issues to valuable knowledge to help understand differences between ethnic clusters. Assessment of motivation and resilience within a minority population can lead to answers useful to help adapt institutional design for future migration tendencies.

Assimilation study of a distinct subculture can produce insight of the organizing and involvement in policy formulation, from grass-root beginnings to a dynamic self-motivated constituency. Analysis of long-term effects and influences of ethnic groups on institutional systems could establish patterns of success and failure. Exploring social interaction of a distinct group could elucidate prevailing concerns occurring as the result of ethnic misperception.

A survey of technology training of Czechoslovak immigrants could bring forth rudiments of learning useful to the development of a fruitful inclination to succeed. A rationale for distinct learning paradigms can be established to illuminate the understanding of the necessity for manual training facilities. Investigating how ethnic groups pass down skills and survival capabilities can help identify the important factors that make them successful at certain skills rather than others. Isolating vocational skills and aptitudes that are transferred from a minority group and assimilated into the host society can facilitate the development of new vocational training programs. The investigation can give an understanding of affirmative components of traditional idiosyncrasies through the assorted records of achievement of various Czechoslovaks.

Limitations of the Study

The first limit imposed is time. The amount of information that is both directly and indirectly related to the study of immigrants and their assimilation into a new society is unending. The research must be limited by both the amount of information that is to be gathered and the time constraints of processing the information gathered. The period of 1875 to 1935 was chosen to coincide with the beginnings of manual training in Chicago, the start of a pronounced Czechoslovak settlement in Chicago and the apex of Czechoslovak influence in Chicago government. The research needs to break the form of any traditional inquiry or approach for reasons of time past between written records and time of subjects observed, no existing subjects, language of written records, availability of written records, and relevance between the variables of the research [17].

At this point in post-graduate studies, it is the goal of this research to start showing what is important for change (historical data), why is it important (application to present issues), and how to create change (my synthesis and analysis) in a way that individuals can see that the history of education is important, because so much of what works in education is forgotten. Now with the trend of privatization of and reorientation of public funds to private entities it is important to identify what has happened in the past when this has occurred and let individuals themselves judge the data (history) for themselves. Thor Heyerdahl states the reason for research very well, “Why? What was I trying to prove? Nothing. I did not want to prove anything. I wanted to find out something” [28].

Narrative

The Indians are gone. Diversity and change produced a new industrial landscape from the swamp that was Chicago; found by accident looking for the West coast. Many years latter it was no accident that streams of immigrants came to Chicago to take part in the American dream or for just plain greed, as Mike Royko put it in 1973. Chicago was a transit point for people making it a place where anything could happen and for those who ventured into Gambler’s Alley, it usually did.

Located in the center of the United States, Chicago was the go between for the raw products from the western frontier and the finished goods of the East coast. The biggest industry in Chicago became meatpacking. *Reports of the Immigration Commission* in 1910 reported, “Slaughtering and meat-packing output outranks all other industries of the city.” Upton Sinclair captured the essence of the Chicago stockyards in his book *The Jungle*. Descriptions of the Slavic workers and residents from Southside of Chicago opened a window into the life of the immigrants, such as Marija, who worked in a canning factory. The pigs were processed on an assembly line and with “two swift strokes severed the head” and away they went off to pork heaven, with the workers moving like “a demon was after him” (p. 52).

Statistics from 1910, report that 73 percent of the head of households in the slaughtering and meatpacking business were foreigners. The Czechoslovaks comprised over one-third of this group of stockyard workers that was studied. The building trades also had their share of Czechoslovaks, but the majority of immigrants “engaged in non-skilled” work. Though the majority of new immigrants performed manual labor, there were some businesses and tradesmen of Czechoslovak background that were involved in the building trades.

Tools are the center point in a history of man. All progress depends on modifications of past technology and how this information is transferred to the next generation, to paraphrase David Ricardo (1821) in *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*. Technical training has become a science in itself. Educators such as Johann Pestalozzi and John Dewey helped develop the pragmatic philosophy of education. The idea is that learning from experience and activity helps to develop a more complete person. Distinct and specialized learning institutions were developed to train both the workers who needed to learn new skills and to train the teachers who would facilitate manual training to future tradesmen and professionals. The Cook County Normal School, now known as Chicago State University, was established in 1867 to supply capable teachers to public schools.

The Czechoslovaks had the schools to teach them new skills and how to work in America. The immigrants had prior knowledge for tool-making as seen by artifacts excavated by Andrew Kmeť, director of the Slovak Antiquities Association in the late 1800's [29] as seen in Figure 11. Industrialization and machines revolutionized the "technology of handicraft," (p. 231) where the worker is the essential part of the method of training to pass down skills to younger generations [30]. The newcomers would learn new proficiencies to help them perform systematic and detailed work in the growing America [31] as can be seen in the plans and workflows [32] in Figures 10 and 11. Thomas Jefferson foresaw the need for a "technical philosophy" to train:

The mariner, carpenter, shipwright, pumpmaker, clockmaker, machinist, optician, metallurgist, founder, cutler, druggist, brewer, vintner, distiller, dyer, painter, bleacher, soapmaker, tanner, powdermaker, saltmaker, glassmaker. [33]



Figure 1: Bronzové zbrane, nástroje a nádoba [Bronze weapons, tools and containers]. From *Dejiny Vedy a Techniky Na Slovensku* [History of Science and Technology in Slovakia] by Ján Tibenský, Martin, Czechoslovakia: Vydavateľstvo Osveta, 1979, p. 289.

The manual training movement in United States was an impetus for per social change and industrial dominance. In 1886, Charles Ham published *Mind And Hand: the Chief Factor in Education*, in which he explains that manual training is not only good for skill acquisition, but more importantly builds the self-esteem of individuals who will become better citizens, leading to a healthier civilization. The progression of industrial expansion was put on display in Chicago during the 1893 World's Fair, that left a long lasting imprint on the city and its future [34].

Manual training was seen as the cure for the problems with education during a latter part of 1800's. Studies were conducted they indicated how bad schools were performing. In one such study, chaired by George Mead in 1912, it was calculated that 94 percent the Chicago public school students did not finish high school. The Czechoslovaks coming from a background of servitude and struggle for education became involved in Chicago public schools and vocational education. Using past experiences and the conditions of the manual training movement, the immigrants helped to develop methods of teaching that would be relevant to solve problems of social functioning in a congested and growing Chicago.

John Amos Comenius born 1592 formulated methods of teaching and was one of the first educators to use visual aids to teach and he was considered a pioneer in advocating reform of educational policies. Professor Thomas J. Masaryk, the first President of Czechoslovakia and lecturer at the University of Chicago exposed many of Comenius' ideas, for practical and technical education.

Czechoslovak administrators, such as Dr. Frank J. Jirka, born in Ulada Vozice in Bohemia December 6, 1858, took it upon themselves to get involved with the details for the improvement of school facilities. In an 1891 report, Dr. Jirka asked for the authority to take control of a project to setup a forging shop for a manual training class. The Jirka Manual Grammar School was developed to start children at a young age to form skills and experience with hands on tasks. Dr. Jirka in an August 19, 1891, report to a committee, asked for financing and the authority to instruct the chief engineer to have machinery set up in a new building and to provide necessary fans to help with the proper ventilation of the forges and foundry in a new manual training class. [35]

A report by the Committee on Buildings and Grounds, co-authored by Thomas Cusack, in 1898 foresaw the problem [36, pp. 166-7] of overcrowding and "modified the arrangement and construction of the schools" for "larger play rooms" and "convenient entrances." The Jirka School was one of the first manual elementary schools to be built; it was recommended November 8, 1897, and authorized by the City Council April 1898 to help with overcrowding and training of immigrants in the district. The *Report of the President of the Board of Education* in 1899 [37, pp. 73-4] cites the influence of the Bohemian nationality on "certain of the Chicago schools" where these children bring "characteristic hereditary tendencies... from which he had descended."

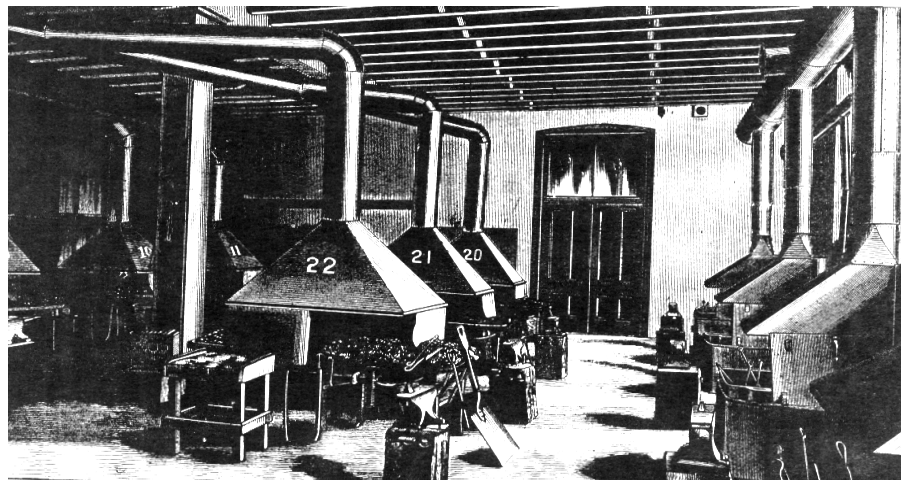


Figure 2: Forging shop. Source: C.M. Woodward, *The Manual Training School* (New York: Arno and The New York Times, 1969), 86.

Jaroslav (JJ) Zmrhal used his experience as a principal to form tests and evaluations to assist educators in understanding the proficiency's of children in regards to their vocational skills and aptitudes. Zmrhal was a follower of the idea that drawing was an important factor to developing people with industrial skills.

Zmrhal emphasizes in his papers the importance of object learning and how this learning is best facilitated through the industrial arts. In notes from January 29, 1916[38, 39], he writes of the “value of drawing, its influence upon the intellectual level of construction work.” He makes a simple diagram to explain his ideas, that “Pupils should learn to work” and “making drawings from representations, and representations from objects, etc” expressed by Figure 20. Ending his notes, he writes that drawing “is an important factor in developing the habit of indirect activity and in determining the intellectual level of man’s industrial habits.”

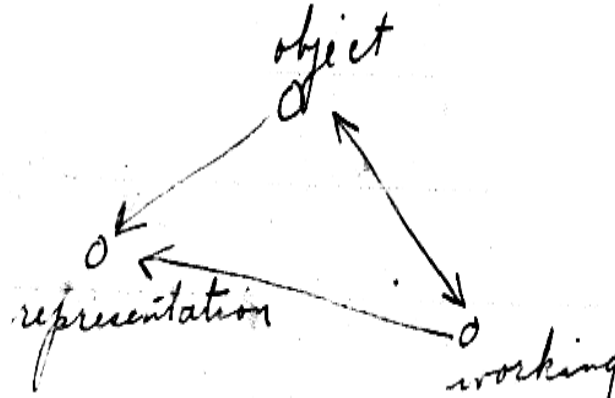


Figure 3: Zmrhal Diagram of learning from drawing, 1916. Photocopy image from actual notes, J.J. Zmrhal, 29 January 1916, Box 108, ACASA, Special Collections, Joseph Regenstein Library, University of Chicago, Chicago.

Mayor Anton Čermák, who died taking a bullet meant for Franklin D. Roosevelt is credited, for the development of Chicago machine politics: a system of complete political control over all agencies of government, including the Board of Education. Čermák who had an industrial background came from Czechoslovakia and gained popular support for his policies because immigrants identified with his value system.

A study in 1926 by Charles Bennett titled *History of Manual and Industrial Education up to 1870*, traces the development of manual training by educators such as Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, and Fellenberg and emphasizes the importance of art education in relation to industrial training. With the coming of the depression in United States the theories and studies of manual training were put into practice and materialized as trade schools and technical high schools.

The Washburne Trade School, established in 1919, evolved from a Czechoslovak enclave to an institution that trained apprentices in all the trades that were needed to build and repair and infrastructure of Chicago. The Carter Harrison Technical High School, built in 1912, at one time had “the largest high school in the world for children all Bohemian dissent.”

The Czechoslovak immigrants and their descendants became involved in different vocations and professions in American society, which provided a catalyst for assimilation into mainstream living from the industrial/immigrant enclaves of the inner city. The Chicago public schools helped to train and prepare the Czechoslovaks for integration into manual and professional vocations as seen through a sample of biographies taken of immigrants and their descendants.

Conclusions

From the historical data gathered several conclusions were synthesized regarding Czechoslovak immigrants and Chicago public education.

Question One:

How and to what extent did Czechoslovak immigrants help build the infrastructure of the Chicago school system?

The data indicate Chicago was an industrial center that drew many people to the metropolitan area seeking to be part of the industrialization and innovation taking place in the late 1800's and early 1900's. The immigrants performed various trades and vocations. The newest immigrants worked as unskilled labor, whereas immigrants acclimated to the norms and standards within Chicago created businesses and services that fulfilled the needs of industrial growth.

Czechoslovaks were found to have been involved in trades that could have been part of the building of the Chicago school infrastructure. Inferences can be made that since there was many Czechoslovaks in Chicago and some were tradesman, hence they were involved in the construction of the schools. In the case of the Harrison Technical High School, secondary source material indicated Martin J. Královec, a Czechoslovak, as planner and builder of the institution. Primary source material indicated Dr. Frank J. Jirka was involved in planning and oversight of the Chicago Manual High School. The reports from his committee indicated that he wanted more control over the work performed at the school.

The evidence does not conclusively show that Czechoslovak immigrants actually built the structures within the Chicago School system. Until direct evidence of Czechoslovak contracts with the Board of Education and the city of Chicago are examined, it can only be concluded that the immigrants had a strong influence on the building of the infrastructure.

Question Two:

How and to what extent did Czechoslovak immigrants contribute to the development of technology education in the Chicago public schools?

The Czechoslovaks have a historical foundation in education and can be associated with the pragmatic theory of learning back to Johannes Amos Comenius who advocated learning by experiencing, which is the basis of John Dewey's experimentalist epistemology. J. J. Zmrhal developed specific programs and lessons plans that incorporated observation with hands on object learning to build industrial competencies. Dr. Jirka directly influenced the manual training curriculum in Chicago, by his appointment as Chairman of the Committee on English High and Manual Training School.

Correlations are present between the variables: Czechoslovaks and technology education development, that lead to the conclusion of direct and tangible contributions made by the Czechoslovaks in Chicago vocational education.

Question Three:

How did Czechoslovak immigrants organize themselves to affect policy changes in the Chicago school system?

Tendencies of the settlement patterns of the Czechoslovak immigrants within Chicago support the idea that groups were formed to serve the social needs of the ethnic enclaves. The Burgess City model for a certain segment of the Czechoslovak population supports theories of urban settlement and transience, whereas a number of immigrants permanently inhabited the original immigrant communities. The lack of changeover within parts of the population helped to establish permanent and numerous organizations that could service the demands of the Czechoslovaks. *Rovnost Ludu* and *Sloboda* newspapers called on the immigrants to become involved in decision-making processes of the Chicago administration.

The variety of ideas and memories of past experiences in Europe fostered the explosion of groups advocating ideas that once were banned and oppressed in the old the country. The immigrants used the skill of written correspondence to request materials that would augment the instruction of the Czechoslovaks. Verbal communication in the form of lectures, speeches and radio addresses were used to disseminate information and ideas.

The immigrants formed a political base that propelled Czechoslovaks into civil service. The apex of governmental ascendancy in Chicago was the election of Anton Čermák to the office of Mayor. A new form of total control of municipal agencies was the result of Čermák's unrelenting quest to serve the people that coined the idea of the "political machine."

Question Four:

How and to what extent did Czechoslovak immigrants have long-term institutional effects on the Chicago educational system?

Buildings that bear the names of Czechoslovaks are in existence today, leading to the supposition that future generations will question the importance and significance of the names appearing on structures. Manuscripts, records, minutes and archives show that Dr. Frank J. Jirka and Jaroslav J. Zmrhal were involved on the Board of Education at the time when the public schools were transformed into laboratories for learning practical skills. The Czechoslovaks were directly involved in the development of the manual training institutions within the Chicago public schools.

The Carter H. Harrison Technical High School built in the heart of the Czechoslovak community in Chicago was the largest technical high school in Chicago when it was built in 1912. The school had the most advanced machinery and labs available for instruction in industrial subjects and ninety years later is still standing as a testimonial to the achievements of a minority group that came from a central European country with nothing and used the opportunities found in a new land to build a school for future generations to use.

Question Five:

How did Czechoslovak involvement in the educational system affect their integration into American society?

The complete assimilation into American society by the Czechoslovaks can be seen in the range and variance of professions and occupations realized by the members of this minority immigrant group. The level of achievement within the social structure of the host country has included: engineers, builders, professors, judiciary appointments, governor, mayor, Board members, respected business leaders and educators. One strong indicator of integration of a subculture is the lack of ethnic prominence within present Chicago culture. The Czechoslovaks utilized the Chicago public schools to realize the American dream. Board of Education members Jirka, Zmrhal, and Mayor Čermák used their control and influence to help fellow Czechoslovaks gain the skills to become involved in American society at all levels and vocations.

Recommendations

A more detailed survey of Board of Education documents and records could shed light upon the extent that Czechoslovaks were directly involved with the building of schools in Chicago. Translating Czech, Slovak and Hungarian education and technology texts could reveal methods of instruction transferable to present skill-based teaching with an infinite amount of possibilities for future development of technology conceptions. Biographies can be written, as well as detailed histories of ethnic contributions to American society by examining and locating personal documents of individuals involved with the Board of Education and City of Chicago. In doing so the goal is to identify specific social and character traits that propel one group to succeed rather than another. Furthermore, there is a need to develop systems of researching qualitative data for ease of understanding without losing the inherent motivations of the groups being studied.

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Biography

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