

Editor's Notes

THIS IS A pivotal time for the lands and peoples of the former Habsburg monarchy, as well as for historians working in the field. Those who once dismissed Habsburg history as archetypally arcane have discovered that the problems that destroyed Austria-Hungary survived and have come back to confound a new generation of statesmen. The events of the past decade have not only sparked renewed interest in the region, they have also made it much more accessible to foreign scholars. The simultaneous collapse of the Iron Curtain and the US dollar at the beginning of this decade has presented scholars with some powerful incentives for forsaking the popular but expensive archive centers like London, Paris, and Vienna for the relatively untouched repositories of the formerly Communist successor states.

This volume is designed to encourage that transition. It does not pretend to be comprehensive in its enumeration or examination of archival repositories; that would have consumed many volumes, rather than a modest two hundred pages. Nor does it examine documents from the post-Habsburg period, except when they bear some immediate relevance to the monarchy's legacy. Researchers seeking truly comprehensive (although occasionally dated) coverage can consult the considerable number of titles listed in this issue. We do, however, hope that showcasing some of the collections of a select group of archives will assist scholars at all professional levels in formulating research topics in the Habsburg field. This volume should also fill a need for updated information, following the numerous procedural, organizational, and technological changes of the past decade. Of course, this is still a period of dynamic change for the region's archive and library systems. Several new facilities are under construction and some older ones are being renovated; phone systems are being overhauled to accommodate fax machines and an ever-changing array of phone numbers; additional family and church archives will likely be returned to their original owners over the next few years.

Amid these dynamic developments, we have tried to institute a certain degree of order and consistency in formatting the volume. Although we have made some allowances for the unique organizational structure of some countries' archive systems, the ten reports follow a fairly uniform order of presentation of (1) central, (2) regional (county, district, municipal), (3) church, and (4) private repositories. There are, however, greater variations in the coverage of individual archives, especially local facilities, for which some detailed data were unavailable.

Producing even a one-volume guide has presented numerous challenges. The project could not have been initiated or sustained without the assistance of several superbly qualified central European colleagues who were recruited for the project by associate editor Barbara Lawatsch-Boomgaarden. Even then, it proved extraordinarily difficult to enlist contributors from several countries where archive staffs had been obliged to overcome the demoralizing and destructive effects of long periods of unpaid salaries, wartime destruction, or international embargoes. Once the manuscripts had been submitted, assistant editor Carol Duling was obliged to fashion a new style sheet for the *Yearbook's* first venture into archival publishing. Similarly, the volume's ten detailed maps represent the journal's initial employment of fully digitalized cartography, a task mastered by Daniel Pinkerton, in consultation with Frank Reed, creator of Clockwork Software's *Centennia* historical atlas.

Finally, the editorial staff was obliged to confront the all-too-familiar cultural challenges in covering a region that embraces two war zones, ten countries, and even more ethnic groups. Historians tend to be most familiar with the terms and terminology employed in the language of the ruling nationality during the period in which they specialize. Yet the successor states have institutionally converted much of the nomenclature into the languages of today's nation-states. A striking example of this is the Czech Republic, where early modern and 19th-century historians will encounter Slavicized names for Bohemia's cosmopolitan noble families and the formerly German towns of the Sudetenland. In such instances we have provided the formerly dominant German, Magyar, or Polish-language spellings in parentheses on the first occasion in which they are mentioned. One accommodation that we suspect may become permanent for the former Yugoslavia is the recognition of three languages (Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian) in place of what was previously termed "Serbo-Croatian."

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Editor