Records of Empire, Monarchy, or Nation? The Archival Heritage of the Habsburgs in East Central Europe

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Germany, Austria, and greater (pre-1918) Hungary existed for centuries in a relationship that we may call imperial: they were held or brought into connection by various dynasties' ambitions. In the modern era, however, this ambition took on a new, national light as subject peoples asserted their rights. Hungarians led the way in contesting Habsburg absolutist rule in Hungary, inspiring in turn the self-emancipation of its peoples who came to see Hungary itself as a multinational empire.

In speaking of imperial archives in the region between the Alps and the Carpathians one must immediately define terms. For most of the modern era this region was not an empire at all, if by that we mean that its ruler exercised authority over the entire region by virtue of the title of emperor. Until 1806 the head of the Habsburg house was Holy Roman Emperor, but

*I would like to thank the forum's editors for their encouraging comments on the initial text, and AJ's anonymous reviewer for helpful suggestions as well as valuable information and his own recent articles provided by Imre Ress. In addition to the sources I cite below, my knowledge of the subject derives from years of research in the archives of the former Habsburg region and the preparation of two archival studies on Hungary (co-authored by Ress) and Romania for the volume edited by Charles W. Ingrao, A Guide to East-Central Archives. Minneapolis, 1998 (=Austrian History Yearbook. 1998. Vol. 29. Pt. 2). Pp. 43-81 and 105-121.
The meaning of archives is also less than obvious. In the simplest sense they are buildings or repositories for records or documents. Archival professionals then distinguish them from office files by the requirement that archives must be organized and staffed to facilitate access and research by outsiders. Finally, archives are distinguished from manuscripts as constituting the product of the normal activity of an organized institution. Modern archival theory expresses a preference for the preservation of original order and institutional integrity of archives (respect de fonds, the principle of original order or provenance) rather than the thematic arrangement of records of varying provenance. The purposeful assemblage and arrangement of archives was often practiced by archivists in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but by the end of World War I provenance had officially become the dominant principle in the archives of Austria-Hungary. Today archivists see original order as an important aspect of archives' value for research. This theoretical distinction had dramatic implications for Habsburg archives in the modern era.

### Archives of Empire

So much for formal titles. The historian of political ideas and movements still speaks, as did contemporaries, of the old German empire or of the Austrian imperial idea or simply “Austrian idea,” the latter two concepts meaning an aspiration to establish a uniform system of rule over the lands in personal union with the Habsburg dynasty – or more idealistically to propagate a dominant ethos that would cement the ties of the subject peoples to the ruling house or at least make their coexistence within a common state seem more desirable than its dissolution. The goal of Austrian political uniformity within a greater Germany or Austrian empire had only evanescent success, but the later ideal gained supporters not only among civil servants but also increasingly among historians. Like everywhere, the first imperial archives arose here out of the rulers’ efforts to buttress their claims. We will see that they later became workshops for historical research in the modern sense, open not only to adherents of the Austrian idea but also to apostles of the incipient national states.

The fundamental raison d’être of medieval and early modern archives was the assertion of rights of succession, ownership, and rule. For centuries the monasteries were the chief repositories of these charters or privileges, followed by the royal treasuries, noble landowners, and city halls. The seminal event in the prehistory of modern Austrian archives was the effort of Emperor Maximilian (ruled 1493-1519) to consolidate his far-flung domains and dynastic marriages through governmental reform and propaganda. His ambition to create an imperial archive at his court in Innsbruck failed, but he did manage to centralize the preservation of Tyrolean records there as well as to enlist documents for somewhat fanciful accounts of his personal exploits and descent from the emperors of Rome. His grandson and successor as Austrian archduke, Ferdinand I, took time out from the contest for Habsburg dominance in Germany and Hungary to order that an official named Wilhelm Putsch collect and create an inventory for the archives in Innsbruck and Vienna. Ferdinand and his successors had recourse to these archives for official purposes.

The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were not conducive to the centralization and ordering of records. Not only did the Protestant states in Germany, the Ottoman Turks, and Christian dynastic rivals in Hungary contest the dominance of the senior Habsburg, but within Austria in its narrower sense the junior lines of the ruling family also insisted upon their separate courts and archives. Bohemia and Moravia at least recognized Habsburg kingship, but their estates and diets maintained separate laws and institutions. The Peace of Westphalia at the end of the Thirty Years War

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forced the emperor to renounce his most ambitious pretensions in Germany and seek consolidation of power in his hereditary lands as an alternative. The crackdown on Bohemian-Moravian separatism after the Battle of White Mountain in 1618, the reunification of Habsburg Austrian lands in 1665, then the repulse of the Turkish siege of Vienna in 1683 and ensuing reconquest of Hungary opened the way to this consolidation.

The eighteenth century was the birth hour of Austrian imperial statehood. The foundation of the new state and its first imperial archives was the series of brilliant military victories by Prince Eugen of Savoy. To organize access to the records of his Court War Council (Hofkriegsrat) since the time of its creation in 1556 and provide access to maps and reports of his marshals’ campaigns in Germany, Italy, and the Balkans, he founded the predecessor of the War Archives (Archivum bellicum: Hofkriegsrätliches Archiv) in 1711. It was not only a repository of records for officialdom and soldiers, but a place for historical research and writing: the archive was required to produce campaign histories that would draw lessons for future operations. The most important imperial archive was founded later: the secret house archives, later named Archive of House, Court, and State (Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, henceforth in this article: HHSA) arose in 1749, in the aftermath of the bitter War of Austrian Succession when the importance of rapid access to documentation became painfully clear. The tightly organized Prussian state had embarrassed Austria and deprived it of its lucrative Lower Silesian possessions; Empress Maria Theresa drew the conclusion that the defense of dynastic rights required not only the documentation of these rights but also centralized tax collecting and regulation of land tenure to support a standing army, with a corresponding increase in administration and record keeping. The empress sent an official named Theodor Anton Taulow von Rosenthal (1702-1779) to Prague, Graz, and Innsbruck to collect older documents. As the administration grew, court chanceries emerged as arms of the imperial government, with regional competence but residing in Vienna and depositing their archives in the HHSA.

The third component of the imperial archives was the Court Chamber Archives (Hofkammerarchiv), whose parent body arose in 1578 to preserve financial records, but grew rapidly after the financial reforms of 1749. Here the focus was on land records and labor services, loans and bonds, taxes and revenue.3 The central archives would serve later to document the Austrian History Yearbook (vol. 6-7, 1970-1971) has articles on the history and holdings of the three imperial archives: Rudolph Neck. The Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv: Its History, Holdings, and Use. Pp. 3-16; Hanns Leo Mikoletzky. The Finanz- and Hofkammer archiv. Pp. 22-38; and Rainer Egger. The Kriegsarchiv. Pp. 39-66. There is also a history of the HHSA in Arthur J. May. Austria // Daniel H. Thomas and Lynn M. Case. Guide to the Diplomatic Archives of Western Europe. Philadelphia, 1959. Pp. 3-20.


Below the level of the three imperial archives, Austrian administrative reform had a decisive impact on record keeping outside Vienna. Beginning in 1756 a series of regulations directed offices to record all incoming correspondence and associated records under a unique number in annual register books. This innovation, called Nova Manipulatio, broke with the earlier practice whereby offices often separated material according to subject matter, and as a result greatly facilitated the coherency and integrity of the historical record. Registers, often supplemented by protocol books, made it more likely that records of an office stayed together. The progressive spread of Nova Manipulatio to lower state bodies, churches, and other organizations throughout the Habsburg realm created a remarkable web of records whose relationship is signaled by the ever-present register numbers that identify not only that document but its antecedents and later documents (Vor- and Nachakten) and correspondence with other offices. With the help of this numerical web it is often possible to track information that was thought lost by consulting secondary and tertiary archives that may exist today in a variety of countries.4

It is important to distinguish the origins and organizational principles of the three central archives. The Kriegsarchiv and Hofkammerarchiv were classical organizational or ministerial archives, arising from the operations of more or less coherent, functional agencies and possessing from the beginning long, nearly complete series of administrative records. For many years this could not be said of the HHSA. The original instructions to Taulow von Rosenthal, which guided his successors for over a century, defined its mission as the collection in one place of individual documents of importance for the defense of the rights of the imperial house and the governance of its states as a whole. The HHSA was to seek out these documents wherever it found them, in isolation from if not together with the other records...
of the agency that created or received them. The HHSA (like many other central archives of this era) arranged its oldest charters and privileges in a single chronological collection. It sometimes passed up the opportunity to acquire old archives because they were unimportant for dynastic interests or imperial governance, or traded records that fell outside these criteria for other archives that did. The HHSA also acquired series of organizational records like those of the medieval kings, and such series became preponderant with the passage of time as the records of the chanceries and foreign office came into the archives. On the other hand there were record series of the utmost central importance, like those of the Council of State and the chancery of the ruler, which it acquired only after 1900 because the central government chose not to relinquish direct control over them.3

The three central archives were essentially repositories for the use of the state itself. Yet, because the HHSA dealt with the most far-reaching issues and was the wealthiest in older material, it quickly attracted outside researchers and granted them access. The permission for use by outsiders was always conditioned by the interest of the state, and denied if the researcher sought access to information that might be injurious to that interest. According to statute, permission depended upon the foreign minister himself, could only be granted for individual documents identified in advance, and all documents had to be examined for dangerous content and withheld if it was found. In practice, these rules were waived in individual cases. Leopold von Ranke (1795-1896) made very extensive use of the HHSA for his sixteenth century histories after a favorable interview with Prince Metternich in 1827 caused the chancellor to waive the rule against the provision of entire fascicles (bundles) of records. Despite his opposition to contemporary liberal movements, Metternich contributed to the emergence of the HHSA as a center for historical research. The director and historian Chmel, who himself played a direct role in this trend, wrote with some exaggeration in 1849: “His Excellency State Chancellor Prince Metternich granted access in the most liberal manner, indeed on his orders many archival officials became practically the assistants of the researchers.”5

In an 1868 letter to the director, Ranke praised the HHSA as the most important archive for German history (für die deutsche Historie), by which he meant the history of the old German empire, not Austria in the narrow sense. After 1806 the HHSA acquired the records of the defunct Holy Roman Empire and Venetia, which were a great attraction for Ranke whose lasting contribution to historiography was his insistence on the value of archives for research. Beginning in the 1820s he had been one of the handful of researchers who enjoyed regular access to the HHSA. The archive was proud of his 1868 letter, including it in its public exhibition for decades. But even he was denied research access in 1863 — to the correspondence of Chancellor Kaunitz with his Paris ambassador in 1756-7. Presumably the Austrian Foreign Minister feared the repercussions for Austria’s image in Germany of “fresh” revelations about Austria’s anti-Prussian coalition a century earlier. The Austro-Prussian contest for leadership in Germany was settled three years later at the Battle of Königgrätz/Sátová.

The limitations on access that Ranke and many other researchers experienced in the HHSA make it ironic that the absolutist state afforded the dramatist Franz Grillparzer (1791-1872), who was frustrated in his literary career by bouts with censorship and was also no admirer of Chancellor Metternich, the directorship of the Hofkammerarchiv in 1832, which he held until his retirement in 1856. Even if his literary career was more important to him, we can conclude from a report he wrote in 1840 that he took some pride in his archival work: “the mission of the archives is to illuminate matters that it is permitted even the most experienced official not to know.”6 Archivists were civil servants (Beamten) who provided research service for their parent ministry. But several of Grillparzer’s memoranda reveal a non-bureaucratic, indeed prescient appreciation of original order when he rejected proposals by the HHSA that some of his archive’s records be ceded to the latter, writing: “I would find it completely unscholarly and destructive of all historical value were two archives placed in the possession of unrelated fragments, isolated rarities through renewed dismemberment of this interesting collection.”7 He was mindful of the fragile state of

5 Ludwig Bittner’s history of the HHSA in vol. 1 of Gesamtinventar has this collecting practice and the frequent neglect of original order as a central theme. As we will see, respect de fonds was crucial for the disputes concerning the control of archives after World War I in which he was directly involved.
6 Bittner. Bd. 1. S. 169*.
Austrian statehood; perhaps the most famous verse about Austria in 1848 came from his pen, a tribute to Field Marshal Radetzky’s victory over Italian troops: “In your camp is Austria / we others are individual fragments.”10 We can read the poem as a confession of Austria’s weakness, or as a declaration in favor of despotism over national particularities. Grillparzer was a critic of contemporary nationalism and saw the dynasty, whatever the flaws of individual rulers and officials, as the guarantor of the unity of the state.

The years after the revolution put the old archival regime to the test. During the decade of absolutism the dominant Austrian minister was no longer the foreign minister but the minister of interior, Alexander Bach. This champion of centralism and the suppression of local autonomy sought unsuccessfully to bring the central archives of the Austrian Empire together in one building. The Imperial Archives (Reichsarchiv) would be one of the monumental new buildings on the RingstraBe.11 With the suppression of the Hungarian Court Chancery and its constitutional successor, imperial authorities sought in 1858 to issue a special interdiction against the removal of records from the Chancery records, and by extension any archives at all.12 As late as 1860, HHSA director Erb would write that the HHSA should be “a well-organized arsenal of weapons for [the monarch’s] struggle for his historical and political rights” (ein möglichst wohlgeordnetes Arsenal für die Waffen zum historisch-staatsrechtlichen Kampfe).13

Archives of Monarchy

The Compromise laws of 1867-68 brought an end to the crisis with Hungary and introduced liberal constitutions in the two halves of the new Dual Monarchy. Hungarian resistance to the imperial vision of Bach and Emperor Franz Joseph led to a double renunciation of imperial rule in Hungary and of absolutism in Austria. Despite its imperial ambitions the Habsburg realm had already contained elements of dualism and indeed multipolarity. Now, these elements combined with constitutionalism to give birth to a number of professionally run archives, imperial, royal, and provincial, with broader public access.

The archives of medieval Hungary had been dispersed during the period of Turkish occupation and their remnants destroyed during the liberation of Buda in 1686. In 1875 the National Archives of Hungary (literally Archives of the Land, Magyar Országos Levélter, MOL) opened. This repository owed its foundation to the old national archives created by an act of the Hungarian diet in 1723 and finally founded in 1756 to house the records of Hungary’s viceroy and diet, now supplemented by the transfer of the records for the Hungarian and Transylvanian Court Chanceries and the provincial governments for Hungary and Transylvania.14 The Kingdom of Croatia, which was associated with the Hungarian crown but had its own government and diet, established its national archives after 1870 with the accession of records from the Hungarian provincial government and Court Chamber archives. In the Austrian half, Bohemia founded separate archives for its diet (Archives of the Land, 1862) and provincial government (1882), and other crown lands followed suit. Contemporaries considered archives an attribute of citizenship (nationhood) and statehood (sovereignty). The prehistory of the Hungarian archives and the separate institutions in Prague illustrate how these concepts did not necessarily coincide. The Hungarian diet had led the way in creating archives of the land in contradistinction to those of the ruler and bureaucracy.

The compromise laws designated three ministries as imperial and royal (kaiserlich und königlich, k. und k.), responsible to the two parliaments and charged with administering the Dual Monarchy’s common affairs: the imperial and royal Ministries of Foreign Affairs, War, and Finance. As we saw, these common affairs already had their central archives in Vienna, reporting to the respective ministries. Therefore they now became Austro-Hungarian archives. In practice this meant that Hungarians (as well as Slavs) were added to the archival staff, and the adequate processing of and access to records about Hungary in the central archives became a matter of public debate and the interpellations of the annual meetings between the imperial and royal ministers and the parliamentary delegations that voted their budgets. Two Hungarians even became directors of the imperial and royal ar-

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10 “In deinem Lager ist Österreich, / wir Andre sind einzelne Trümmer / Aus Torheit und Eitelheit / sind wir zerfallen / Die Gott als Slav’ und Magyaren schuf / Sie streiten um Worte nicht hämisch, / Sie folgen, ob Deutsch auch der Feldherrennuf / Denn: Vorwärts! / Ist Ungrisch und Böhmisch.”
11 Bitrner. S. 26*-29*.
12 Goldinger. S. 72.
archives: Lajos Thallóczy in the Hofkammerarchiv (1885-1916) and Árpád Károlyi in the HHSA (1909-13).15

Thallóczy’s appointment was an indirect consequence of the Habsburgs’ last imperial acquisition, the military occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878. Administration of the territory by either Austria or Hungary would have destabilized the delicate balance between the two halves of the Monarchy, so it was placed under the authority of imperial and royal ministry of finance. Gyula Andrásy, as joint foreign minister, had advocated the occupation but the unpopularity of this move contributed to his resignation. Now there was no longer a Hungarian among the three joint ministers, but one of Andrásy’s diplomatic appointments would fill the bill. In 1882 Béni Kállay (1839-1903), a Hungarian former diplomat who had studied Slavic languages, served as ambassador in Belgrade, and written historical studies of Serbia, became joint minister of finance and governor of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Kállay appointed Thallóczy, a young historian and archivist at the MOL, as director of the Hofkammerarchiv. Like his minister, Thallóczy was interested in Serbian affairs and a supporter of Habsburg expansion in the Balkans. Kállay also assigned Thallóczy a role in the ongoing contest for the possession of the numerous records about Hungarian administration in the Hofkammerarchiv. The new director proceeded to separate out Hungarian records with the surreptitious help of Hungarian researchers, but he took no further action.16

Hungarian ultras wanted all records of Hungarian administration moved to Hungary. The most sensitive of these, to which Franz Joseph would never agree because they involved him personally, were the archives of the revolutionary government that was suppressed militarily in 1849, and then the subsequent military government before the partial restoration of the Court Chancery and provincial government in 1860. In 1884 the Hungarian delegation presented a very different proposal to create a central Austro-Hungarian archives that would include material from the HHSA and others still under the control of the dynasty, and the Austrian delegation supported it as

17 Bittner, S. 32*-35*.
18 Ibid. S. 171*.
20 Bittner, S. 173*.
21 Bittner, S. 176*. The only contemporary Romanian works with the title Răpirea Bucovinei I could identify were by the much better known Mihail Eminescu and Mihail Kogălniceanu rather than Massalsky. She might have supplied her information to either one of them. Eminescu also translated volume 7, pertaining to the occupation of Bucovina, of the collection of documents on Romanian history by Eudoxiu Hurmuzaki, Documente privitoare la istoria Românilor. The compiler of this collection was a Romanian from Austrian Bucovina who also conducted research in the HHSA; cf. Auer. Das well. The director of the HHSA opposed this proposal because he perceived it to be directed against him; Thallóczy appears to have been on the other side. Then in 1896 the delegations proposed that Hungarian records in the Hofkammerarchiv be sent to Hungary.17

Institutional and political interests were very important for the failure of these proposals, but the growing adherence to original order among archivists was also a factor. Árpád Károlyi and his predecessor for most of the dualist period, Alfred von Arneth (1868-1897), took opposing positions on original order. Arneth began his long career as director of the HHSA in 1868 by announcing its opening to historical research, which he had advocated earlier but was anchored in article 17 of the new Austrian constitution: “Scholarship and teaching is free” (i.e., unfettered).18 He set an example for the increasing use of the HHSA by contemporary historians in his authoritative life of Maria Theresa in nine volumes.19 The work is by no means a hagiography, but its portrayal of the architect of modern empire undeniably served as a model formulation of the Austrian idea embodied in the dynasty, army, and progressive legislation. Arneth’s preoccupation with Maria Theresa no doubt also heightened his awareness of her charge to the HHSA that it focus on the procurement of individual documents that were important for the defense of imperial unity.

There were still limits to the freedom of research in the HHSA. First, the end point by year of creation for records that were closed to research was very far back by our current standards: from 1841 to 1885 it was 1740, then until 1905 it was 1830, and the until the end of the Monarchy it was 1847.20 In practice Arneth could waive this limit, as in the case of a princess who justified her interest in the records of the Austrian occupation of Bukovina in 1775 by research in the history of her family. When a work entitled The Theft of Bukovina appeared anonymously in Bucharest in 1875, Franz Joseph himself reproached Arneth for his mistake.21 Five years later Ar-
Richard Bittner. *S. 34*; Stoy. *S 50. Bittner was unable to find documentary support for this.

The imperial family possessed locked doors in front of the stack rows of the Haus-, Hof-, and Staatsarchiv. *S. 65. The brochure Răpirea Bucovinei that is attributed to Eminescu appeared in 1875.

The fourteen Hungarian graduates of the program included Árpád Károlyi. *Original order was becoming the predominant principle of archival thinking in this period: IOG director Theodor Sickel pronounced his support for it already in 1869. Arneth was highly regarded among historians for his opening of the HHSA to researchers, but his view of original order was increasingly anachronistic. Bittner writes that according to oral tradition in the HHSA the Hungarian historian and close colleague of Sickel, Vilmos Fraknó, was the Hungarians’ choice to head the proposed Austro-Hungarian Archives. *In 1910 the International Archival Congress declared its support for the principle of provenance; the HHSA followed suit in the same year, and the MOL two years later. As director of the HHSA Károlyi rejected the joint foreign minister’s proposed exchange of documents with the Bavarian State Archives on the eve of World War I, despite the opportunity it presented to acquire documents of István Böcska, the Prince of Transylvania and rival of the Habsburgs in the early seventeenth century. He wrote: “the application of the completely improper and harmful geographical principle to the degree proposed by the royal Bavarian government would in some cases cause heavy losses to certain holdings of the imperial and royal Haus-, Hof- and Staatsarchiv.”

Not only the theory, but the buildings of the principal archives of Austria-Hungary began to take on familiar, modern contours as the state itself neared its dissolution. In the last years of the Monarchy the chief archives of Vienna and Budapest gained state of the art facilities with office and reading space separated from stack space for more efficient operations and greater security. The HHSA had operated in a section of the joint foreign ministry building on the Ballhausplatz, a short walk from the imperial palace, for decades. In 1899-1902 the new building, well known to historians of the Habsburg Monarchy, arose on the other side of the same block, on the Minoritenplatz. The researcher is conscious of his close proximity to the Hofburg as he approaches the reading rooms on a grand staircase dominated by turn of the century paintings of Franz Joseph receiving his ministers and dignitaries in festive costume. There were generously appointed reading rooms and secure access to the section of the stacks where the records of the imperial and royal dynasty were stored.

The director responsible for this project, Gustav Winter, drew a connection between this achievement and the opening of the archives in 1868 and the foundation in 1895 of the Austrian Council on Archives for archives: these actions were not only beneficial for the internal organization of our archives, “That they contain not just old plunder, but treasures that will not fall into decay as *tiredimum et glirium pabula*, that for their content to serve as the seed of rich scholarly harvests they require professional care: we

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22 Bittner. *S. 186*.


24 Bittner. *S. 34*; Stoy. *S. 50. Bittner was unable to find documentary support for this tradition, however.
may hope that these views have become since 1868 and 1895 the inalienable property of the state institutions that possess archives." In asserting the commitment to public access Winter was evidently sensitive to contemporary criticism of the manner in which the HHSA had amassed its holdings.

The MOL in Budapest struggled increasingly with space shortages in various buildings in the medieval castle district of Buda overlooking the Danube. The new building, on a promontory at the Vienna Gate, was planned and begun in 1913 but only completed in 1923. Its location at the opposite end of the district from the massive royal palace overlooking the Danube symbolized the dichotomy of crown and land in the Hungarian constitution. In contrast to the Viennese palace in which historians conduct research on the empire, historians of Hungary are reminded through the MOL’s castle-like neo-Romanesque exterior and the paintings inside that Hungary began as a medieval kingdom. The frescoes that researchers pass on the way to the reading rooms depict events like King Béla III decreeing the keeping of records in 1181, while stained glass windows with the coats of arms of the former royal cities, most of them by 1923 outside Hungary in Slovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia, dominate the stairwells.

**Contested Archives**

There is much precedent for the transfer of archives as the result of territorial change. An avowedly incomplete list of treaties about such transfers records 183 of them. The legitimation of such transfers in international law is understandable not only because of the documentation of rights and privileges they contain, but because agencies’ records are vital for the modern administration of the acquired territories. The Habsburgs stipulated such transfers in the Peace of Westphalia that concluded the Thirty Years War, and deposited in the HHSA the archives of Lorraine owned by Maria Theresa’s late husband Stephen when he died in 1765. Emperor Napoleon carted off to Paris not only art treasures, but substantial old archives of the Popes and Habsburgs from the Vatican and Vienna that would constitute part of his planned imperial archives. It is remarkable that most of them survived the round trip when his plan came to naught. As we have seen, the HHSA gained the records of the defunct Holy Roman Empire and Republic of Venice in the same period. Yet at the conclusion of the war of 1866 Austria had to surrender both its rule and its archives for the Italian states of Lombardy and Venetia.

Archives were treasured booty for the Austro-Hungarian army in World War I. In November 1915 troops discovered the records of the Serbian foreign office, prime minister, and Belgrade police up to 1914 that had been placed for safekeeping in a monastery. Within a month the first parts of the archive were in Vienna, and a “Serbian documents commission” including two foreign service officers and five archivists of the HHSA set to work selecting documents for publication that would justify the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to Serbia in 1914. The first product of their work was a private print publication of the joint foreign ministry in 1916. Formal publication was halted in 1917 in consideration of the reputation of Serbian politicians during the secret Habsburg peace negotiations. Many of these controversial documents were published in Berlin twelve years later. The occupation of Bucharest by the Central Powers in December, 1916 also brought an archival windfall in the form of Romanian archives that the Hungarians hoped would document the government’s support for Romanian irredentism in Transylvania before its entry into the war in August, 1916. A large quantity of documents were transferred to Budapest where they were never published, but apparently provided some of the documentation for the very critical histories of the Romanian national movement by Benedek Jancsó that were published shortly thereafter. Romanian troops discovered and reclaimed the documents in the courtyard of a government building, exposed to the elements, when they occupied Budapest in the summer of 1919.

This history of archival transfers that the lands of East Central Europe had experienced helps explain the acrimony with which the successor states of the dissolved Habsburg Monarchy laid claim to its archival legacy. Italy, the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (later called Yugoslavia),

38 Ibid. S. 5.
Romania, Poland, and Czechoslovakia all secured parts of the dissolved state on the basis of secret wartime treaties that assured their leaders of the victorious countries’ support for their claims. The new territories had lived decades or centuries separate from their new compatriots, often in very different administrations and social structures; Czechoslovakia was a new state whose territory came exclusively from the former Austrian and Hungarian halves of the Monarchy. The integration of the new territories was an administrative challenge for which they believed archival transfers were essential.

Italy, the strongest of the successor states, moved first to claim its legacy. Italian troops presented themselves in Vienna and, by force of arms, effected the surrender by powerless Austrian officials of record series still in Austrian hands after the transfers of 1866 that arose from the administration of lands now in Italy and of works of art that had come into Austrian possession, the Italians argued, unjustly. Austrian historians today agree that the origin of these record series on newly Italian territory makes their cession to Italy not very objectionable on the principle of provenance, but they take strong exception to the use of force and take issue with some of the claims to art works and regret the fact that the contemporary Austrian public demonstrated much more concern for the art works than the archives. In fact the use of force produced much negative publicity for the Italian position and motivated it to conclude a cultural agreement with Austria in 1919 that the latter found acceptable. By this agreement Italy recognized the principle of provenance rather than pertinence as the proper criterion for archival and artistic transfers and the adjudication of a three-judge court for future disputed cases.33

Other successor states were not in a position to hasten their claims with military force, but enjoyed different sources of strength. At the peace conference in St. Germain they argued successfully for the recognition of their territorial claims and reparations from the property of Austria, whose claims to be a new state rather than the legal successor of Austria-Hungary were rejected. Still, Austria won the same victory conceded by Italy on the principle of archival provenance in the face of the successor states’ claims to the transfer of all archival records pertaining to their new territories, regardless of their presence in the records of territorial or central agencies. This, at least, is the argument of Austrian and Hungarian historians. The treaty does not use the word provenance, as the Austrians demanded, nor does it use the word pertinence as their opponents desired. The disputed article 93 requires the cession of all “archives… belonging to the administration in the ceded territories”; could “belonging” also mean pertaining? The plenipotentiary for Austrian archival affairs at the peace talks, Oswald Redlich, and his deputy Ludwig Bittner were certain it could not.34 In any event the treaty stipulated that the successor states should regulate their specific claims through bilateral agreements with Austria.

Czechoslovakia was the first to reach agreement with Austria, and it set the precedent for the Italian and Romanian bilateral agreements that followed. The agreement for Austria was not difficult, based on its recognition of provenance as its strongest negotiating position, to the cession of archival series originating in the Bohemian lands such as those removed from Prague by Taulow von Rosenthal in the eighteenth century or the Bohemia Court Chancery in the HHSA and Bohemian and Moravian administrative records already residing in the ceded territories. Much more painful was the agreement to cede individual documents from 1888 onward (with related earlier documents) pertaining exclusively to the Bohemia lands. According to Austrian historians this regrettable concession was extorted as the price of desperately needed foodstuffs for the hungry Austrian population. To carry out this provision the agreement provided for extraordinary archival delegates of the successor states in the Austrian archives who were given full access to the archives for the purpose of identifying the documents to be separated. Many of the Czech delegates were quite recent employees of the Austrian archives and knew their way around. Bittner writes that despite the unhappiness on the Austrian side and disagreements that had to be negotiated about many individual documents, the process of separation generally went forward in a collegial and efficient fashion.35 Similar bilateral agreements ensued with Italy and Romania about the cession of archival material, with similar results. A similar agreement could not be

reached with the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, although it did recover the Serbian documents that had been captured in 1915. Due to the nature of Austrian administration under the Monarchy most of the documents separated on the basis of pertinence came not from the HHSA, but from the Hofkammerarchiv and the records of the imperial-royal (i.e., Cisleithanian or Austrian) Archives of Internal Affairs and Justice that later became the core of the General Administrative Archive or Allgemeines Verwaltungsarchiv.

The postwar archival settlement for Hungary involved both similarities and differences. The Treaty of Trianon also ceded substantial territories to the successor states, stipulated reparations from state property, established the principle of provenance for archives on the ceded territories, and invited Hungary to conclude bilateral archival agreements with the successor states. An interesting difference, however, was the concession of a Hungarian claim to joint Austro-Hungarian institutions that contradicted the identification of Austria as the sole inheritor of joint property in the Treaty of St. Germain. This concept was consistent with Hungarian understanding of the joint institutions. During 1918-1919 Hungarian cultural officials and archivists led by Árpád Károlyi, in collaboration with some archivists of the successor states, worked out an ambitious plan to establish under the auspices of an International Archival Scholarly Institute a joint, international administration for the former Austro-Hungarian archives. Under this plan the archives would constitute the joint property of the successor states and all would send archival delegates for the purpose of participating in their management. In this way the transfer of archives would become unnecessary. The promulgation of the Treaty of St. Germain, by granting Austria the sole authority to cede transferred archives, made the proposal impossible. In retrospect the relationships among the successor states were also a powerful obstacle. The national principle was supreme.36

Would joint access have provided for better cooperation among the region’s historians and prevented the polarization of their historical visions? Hungary’s successor states chose not to enact bilateral agreements with it, with the sole exception of an agreement with Romania in 1924 that regulated the exchange of court, landholding and vital records, but not large record groups as in the Austrian agreements.37 According to one Hungarian histori-

37 Sílagi. P. 318. The same study notes (Pp. 322-323) that after World War II Hungary was obligated to cede to Yugoslavia certain record groups that allegedly pertained to the South Slavic region.

an “based on considerations of state and historical policy [the Hungarian successor states] renounced the acquisition, indeed the research of Hungarian source material. This was not of primary importance for the historical syntheses justifying the existence of the new national states, in the center of which were the proof of the fictitious Czechoslovak national unity, the reality of the trilingual Yugoslav nation, and the eternal association of the three Romanian principalities. The intensive research of Hungarian sources would just lead to counterproductive results.”38 This is a partisan view of the young nations’ historiography. Like the historians of post-Trianon Hungary itself, the Slovak, Romanian, and South Slavic historians were coming to terms with the new configuration of the region and the home country in politically charged times. All these countries produced historical works in that period that are of lasting value, and others that were inspired by a polemical urge to set the record straight.

Historians of the Austrian successor states had the benefit of transferred archives, torn in many cases out of their historical context, but those of the Hungarian successor states did not due to the lack of bilateral agreements. The transfer of archives and the creation of new national archives did indeed strengthen the development of conflicting national historiographies, but these had already emerged in the time of the Monarchy with the advantage of access to the imperial (really joint imperial and royal) archives and also the archives of incipient national institutions like the provincial diets and governments. We saw earlier that Hurmuzaki was able to complete his document collection on Romanian history with the full support of the HHSA, and non-Austrians continued to use the HHSA after 1918 when all restrictions on use had been lifted except those imposed by records’ year of creation or depository agreements for personal papers that required permission from the owner.39 Its user statistics in 1924 show its researchers included a substantial minority of citizens of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Romania, and Yugoslavia.40

39 An example of such depository agreements is the one regulating the papers of Archduke Franz Ferdinand who died in Sarajevo in 1914. My research in the papers in 1992 still required the HHSA to secure permission from a family member.
40 Bittnr. Das Wiener Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in der Zwischenkriegszeit. S. 176. In order of number, the countries with the most researchers were Austria and Germany with 281, Italy 110, Hungary 82, Czechoslovakia 72, France 64, Yugoslavia 34... Thus, the second, third, and fifth countries were all successor states.
Austrian and Hungarian archivists reestablished their special relationship despite the failure of Károlyi's proposal. In 1923 they concluded the parameters of an agreement that was then formalized at Baden bei Wien in 1926. According to the Baden Agreement, Austria would manage the archival legacy of the Dual Monarchy according to its own laws, but recognize the Hungarian concept of joint cultural heritage (patrimoine culturel) and accommodate the collaboration of Hungarian archival delegates in the former joint archives who would be chosen by the Hungarian side and sworn in by the Hungarian ambassador. The archival delegates in collaboration with the newly established Vienna Hungarian Historical Institute produced forty volumes of a source collection on Hungarian history through their work in the Vienna archives. The Baden Agreement was in its way unique and unprecedented. The concept of joint cultural heritage was a precedent for the recognition of international cultural heritage established by UNESCO many decades later, but because it contradicted the Treaty of St. Germain and the official views of Austria, the Baden Agreement was not published in the interwar period, nor even mentioned in Bittner’s extensive writings on interwar archival issues.

It would be pleasant but misleading to end a survey of the interwar period on this upbeat note. Austria and Hungary chose to steer a collision course with the successor states and procured the patronage of Nazi Germany to this end. The destruction of Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Yugoslavia and the division of Transylvania in 1938-1940 led once again to the transfer of various archival series and the placement of cultural institutions under new administration. Ludwig Bittner, who had defended Austrian archives at the end of the war, published in 1925 the two long exposes on archival affairs cited here, and then his excellent history of the HHSA in the interwar period, nor even mentioned in Bittner’s extensive writings on interwar archival issues.42

Future historians may determine whether its director exercised his new authority improperly, for instance, to acquire trophy archives or destroy records of criminal activity. What is known is that this distinguished archivist of the old Monarchy and defender of its heritage committed suicide in April 1945.43 Under the name of Austrian State Archives, the administrative unity of central Austrian archives was perpetuated after 1945.

Archives for Historians

One of the problems with historians’ reliance upon archives is that their analysis is limited to archives that actually survive. We know that not all the Vatican records taken to Paris by Napoleon made it back to Rome at the end of his era. Archives may intentionally destroy some of their holdings in the constant struggle for more storage space, or oppressive regimes may do so at their end in order to protect the perpetrators. The Kriegsarchiv resorted repeatedly to selective destruction or disposition (in German Skartierung or Ausscheidung) to ensure space for what was most important. Archival histories do not reveal evidence of overtly political motives for disposition, but it may be supposed that offices were more interested in preserving documentation about central affairs than those pertaining to subaltern peoples and everyday life. Sometimes disposition took on a scale, however, that aroused the concern and countermeasures of the monarch.44 Paper dealers and even private collectors of documents also profited from the elimination of documents. Unfortunately for a time there were Austrian regulations that gave the agencies destroying records the first option to use the space gained thereby, providing them with a direct motivation for such destruction, until countermeasures were taken.45

The archives’ criteria for the elimination of documents, while not always explicit, do seem to have preserved the series most valuable for research, although the questions and kinds of sources valued by researchers have changed with time. Destruction of documents due to war and civil unrest has been more disturbing because it affected entire record groups.

that were of undeniable importance. A riot on the Viennese Ringstraße in front of the Palace of Justice in 1927 caused the building to catch on fire, bringing very heavy losses for the Archives of Internal Affairs and Justice. Fortunately, much of the information survived because these holdings were prime targets of the pertinence-based transfers to Czechoslovakia, Italy, and Romania a few years earlier, some had been selected for published collections of documents, and Austrian offices often kept drafts and copies of official correspondence that are now preserved in other archives. The Second World War was much more destructive of archives than the first. The Viennese archives moved records into safekeeping as the front approached the city, but some were destroyed in their temporary locations. Destruction was much worse for the Hungarian National Archives, in its exposed position at the end of Buda’s castle district that was the target of Soviet bombardment for months in early 1945. Losses were even heavier in 1956 when local fighting destroyed part of the building before there was time to move records to a more secure location.47

Fortunately the other major cities and archives of the Habsburg heritage suffered far less substantial wartime damage. The failure of attempts to centralize the archives in Vienna and the archival transfers after 1918 helped preserve the archival legacy by decentralizing it. The archives of provincial and local state bodies and especially the churches survive today in the successor states to document the lives of the subject peoples. The diocesan archives have been especially important for the reconstruction of their history in the Habsburg Monarchy because they had a formative role in their cultural identity. Religion and ethnicity often coincided, church-administered schools were the principal outpost for education in the national languages, and bishops for many years acted as political leaders beyond their religious functions. The wartime loss of Polish archives was uniquely catastrophic, estimated at 74%. Fortunately for researchers on the history of Poles in the Habsburg Monarchy, this destruction did not affect the archives of the free city of Kraków and the Galician provincial government, which survive today in Poland and Ukraine.48

Wartime destruction helped inspire a renewed attention to archival preservation and source publication. The archives of the successor states in the Eastern Bloc incorporated extensive microfilming into their five-year plans for bilateral cooperation. At first the microfilming reflected individual research projects and needs, and the resulting films were not very useful for others. To address this problem, after 1960 the microfilm plans became more systematic, targeting entire record groups if they contained a significant amount of material about the interested country. Hungary’s archival delegates in Vienna recommenced activity in this period, after a politically inspired hiatus, and took the lead in identifying records for microfilming in the Viennese archives. By 1990 Hungary had filmed 30 million frames of material in Vienna, primarily from the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries. As impressive as this number sounds, it still only accounted for 10% of material identified by the delegates as worthy of filming. As examples of other filming activity, it is known that the Hungarians also filmed in Romania, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia, and the Romanians filmed records of the Serbian church in Yugoslavia that were important for its own history within the Monarchy.49

The primary training and qualifications of archivists in Vienna and the successor states since 1945 have been in history. The historical activity of archivists in the HHSA benefits from the work space in the building since 1902, which was designed to facilitate collaborative work like the general inventory volumes previously cited. The publication of the protocols of the Austrian and Austro-Hungarian Council of Ministers have been two major collaborative projects of Austrian and Hungarian archivists and historians.50 Archives of the HHSA take pride in their status as productive scholars, arguing that it contributes fundamentally to their ability to advise researchers. As they write, there is “a cooperative connection between archival activity and scholarly research” and the archival interview is a “specialized dialog of scholars.”51

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49 Ress. Die ungarische Archivdelegation in Wien; Personal email messages of Imre Ress, October 28 and 30, 2007. Dr. Ress was Hungary’s archival delegate in the HHSA.


51 Alfred Kohler, Leopold Kammerhofer, and Elisabeth Springer. Die Bedeutung des Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchivs in Wien als Stätte internationaler Forschung // Springer und Kammerhofer (Hgs.). Archiv und Forschung: Das Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv in Wien in 1902, which was designed to facilitate collaborative work like the general inventory volumes previously cited. The publication of the protocols of the Austrian and Austro-Hungarian Council of Ministers have been two major collaborative projects of Austrian and Hungarian archivists and historians.50 Archives of the HHSA take pride in their status as productive scholars, arguing that it contributes fundamentally to their ability to advise researchers. As they write, there is “a cooperative connection between archival activity and scholarly research” and the archival interview is a “specialized dialog of scholars.”51
The postwar years brought not only continued openness of access for research to the Viennese archives, but improved funding and international collaboration. Archivists in the other successor states are also historians who have distinguished themselves with historical publications. It is true on the other hand that politically motivated limitations on archival access marred the operations of many archives during the Communist period, but this situation is fortunately now largely a thing of the past. The study of the Habsburg Monarchy became a major field in the US, attracting many American historians to the Viennese archives and prompting funding from the Austrian state for the Center for Austrian Studies at the University of Minnesota that was the long-time publisher of the Austrian Studies Yearbook. This journal recently published as a special issue a detailed guide to the archives of the Habsburg Monarchy in the successor states. The European accession process has probably done even more than the purported internationalization of the preceding period to undermine the historiographical and archival isolation of the countries of the region. Supranational states seem less anomalous from the perspective of today.

**SUMMARY**

Статья посвящена истории австро-венгерских архивов на протяжении всего существования империи и вплоть до окончания Второй мировой войны. Имперские архивы в собственном смысле слова возникли в интересах империи, ее Беллиондии и Европы. Wiener Beiträge zur Geschichte der Neuzeit, 20. Wien, 1993. S. 9-18; the quotations are from p. 16. As a young researcher in the HHSA I had two characteristic experiences, one of them with a coauthor of this study and another with one of the contributors to Die Protokolle des österreichischen Ministerates. When I inquired whether there were any Austrian intelligence reports on the Danubian Principalities in the 1860s, Dr. Springer not only told me about the relevant record series but enthusiastically led me through the iron doors to the HHSA stacks to show me the archival bundles so I could judge for myself about the extent of the material and its finding aids! My other memorable consultation was with Dr. Horst Brettner-Messner, who advised me about Austrian imperial records including those pertaining to minister of state Anton von Schmerling. The archivist had a certain startling physical resemblance to Schmerling that gave his advice special weight for me. 32 Auer, Das Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv und die Geschichtswissenschaft. S. 59-61; The guide was A Guide to East-Central Archives, which I have cited several times; it details the manifold holdings for the history of the Habsburg Monarchy of all its successor states other than Austria.

ли как отражение претензий властителей на территории, которые они стремились консолидировать и на которые позднее стали предъявлять претензии национальные движения. Собственно имперскую архивную традицию Джеймс Ниessen прослеживает с XVIII века (Archivum belicum: Hofkriegsrätilches Archiv, 1711; Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, 1749; Hofkammerarchiv, основан в 1578, но стал разыватьться с 1749). В статье анализируется их специфика как имперских политических институтов и локусов историографии. Период двуисточной монархии (начиная с 1867-68 гг.) стимулировал специализацию и расцвет архивов — имперских, королевских, местных. Именно в этом контексте Венгрия основала Национальный архив (Magyar Országos Levéltár, 1875). В статье также рассматривается логика основания Хорватского, Богемского и прочих национальных архивов, не только обслуживавших государственные интересы, но и открытых для публики. Автор также прослеживает превращение в этот период имперских архивов в австро-венгерские, поскольку по условиям “Компромисса” три основных имперских министерства работали с обоими парламентами и ведали делами двуисточной монархии: Министерство иностранных дел, Военное министерство и Министерство финансов. Поступившие из них в имперские архивы материалы потребовали включения венгров в число архивных сотрудников, а сама архивная политика стала предметом переговоров между имперскими и королевскими властями, а также обоими парламентами. В статье анализируются политические и научные последствия подобного изменения характера имперских архивов. Параллельно Ниessen рассмотривает профессионализацию архивного дела, выражающуюся в специфическом обозначении архивистов, создании современных архивных зданий и формировании особого, противопоставленного себя государственной и национальной политической логике. Период Первой мировой войны, пришедший к краху Австро-Венгерской империи, ознаменовался интенсивным перемещением архивных коллекций, что в статье анализируется на разнообразных примерах: начиная с отправки в Вену в 1914 г. документов Сербского МИДа, использованных для оправдания выдвинутого Сербией в 1914 году ультиматума, и заканчивая столкновениями за архивное наследство между государствами, возникшими на руинах Австро-Венгрии. Особо в статье упоминается архивное соглашение между Австрией и Венгрией от 1926 года, по которому юридическое руководство бывшими имперскими архивами оставалось в Вене, в то время как Австрия признавала венгерский концепт “совместного
культурного наследия" и обеспечивала венграм доступ к "их" документам из архивов дуалистической монархии. В последнем разделе статьи автор говорит об избирательности хранения документов в имперских и национальных архивах Габсбургской (Австро-Венгерской) империи; о том, что маргинализация в них субальтерных групп может частично компенсироваться с помощью обращения к архивам местных церковных приходов, поскольку этничность и религиозная идентичность на местном уровне были основными политическими языками. Упоминав о документальных потерях времен Второй мировой войны, о разного рода катаклизмах и проч., Дже́ймс Ни́ссен делает вывод о том, что именно построенная централизация архивов в странах, образовавшихся после распада империи, и современная международная кооперация в архивном деле помогли сохранить тот комплекс документов, который может послужить целям новой имперской истории.

Светлана ГОРШЕНИНА

КРУПНЕЙШИЕ ПРОЕКТЫ КОЛОНИАЛЬНЫХ АРХИВОВ РОССИИ:
УТОПИЧНОСТЬ ТОТАЛЬНОЙ ТУРКЕСТАНИКИ
ГЕНЕРАЛ-ГУБЕРНАТОРА КОНСТАНТИНА ПЕТРОВИЧА фон КАУФМАНА

Введение

Многие военные, чиновники и интеллектуалы царской России надеялись окончательно придать своему отечеству статус полноценной европейской державы в результате продвижения империи в глубь Средней Азии. Вне зависимости от политических пристрастий все ждали видеть Россию "Европой" в Азии, но в значительно "улучшенном" по сравнению с другими западными державами варианте, что казалось возможным благодаря особенностям национальной русской истории и национального характера. Г. Ф. Федоров, начавший свою службу при первом туркестанском генерал-губернаторе К. П. фон Кауфмане и дослужившийся до управляющего канцелярией генерал-губернатора при

* Моя искренняя признательность за высказанные наблюдения при чтении первой версии этой статьи адресуется Сергею Абашину, Борису Чукоевичу, Клоду Ракону, Александру Станиану и анонимному рецензенту Ab Imperio.