Editors’ Notes

Volume 44 of the Austrian History Yearbook conveys the rich intellectual diversity of the work being done these days by scholars, both senior and junior, of the Habsburg Monarchy and the successor states. This volume also reflects an unusual diversity of background among its articles’ authors who hail from Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Great Britain, and the United States. Their articles focus on a broad variety of chronological periods, from eleventh-century Hungary to Hungary in 2012. Our authors use methodologies that foreground vastly different types of historical approaches, from the historical study of art, architecture, and material culture, to anthropology, cultural history, social history, political history, and the study of historiography.

In her Robert Kann Memorial Lecture, Nora Berend reflects on the relationship between identity and violence among Christians and Muslims in medieval and early modern Hungary. Rather than seeing inter-religious violence as a product of warring identities, Berend, like some other pioneering historians of Habsburg Central Europe, suggests that violence more often helped to create and then sustain identities, and not simply in the recent past. Berend’s findings, among others, are confirmed in James Tracy’s study of sixteenth-century Habsburg-Ottoman relations on the southern Hungarian border. Here, local, family, and regional strategic concerns frequently shaped larger dynastic and imperial policies.

Werner Telesko, Richard Kurdiovsky, and Dagmar Sachsenhofer analyze the politics of artistic representation in their examination of the architecture and interior décor of the Vienna Hofburg in its final century as the official residence of Habsburg rulers. Using written and visual texts, Markian Prokopovych examines public representations of the “scandalous” events surrounding the opening of the Budapest Opera House in 1884. Thomas Ort examines what he calls the particularly masculine qualities of pre-World War I Czech modernist artists, as they were manifested in the new art of cubism. John Boyer and Jonathan Kwan offer thoughtful and compelling reassessments of political history in the Austrian half of the Dual Monarchy. Boyer asks us to reconsider the critical long-term legacies of the 1907 reform that instituted universal manhood suffrage for elections to the Austrian Reichsrat or Parliament. This surprisingly understudied event that institutionalized new forms of democracy, and made possible new levels of political partisanship, also produced enduring consequences of enormous importance to Central European history for the next fifty years. Kwan examines the long-neglected role of Austro-German liberalism during the critical and confusing months that followed Austria’s defeat at the hands of Prussia in the summer of 1866. What role did liberals play in influencing the shape taken by the Compromise or Ausgleich settlement of 1867, how did they work out their differences on this issue, and how did their acceptance of compromise influence their own trajectory as a party and a movement? Marsha Rozenblit offers a nuanced and insightful social study of the
historic—and changing—role played by German-Jewish schools in the Crownland and later the province of Moravia, from the mid nineteenth century under the Habsburg Monarchy until the late 1930s in Czechoslovakia. Her analysis raises, among others, important questions about both the processes and the meanings of local forms of national identification and linguistic usage among Jews in this part of Central Europe. In anticipation of next year’s World War I centenary, Irina Marin analyzes the controversial case of retired Hungarian general Nikolaus Cena, arrested by overly eager authorities before war had even been declared. The case illustrates the extreme paranoia of many within the military who anticipated the need to incarcerate potential traitors, and on the basis of highly questionable evidence, presumed Cena to be a spy for Romania. Marin’s investigation adds to a growing war literature that seeks to examine relationships between the military authorities and both the Hungarian and Austrian civil authorities in the first years of the War.

Volume 44 also includes three very different essays that engage specifically the relationship between politics and historiography in the study of Austrian, Hungarian, and Croatian history. Filip Šimetin Šegvić and Tomislav Brandolica examine the diverse instrumental uses to which Central European historians, journalists, and popular writers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries have put the protean figure of Prince Eugene of Savoy. Ljiljana Radonic investigates the official politics of history during the Tdman era (1990–99) regarding the Ustaša-ruled independent Croatian state (NDH) during World War II. Mártón Dornbach locates the roots of much contemporary political rhetoric and conflict in Hungarian politics in its Austro-Hungarian past. Finally, the article section of Volume 44 concludes with appreciations of the lives of two [beloved] historians who died this year, and who shaped our field in profoundly important ways: Fritz Fellner (1922–2012) and Mirjana Gross (1922–2012).

The editors would like to thank the many anonymous reviewers on both sides of the Atlantic whose constructive and reflective comments made this volume possible. We especially thank Professor Robert Nemes of Colgate University whose tireless and intelligent work as Reviews Editor comes to an end with this volume. Robert’s service also included many stints as an outside evaluator of articles, along with his work editing the book review section. We also welcome our new Reviews Editor, Professor Maureen Healy of Lewis and Clark College. We would like to thank Professor Gary B. Cohen, formerly our Executive Editor, who generously offered us his advice and expert knowledge this year regarding all aspects of the publication of the Yearbook.

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