

THE SCIENTIFIC VALUE OF GEOLOGIST'S BEQUESTS USED FOR THE RESEARCH IN THE HISTORY OF GEOSCIENCES IN AUSTRIA

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1. The archives of the Geological Survey of Austria

Archives are the most important units of geological surveys. Their aim is the collection of written or drawn documents. In the Imperial Foundation – Act, dated November 15th, 1849, of the former Imperial Geological Institut (Geologische Reichsanstalt) the unit „Archive“ was planned. In this time only a few printed geoscientific literature existed. Geological maps existed only as manuscript – sheets. In reality the unit „Archive“ didn't exist in the beginning of the Geologische Reichsanstalt. Only the activities of the library and the map – collection, administrated by the drawing – section, were reported annually by the director. After the first World War we can find annual reports on a unit called „Museum and Archives“. This unit was probably extended during the time of the „Geologisches Reichsam, Zweigstelle Wien“ between 1938 – 1945. After the second World War in the frame of the departments concerning applied geology so called „Karteien“ where established. These were collections of unpublished documents. For search of documents systematic card – catalogues were used. As consequence of the reorganization of the Geological Survey of Austria (successor of the Imperial Geological Institute) a special unit „Scientific Archive“ within the frame of the library was founded. Later the Graphic Collection was added. The Scientific Archiv of the library contains geological manuscript – maps of Austria and the former Austrian – Hungarian Monarchy, field – reports, field – diaries (Feldtagebücher), biographical materials und research reports. An important part of the stock of the Scientific Archive of the Library depends on bequests, which were donated in the last decades to the Geological Survey of Austria.

2. The bequests of geologists at the Geological Survey of Austria: useful sources for the history of geological sciences in Austria

The study of some important material of the Scientific Archives from the time of the beginning of the Imperial Geological Institute (Geologische Reichsanstalt) in 1849 to the 3rd International Geological congress in Vienna is the aim of the reported research project. Special attention is given to the correspondence of Franz von HAUER <1822-1899> and field – diaries of 9 geologists. The correspondence of Franz von HAUER, who was the second director of the Imperial Geological Institut (Geologische Reichsanstalt) is very important. He had contacts with the most significant geologists and scientiest of his time. More than 660 letters are preserved, which allow an interestic view in scientific discussions and the social surrounding. Franz von HAUER exchanged scientific information with 84 addresses e.g. Wilhelm HADINGER <1795-1871>, Andreas BAUMGARTNER <1793-1865>, Sigmund AICHHORN <1814-1892> etc. to solve general and financial problems. Additionally historical – political events and personal problems where discussed.

The 225 field – diaries of the Scientific Archive of the Geological Survey of Austria contain many precious information of the field – activities. Intensive researches on the field – diaries of Marco Vinzenz LIPOLD <1816-1883> are in progress. The research was started with 26 field – diaries of Marco Vinzenz LIPOLD <1816-1883>, wich are outstanding with respect to their formal and artistical out-look. Last but not least they have still most important scientific value. The first step is the transcription of LIPOLD's old hand-writing in latin letters. The next step is the comparison of LIPOLD's unpublished field-diaries and published papers, dominantly printed in the „Jahrbuch der Geologischen Reichsanstalt“ and search for unknown results. The routes of LIPOLD's fieldsurveys where exactly reconstructed. At least in the Administration – and Registration – Archives of the Geological Survey of Austria the written reports to the director of the Imperial Geological Institut (W.HADINGER) were controlled and compared. On the basis of searching these archival materials and geologist's bequests it is possible to give a better and complete description of the historical development of the geosciences in Austria. The development of theories and results in the geosciences is considered with this autopsic method. At least the influence of the conditions of life and the historical – political circumstances in respect to the development of science could be better documented and presented.