

Archival Training in Europe

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EVER SINCE THE ESTABLISHMENT of the American archival profession, training has been a foremost concern; and during the past ten years especially, the issue has engendered vigorous debate. Yet it is surprising how little attention has been paid to Europe, where diverse systems of education have functioned for a much longer time. Europeans too have had to confront the dilemma of records proliferation and the advent of new information technologies, and thus have had to reassess the relevance of traditional professional preparation. While Europeans have not devised a definitive solution, their experience can cast a fresh perspective on what for America remains an unresolved problem.

The very antiquity of the European archival profession provides the first insight: that the role of the archivist, far from being constant, has often been transformed in response to changing historical and cultural conditions. Until the end of the eighteenth century, most archives were the private possessions of kings, noblemen, and privileged institutions like the church. Archives were prized, above all, for their administrative value and as repositories of time-honored rights and prerogatives, only

secondarily as sources for scholarly investigation. Archivists themselves tended to be clerks or jurists adept at organizing collections with an eye to their administrative utility and their usefulness in enforcing royal or aristocratic claims. The French Revolution fundamentally transformed the purpose and function of archives by opening them to a wider public and facilitating their use in historical research. Early nineteenth-century romanticism, with its predilection for exotic and remote eras, also encouraged the archivist to be an historian.¹

Thus have Europeans, more perhaps than Americans, traditionally stressed the archivist's dual responsibility as a custodian and interpreter of the historical record. In France and Germany especially, the writing of local history has long been regarded as the profession's natural preserve. In these two countries, as well as in Italy, Austria, and Denmark, the research and publication of historical works is lauded as a means for the archivist to gain a fuller insight into the research value of primary source materials, and also communicate their contents to the scholarly world at large. Many European archives still allot a

¹ Giorgio Cencetti, "Archivi e archivisti di ieri e di oggi," *Scritti archivistici* (Rome: Centro di Ricerca, 1970), pp. 9–18; Georg Wilhelm Sante, "Der Archivar—Wandel eines Berufs," in *Mélanges offerts par ses confrères étrangers à Charles Braibant* (Brussels: Comité des Mélanges Braibant, 1959), pp. 474–75.

specific amount of weekly time for personal research.² Although some have questioned the appropriateness of such pursuits,³ the ideal of the archivist as historian is still a vital one in much of Europe and plays its part in recruitment and training.

Not only have the antiquity and documentary reservoir of Europe's past reinforced the primacy of historical training, they have also necessitated the mastery of an array of "auxiliary sciences of history" largely alien to American experience. Traditionally, European scholar-archivists have needed to learn paleography, the study of scripts in Latin and in the vernaculars; diplomatics, which deals with the forms and characteristics of older documents, and helps determine authenticity; chronology, the method of dating them; sphragistics or sigillography, the study of seals; heraldry; numismatics; and other specialties.

Because of the greater diversity of Europe's historical record, and the need for longer and more intense preparation, the archival service in some European countries is more differentiated than in the United States. Thus there are senior archivists whose qualifications and functions are more scholarly in nature, as well as less broadly educated intermediate grades entrusted with the more technical and routine aspects of archives administration. In the Netherlands, both German states, Denmark, and, to a lesser extent in Sweden, different kinds of training are provided for each rank. But instruction at a given level tends to be uniform; except in the Soviet Union and possibly in England, the idea of preparing professionals for work in specific kinds of archives has not taken hold.

In recent years the flood of documentation has encroached on the time once devoted to leisurely scholarship and has sometimes compelled archivists to become more involved in administration and records management. Increasingly, the ability to decipher arcane scripts and authenticate archaic charters seems less relevant in the age of the computer. In Europe, updating archival education has in many ways proved even more difficult than in America, for the updating calls into question practices, traditions, and ideals hallowed by a century of almost unquestioned acceptance. In the face of these challenges some training institutes have remained obdurately obsolescent, to the detriment of the profession as a whole. But most have accommodated contemporary trends even while retaining much of the traditional subject matter and upholding the scholarly standards of former years. And a few have actually jettisoned most of the old curriculum, devising instead a modern and often exhaustive course of study which should particularly interest archivists in America.

European programs are as varied as the countries dotting the continent. In France and the Soviet Union, candidates undertake combined historical and archival training in special institutes equivalent to but distinct from regular universities. In Austria, Poland, and East Germany professional preparation is concurrent with university study, while in West Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, and England it is postgraduate. The structure of the education, however, is less crucial than the curriculum, than whether the auxiliary sciences and historical studies predominate or

² André Uyttebrouck, "Le recrutement et le début de carrière du personnel scientifique des archives de L'état," *Archivum* 14 (1965): 193-95; Robert-Henri Bautier, "L'archiviste face à ses tâches," in *Actes des onzième et douzième conférences internationales de la table ronde des archives* (Bucharest 1969, Jerusalem 1970), pp. 145 ff.

³ This is particularly the case in England where the renowned Sir Hilary Jenkinson was adamant in his insistence that "the archivist is not and ought not to be an historian" and ought not "to decide what publications the public requires or what are most needed for the advance of historical or some other form of research." Hilary Jenkinson, *A Manual of Archive Administration* (London: Percy Lund, Humphries and Co., 1965), pp. 123, 125. For similar views on the continent see André Uyttebrouck, "Carrière scientifique et carrière de direction," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 43 (1972): 264-69, 272-73.

whether archives administration receives due attention. This emphasis explains why some countries have successfully adapted to the "archival revolution" while others have not.

Of the many archives schools in Europe, the *Ecole des Chartes*, in Paris, founded in 1821 and thus the oldest such institution, provides the best-known model of traditional training. Imbued with the highest standards of critical scholarship, it deems its primary mission to be not simply the production of archivists but the cultivation of proficient research scholars, particularly those adept in the medieval and early modern epochs of history. Indeed, the *Ecole des Chartes* is not exclusively an archives training institute, but rather an institution of higher learning independent of the university. It enrolls secondary school graduates and provides them with general education as well as specialized training for careers as archivists, museum curators, staff for the National Center for Scholarly Research, and librarians—although librarians have been trained in a separate library school since 1964. Applicants for the *Ecole des Chartes* must pass rigorous entry examinations in French history and historical geography; in Latin, without a dictionary; and in either English or German. Once admitted, the *chartiste* undertakes a four-year course primarily in auxiliary sciences, in Latin, in old French and Provençal philology, and in French institutional and legal history with emphasis on the period before the French Revolution. Students conclude their studies by writing a thesis, comparable to the doctoral dissertation in American and German universities, dealing most

often with a topic in French history before the nineteenth century.⁴

Because of this antiquarian bent and long-standing neglect of specifically archival subjects, graduates of the *Ecole des Chartes* planning on a career in archives have been required since 1956 to supplement their training with a three-month course at the National Archives, the *Stage technique internationale d'archives* ("International technical term of archives"). Through lectures, exercises, and visits to various bureaus and archives of the *départements*, students learn the fundamentals of archives administration; the history, contents, and organization of French archives; and French administration. Subsequently they undertake a short practicum, often in an *archives départemental*.⁵

Though none would deny its high standards of scholarship, many have condemned as hopelessly outmoded the training provided by the *Ecole des Chartes*. A decade ago the chorus of castigation was especially harsh about a system which insisted on deep knowledge of Merovingian documents but tolerated ignorance of the last century, which trained professionals for the task that was the exception rather than the rule.⁶ Still others lamented that, despite the supplementary *Stage*, the young French archivist was not adequately prepared for the proliferating records and administrative complexities he or she encountered in his or her first position. Archivists and their professional organizations all urged that the *Ecole des Chartes* devote more time to archives administration and bring the focus of its historical studies from the cutoff year 1815 up to the twentieth cen-

⁴ Pierre Marot, "La formation de l'archiviste en France," *Archivum* 3 (1953): 51–59; Albert Mirot, "La formation des archivistes en France," *Gazette des Archives*, n.s. 21 (1957): 35–41; Robert Marquandt, "La formation des archivistes en France," in Robert Marquandt, René Gandilhon, eds., *Vorlesungen zum Archivwesen Frankreichs* (Marburg: Archivschule, 1971), pp. 35–60; Charles Kecskeméti, *La formation professionnelle des archivistes* (Brussels: UNESCO, 1966), pp. 16–17; "Ecole nationale des chartes," a 1979 syllabus issued by the school.

⁵ Roger Comeau, "Impressions d'un canadien au Stage Technique Internationale d'Archives," *Canadian Archivist* 2, no. 2 (1971): 16–24; see also Kecskeméti, *Formation professionnelle des archivistes*, pp. 44–45.

⁶ Yves Pérotin, "Le grenier de l'histoire et les récoltes excédentaires," *Gazette des Archives*, n.s. 50 (1965): 134.

ture.⁷ Although the student unrest of May 1968 shook this venerable institute, as it did other French institutions of higher learning, and led to some curricular reform, the fundamental dilemma of a program excessively devoted to historical erudition and insufficiently attentive to problems of modern archives administration and records management remains only partially resolved.⁸

Traditionalism permeates the schools of Austria and Italy, also. The Institute for Austrian Historical Research, in Vienna, founded in 1854, was largely modeled after the *Ecole des Chartes*, and differs today only in offering its courses concurrently with university study and in devoting somewhat more attention to archives administration in a curriculum otherwise heavily weighted toward Latin philology and the auxiliary sciences.⁹ In Italy, recruitment into the profession precedes actual training. Prospective archivists must

first complete doctoral work and then undergo a rigorous series of examinations in Italian history, administration, and constitutional law; archives administration; Latin translation; and proficiency in a modern foreign language. After surmounting this formidable obstacle, the candidate is assigned to one of the Italian state archives and is trained simultaneously at one of Italy's seventeen "schools of paleography," in which the instruction, while it does not neglect archival subjects, still focuses primarily on the auxiliary sciences.¹⁰

In these countries too, instruction burdened with excessive historical emphasis has proved increasingly less suited to an age of mass documentation. Though perhaps less outspoken than their French colleagues, both Austrian and Italian reformers have urged that more attention be devoted to archives administration as well as modern history and documentation.¹¹ In

⁷ Ibid., pp. 131–43; Pérotin, "Les archivistes et le mépris," *Gazette des Archives*, n.s. 68 (1970): 12–14, 19; Jacques Monicat, "Le recrutement et la formation professionnelle des conservateurs d'archives en France," *Gazette des Archives*, n.s. 34–35 (1961): 131–39; Vital Chomel, "Les problèmes du personnel scientifique des archives en France," *Gazette des Archives*, n.s. 63 (1968): 235–57; O. de Saint-Blanquat, "Les problèmes du personnel scientifique des archives en France," *Gazette des Archives*, n.s. 66 (1969): 190–95, n.s. 69 (1970): 103–9; "Seizième congrès national des archivistes français, Paris, 15–17 juin 1970," *ibid.*, 131–32; "XVIIe congrès national des Archives de France, Pau, 7–9 octobre 1971," *Gazette des Archives*, n.s. 75 (1971): 213–24.

⁸ Robert Marquandt, "Fragen der archivischen Ausbildung in Frankreich," *Der Archivar* 26 (1973): 197–200; Etienne Taillemite, "Archives et recherche historique en France," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 46 (1975): 300–301. According to 1979 information (B. Delmas, "The Training of Archivists: Analysis of the Study Programmes of Different Countries and Thoughts on the Possibilities of Harmonization" [unpublished report for Meeting of Experts on the Harmonization of Archives Training Programmes, UNESCO, Paris, 26–30 November 1979], pp. 41–43), the curriculum of the *Ecole des Chartes* now does include coursework in archives administration, modern archives, information science, and contemporary history. Nevertheless, the medieval emphasis and the heavy role played by auxiliary sciences is still very evident. Moreover, a perusal of recent issues of the *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes* indicates that student theses are still primarily concerned with pre-1815 topics.

⁹ "Statuten des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung," *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 72 (1964): 253–58; Kecskeméti, *Formation professionnelle des archivistes* pp. 14–15; Heinrich Fichtenau, "Die Ausbildung von Archivaren am Institut für österreichische Geschichtsforschung," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 46 (1975): 190–95; Peter Gasser, "Die Ausbildung der Archivare in Österreich," *Archivum* 4 (1954): 7–33; Delmas, *Training of Archivists*, pp. 51–52.

¹⁰ Elio Lodolini, "Reclutamento e formazione degli archivisti in Italia," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 46 (1975): 208–14; Lodolini, "Gli archivi di stato italiani," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 41 (1970): 379–90; Jole Mazzoleni, "Manuale di archivistica (Naples: Libreria Scientifica, 1972), pp. 142–45, 270, 281, 291; Kecskeméti, *Formation professionnelle des archivistes*, pp. 18–20.

¹¹ Richard Blaas, "Der Archivar und seine Berufsausbildung," *Scrinium*, no. 1 (1969): 9 ff.; Blaas, "Reformvorschläge zur Archivarausbildung," *Scrinium*, no. 5 (1971): 20–37; Wilhelm Rausch, "Gedanken eines Kommunalarchivars zur Ausbildung der österreichischen Archivare," *Scrinium*, no. 18 (1978): 15, 18; Giuseppe Pansini, "Proposte per la ristrutturazione delle scuole di archivio," *Rassegna degli Archivi di Stato* 35 (1975): 375, 376; comments by Antonio Saladino in "Convegno nazionale di studio di Rieti," *Archivi e Cultura* 4 (1970): 100–102.

Italy an exaggerated regionalism has further compounded the problem. Training and recruitment encourage archivists to become specialists for a specific Italian state of the period before the unification of Italy in 1861. Thus modern documentation inventories tend to be summary, and personnel moves from one archives to another are disadvantageous for all. Some reformers have suggested that more solid training in modern administrative history could alleviate this predicament. Others have pleaded for the establishment of a national archives school to provide the needed uniformity and a more modern accent, but most Italian archivists apparently feel that regional and historical differences make this proposal impractical.¹²

One could easily infer, as some Americans have mistakenly done, that antiquarianism and obsolescence permeate European archival education. But programs in the Netherlands and West Germany exemplify the reconciliation of high scholarly standards and due regard for older eras and documentation with modern exigencies and new technology.

In part, German and Dutch adaptability has a deeper historical basis. In both countries, formal training instituted almost a century ago avoided that exaggerated historicism pervading the French, Austrian, and Italian schools, and concentrated more heavily on archives administration.¹³ The planners of past programs had a solidier conception of their function, and this perhaps helps account for the greater flexibil-

ity shown in those of more recent years. During the 1960s reformers in both countries advocated sweeping curricular revisions including adoption of specialized training, with traditional subjects for aspirants for older archives and more technically and administratively relevant ones for those planning to work in contemporary repositories. The archival establishment in both nations rejected the more radical proposals. Latin and other language requirements have been retained; paleography and the other auxiliary sciences still play an important, but by no means predominant, role in the curriculum. In essence then, the all-around archivist, adaptable to a variety of functions, rather than the narrowly trained specialist, remains the ideal. Otherwise, the West Germans, in particular, have proved receptive to change. The Marburg school, especially, has updated its courses to provide some coverage of film and sound media, records centers and modern records management, reproduction, and electronic data processing. Its concluding practicum has been transferred from the Marburg State Archives, notable mainly for its medieval and early modern holdings, to the Federal Archives in Koblenz where students gain better familiarity with recent documentation and modern technology and become better apprised of the interrelation between modern archives and administration. While the Dutch would not appear to be as technologically innovative, they have devised possibly the most imaginative program for integrating study and practical work experience.¹⁴

¹² Pansini, "Proposte," pp. 381–83; Pansini, "Die Ausbildung der Archivare in Italien," *Scrinium*, no. 18 (1978): 31–34; Elio Lodolini, "Die italienische Archivorganisation und ihre jüngsten Veränderungen," *Archivalische Zeitschrift* 72 (1976): 130–31; Nicola Raponi, "Sulla formazione professionale, la specializzazione e l'utilizzazione del personale direttivo negli archivi," *Rassegna degli Archivi di Stato* 35 (1975): 293–94.

¹³ Ernst Posner, "European Experiences in Training Archivists," *Archives and the Public Interest* (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1967), p. 54. For historical background, see also Johannes Papritz, "Die Archivschule Marburg/Lahn," *Archivum* 3 (1953): 61–75; F. C. J. Ketelaar, "De Archiefschool 1919–1969," *Nederlands Archiefblad* 74 (1970): 120–37.

¹⁴ Fritz Wolff, "Organisation und Lehrplan der Archivschule Marburg (1947–1972)," *Der Archivar* 26 (1973): 157–68; Kurt Dülfer, "Probleme und Erfahrungen bei der deutschen Archivaraus- bildung," *Scrinium*, no. 2 (1970): 27–30; Dülfer, "Gegenwartsrückwirkungen auf die Archivschule Marburg," *Der Archivar* 25 (1972): 249; Eckhart G. Franz, "Projekt HETRINA: Elektronische Datenverarbeitung an der Archivschule Marburg," *Der Archivar* 24 (1971): 381–90; Volker Wagner, "Neue Ausbildungsformen für den wissenschaftlichen Archivarnachwuchs: Der ergänzende 'Stage' der Archivreferendare am Bundesarchiv in Koblenz," *Der Archivar* 26 (1973): 173–78; Eric Ketelaar, "The Dutch School for Archivists," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 46 (1975): 197.

In the Netherlands and West Germany, the archival profession is divided into two grades of personnel, each with distinct functions, educational attainments, and professional training. Senior or scholar-archivists generally hold doctoral degrees, usually in history, are trained along traditional lines to permit mastery of older documentation, are entrusted with the more complicated and long-term responsibilities, and hold the highest administrative positions. Mid-grade archivists generally have only a secondary education (which, it should be noted, is considerably more advanced than high school training in the United States). Their sphere of activity centers on the less arcane documentation of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which does not require advanced training in the auxiliary sciences, and on simpler, short-term tasks like reproduction and conservation, preparation of finding aids, simpler researches, and reference work. In West Germany, at least, it is possibly a sign of the less than fully professional status of mid-grade archivists that more than one author has urged that they should not be burdened merely with the duties senior archivists do not care to perform. In both countries the consensus is that mid-graders should be rigorously excluded from all administration.¹⁵ In recent years the German Federal Archives and the Bavarian Archives School in Munich have established brief training courses for paraprofessionals whose modest duties are becoming increasingly essential in relieving harassed professional staff from the routine,

time-consuming tasks of user services, genealogical and other elementary research, registering, security filming, and the like.¹⁶

The principal training institute in the German Federal Republic is the Archives School in Marburg-an-der-Lahn, a charming and picturesque university town nestled amidst the pines and hills of Hesse.¹⁷ As in Italy, recruitment generally precedes training, and the student body is comprised largely of those recommended by various federal, state, municipal, and ecclesiastical archives. Candidates for the "higher service" of scholar-archivists must have completed university study and obtained the doctorate. Although the vast majority of entrants have a background in medieval or modern history, about 10 percent of the school's graduates are economists, theologians, jurists, and philologists. Applicants must be proficient in Latin and French and have spent several months working in an archives. The course itself lasts for three semesters (eighteen months) and entails 800–1,000 hours of instruction apportioned among archives administration, auxiliary sciences, and historical studies. Archives administration courses, while concentrating heavily on standard archival subject matter, also include an introduction to modern media—film, sound, and picture archives—and modern information technology. The auxiliary sciences include the usual dosage of paleography, diplomatics, exercises in French and Latin documents, as well as heraldry, sphragistics, and numismatics. The history courses focus primarily on legal, administrative, and

¹⁵ Netherlands, Archiefraad, *De Rijksarchiefdienst* (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1971), pp. 30 ff.; Wolfgang Müller, "Ein Diskussionsbeitrag zum Thema 'Archivinspektoren und Diplomarchivare,'" *Der Archivar* 15 (1962): 197–204; Winfried Bliss, "Einstellung, Ausbildung und Einsatz des gehobenen Dienstes," *Der Archivar* 17 (1964): 403–6; articles by Herbert Stöwer and Wilhelm Janssen, both entitled "Zum Berufsbild des Archivars des gehobenen Dienstes," *Der Archivar* 25 (1972): 141–50.

¹⁶ Günter von Roden, "Die Notwendigkeit eines mittleren Dienstes," *Der Archivar* 26 (1973): 471–75; Harald Jaeger, "Ausbildung und Einsatz des mittleren Archivdienstes," *Der Archivar* 29 (1976): 269–72.

¹⁷ In addition, there is the school in Munich that trains personnel specifically to meet the needs of the Bavarian archives service. In large part its admission standards and courses parallel those of Marburg. In keeping, however, with the Bavarian service's efforts to promote close co-operation between archives and administration, the curriculum manifests a more pronounced legal and administrative accent. For details, see Hermann Rumschöttel, "Die Archivarausbildung in Bayern," *Scriinium*, no. 17 (1978): 19–35; Bernhard Zittel, "Neue Wege der Archivarausbildung in Bayern," *Der Archivar* 26 (1973): 191–98.

regional history. After a six-week practicum at the Federal Archives, the program ends with a rigorous series of oral and written examinations.¹⁸

Mid-grade candidates for the "elevated service" of "archives inspectors" must undertake first of all an intensive administrative course of study at a university. Then they transfer to Marburg where they are subjected to four months of concentrated work in the constitutional, legal, administrative, social, and economic history of Germany; auxiliary sciences; and economics and finance; all combined with exercises in Latin and French. This gruelling regimen is followed by a twelve-month module with approximately 1,000 hours of instruction, primarily in archives administration with a significant accent on modern technologies.¹⁹ Indeed, some aspects of the archives inspectors' information-management training is even more rigorous than that for senior archivists. One can expect that in coming years these subaltern professionals will play an increasingly respected, autonomous, and vital role in West Germany's archives.

With laudable foresight, the National Archives School in The Hague will admit only as many applicants as the market for archivists will bear, thus wisely assuring against unemployment with its waste of talent and its loss of status for the profession. Because the demand for senior archivists is small and static while that for mid-grade personnel is growing, only from five to eleven candidates for the former grade, but roughly forty for the latter, are admitted yearly. Most students have paid-trainee positions in a state or local archives; and

since classes meet but once a week, work and study can be conveniently combined.

The fundamental difference between candidates in the two Dutch grades lies more in educational qualifications than in actual training. Senior archivist candidates must have concluded a doctoral examination, preferably in history or law but possibly in theology, economics, or social sciences. Mid-grade archivists must have completed secondary school and demonstrate proficiency in history, French, and another language. The course of study lasts ten months and comprises roughly 1,600 hours of work and study. The curriculum stresses archives administration, a subject neatly complemented by the daily organizing and description of collections. Both grades learn auxiliary sciences, medieval Dutch, and legal and administrative history; but the senior archivist candidates also pursue the study of Latin, diplomatics, and ecclesiastical history, with some legal history. The program ends in June, followed by examinations in the Fall, which are open to applicants who have not attended the school.²⁰

Although none of their programs can compare in rigor or educational standards with those in the Netherlands and West Germany, other European countries have devised creditable training which attempts to balance the traditional subjects with a solid grounding in modern archives administration. In England, the Public Record Office, like our own National Archives, continues to recruit its novice archivists from the universities and then provides them with on-the-job training. In addition, several universities have, since

¹⁸ Hans Philippi, "Die Archivschule Marburg," *Scrinium*, no. 17 (1978): 7-18; Fritz Wolff, "Archivarausbildung an der Archivschule Marburg," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 46 (1975): 226-38; Dülfer, "Probleme und Erfahrungen," pp. 32-35; Delmas, "Training of Archivists," pp. 45-46.

¹⁹ Fritz Wolff, "Die Neuordnung der Ausbildung des gehobenen Archivdienstes an der Archivschule Marburg," *Der Archivar* 30 (1977): 53-60; Delmas, "Training of Archivists," pp. 46-47.

²⁰ Ketelaar, "Dutch School for Archivists," pp. 195-208; text of legislation regarding archival training, in P. Noordenboos, *Overheidsdocumentatie* (Aalpen aan den rijn: Samson, 1971), pp. 193-98. See also F. C. J. Ketelaar, "De stage van archivariissen-in-opleiding," *Nederlands Archievenblad* 75 (1971): 179-89; J.H.M. Wieland, "De cursus 1976-1977 van de rijksarchiefschool," *Nederlands Archievenblad* 80 (1976): 243-46.

the Second World War, offered a variety of one-year postgraduate courses, mainly to prepare personnel for local record offices. The best-known of these, the School of Librarianship and Archives, at the University of London, requires course-work in archives administration, records management, and the preparation of finding aids. Otherwise students may select, depending on their interests and intended employment, from a variety of electives such as early and modern English administrative history, diplomacy, law of real property, local government, and the application of computers to archives. At the universities in Liverpool and in Wales, at Aberystwyth and Bangor, the curriculum is more attuned to the older eras of English history and to the auxiliary sciences.²¹ In Madrid, the Spanish "School of Documentalists," the major Iberian institute for archival education, has offered a one-year program combining study in both archives administration and auxiliary sciences. Unlike most other European schools, it also requires some course-work in library science.²² In many Eastern European nations, archival training is concurrent with university study. Programs in Poland (Toruń), Czechoslovakia (Prague, Brno, and Bratislava), Hungary (Budapest), and Romania (Bucharest) offer courses in archives administration, auxiliary sciences, and related historical subjects.²³ In some of these nations archival education is in considerable flux. After 1973, the former 720-hour course of study in Poland was reduced to less than 400

hours, ostensibly to speed up the preparation of professionals. With some justification, Polish archivists have complained that these reforms leave the country with standards far lower than in most other European nations.²⁴ In Hungary the curriculum has recently been modernized to meet the need for specialists able to handle contemporary documentation.²⁵

While archival training in most European countries reflects a kind of constructive conservatism, programs in the USSR and East Germany are the epitome of modernity and may foreshadow the direction professional preparation in other nations will eventually take. In the Soviet Union the notion of archives is essentially dynamic; sound recordings and cinema, for example, are regarded as no less legitimate than paper records. Also, the accent is less historical than in Western Europe. Soviet archivists insist that archives administration is not an auxiliary science of history, just as archives themselves serve not only research historians but other scholars, as well as contemporary administrative needs. Some have even deplored that applicants still, despite efforts to broaden the scope of training, consist too exclusively of historians.²⁶ East German professional preparation likewise stresses modern documentation and information technologies, while older records and the auxiliary sciences have been increasingly de-emphasized and relegated to the status of optional specialties.²⁷

The principal training school in the

²¹ Andrew G. Watson, "The Training of Archivists in Great Britain," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 46 (1975): 214-26.

²² Miguel Bordonau Mas, "Formación profesional de los archiveros en España," *Boletín del Archivo General de la Nación* (Venezuela) 62 (1972): 5-14; Vicenta Cortés, "Formación de archiveros en España," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 46 (1975): 185-89; Kecskeméti, *Formation professionnelle des archivistes*, pp. 15-16, 20-21, 28-29.

²³ Kecskeméti, *Formation professionnelle des archivistes*, pp. 18, 35-38, 91-94.

²⁴ Andrzej Tomczak, "Kształcenie archiwistów w Polsce i innych krajach europejskich," *Archeion* 66 (1978): 29-65.

²⁵ Oskar Sashegi, "Archivarausbildung [Ungarn]," *Der Archivar* 29 (1976): 321-22.

²⁶ Jacques Charpy, Michel Duchein, "Un voyage archivistique en URSS," *Gazette des Archives*, n.s., 93 (1976): 96; V.I. Avtokratov, "O nekotorykh problemakh arkhivovedeniia," *Sovetskie Arkhivy* (1970), no. 6: 14-16; I. I. Stroumova, "Uluchshat' rabotu s kadrami arkhivnykh uchrezhdenii," *Sovetskie Arkhivy* (1974), no. 5: 6.

²⁷ Reinhard Kluge, "Zum System der sozialistischen Bildung und Erziehung im Archivwesen der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik," *Archivmitteilungen* 19 (1969): 92; Botho Brachmann, "Die Hochschulausbildung der Archivare in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik," *Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique* 46 (1975): 176, 177-178.

USSR is the Moscow State Historical-Archival Institute (MGIAI), which, since its foundation in 1930, has trained more than half of all Soviet archivists.²⁸ Open to applicants who have completed secondary education, the MGIAI program lasts five years. While its basic course emphasizes history, it also includes intensive archives-related course-work: theory and practice of archives administration (92 hours); history and organization of the Soviet state archives (116 hours), and Soviet administrative archives (68 hours); foreign archives (72 hours); technical and audiovisual archives (60 hours); sources of Russian and Soviet history (152 hours); auxiliary sciences of history (36 hours); historical editing (80 hours); history of Russian institutions prior to 1917 (72 hours); Soviet public law and Soviet institutional history (86 hours); a practicum in auxiliary sciences (104 hours); and an ancient language, Old Church Slavonic, Latin, or Arabic (68 hours). There are also required seminars in sources of Russian-Soviet history, institutional history, Soviet public law, and the history and organization of archives, as well as optional seminars. Students conclude their work by preparing a thesis.²⁹

During the 1960s the Moscow Institute began to depart from the largely historical orientation of its first thirty years by several innovations, some with no counterpart in the rest of Europe. Especially noteworthy is the special track in scientific-technical archives, which may well constitute a unique Soviet contribution to the modernization of archival training. Students may now specialize in this esoteric, but growing, field first by taking standard MGIAI courses such as archives and public administration

and public law, and then concentrating in scientific and technical subjects like physics, higher mathematics, computer science, and the like.³⁰ In 1964 the Moscow Institute also introduced separate training for records managers, a program that emphasizes modern systems of automation and requires extensive practicums in the economic enterprises and administrative departments that need rationalized record-keeping. By the mid-1970s the program had expanded to include more than a thousand students, although it still was unable to meet the demand for such personnel.³¹ Obviously, such a course was in response to the imperative needs of a centralized, bureaucratized state with problems of waste, duplication, and inefficiency. Nevertheless, the Soviets maintain that archival training institutes are best suited to undertake this kind of training because, to cite the argument of G. A. Belov, the head of the Soviet Central Archives, archivists' own operations will ultimately benefit therefrom and because archives administration and records management "rest on one and the same methodological foundation."³²

In East Germany the profession is differentiated into three grades: diploma archivists, state-certified archivists, and archives assistants. Presently the ratio of these levels stands at approximately 1:3:5, but it is claimed that it is possible to continue one's education, and advance into higher rank.³³

Diploma archivists, who enjoy the highest educational background, direct the "collectives" of medium and larger archival establishments, and must have sufficient scholarly expertise to handle diverse documentation from what Marxists desig-

²⁸ S. I. Murashov, V. I. Vialikov, "40 let Moskovskomu gosudarstvennomu istoriko-arkhivnomu institutu," *Sovetskie Arkhivy* (1970), no. 5: 20–28; Stroumova, "Uluchshat' rabotu," p.4.

²⁹ Kecskeméti, *Formation professionnelle des archivistes*, pp. 38–40.

³⁰ N. G. Filippov, "O podgotovke kadrov dlia nauchno-tekhnikeskikh arkhivov," *Sovetskie Arkhivy* (1969), no. 5: 60–62.

³¹ N. V. Ovchinnikova, "O podgotovke spetsialistov na fakul'tete gosudarstvennogo deloproizvodstva MGIAI," *Sovetskie Arkhivy* (1974), no. 5: 29–37.

³² G. A. Belov, *Voprosy istorii, teorii i praktiki arkhivnogo dela v SSSR* (Marburg: Archivschule, 1971), p. 205.

³³ Botho Brachmann, "Die Hochschulausbildung der Archivare in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik," *Archivmitteilungen* 25 (1975): 22–23.

nate as the three eras of European history: feudalism, capitalism, and socialism. They also make the major appraisal decisions and undertake the most complex arrangement and description. Originally, training for this grade was postgraduate; but since 1967 it has been integrated into a single degree program at the Humboldt University in Berlin. The four-year course includes roughly 230 hours of Marxism-Leninism, 680 hours of history, and 720 hours of archives administration, with the specific study emphasizing appraisal, records management, and the practices of the Soviet Union and other communist countries.³⁴

The state-certified archivist, roughly comparable to the mid-grade personnel of West Germany and the Netherlands, is essentially an information management specialist whose functions are less scholarly, the day-to-day handling of mundane details. Perhaps, then, it was not accidental that engineering schools largely provided the model for reforms instituted ten years ago in the preparation for this grade. Candidates undertake three years of training at the Special School for Archives Administration in Potsdam. For the first two years, instruction is primarily theoretical, with substantial political indoctrination, Russian language study (English or another language are optional), and history. The Special School concentrates heavily on archives administration including modern and administratively relevant subjects like records management, electronic data processing, operations research, cybernetics,

semiotics, and the like. A one-year practicum follows. On paper then, and very likely in practice as well, this intermediate grade, the training for which exemplifies information management to the pluperfect degree, will be well prepared to confront the complex administrative and technical problems with which East German archives must increasingly contend.³⁵

Archives assistants are the most recent addition to the East German professional hierarchy, having been introduced in the early 1960s to handle the simpler and more routine aspects of archives administration. Despite the humble nature of their duties, they receive two years of preparation at the Central Professional School in Caputh, near Potsdam, undergoing training focused on elementary archival practices, history, civics, sports, records management, typing, basic electronics, elementary data processing, conservation, and reproduction.³⁶

The same emphasis on modern documentation largely characterizes the more modest training courses instituted within the last ten years by the nations of Northern Europe. Long content with recruiting personnel from university graduates and letting them learn their craft through apprenticeship, Scandinavian archivists recognized that this practice was no longer adequate to meet the challenge of proliferating documentation and modern technology, or the burgeoning need for proportionately greater numbers of more skilled mid-grade and paraprofessional personnel.³⁷ Undoubtedly Sweden has de-

³⁴ Brachmann, "Hochschulausbildung," *Archivmitteilungen* 25 (1975): 23–24; Jürgen Rickmers, Waldemar Schupp, "Die Aus- und Weiterbildung der Archivare in der DDR," *Archivmitteilungen* 24 (1974): 206; Botho Brachmann, Fritz Reinert, "Aus- und Weiterbildung im Staatlichen Archivwesen der DDR," in German Democratic Republic, Ministerium des Innern, Staatliche Archivverwaltung, *Taschenbuch Archivwesen der DDR* (Berlin: Staatsverlag der DDR, 1971), pp. 120–21.

³⁵ Brachmann, Reinert, "Aus- und Weiterbildung," pp. 119–20; Rickmers, Schupp, "Aus- und Weiterbildung," pp. 203–4; Waldemar Schupp, "Die Umgestaltung der Ausbildung an der Fachschule für Archivwesen," *Archivmitteilungen* 20 (1970): 12–17; Detlef Magnus, "Zur Gestaltung des dritten Studienjahrs an der Fachschule für Archivwesen," *Archivmitteilungen* 23 (1973): 54–57.

³⁶ Rickmers, Schupp, "Aus- und Weiterbildung," pp. 202–3; Jürgen Rickmers, "Die sozialistische Berufsausbildung von Archivassistenten," *Archivmitteilungen* 20 (1970): 188–90; Hans-Heinz Schütt, "Die Ausbildung von Werktätigen zum Archivassistenten und ihre aufgaben- und objektbezogene Weiterbildung," *Archivmitteilungen* 23 (1973): 58–62.

³⁷ For an overview of the Scandinavian situation see Harald Jørgensen, "Die Ausbildung des Archivpersonals in den skandinavischen Ländern," *Scrinium*, no. 18 (1978): 35–38; Jørgensen, "Die Ausbildung des Archivpersonals in den skandinavischen Ländern," *Der Archivar* 26 (1973): 199–206.

vised the best-conceived and most comprehensive program, open both to advanced university graduates and to the less educated employees of the archives themselves. Sponsored by the University of Stockholm and the Swedish National Archives, the program consists of two, ten-week segments. "Basic Course A 1" is essentially an introduction to archives administration combined with a two-and-a-half week practicum. "Basic Course A 2," taken by candidates for advanced grades in the Swedish service, expands upon material covered in A 1 and devotes special attention to administrative history, auxiliary sciences needed to handle older documentation, modern media, automatic data processing, and records management.³⁸ Denmark's initiative in archival education has been limited to mid-grade "archives secretaries." They undertake two semesters of study in such subjects as Danish history and administration, paleography and auxiliary sciences, archives administration, conservation and duplication techniques, automatic data processing, and special subjects like German language of administration. But Danish archives continue to recruit senior archivists from among university graduates, for whom a solid background in history, and in-house training, are deemed to constitute suitable professional preparation.³⁹ In Norway, the National Archives in Oslo offers, on a

largely impromptu basis, a variety of programs ranging from the 120-hour "basic course" to a more comprehensive 300-hour sequence. Both stress current and practical subjects primarily—archives administration, Norwegian administration and legal system, records management—and correspondingly de-emphasize subjects pertinent to antiquarian material.⁴⁰

It should be apparent that some of the presuppositions underlying the education and recruitment of archivists in Europe have only limited or debatable relevance to the American situation. The United States is a nation devoid of ancient records and consequently has little need for the subject matter that still forms a central part of many European curricula. Also, continental standards derive from a view, more than a century old, that archivists, among the higher echelons at least, have a two-fold responsibility not only to preserve the historical record but to engage in historical scholarship as well. While most American archivists would agree on the desirability of historical training, it is clear that historical research is far from the exclusive, let alone the most prevalent, function of even major archives in the United States. And the suggestion that the archivist should also be a proficient historian would elicit anything but unanimous agreement on this side of the Atlantic.⁴¹ Similarly, the system of service grades is in large part an out-

³⁸ Josef Edström, "Utbildning i arkivkunskap," in *Uddannelse i arkivvaesenet* (Copenhagen: Rigsarkivet, 1973), pp. 76–84; Rolf Hagstedt, "Den första arkivkursen i svenska riksarkivet," *Nordisk Arkivnyt* 19 (1974): 25–26; Hagstedt, "Arkivkursen hösten 1974," *Nordisk Arkivnyt* 20 (1975): 20.

³⁹ See the German-language articles by Jørgensen noted above (Note 37). See also Marianne Reimer, "Erfaringer fra arkivsekretæruddannelsens første fem år og ønsker om den fremtidige uddannelse," in *Uddannelse i arkivvaesenet*, pp. 38–41; Harald Jørgensen, "Arkivvaesenets krav til arkivarernes uddannelse," *ibid.*, pp. 35–37.

⁴⁰ Arne Strøm, "Uddannelse af arkivpersonale i norsk administration," *ibid.*, pp. 42–44; Jørgen H. Martinsen, "Norske arkivkurs," *Nordisk Arkivnyt* 18 (1973): 21–23.

⁴¹ That archives fulfill more functions than just historical research has perhaps been most forcefully stated by Margaret Cross Norton (Thornton W. Mitchell, ed., *Norton on Archives: The Writings of Margaret Cross Norton on Archival and Records Management* [Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1975], pp. 14–15, 81–82, 88). There are differing views on the appropriateness of historical research as a professional responsibility of the archivist. T. R. Schellenberg (*Modern Archives* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1956], p. 236) downplays its importance, suggesting, perhaps infelicitously, that the archivist "thus may be regarded as a hewer of wood and drawer of water for the scholars." On the other hand, there are writers, like Kenneth W. Duckett (*Modern Manuscripts* [Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1975], p. 37) who deplore pressures that deprive staff of the time for and self-fulfillment provided by research, and Harold T. Pinkett ("Professional Development of an Archivist: Some Ways and Means," *Georgia Archive* 3 [1975]: 111) who suggests that in some cases such scholarly activity "may effectively exemplify and publicize the research value of archival materials far better than an unimaginative and stereotyped archival compilation."

growth of the greater antiquity and complexity of European documentation as well as the specifically European notion that the profession should perform a dual function. There is, to be sure, much to say for ranking that seems to accommodate differing education, responsibilities, and interests among archivists, and, in particular, seems to distinguish between those whose talents and interests lie more on the information management side of the profession than those whose bent is more scholarly or administrative. Nevertheless, there are also many pitfalls to such a system, not the least of these being its overly rigorous delimitation of duties and its tendency to establish a rigid hierarchy. And the obstacles to implementing service grades in the United States would be formidable indeed.⁴²

Perhaps because of such differences, American archivists in recent years have all too hastily dismissed the experience of Europe as irrelevant to the United States. No less an authority than T. R. Schellenberg found Europe's training to have little applicability because European archivists "are concerned in the main with ancient and medieval records." Frank B. Evans has repeated these allegations, suggesting that in many European countries research has taken priority "to the detriment of basic arrangement, description, and reference service responsibilities."⁴³ Now, if such observers had in mind the *Ecole des Chartes* or the almost equally old-fashioned institutes in Austria and Italy, these charges would have some foundation. But these schools are by no means representative of Europe as a whole. Whoever examines the

programs of the Netherlands, both German states, and the Soviet Union, and some other countries, will find curricula combining both traditional and modern themes. And if one subtracts from total course-work that portion of study exclusively devoted to older epochs, there still remains a solid core of archivally related material that exceeds in length of instruction and in subjects covered what is offered in almost any American program. Indeed, in some European countries even mid-level archivists receive more intensive preparation for their vocation than their best-instructed American counterparts. At the very least, all this should suggest that American archivists might well benefit from more expanded and comprehensive instruction.

The most valuable insight Europe can provide for America is that autonomous and self-contained programs of professional education can and do thrive. Unfortunately, American discussions have seldom focused on what ought to be the essential question: how the teaching of archives administration can attain independent stature, as it has done in Europe, and thus develop more multifaceted and intensive programs. Instead, for the past decade many American archivists have seemed more concerned with whether the discipline had best become a dependency of library schools or history departments, and participants in this debate have generally been more successful in demolishing the arguments of their adversaries than in providing satisfactory solutions to the problem

⁴² The adoption of service ranks and two-tier training was recommended in the Bemis Report of the 1930s, the first major statement on American archival education. See Samuel Flagg Bemis, "The Training of Archivists in the United States," *American Archivist* 2 (July 1939): 158-61. Bemis, however, was perhaps too impressed with German precedents and practices, and his suggestion has found little resonance in later American discussions of the subject.

⁴³ T. R. Schellenberg, "Archival Training in Library Schools," *American Archivist* 31 (April 1968): 155; Frank B. Evans, "Postappointment Archival Training: A Proposed Solution for a Basic Problem," *American Archivist* 40 (January 1977): 69.

itself.⁴⁴ H. G. Jones did, it is true, advocate that the National Archives and Record Service establish its own training institute, to be affiliated with a Washington university and offer a full-year course leading to the master's degree. But in the end his imaginative proposal was shelved by colleagues in NARS.⁴⁵

European experience can provide, if not specific models suitable for imitation, at least some broader perspective on the problem. Certainly the notion of a completely self-contained national school combining both general higher education and archival training, on the order of the *Ecole des Chartes* or the Moscow Institute, is impractical for the United States; but many European nations have been able to establish creditable programs within a university con-

text, without subordinating them to other faculties. Possibly American curricula could benefit from adopting some European precedents—administrative history, for example, or diplomatics with a more modern accent. Apparently too, in at least some European countries more time is devoted to electronic data processing, records management, non-print media, and conservation than in the United States. Some European institutes, particularly those in the Netherlands but in some of the communist states too, have devised exemplary means of combining study with practical work experience. In short, there is still much America can learn from practices abroad. Here too, as in other aspects of European archives management, the goal should be not slavish imitation but rather the garnering of insights broader than an exclusively American-oriented discussion can provide.

⁴⁴ The best-known exponent of archival training in library schools was Schellenberg: "Archival Training in Library Schools," pp. 155–165; *The Management of Archives* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), pp. 5–6, 61–63, 70, 79. A similar case has also been made by John C. Colson, "On the Education of Archivists and Librarians," *American Archivist* 31 (April 1968): 167–74, and by Nancy E. Peace, Nancy Fisher Chudacoff, "Archivists and Librarians: A Common Mission, a Common Education," *American Archivist* 42 (October 1979): 456–62. Critics of the library school argument and proponents of solid historical preparation for archivists include: W. Kaye Lamb, "The Modern Archivist: Formally Trained or Self-Educated," *American Archivist* 31 (April 1968): 175–77; H. G. Jones, "Archival Training in American Universities," *ibid.*, pp. 135–54. See also Lawrence J. McCrank, "Prospects for Integrating Historical and Information Studies in Archival Education," *American Archivist* 42 (October 1979): 443–55, for a thoughtful and balanced reassessment of the problem.

⁴⁵ H. G. Jones, *The Records of a Nation* (New York: Atheneum Press, 1969), pp. 217–18; Evans "Post-appointment Archival Training," p. 64.

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