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Die topographische und hydrotechnische Aufnahme des Wienflusses unter Prof. Josef Stummer 1487-1857

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Abstract

The presented topographic and hydrotechnic survey of the Wien River, the largest tributary of the Viennese Danube, was performed under the supervision of the civil engineer and architect Josef Stummer between 1847 and 1857. It is the comprehensive portrayal of a river in a period of rapid urban transformation. The “Wienflussaufnahmen” was the final assignment of students of water and roadwork engineering at “k.k. polytechnisches Institut”, where Josef Stummer taught. It is a comprehensive source kept by the Viennese Municipal and Provincial Archive (Wiener Stadt- und Landesarchiv, Kartographische Sammlung) and consists of elevation measurements, longitudinal and cross profiles, maps, technical illustrations and descriptions of the geological, hydrotechnical, topographic, economic and legal situation in the Wien River valley. The latter have been completely transcribed, while the cartographic and quantitative parts of the survey are represented in an exemplary way to give an overview on the content of this source.

The Wien River survey is an interesting and extraordinary source for environmental history. It provides insight into human-nature interactions in the highly dynamic regime of a small torrential urban river and in human practices and material arrangements of river utilisation and regulation on the verge of change: Population growth, urban expansion, industrialisation and hygiene concerns contributed to the comprehensive regulation of the river at the end of the 19th century, while new technologies for transport and production abrogated the energetic use of the river.