

1. Episcopal Marriage Court St. Pölten
2. Archiepiscopal Marriage Court Vienna

We investigated the practice of the ecclesiastical marriage courts, which after the reassignment of their jurisdiction over matrimonial affairs in 1857 were once again presiding over such matters, using the surviving divorce dossiers of the Episcopal Marriage Court of St. Pölten and the Archiepiscopal Marriage Court of Vienna.

The divorce dossiers were completely digitalised. Documents which were considered to be relevant for our research, for example complaints, minutes from preliminary hearings or verdicts, were transcribed in full, while other documents, for example questioning protocols, were transcribed in longer regesta, while others, for example a summons to come to hearings, were transcribed using short regesta. The approximately 4,000 digital reproductions are stored in the research project's database.

1. EPISCOPAL MARRIAGE COURT ST. PÖLTEN

The court practice of the Episcopal Marriage Court of St. Pölten can be reconstructed using two minute books from court sessions documenting the time periods from 1857–1863 and 1864–1872 on the one hand; and on the other hand, from the existing files of the matrimonial proceedings which fill 23 boxes.

While investigating the matrimonial proceedings of the St. Pölten Marriage Court we used two time segments. The first investigation period focusses on the first six months of the renewed jurisdiction of the ecclesiastical courts, from January until June 1857. The second investigation period takes the last quarter of 1867 into consideration, and allows for a comparison with the marriage court practices of the Vienna Marriage Court.

In contrast to the Viennese Magistrate's Office, which returned most of the evidence documents submitted by the disputing parties to the respective spouses, presumably all of the documents which were produced by or for the marriage court can be found in these dossiers: from the complaint to medical certificates, from list of questions to court summons, from correspondence with secular authorities up to verdicts.

The divorce dossier of the couple Anna Maria und Johann Stockinger, the most comprehensive dossier from the year 1857, for example, consists of documents, some of which are simply piled together, while others are bound into files, adding up to 762 pages. As is the case with the Stockinger dossier, the documents of each individual dossier are only partially stored in chronological order.

2. ARCHIEPISCOPAL MARRIAGE COURT VIENNA

In contrast to the marriage courts of St. Pölten, the court practice of the Archiepiscopal Marriage Court of Vienna can be reconstructed only for the last quarter of 1867, the historical records of which fill two cartons. Unfortunately, at least based upon what we were able to find, the record books of the marriage court also no longer exist. Still, in spite of that, we have plenty of well-documented matrimonial proceedings, registered on a total of over 2,000 pages.

The individual, mainly chronologically ordered dossiers generally contain the priest's reports, the complaints, the protocols of the statements of disputing parties and possible witnesses, the marriage court decisions and justifications as well as summons, delivery receipts and the correspondence between the marriage court and secular authorities.

Due to the fact that other marriage courts delegated their cases to the Archiepiscopal Marriage Court of Vienna, and the fact that it served as a second instance, there are also file dossiers available which were produced by the Marriage Court of Vienna in the course of its function as a second instance.

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Next sub-item: **Periodes**

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