

JANA NOSKOVÁ (Ed.)
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**„KDYBYCH MĚLA DOPODROBNA VŠECHNO
VYPSAT...”**

**PRVNÍ POLOVINA 20. STOLETÍ VE VZPOMÍNKÁCH
ČESKÝCH OBYVATEL BRNA**

[‘If I Could Write It All in Detail...’]

The Early 20th Century as Remembered
by the Czech Inhabitants of Brno]

Brno: Statutární město Brno – Archiv města Brna, 372 pp.

The book *‘If I Could Write It All in Detail...’ The Early 20th Century as Remembered by the Czech inhabitants of Brno*, edited and prepared for publication by Jana Nosková, is a continuation of the previous two books (Nosková, Čermáková, 2013; Nosková, 2016) devoted to the memories of the German residents of Brno in the first half of the 20th century (Nosková, 2023, p. 9). From a formal standpoint, the book is divided into the following parts: The introduction comprises the chapter “Edition of Memories of Czechs from Brno on Life in Brno in the First Half of the 20th Century”, available in both Czech and German. Following this is a list of references and acknowledgments. The core of the book consists of the memories of the informants, presented in a chapter titled “Memories”. It contains 14 subchapters, each bearing the name of an informant whose memories it narrates. The book is complemented by a glossary compiled by Jana Nosková, Jana Čermáková, Lucia Kubová, and Markéta Jančíková. In addition to the Index of Names and Places, the book includes a chapter entitled “Uličník”, which presents the names of the mentioned streets — both past and present.

The primary objective of the author is to present the memories of the inhabitants of Brno, who identify as Czechs, focusing on the first half of the 20th century (Nosková 2023, p. 9). In contrast to the author's previous two books (Nosková, Čermáková, 2013; Nosková, 2016), where she conducted her own research to gather materials on this period, this book relies on existing materials. The content for this book originated in the 1980s, thanks to researchers from the Institute of Ethnography and Folklore of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences (Nosková, 2023, p. 9).

In the section titled "Edition of Memories of Czechs from Brno on Life in Brno in the First Half of the 20th Century", the author begins by providing an introduction to the book and elucidating its origins. Subsequently, the author provides information regarding the research of the city, focusing on urban ethnology/anthropology. Within this chapter, the author discusses the autobiographical sources, explaining the social changes that led to their increasing prevalence. Additionally, the author explores the emergence of interest in such autobiographical materials and how they were acquired.

Furthermore, the chapter discusses the Brno competition, which solicited materials such as photos of the city, houses, weddings, parties, and costumed balls, along with old costumes, handwritten songbooks, chronicles, and knowledge of city legends, among other things (Nosková, 2023, p. 24). These materials, brought by the Institute for Ethnography and Folkloristics of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences in Brno, served as sources for the for Nosková's book. Following this, the author outlines the topics addressed in the subsequent chapter's memories, concluding the chapter with an editorial note on source preparation.

Within the "Memories" section, each subchapter, focusing on the memories of a specific individual, commences with a brief overview. This includes details such as the informant's year of birth, the date of submission of the memories, the length of the manuscript, and a concise description of its contents or how it was compiled. Subsequently, the memoirs unfold, varying in length and scope. They cover a range of topics, including *Recollections of one's native village – Husovice*, *Reminiscences of the First World War as it was experienced*, and *Memories of interwar Brno*, among others.

With her book, *'If I Could Write It All in Detail...' The Early 20th Century as Remembered by the Czech inhabitants of Brno*, the author provides a captivating insight into the recollections of Brno's residents during this period. This book stands as a significant contribution to urban anthropology, offering a nuanced exploration of life in Brno's past. Building upon her previous works (Nosková, Čermáková, 2013; Nosková, 2016), the author expands the discourse by incorporating additional perspectives and memories, enriching the reader's understanding of this particular time and place. The memoirs, accompanied by an introductory chapter available in both Czech and German,

which delves into the topics of urban anthropology and autobiographical sources, alongside the narrative of material collection, serve as a valuable resource for the ethnological community and readers interested in this subject matter.

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References

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