



LIGUE DES BIBLIOTHÈQUES EUROPÉENNES DE RECHERCHE
ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN RESEARCH LIBRARIES

Manuscript Librarians Group

Germany – Backgrounds

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This report focuses on the activities of the six German manuscript cataloguing centres (medieval manuscripts) and of a number of important libraries and archives with holdings of modern manuscripts and personal papers. It has been compiled with the kind cooperation of Till Becker in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin and colleagues in Berlin, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt, Leipzig, Marbach, Munich, Weimar and Wolfenbüttel.

Contents: Introduction. — Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. — Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel. — Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz. — Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main. — Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig. — Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart. — Monacensia. Literaturarchiv und Bibliothek, Munich. — Heinrich-Heine-Institut der Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf. — Archiv der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Berlin. — Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv Weimar, Klassik Stiftung Weimar.

Introduction

Manuscript collections are spread throughout Germany due to the federal structure of the country. Important collections can be found in the regional and university libraries in Augsburg, Bamberg, Berlin, Bonn, Bremen, Coburg, Darmstadt, Dresden, Eichstätt, Erlangen, Frankfurt, Freiburg, Fulda, Gießen, Göttingen, Halle, Hamburg, Hannover, Heidelberg, Karlsruhe, Kassel, Kiel, Köln, Leipzig, Lübeck, Mainz, Marburg, Munich, Münster, Nürnberg, Oldenburg, Paderborn, Regensburg, Speyer, Stuttgart, Trier, Tübingen, Wolfenbüttel, Würzburg. The greatest concentrations of medieval manuscripts are at library repositories in Munich and Berlin. All these institutions keep modern manuscripts and personal archives as well. Important institutions concentrating on personal archives are: Archiv der Akademie der Künste Berlin, Archiv der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften Berlin, Heinrich-Heine-Institut Düsseldorf, Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach, Monacensia Literaturarchiv in der Münchner Stadtbibliothek, Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv Weimar.

The origins of the most (medieval) **manuscript collections** go back to former private collections as well as to secularized monasteries during the Reformation and the 19th century. The following data cover only the libraries that are also manuscript cataloguing centres of the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) and give therefore a partial, though representative, view of the German collections.

A complete guide to Western German collections was provided by Tilo Brandis and Ingo Nöther in 1992 (*Handbuch der Handschriftenbestände in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Teil 1, bearb. von T. Brandis und I. Nöther. Berlin 1992). A description of the formerly Eastern German collections is ongoing.

The German central database '[Manuscripta mediaevalia](#)' gives information about the catalogued manuscripts collections.

The origins of the archival collections – be it as special collections in a bigger library or archive or in a special archive – go back to donations of their famous creators or their heirs, or to a former membership in one of the Academies.

A still very helpful guide to these collections was published in 1934: Wilhelm Frels, *deutsche Dichterhandschriften von 1400 bis 1900*, Leipzig 1934. The two volumes about *Die Nachlässe in den Bibliotheken und Archiven der Bundesrepublik* (Boppard 1981-1983) and the three volumes of *Gelehrten- und Schriftstellernachlässe in den Bibliotheken der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik* (Berlin 1959) are entirely substituted by two online catalogues: [Kalliope](#) (Verbundkatalog Nachlässe und Autographen) and the [Zentrale Datenbank Nachlässe](#) (ZDN).

[Bayerische Staatsbibliothek](#), Munich

Founded in 1558 by Duke Albrecht V as the Wittelsbach court library. It is now the central regional library of the federal state of Bavaria, the state authority for all library matters in Bavaria and one of the biggest academic libraries in German-speaking countries. The library holds more than nine million volumes.

Major collections:

- Manuscripts – 91,500 items
- 37,500 manuscripts of Western origin (i.e. Latin, German, French, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Slavic), 6th-20th century (Breviarium Alarici, Clm 22501; Codex aureus Clm 14000, Carmina Burana Clm 4660; Heliand, Cgm 25; Muspilli, Clm 14098; Perikopenbuch Heinrichs II., Clm 4452; Serbian Psalter, Cod. slav. 4)
- 16,500 manuscripts of Oriental origin, 6th- 20th century, over 45 different languages (Babylonian Talmud, Cod. hebr. 95)
- 37,500 music manuscripts
- about 700 papyri, 370 Greek (Pap.graec.mon.)
- Modern papers and autographs: 35,800 items, 16th-20th century, all areas of artistic, scholarly and public life (Angelus Politianus, Adalbert Stifter, Richard Strauss, Richard Wagner).

[Herzog August Bibliothek](#), Wolfenbüttel

Founded in 1572 by Duke Julius of Lower Saxony, the library became, under the book collector Duke August (1579-1666), the largest collection of printed books in Europe and was considered as the eighth wonder of the world. It is today a modern research library of international renown with a collection of about one million volumes and part of the virtual national library of Germany responsible for the 17th century.

Major collections:

- Manuscripts – 11,800 items (2,700 medieval manuscripts)
- 11,275 manuscripts of Western origin, 6th-18th century, for the most part 15th and 16th century (e.g. Gothic Ulfilas-Fragments, Cod. Guelf. 64 Weiss.; Old High German Catechism, Cod. Guelf. 91 Weissenb.; Gospel Book of Henry the Lion, Cod. Guelf. 105 Noviss. 2°)
- 142 manuscripts of Oriental origin (mainly Arab, Turkish and Chinese)
- 383 modern music manuscripts, 16th-20th, for the most part 18th century. Medieval music manuscripts (e.g. Notre Dame-Manuscripts W 1 and W 2: Cod. Guelf. 628 and 1099 Helmst.) are integrated in the other collections.
- Modern papers and autographs: about 130 literary estates, 16th-20th century, for the most part 17th and 18th century, written by artists, poets and librarians (e.g. Philipp

Hainhofer, Johann Valentin Andreae, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing) related to the court in Wolfenbüttel, the university of Helmstedt and the duchy of Braunschweig.

[Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin - Preussischer Kulturbesitz](#)

The founding of the Churfürstliche Bibliothek zu Cölln an der Spree (Electoral Library) nearly 350 years ago established the basis for what is today the most important academic research library in Germany. The library holds today more than ten million books.

Major collections:

- Manuscripts – 125,000 items
- 18,500 manuscripts of Western origin (i.e. Latin, German, French, Italian, Greek, Spanish, Slavic), 5th-20th, (Codex Wittekindeus Ms. theol.lat. fol. 1 ; Psalter Ludwigs des Deutschen, Ms. theol. lat. fol. 58; Konrad von Würzburg Trojan War, Ms.germ.fol.1; the oldest Vergil manuscript, Ms.lat.fol.416; Heinrich von Veldeke Eneas, Ms. germ. fol. 282 and Nibelungenlied Ms. germ. fol. 855).
- 40,000 manuscripts of Oriental origin
- 67,000 music manuscripts and autographs, 11th-20th century.
- Modern papers and autographs: 400,000 items, 1,500 literary estates (all areas of artistic, scholarly and public life with main focuses in 19th and 20th centuries: Hegel, Brüder Grimm, Alexander von Humboldt, Mommsen, Hauptmann, Bonhoeffer, Gründgens). Famous autograph collections (the Darmstaedter Collection, Sammlung Autographa).

[Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg, Frankfurt am Main](#)

Its origins go back to the donation of Ludwig von Marburg zum Paradies to the town council of Frankfurt 1484. It is now the central library of the University of Frankfurt and holds more than 6 million volumes.

Major collections:

- Manuscripts – 6,698 items (615 medieval manuscripts)
- 2,335 manuscripts of Western origin, 9th-20th century (Fuldaer Psalter, Ms. Barth. 32; Lorscher Litanei Ms. Barth. 179)
- 115 manuscripts of Oriental origin
- 4,248 music manuscripts, 16th-20th century
- Modern papers and autographs: c. 20,000 items, 16th-20th century, German poets and artists (Ludwig Börne, Karoline von Günderode)
- Archive Centre: Ernst Barthel, Max Fürbringer, A.R.L. Gurland, Heinz-Joachim Heydorn, Arthur Hübscher, Max Horkheimer, Editha Klipstein, Franz Lennartz, Bruno Liebrucks, Leo Löwenthal, Herbert Marcuse, Alexander Mitscherlich, Louise von Panhuys, Friedrich Pollock, Arthur Schopenhauer, Johann Christian Senckenberg, Ruxandra Sireteanu, Erwin von Steinbach Foundation

[Universitätsbibliothek Leipzig](#)

Its origins go back to the Reformation in Saxony and the secularized monasteries in Saxony and Thuringia. Founded in 1543 from Duke Moritz of Saxony, the University Library of Leipzig is today the Central Humanities Library of the University. The library holds today about 5.2 million items.

Major collections:

- Manuscripts – 8,730 items (2,400 medieval manuscripts)
- 4,700 manuscripts of Western origin, 4th-20th century (Codex Sinaiticus, Cod. gr. 1; Psalterium Latinum, Ms. 774; Petrus Cantor Parisiensis, Summa, Ms. 432; Eike von Repgow, Sachsenspiegel, 1461; Nikolaus Apel, Mensuralkodex, Ms. 1494)
- 3,200 manuscripts of Oriental origin, 10th-19th century, (Koran, Muhammad Ibn Sah Muhammad, 1570)
- Greek ostraca and papyri collection

- Modern papers and autographs: 170 literary estates, 16th-20th century, university life, German poets and artists (Wolfgang Meurer, Gottfried Kirch, Gustav Fechner, Johann Christoph Gottsched, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (Hirzel-Sammlung), Thomas Mann).

Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart

Founded in 1765 in Ludwigsburg as a public library by Duke Carl Eugen von Württemberg, the Württemberg State Library is today a regional and modern research library and one of the most important humanities libraries in the Southern German countries. The library holds today about 5.4 million items.

Major collections:

- Manuscripts – 15,264 items (about 3,000 medieval manuscripts)
- 13,838 manuscripts of Western origin, 5th-20th century, (most of them Latin and German) (Vetus Latina-Fragments, Cod. fragm. 100; Stuttgarter Psalter, Cod. bibl. 2° 23; Weingartner Liederhandschrift HB XIII 1; Landgrafensalter, HB II 24; Gebetbuch Georgs II. von Waldburg, Cod. brev. 12).
- 176 manuscripts of Oriental origin.
- 1,250 music manuscripts (Choirbooks of Lorch, Cod. mus. I 2° 63-64)
- Modern papers and autographs: 180,265 items, 16th-20th century, German poets and artists, theologians, natural scientists, musicians of regional interest (Eduard Mörike, Johannes Kepler, Heinrich and Wilhelm Schickart, Gustav Schwab).
- Literary and theological archives: Friedrich Hölderlin, Stefan George, Johann Christoph Blumhardt, Friedrich Christoph Oetinger, Swedenborg Collection.

Monacensia. Literaturarchiv und Bibliothek, Munich

The Monacensia, an institute of the Munich Public Library, preserves a research library specialized on Munich themes (founded in 1921) and the Munich municipal literary archives (founded in 1924). The library holds approximately 140,000 volumes. The collection of the literary archives comprises more than 300 literary estates and files of important poets and writers who lived and worked in Munich.

Major collections:

- Modern papers and autographs: about 300 literary estates and files with c. 450,000 items (autographs)
- Significant topics: literature in exile, Schwabinger Bohème about 1900, Munich folk singers and Bavarian and Munich literature in the 19th and 20th centuries (Frank Wedekind, Klaus and Erika Mann, Oskar Maria Graf, Annette Kolb, Franziska zu Reventlow, Ludwig Thoma, Liesl Karlstadt, Therese Giehse, Herbert Achternbusch, Carl Amery and many more.)

Heinrich-Heine-Institut der Landeshauptstadt Düsseldorf

In 1970 the department of manuscripts of the old Düsseldorf Library, founded in 1770, became an autonomous institution of the City of Düsseldorf under the name of Düsseldorf's greatest son, the poet Heinrich Heine. It holds more than 120 cultural estates (literature, music, fine arts, sciences) and various collections. The Heine-Institut includes a special library and a museum with a permanent Heine-exhibition and changing exhibitions with literary subjects.

Major collections:

- Heine-Estate with 4,000 manuscripts, 300 letters of and 900 letters to Heine
- Heine-time: Poets of the first half of the 19th century, friends of Heine, Heine-family
- Authors, composers, painters, scientists of the Rhine-Area from the 16th-21st century
 - Literature: Friedrich Spee von Langenfeld, Jacobi-Family, Karl Immermann, Christian Dietrich Grabbe, Ferdinand Freiligrath, Wilhelm Schäfer, Hanns Heinz Ewers, Herbert Eulenberg, Heinrich Spoerl, Rose Ausländer, Bernd Engelmann
 - Music: Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, Norbert Burgmüller, Robert und Clara Schumann, Max Bruch, Jürg Baur
 - Fine arts: Düsseldorfer Malerschule (Achenbach, Hübner, Reinick, Schadow, Schrödter)

- Sciences: Johann Friedrich Benzenberg, Friedrich Sengle Collection of autographs (ca. 2,000 items)

[Archiv der Berlin-Brandenburgischen Akademie der Wissenschaften](#)

The archive was established soon after the foundation of the Kurfürstlich Brandenburgische Sozietät der Wissenschaften (the Society of Sciences of the Elector of Brandenburg) in 1700. Over the centuries the archive has acquired valuable and unique archival material related to the history of the Academy und science. This includes more than 80 memoranda, drafts, and letters by Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, the Society's founder and first President. The Academy archive is divided into four departments: the Historical Department, Department of Academy Holdings since 1945, Department of Private Papers and the Collections Department. The total archival material held now comprises 6,000 running meters of official and private papers.

Major collections:

- 1,200 manuscripts of Academy lectures, scientific treatises, prize-winning writings on topics set by the Academy
- more than 200 holdings of private papers by well-known scholars
- more than 2,000 art objects (painting, sculpture including busts, medals and commemorative coins, graphic art und craft products)
- 40,000 photographs related to Academy history
- around 550 tapes, 270 films and video cassettes
- 30,000 newspaper clippings.

[Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv Weimar](#), Klassik Stiftung Weimar

After the death of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's last grandchild, Walther Wolfgang von Goethe, on April 15, 1885 the great duchess Sophie von Sachsen-Weimar-Eisenach came into possession of the poet's literary estate by order in his testament. That same year the duchess founded a Goethe-Archive. In 1889 Schiller's personal collections were added to after a donation made by his grandson and great grandson, Ludwig and Alexander von Gleichen-Rußwurm; since then the archive has been named 'Goethe- and Schiller-Archive'. The Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv is the oldest literary archive in Germany.

Today the Goethe- and Schiller-Archive houses 122 personal archival estates, mainly collections from authors, but also from scholars, philosophers, composers, and artists, 11 estates originating from institutes (including records of the publishing house Insel in Leipzig and the German Schiller Foundation) as well as a collection of autographs comprised of about 3,000 authors. Following a profile, the archive is characterized as an archive of literature of the German language from the 18th and 19th centuries. Belonging to the Nationale Forschungs-und Gedenkstätten der klassischen deutschen Literatur in Weimar (NFG) since 1953, the Goethe- und Schiller-Archiv today is a department of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar

The archive cares for the manuscripts of Johann Wolfgang Goethe, Friedrich Schiller, Christoph Martin Wieland, Johann Gottfried Herder, Ludwig Achim und Bettina von Arnim, Karl Immermann, Ferdinand Freiligrath, Fritz Reuter, Otto Ludwig, Friedrich Hebbel, Georg Büchner, Gustav Freytag, from Goethe's friends and associates Karl Ludwig von Knebel, Karl Friedrich Zelter, Friedrich Wilhelm Riemer and Johann Heinrich Meyer, from the Weimar publisher and entrepreneur Friedrich Justin Bertuch, from Franz Liszt und Friedrich Nietzsche, collections of general music societies, the German Schiller foundation, the Goethe-Society and the publishing house Insel in Leipzig. Based on its collections the archive is considered central to literature of the German language of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The finding aids to the estates can be browsed [online](#).

The historical building of the archive, erected in 1896, is currently closed for a general reconstruction.

[Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach](#)

Based on the collection of the Swabian literary and intellectual history established at the turn of the century in the National Schiller Museum, the Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach, founded in 1955, aims at a national collection of

German literature and intellectual history from the end of the enlightenment up to the present. In its core there are manuscripts, notebooks, correspondances as well as printed material and pictures, relating to German literary, intellectual and political history. The library collection holds more than 750,000 units today.

Major collections of the Archive Department:

- 1,200 estates, partial remains and closed collections (9,000 meters): e.g. Hannah Arendt, Gottfried Benn, Hans Blumenberg, Paul Celan, Alfred Döblin, Hans-Georg Gadamer, Yvan und Claire Goll, Martin Heidegger, Friedrich Hölderlin, Hugo von Hofmannsthal, Ernst Jünger, Erich Kästner, Franz Kafka, Justinus Kerner, Siegfried Kracauer, Heinrich und Thomas Mann, Eduard Mörike, Rainer Maria Rilke, Peter Rühmkorf, Friedrich Schiller, Arthur Schnitzler, Gustav Schwab, W.G. Sebald, Kurt Tucholsky, Ludwig Uhland, Carl Zuckmayer.
- Publishers' and editors' archives: e.g. Cotta, Insel, Luchterhand, R.-Piper, S.-Fischer, Suhrkamp.
- Fine Arts Collection: e.g. 100,000 portraits (paintings, drawings, sculptures, photographs, death masks), mementos (writing implements, pieces of furniture etc.).