National background – Germany 2018

Many libraries in Germany have important manuscript collections.

We have to distinguish between:

- Codex manuscripts (medieval and modern), Western and Oriental/Asian
- Letters, autographs, personal archives (estates, collections)
- Music manuscripts

The libraries describe these collections on their websites. The descriptions in the former national background papers may serve as helpful incentive. New and important acquisitions of manuscripts are published annually in: Bibliothek und Wissenschaft, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

The best overviews are offered by the national databases for this particular material:

Manuscripta Mediaevalia lists alle manuscript collections (for – mainly medieval - Codex manuscripts) under the label „Handschriftensammlungen" in alphabetical order

http://www.manuscripta-mediaevalia.de/#|12

Kalliope gives access to letters, autographs and personal archives of a great number of German libraries (http://kalliope.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/de/index.html) and lists other information tools, like Zentrale Datenbank Nachlässe, http://www.nachlassdatenbank.de/

RISM https://opac.rism.info/index.php?id=15 also provides access to music manuscripts in German collections.

New developments in Germany between 2015 and 2018

(1) Development of a masterplan for the digitization of medieval manuscripts

This DFG sponsored project ended in November 2015 and the results were published in several papers.

Handreichungen für Handschriftendigitalisierungsprojekte im Überblick (2018)
=> Digitalisierung mittelalterlicher Handschriften in deutschen Bibliotheken: Ergebnisse der Pilotphase (PDF)
=> Digitalisierung mittelalterlicher Handschriften in deutschen Bibliotheken: Masterplan (PDF)
=> Planungshilfe für Antragsteller: Workflow für die Digitalisierung mittelalterlicher Handschriften (PDF)
Liste von handschriftenspezifischen Strukturelementen für den DFG-Viewer

 In 2018 a first call for projects was issued by DFG.

(2) Development of a new manuscript portal (Handschriftenportal)

In December 2017 DFG granted funds for the development of a new manuscript portal to replace Manuscripta Mediaevalia. The new portal will apply a clear distinction between a unique (short) description (or naming) of the manuscript as cultural heritage object (Kulturobjektdokument) to which several (different, long, extensive or short) descriptions – and later also user driven

annotations – as well as links to digital presentations are provided. Work starts in October 2018, the project phase is scheduled for 6 months.

(3) Web page for the 6 German Handschriftenzentren

https://www.handschriftenzentren.de/. This new website, established in 2016, gives access to all new developments mainly for codex manuscripts in Germany.

(4) Precious bookbindings: Standards for description and digitization

This DFG-sponsored project, carried out by Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, finished in October 2018. The standards will be published once the project review is finished. Access to a semantic-web-database with major project information is available: https://einbaende.digitale-sammlungen.de/Prachteinbaende/Hauptseite

(5) Kalliope

This national database run by Staatsbibliothek Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, restructures its membership organisation, cf. http://kalliope.staatsbibliothek-berlin.de/de/Teilnahme/Kalliope-Verbund.html as a union catalogue.

(6) RNAB (Ressourcen-Erschließung mit Normdaten in Bibliotheken und Archiven)

The introduction of RDA in German libraries cataloguing led to a revision of the rules for cataloguing private archives, letters and autographs. The new rule set also tends at harmonizing with archival standards. A presentation of the state of art is available at: https://opus4.kobv.de/opus4-bib-info/frontdoor/index/index/docId/3663

(7) RDA und Handschriften

A parallel group, established in 2017, develops an RDA compatible rule set for codex manuscripts , https://wiki.dnb.de/display/RDAINFO/AG+Handschriften+%7C+RDA+und+Sondermaterialien

(8) ISMI

The definition of an International Standard Manuscript Identifier has been advocated since April 2017, with a steering group of which Claudia Fabian, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, is a member. This identifier for a (codex) manuscript as real world object (cultural heritage entity) would allow a better interoperability of the many informations about manuscripts and their digital surrogates on the internet. https://www.irht.cnrs.fr/?q=en/agenda/3e-rencontre-international-ismi-pour-l-identification-et-l-interoperabilite-des-manuscrits

(9) Handschriftencensus

This project is continued since 2017 by Akademie der Wissenschaften und Literatur in Mainz. It aims at giving a census of medieval German text tradition in manuscripts. Handschriftencensus cooperates with Handschriftenportal and RDA und Handschriften.