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RE-CATALOGUING THE VARNHAGEN COLLECTION: A NEW DESCRIPTION SCHEME AND ITS APPLICATION TO THE SELECTED MATERIAL¹

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ABSTRACT

The article presents a proposal of re-cataloguing the Varnhagen Collection, one of the largest and most important European manuscript collections of the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century. This collection is part of the former Prussian State Library in Berlin, and is currently kept in the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków. This proposal is a response to the postulate of creating a systematic, possibly complete

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and error-free catalogue of this collection, which will enable full use of its resources. The article develops a theoretical scheme of description, tested in practice in teamwork and with archival units of various volumes and structures. The scheme takes into account the archival strategies used in the collection, the tradition of research on the collection (Ludwig Stern's catalogue) and refers to modern solutions (the electronic Kalliope database and the printed catalog of Alexander von Humboldt's papers from 2019). After a short historical outline of the collection (relocation during World War II and the post-war situation) and the reconstruction of the history of its creation and character, the article presents in detail the description scheme and its use on the example of the legacy of the writer Helmina von Chézy (178–1856) belonging to the collection. The full application of the scheme will be found in the currently prepared catalog of parts of the collection, which can be used as a starting point for its comprehensive cataloguing.

KEYWORDS: Varnhagen Collection, Jagiellonian Library, Ludwig Stern, catalogue of manuscripts, Helmina von Chézy

INTRODUCTION - POINT OF DEPARTURE AND OVERVIEW

The Varnhagen Collection, part of the collections of the former Prussian State Library in Berlin, and currently held in the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków, is now fully accessible to all interested researchers. However, readers often cannot use its resources to the full extent due to the lack of a detailed catalogue that would allow precise navigation through this unique collection.² To this day, there has been only one printed catalogue made by Ludwig Stern in 1911, which attempted a comprehensive description of the Varnhagen Collection based on the standards in force at that time.³ The catalogue allows the readers to get an idea of the collection as a whole,

2 This gap is not filled by general and scattered information about a few documents from this collection available in electronic databases, e.g., Kalliope Union Catalogue (Kalliope Verbundkatalog).

3 L. Stern, *Die Varnhagen von Ensesche Sammlung in der Königlichen Bibliothek zu Berlin*, Berlin 1911.

presents its structure, and allows them to find some detailed information, but due to the passage of time, it is actually a historical document. This means that, firstly, it does not meet today's standards for the indexing of manuscripts, and, secondly, the catalogue entries require the documents to be verified first-hand each time.

Calls for the re-cataloguing of the Varnhagen Collection have been made in recent years by both the German researchers associated with the Berlin State Library (Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin) and the Polish researchers working on the collection.⁴ Due to the complexity of this task (given the size of the collection and the variety of documents it includes), they all point out the need for extensive research conducted by individuals and collaboratively by the various scholarly institutions and libraries involved. The main goal would be to ensure that the collection reaches the widest possible audience and, simultaneously, to supplement the available knowledge about it. Furthermore, it should be added that such a detailed study is also a necessary condition for the digitization of the collection.

Responding to the call to create a systematic, possibly complete, and error-free index of the documents, in this article we pose a methodological question: what should the new catalogue look like? What description scheme should be adopted to be applicable to all possible cases, respecting the heterogeneity of the materials and at the same time allowing for their detailed cataloguing? This article then presents a proposal for re-cataloguing the Varnhagen Collection developed as part of the Polish-German project entitled

4 See J. Weber, 'Die Sammlung Varnhagen', *Briefnetzwerke um Hermann von Pückler-Muskau*, ed. J. Kittelmann, Dresden 2015, pp. 185-196 and P. Zarychta, 'Zum Nachlass Rosa Maria und David Assing in Krakau oder: Warum die Sammlung Varnhagen neukatalogisiert werden sollte', *Internationales Jahrbuch der Bettina-von-Arnim-Gesellschaft*, vol. 28-29 (2017), pp. 31-50. Zarychta points to problems and challenges related, in particular, to the study of larger archival units. Using the Nachlass of Rosa Maria and David Assing as an example, he demonstrates that the information in Stern's catalogue is not only incomplete, but sometimes incorrect, hence the content of some units remains undiscovered to this day. The researcher also recognizes the dispersion of material belonging to one Nachlass among different units (boxes) as a problem. See *ibidem*, p. 49-50.

“Female Writers in the Varnhagen Collection - Letters, Works, Relations,’ carried out in close cooperation with the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków. The aim of this project - apart from cataloguing the documents selected for the project and making them available in electronic databases⁵ - is to create a digital critical edition of these documents available online and in a printed annotated edition of selected letters.

After a short historical outline about the Varnhagen Collection, a description scheme⁶ will be presented, which will then be illustrated using an example of the manuscripts of the writer Helmina von Chézy (1785-1856) included in the collection. The scheme will be applied in full in the cataloguing of all the materials included in the above-mentioned project, which is being prepared by the Polish part of the team.

THE HISTORY OF THE VARNHAGEN COLLECTION AS PART OF THE FORMER PRUSSIAN STATE LIBRARY IN BERLIN (RELOCATION DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND THE POST-WAR SITUATION)

The Varnhagen Collection found its way to Kraków as a result of the events of the Second World War. Beginning in 1941, due to the threat of bombing Berlin, the most valuable collections of the Prussian State Library were gradually moved out of the German capital. A total of three million prints and 900,000 objects of special collections were selected for evacuation. They were divided into two categories: the first one included manuscripts, musical manuscripts, autographs, incunabula, Orientalia, and rare art collections. The second category included prints from the following collections:

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- 5 These will be the following databases: electronic catalogue of the Jagiellonian Library as a part of the linked catalogues of Polish libraries ALMA and Kalliope Union Catalogue (Kalliope Verbundkatalog).
 - 6 The scheme was developed by the authors of this article in the first stage of the project, including the inventory and cataloguing of the documents selected for the project. The manuscripts will be examined in the context of the epistolary, cultural, and social exchange network as well as against the background of the entire Varnhagen Collection and its links with other collections of the time.

Judaica, Kriegs-Sammlung, linguistic, Italian, and Slavic prints as well as atlases and periodicals. These collections were placed in various safe places (almost thirty in total) in the southern and eastern territories of the Third Reich. Some of them ended up in Fürstenstein (Książ) in Lower Silesia, from where they were moved to a potentially safer place - Grüssau (Krzeszów near Kamienna Góra). In the Cistercian monastery church located there, 505 boxes containing the so-called 'Prussian treasure' were stored.⁷ In 1945, the Red Army troops that passed through Krzeszów did not find the library collections; they were only found by Stanisław Sierotwiński - the representative of the Polish government administration.



FIG. 1: The Cistercian monastery church in Krzeszów, photograph by Z. Pietrzyk

- 7 Among the studies on the subject, the work that provides the most comprehensive description of the consecutive stages of securing and evacuating library collections from Berlin is that by Werner Schochow, *Bücherschicksale. Die Verlagerungsgeschichte der Preußischen Staatsbibliothek. Auslagerung-Zerstörung-Entfremdung-Rückführung*, Berlin, New York 2015. For the newest bibliography concerning the history of the collection see M. Jaglarz, K. Jaśtał, 'Bestände der ehemaligen Preußischen Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin in der Jagiellonen-Bibliothek: Geschichte und Struktur', *Bestände der ehemaligen Preußischen Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin in der Jagiellonen-Bibliothek Forschungsstand und -perspektiven*, eds. M. Jaglarz, K. Jaśtał, Berlin et al. 2018, pp. 15-30.

After the hostilities ended and the peace settlement was concluded, Lower Silesia became part of the reborn Polish state. The Polish authorities founded the institution of the Delegate of the Ministry of Education for abandoned and deserted book collections. In the period from December 1, 1945, to April 30, 1947, the delegate was Dr. Stanisław Sierotwiński, a Polish teacher and employee of the Jagiellonian Library, and the seat of the Delegation was in the building of the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków.⁸ The building, erected in the 1930s, was spacious and modern, and the transfer of the library collections there had been planned in the autumn of 1939. This was prevented by the outbreak of the war, but the relocation was organized by the German occupation authorities, and in April 1941, the Staatsbibliothek zu Krakau, a library to be used exclusively by Germans, was officially opened. It functioned until July 1944, when part of the collection (mainly the acquisitions from 1941–1944) was transported to Lower Silesia. Nevertheless, the building of the library, undamaged during the occupation and the military operations in January 1945, was suitable to be used as the headquarters for Sierotwiński's activity as the Delegate of the Ministry. During the post-war chaos, his task was to secure library collections against theft, dispersion, or devastation. In 1945, in Lower Silesia, Sierotwiński searched for the collections taken from the libraries of Kraków, Warsaw and Lwów, and most probably this was how he found the traces of the Berlin collections in Krzeszów⁹.

Beginning in 1946, on the basis of the decree of March 8, 1946, on former German property, the collections referred to as the 'Prussian treasure' were gradually transported to Kraków. Initially, they were stored in various places throughout the city, including the monasteries of the Missionaries and the Dominicans,¹⁰ but even-

8 J. Pirożyński, 'Berlinka. Zbiory Berlińskie w Bibliotece Jagiellońskiej', *Dziennik Polski* No 115 (21.5.1993).

9 P. Lechowski, 'Sporna Berlinka. Kontrowersje wokół zbiorów byłej Pruskiej Biblioteki Państwowej przechowywanych w Bibliotece Jagiellońskiej', *Biuletyn EBIB* 2008, vol. 99, <http://www.ebib.pl/2008/99/index.php> (accessed 4.03.2022).

10 It was probably then that part of the collection had to be separated and remained in the monastery. In 2016, the Dominicans of Kraków donated to the Jagiellonian

tually, for conservation reasons, they were moved in 1947 to the building of the Jagiellonian Library. Some of the chests containing books and manuscripts were damaged, although the collections as a whole remained in good condition. Work on unpacking the chests in the library building (ultimately 490 of them were delivered there) began on November 1, 1947, and the checking of their contents lasted until February 1, 1948.¹¹

In the early 1950s, the Ministry's Delegation was discontinued, and the Berlin collection, colloquially known as 'Berlinka,' was transferred to the care of the Jagiellonian Library. Until the end of the 1970s, the Polish authorities concealed the presence of the collection in Poland, which resulted in its exclusion from research for years. Moreover, they made contradictory, constantly changing decisions about its future. In 1957, the director of the Jagiellonian Library was ordered to prepare the Berlin collection for its return to Berlin. At that time, preparatory work for the microfilming of the most important and valuable materials began. However, the Ministry of Higher Education soon cancelled their decision. A few years later, it was decided to return a large number of periodicals to Germany. Through Łódź, a dozen or so rail carriages filled with periodicals were transferred to the GDR, to the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. The most important collections, however, remained in the Jagiellonian Library.¹² Expert opinions on international law were also prepared by eminent Polish lawyers, who unanimously stated that the collections found in Krzeszów were the property of the Polish state. Indeed, the collection has such status now - that of a state treasury deposit in the Jagiellonian Library.¹³

Library the Latin, Greek, and Roman manuscripts, and albums (diaries) found in the monastery as well as a collection of Oriental manuscripts and prints, mainly Judaica.

- 11 Z. Pietrzyk, 'Polonica in Albums forming part of the former Prussian State Library in Berlin (now held by the Jagiellonian Library) which were brought to light in 2014', *Bestände der ehemaligen Preußischen Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin in der Jagiellonen-Bibliothek. Forschungsstand und -perspektiven*, eds. M. Jaglarz, K. Jaśtał, Berlin et al. 2018, pp. 103-104.
- 12 Z. Pietrzyk, 'Zbiory z byłej Pruskiej Biblioteki Państwowej w Bibliotece Jagiellońskiej', *Alma Mater* No 100 (2008) pp. 15-19.
- 13 W. Kowalski, "Sytuacja prawna poniemieckich zbiorów bibliotecznych w Polsce", *Przegląd Biblioteczny* 1997, vol. 1, pp. 17-23; J. Pruszyński, *Dziedzictwo kul-*

In 1975, preparations began to incorporate “Berlinka’ into the collections of the Jagiellonian Library. The decision was soon annulled, and the plan to open the collection to the public and determine its future was suspended again. Another step in the inconsistent and hardly understandable policy of the Polish state authorities towards the Berlin collection was the handing over in 1977 by the First Secretary of the Polish United Workers Party, Edward Gierek, of 29 selected manuscripts of Ludwig van Beethoven (e.g., an extract from the Ninth Symphony), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Johann Sebastian Bach ‘on behalf of the Polish nation to the GDR nation.’

In 1979, the Berlin collection started to be made available to scholars with a special, individually obtained ministerial permission. The breakthrough came in 1981 when Professor Józef Andrzej Gierowski was nominated Rector of the Jagiellonian University, and Professor Jan Pirożyński Director of the Jagiellonian Library. In July 1981, by the decision of the authorities of the Jagiellonian University, the collection was made available to all interested scholars, in accordance with the general rules for access to special collections.¹⁴

The Berlin collection held in the Jagiellonian Library includes special collections of manuscripts, music, graphics and cartography, and old prints as well as periodicals and books from the 19th and 20th centuries, which are of incomparably lower value.¹⁵ One of the most valuable collections stored in the Manuscript Department of the Library is the Varnhagen Collection.

tury Polski. Jego straty i ochrona prawna, vol. 2, Kraków 2001; Hanna Łaskarzewska, ‘Europa bez roszczeń? Problemy własności zbiorów, pamięć i polityka’, *Roczniki Biblioteczne* 2006, vol. 50, pp. 45-91.

14 Z.Pietrzyk, ‘Jan Pirożyński jako bibliotekarz’, *Biuletyn Biblioteki Jagiellońskiej* 2005, vol. 54, pp. 7-29.

15 The Jagiellonian Library preserves, maintains and makes available the collections from the former Prussian State Library, and also supports the research on them in terms of organization and scholarship. An example of such cooperation with units of the Jagiellonian University was the “Fibula’ project. Cf. <http://info.filg.uj.edu.pl/fibula/en/node/40> (accessed 5.04.2022).

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE VARNHAGEN COLLECTION

The Varnhagen Collection is considered to be one of the largest and most important European autograph collections of the 19th century. Through thousands of letters, literary manuscripts, periodicals, and notes, among other things, (200,000 items in total), it documents the literary, cultural, scholarly, and political life of Europe in the late 18th century and the first half of the 19th century. Therefore, unlike the so-called Autograph Collection, which is also part of the Berlin collections, it constitutes a closed collection of autographs contemporary to its founders.

The collection was founded by a Berlin diplomat, writer and journalist, Karl August Varnhagen von Ense (1785-1858). Its basis and core were Varnhagen's own handwritten Nachlass and the rich correspondence of his wife Rahel Varnhagen, *née* Levin (1771-1833). She ran a famous literary salon in Berlin in the years 1790-1806, before she married Varnhagen, and later as his wife in the years 1820-183. This salon was a meeting place for the intellectual elite of contemporary Germany. Among the most distinguished guests were Friedrich and August Wilhelm Schlegel, Ludwig Tieck, Clemens Brentano, Friedrich Schleiermacher, Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué, Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau, Wilhelm and Jakob Grimm, Jean Paul Richter, Wilhelm and Alexander von Humboldt, and many others. The collection includes over 6,000 letters written by Rahel herself, addressed to three hundred correspondents, and which related to her life filled with a rich intellectual exchange.¹⁶

Karl A. Varnhagen, showing an unbridled 'collector's zeal',¹⁷ collected various historical and biographical materials¹⁸ from an early

16 On the subject of the origin of the collection cf. N. Gatter, '«sie ist vor allem die meine...». Die Sammlung Varnhagen bis zu ihrer Katalogisierung', *Wenn die Geschichte um die Ecke geht*, eds. Nikolaus Gatter, Eva Feldheim et al., Berlin 2000 (Almanach der Varnhagen Gesellschaft 1), pp. 239-271, 245.

17 L. Stern also writes about his 'inborn collector's nature' ("naturhafte Sammlernatur"). See L. Stern, *op. cit.*, p. IV.

18 Varnhagen acquired e.g., part of the precious correspondence of J.H.S. Formey, secretary of the Prussian Academy of Sciences, see *La correspondance de Jean Henri*

age for over 50 years of his life'. Based on his activities as a journalist, writer, and diplomat, he was able to make acquaintance with numerous personalities from the political and cultural life in Europe, extending his contacts to span almost the entire continent. He bought, exchanged, or received autographs as gifts. Interestingly, his collection documents its own founding as a socio-cultural practice, as it contains numerous letters in which Varnhagen directly addressed people whose collections or whose own autographs interested him. This is illustrated, for example, by the previously unpublished correspondence of Varnhagen with Helmina von Chézy, which proves that the diplomat was interested both in entire legacies and in specific manuscripts, e.g., specific poems.¹⁹ At the same time, he often expressed his regret that he had started collecting so late,²⁰ although at that time his collection was already so famous that it constituted a kind of institution.

The way Varnhagen himself perceived his collections is shown in his letter from 1848 to Karl Falkenstein, the head librarian and councillor of the Royal Library in Dresden. It was made public after his death, in the article entitled 'Ueber Zweck und Werth der Autographensammlungen' (1859). It reads:

For me, too, the desire to collect manuscripts was awakened only in my later years and by chance, after I had until then indifferently given away everything that had come my way and had carelessly passed by the richest sources that had long been open to me. [...] Incidentally, I think of our collecting in a very honourable and serious way; for me, it is not a mere hobby, but a literary matter which will be very important in the future. The whole series of letters, essays of all kinds, historical testimonies, the most diverse

Samuel Formey (1711-1797) inventaire alphabétique. Etabli sous la direction de Jens Häsel, Paris 2003, p. 10.

- 19 The founding of the collection and searching for valuable manuscripts were constant topics in the correspondence. Cf. e.g., SV 47 Chézy Helmina von, fol. 739-744 and fol. 751-752, Varnhagen's letters of 7 Oct 1854, 30 Oct 1854, 25 Feb 1855, and 25 Jan 1856.
- 20 As in the letter of May 31, 1852, regarding the writer Henrietta Herz: 'Unfortunately [Herz] destroyed all her papers. It is also a great loss for my autograph collection, to which she would certainly have sent me more than one slip, had I not become a collector too late.' SV 47 Chézy Helmina von, fol. 735-736.

information, and explanations easily join the slip, and gradually a historical-literary encyclopaedia comes into being, such as many a writer would now like to have at hand when dealing with material from earlier times. I have therefore taken the precaution that my collection will be preserved after my death and handed over to a public library for general use.²¹

After Varnhagen's death, the collection was taken over by his niece and heir, Ludmilla Assing (1821-1880), who had lived with him in Berlin since 1842 and even tried to continue the tradition of the late Rahel's literary salon. Ludmilla enriched the collection with the documents of her parents, Rosa Maria and David Assing, and her own papers. In addition, due to her efforts in the early 1870s, she incorporated into the collection the autographs of the writer and diplomat Apollonius von Maltitz and Prince Hermann von Pückler-Muskau. She also made many copies of manuscript documents, which are an equally valuable part of the collection. Ludmilla Assing faced criminal charges as a result of her editorial activities, which included publishing the correspondence between Alexander von Humboldt and Karl A. Varnhagen. Her work was critical of the contemporary situation in Prussia at that time, and so, in 1862 she was forced to flee via Switzerland to Italy (Florence), taking the collection along. She remained there until her death. In her will, she bequeathed the collection to the Royal Library in Berlin, thus, fulfilling her uncle's will. After her death in the spring of 1881, the collection was donated by the executor of her will, Salvatore Battaglia, to the Royal Library in Berlin.²² In its final form, the collection included documents of over 9,000 persons and was a real "manuscript museum."²³

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- 21 K. A. Varnhagen, 'Ueber Zweck und Werth der Autographensammlungen', *Organ für Autographensammler und Autographenhändler*, 3 (1859), ed. Johannes Günther, pp. 33-35, 34 - translated by J. Kita-Huber. This title comprises two articles by Varnhagen: the letter to Karl Falkenstein of 18 Jan 1855, and an entry to the autograph album of Richard Zeune.
- 22 *Briefe von Alexander von Humboldt an Varnhagen von Ense, aus den Jahren 1827 bis 1858: nebst Auszügen aus Varnhagen's Tagebüchern und Briefen von Varnhagen und andern an Humboldt*, Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus 1860. Five editions of the volume were published in 1860 alone. Cf. N. Gatter, op. cit., pp. 250-271.
- 23 L. Stern, op. cit., p. X.

We know about the form and order in which the collection, among others, reached Berlin from Florence from the foreword in Ludwig Stern's (1846-1911) catalogue. Stern was an Egyptologist, Celticist, and librarian by profession as well as the director of the Manuscripts Department at the Royal Library. He was responsible for cataloguing the collection from 1881 until his death, and so he created a new system based entirely on the alphabet. Thus, the collection was donated to the Royal Library in three sections (Abteilungen), described by the previous owners as autographs, manuscripts, and prints with the boxes containing the original collection of autographs being alphabetically arranged:

Varnhagen had arranged a large number of his autographs alphabetically in boxes of quarto format, but others, especially if there were more of them from one person, were kept in folders. The many notes on people and the copies of letters, as well as his own returned letters and the letter drafts, were also kept in special boxes.²⁴

This order reflected the individual nature of the collection and at the same time its exceptional complexity and diversity. As Stern reminds us, Varnhagen himself did not want to compare his collection with other contemporary collections, seeing something completely different in it. This is illustrated, for example, by Varnhagen's critical reaction to the article by the Prussian general and diplomat Joseph von Radowitz entitled 'Die Autographensammlungen,' in which he proposes the use of systematics in autograph collections based on the social position and the rank of the authors of the manuscripts. In the diary published posthumously (the entry of September 15, 1851), Varnhagen replies as follows: 'My collection is different from the one he [Radowitz] has in mind, it is primarily mine, created according to my circumstances, intentions, and possibilities.'²⁵

24 L. Stern, op. cit., p. VI, all quotes from the catalogue were translated by J. Kita-Huber. Cf. also J. Weber, op. cit., p. 192.

25 K. A. Varnhagen, *Tagebücher. Aus dem Nachlass Varnhagens von Ense*, Hamburg 1868, vol. 9, p. 369. At that time, a number of textbooks with guidelines for autograph collectors were written. One of the best known is *Handbuch für*

According to Stern, one of the individual features of the Varnhagen Collection, reflecting the personality of the collector, are handwritten biographical notes usually on separate pages, illustrations and prints.²⁶ Another special feature is its heterogeneity and, at the same time, the presence of documents of different quality due to the mixed nature of the collection. Apart from the manuscripts of eminent representatives of European culture and science, we can also find here documents of less famous people, which – as Stern himself noted – have a great historical value. The collection, thus, presents a maximally complete and varied picture of its time.²⁷

LUDWIG STERN'S CATALOGUE

In total, Stern carried out two stages of cataloguing and organizing the collection. In 1893, he first created a repertory – a handwritten index of all documents or a ‘road map’ in which he introduced the alphabetical rule. He also marked the original shelf mark numbers, noting at the same time that the ‘separation of “manuscripts” from “autographs,” [and] copies and notes from the originals, is in places entirely accidental or arbitrary.’²⁸ This meant that the alphabetical order was (at this stage) more important than the ordering of the documents by category within each archival unit. For the purposes of the printed catalogue planned for 1911, he rearranged the collection according to the alphabetical index of the material as stated here:

In order to further facilitate its use, the entire collection had to be rearranged according to the alphabetical index and stored in uniform folio boxes with continuous numbering (just as it is done for the other autographs of the Royal Library), and at the same time

Autographensammler by J. Günther and O. A. Schulz from 1856, which includes Radowitz's methodological proposal. Cf. also K. Jaśtał, ‘Karl August Varnhagen von Ense und seine Autographensammlung’, *Briefnetzwerke um Hermann von Pückler-Muskau*, op. cit., pp. 197-206.

26 L. Stern, op. cit., p. XII.

27 L. Stern, op. cit., pp. XI-XII.

28 L. Stern, op. cit., p. XIII.

the handwritten index of 1893 had to be completed, specified and corrected many times.²⁹

Stern sorted the documents so that all autographs of a given person were always under their name, supplemented with the biographical material from Varnhagen, which in the first index (1893) was in a different place (the register with biographical information) where almost every archival unit began from Varnhagen's notes about a given person. Moreover, in the catalogue, Stern included references to publications of the 19th century based on this collection. Stern describes his principles as follows:

Since the catalogue was to have a certain degree of completeness, it had to be brief and could not be extended beyond general library needs. Due to the overwhelming size of the collection and its diversity, a more detailed description of the content of the letters had to be dispensed with, and only a few exceptions to this rule were permitted. On the other hand, the immediate identification of the persons was made possible by adding their most necessary biographical data. Varnhagen had already prepared the indexing by noting the writer and addressee at the top left of the letters, whose envelopes have rarely been preserved, and the provenance at the bottom left, and in many cases also adding biographical information on coloured slips of paper.³⁰

As he admitted, his catalogue had, therefore, only 'a certain completeness' as Stern often did not specify the number of manuscripts, but wrote only 'circa,' and he did not list all his male and female correspondents and only wrote, "among others.' For example, in the case of the Assing documents, he used phrases such as 'all kinds of other papers and newspaper cuttings,' 'military and other personal papers, including his doctoral diploma and his Königsberg dissertation on 'Oxygenica' (title page missing),' and 'circa 82 letters to Varnhagen von Ense 1813-42'.³¹ In the index of

29 L. Stern, op. cit., p. XIV.

30 Ibidem.

31 L. Stern, op. cit., p. 30. The Nachlass of Rosa Maria Assing was systematised by P. Zarychta: *Selbstinszenierung und Gedächtnisbildung. Rosa Maria Assing in Briefen*

Chézy's Nachlass, he used the terms 'other fragments,' and 'all kinds of printed material from periodicals 1820-45'³², among other things. This tendency can also be seen in the remarks on Pückler's autographs, where Stern explained that this extensive resource, originally completely disordered, was structured and described by him in a general outline ('ist in der Hauptsache nun gleichfalls in übersichtliche Reihenfolge gebracht.')³³

Therefore, he intended, particularly with regard to large archival units, to maintain the general line of order without the need to separate each document. This did not seem to contradict the archiving standards of the time but does not currently meet modern requirements. The descriptive strategies used in Stern's catalogue are therefore situated at the interface of information science and literary tradition.³⁴ Thus, Stern paved the way for further archival work on the Varnhagen Collection. Firstly, he saw his catalogue as only a contribution (albeit significant) to the complete systematising of the collection and, thus, open to future additions and corrections. It is significant that he ended his foreword as follows: 'I am aware that there is still a lot to be added.'³⁵ Secondly, it determined the way of thinking about the collection and the methodological approach to be used. It was not without reason that his catalogue was once viewed as a 'model masterpiece of modern autograph cataloguing' and was the model for the six-volume general catalogue of manuscripts in the Royal Library of Berlin.³⁶

The proposal for new cataloguing of the Varnhagen Collection presented in this article follows this tradition. In the face of the de-

und Lebenszeugnissen aus der Sammlung Varnhagen. Edition und Kommentar, Berlin 2021 (vol. 1) and Berlin 2022 (vol. II).

32 L. Stern, op. cit., p. 147.

33 L. Stern, op. cit., p. VII.

34 The newest issue of the journal *Zeitschrift für Germanistik*, NF 32 (2022), vol. 1 is devoted to catalogues as writers' and narrators' strategies. Cf. also K. Jürjens, U. Vedder, *Kataloge: Medien und Schreibweisen des Verzeichnens. Zur Einführung*, pp. 7-18.

35 L. Stern, op. cit., p. XV.

36 Hans Lülfiing, 'Die Handschriftenabteilung', *Deutsche Staatsbibliothek. 1661-1961*, vol. 1: *Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Leipzig 1961, pp. 319-380, 352.

velopment of archival science and new possibilities for collecting and sharing data, and in the context of the development of digital technologies, the Varnhagen Collection today requires a more careful classification and cataloguing. The new proposal must comply with the current standards and still draw on both the archival practices used in the collection and its description so far.

The aim is to meet the demand for systematicity, completeness, and detailed description within archival units while marking the ‘geological strata,’³⁷ i.e., the arrangement of the documents within the units. Varnhagen’s narrative, which was continued but also re-organized and complemented by Stern, is enriched by our proposal as another step towards ordering and supplementing the catalogue. The details of this will now be presented.



FIG. 2. Varnhagen Collection: SV19_Ludmilla Assing,
photograph by Paweł Zarychta

37 This term refers to the term ‘stratigraphy,’ used by Dominik Erdmann in reference to Alexander von Humboldt’s Nachlass. Cf. ‘Einführung’, *Der Nachlass Alexander von Humboldt in der Jagiellonen-Bibliothek*, bearbeitet von Dominik Erdmann, ed. M. Jaglarz, Kraków 2019, pp. V-XXXIV, XXXIV.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF MATERIALS IN THE VARNHAGEN COLLECTION

In the Varnhagen Collection, there is a rule that all items related to a specific person are placed in the folder labelled with that person's name. These include original documents, pictures, works and letters as well as publications and press cuttings and, in some cases, also extracts from incoming correspondence as well as materials about it, such as Karl Varnhagen's notes. Nevertheless, there are also exceptions to this rule. Members of royal families are listed under the name of the country in which the families ruled. The large archival units of, for example, Rahel Varnhagen or Prince Herman von Pückler-Muskau are ordered somewhat differently. For example, some of their outgoing correspondences are listed under the addressees' names, thus, contradicting the basic rule. The folders are arranged alphabetically by name and placed in boxes marked with numbers which are combined with the surname to form the shelfmark of the manuscript unit. This enables the locating of a specific document and is a universally used practice in organizing scholarly literature.³⁸ This arrangement is different from the rules used in Polish libraries, where the manuscript Nachlass of a given person is treated collectively as a whole due to its provenance, and is thus preserved and catalogued.³⁹ Therefore, the collection under the name of 'Helmina von Chézy' would contain her autographs and related materials, excluded from documents of other persons that have thus been dispersed. Therefore, the letters are not listed by the addressees, but by the authors, and so are scattered throughout the collection.

This arrangement is reflected in Ludwig Stern's printed catalogue. The materials were described by Stern in the following order: pictures and drawings, personal documents, outgoing and possibly incoming correspondence (here, Stern placed cross-references in-

38 A typical notation: 'SV 47 Chézy Helmina von', where the abbreviation SV 47 stands for 'Sammlung Varnhagen'[Varnhagen Collection] box 47.

39 Cf. *Wytyczne opracowania rękopisów w bibliotekach polskich*, Wrocław 1955.

dicating under which names to look for incoming correspondence in other parts of the collection), creative works, printed materials and press cuttings, and assorted materials, including foreign ones. Information about Varnhagen's notes was often omitted in Stern's description. At the end of each description appeared the number of the box in square brackets, and if the collection related to one person, it consisted of several boxes, and the number of the boxes were included in the text after each batch of material had been described.

The current project describes eight archival units including the papers of the following people: Charlotte von Ahlefeld, Helmina von Chézy, Caroline de la Motte Fouqué, Amalia Helvig, Amalia Schoppe, Fanny Tarnow, Amalia von Voigt, and Karoline von Woltmann⁴⁰. They comprise one large (Chézy), two medium-sized (Schoppe, Tarnow), and five smaller collections.

DESCRIPTION SCHEME

The scheme adopted for the project is an extended and modified version of the description used by Stern and based on current practice and methods⁴¹. This is how it looks:

Shelfmark number of a given unit (SV, box number, name)

1. Notes on the person
2. Pictures, paintings, and drawings
3. Outgoing correspondence
4. Creative works
5. Personal materials
6. Prints and press cuttings

40 SV 1 Ahlefeld Charlotte; SV 47 Chézy Helmina von; SV 60 Fouqué Caroline de la Motte; SV 84 Helvig Amalie von; SV 230 Schoppe Amalia; SV 241 Tarnow Fanny; SV 271 Voigt Amalie von; SV 281 Woltmann Karoline.

41 The authors drew, among other things, on the scheme used in the Kalliope database: <https://kalliope-verbund.info>, and in the catalogue of Alexander von Humboldt's manuscripts: *Der Nachlass Alexander von Humboldt in der Jagiellonen-Bibliothek*, op. cit. The catalogue was deliberately left out of the system used in Polish libraries. Any other solution would have been contrary to the historical arrangement of the collection.

7. Incoming correspondence

8. Foreign materials

9. Library materials

The aim of the team was to develop a scheme which would have the following features:

- the description as detailed as possible with the catalogue containing a systematic index of all objects, with each having its own number and the range of pages;
- source material about one person presented not only as a collection of details but also as a whole;
- the description scheme being also a narrative technique where the order adopted allows for an illustration of the structure of the entire collection.

DETAILS OF THE DESCRIPTION

1. Notes on a person are described right next to the letters or work extracts. Most often, these were made by Karl A. Varnhagen or Ludmilla Assing and those belonging to the former were frequently about letters and were written on small, coloured slips of paper attached to the manuscripts. All information that does not come from the manuscript is placed in square brackets. This applies not only to literary data, but also to K. Varnhagen's notes.
2. Pictures, paintings, and drawings were supplemented, where possible, with information about the author.
3. For outgoing correspondence, each letter is described in the following order: sender, addressee, place, and date of writing the letter. When we are not dealing with the original, we provide information on whether it is a copy, a draft, etc. The letters are arranged alphabetically according to the addressees' surnames, and chronologically within the surnames. Letters to undetermined persons are placed at the end, and - if necessary for identification - the description is supplemented with the incipit. If a document or excerpt is attached to the letter, it is placed

- directly next to the letter and is also described there.
4. Creative works are divided into poetry, prose, and drama. At the end of the section, there are draft materials for literary works and unfinished ones. The works are arranged chronologically or, if it is impossible to determine the time of their writing, first comes the finished texts, then fragments or sketches, and finally draft materials for individual works, most often in the form of notes.
 5. Personal materials which are, namely, personal documents, diaries, and bills.
 6. Prints and press cuttings are placed in their chronological order.
 7. Incoming correspondence, i.e., letters addressed to a person, are described according to the outgoing correspondence model, except that the letters are arranged alphabetically according to the surnames of the senders.
 8. Foreign materials are usually letters from different senders to different recipients. One shelfmark number may happen to comprise materials concerning different people, which are linked - coincidentally - by the same name and surname⁴². This is all the more important because in this study it was decided to subsume all documents under a specific shelfmark number, so as to give the reader a full picture of the content.
 9. Library materials consist of folders, notes and bookmarks constitute an integral part of the unit and are added to it at various stages of the library's work.

APPLICATION OF THE SCHEME - THE NACHLASS OF HELMINA VON CHÉZY AS AN EXAMPLE

Based on this scheme, the project team identified first-hand and sorted out eight archival units which were then foiled and digi-

42 For example, the folder of the writer Charlotte von Ahlefeld *née* Seebach includes copies of letters from Charlotte von Ahlenfeld-Laurvigen *née* Hedemann assigned to her by mistake, and the folder of Amalie Voigt *née* Ludecus includes an obituary of her husband's relative, Amalie Voigt *née* Hufeland, Osann by her first marriage.

tized. Each object was given a new shelfmark number, including the SV, box number, and name and sheet numbers which makes it possible to uniquely identify each document separately (letter, drawing, manuscript, print) and not only the general archival unit. All the objects described in the new scheme were entered into the electronic Kalliope database together with their shelfmark numbers and the metadata generated during the process. In this way, the reader is able to identify the type of objects with a given unit or box like they would have with Stern's catalogue, but they were also able to obtain a detailed list of all objects. This will be subsequently demonstrated as we apply the scheme to an example of the work on the Nachlass of the writer Helmina von Chézy mentioned earlier by first showing how Stern handled these documents followed by our approach, in contrast.

In the introduction to his catalogue, Ludwig Stern treated the autographs of this 'poet,' granddaughter of the eighteenth-century writer Anna Luisa Karsch, as particularly noteworthy to be considered alongside the documents of the musician and pedagogue Paul Emil Thieriot, theologian and philosopher J.H. Samuel Formey, and the Clemens Brentano family⁴³. The lack of reliable source editions concerning Chézy's life and work makes research on her output only rudimentary in nature. The identification and cataloguing of the documents in the collection, including correspondence, letter drafts, and manuscripts of published and unpublished works, will certainly help to deepen the research. Today, Chézy is known only to a few, although in her day, she played a significant role in the social and cultural life not only of Germany but also of Europe, in particular in German-French relations. She corresponded with the most influential writers, artists, and politicians, and collaborated with a number of leading periodicals and publishing

43 L. Stern, *op. cit.*, p. VI. According to the findings so far, Karl August Varnhagen took over about one third of the documents offered by Chézy for its collection. See Volker Schindler, 'Rahel Varnhagen von Ense (1771-1833). Eine «Sévigné prussienne»? Französische Echos auf Rahel Varnhagens Briefwerke', *Vom Salon zur Barrikade. Frauen der Heinezeit*, ed. Irina Hundt, Stuttgart, Weimar 2002, pp. 17-46.

houses. This makes the systematising of her correspondence important for research on the 19th century culture.⁴⁴

Stern described Chézy's Nachlass only partially using the order presented above. This consisted of Varnhagen's notes, pictures and drawings, various notes, including letters (personal documents), outgoing correspondence (letters in chronological order), incoming correspondence (surnames of correspondents in alphabetical order with first name initials), poems and manuscripts (creative works), printed materials, miscellaneous materials, and indicating that her remaining manuscripts were stored in the Berliner Literaturarchiv.⁴⁵ Apart from general terms, such as 'other sketches/notes,' the number of letters and their dating were sometimes only indicative. For example, in the case of Chézy's correspondence with Apollonius v. Maltitz and Karl A. Varnhagen: 'about 50 letters to Ap. v. Maltitz 1828-55, together with 34 letters from him to her 1828-50; 25 letters to Varnhagen 1835-56 with poems and drafts of letters to Varnhagen, together with 11 letters from Varnhagen to her 1835-56.'⁴⁶ The catalogue is therefore imprecise, not only in terms of the detail of the description but also regarding the structure of the resources.

Chézy's documents, kept in a box with the shelfmark number SV 47, were divided into eight folders with the following titles: 'H. v. Chézy Persönliches,' 'H. v. Chézy Korrespondenz,' 'H. v. Chézy Schriftstellerei,' 'H. v. Chézy und Varnhagen,' 'von Chézy und Ap. v. Maltitz,' 'Die Günderoode [Chézy],' 'H. v. Chézy Poesie,' and 'H. v. Chézy Gedrucktes.' These indicated the arrangement and the main describing 'line.' The folders held a variety of materials with the same types of documents being scattered across various folders and smaller covers within one unit. In addition, one more archiv-

44 Chézy kept in touch with Polish aristocrats too, e.g., Countess Ludwika Eleonora Jaraczewska. Cf. also J. Kita-Huber, 'Der Briefwechsel Helmina von Chézys: Erschließung und (Teil)edition', *Bestände der ehemaligen Preußischen Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin in der Jagiellonen-Bibliothek*, op. cit., pp. 263-278.

45 L. Stern, op. cit., p. 147.

46 L. Stern, op. cit., p. 142.

ing rule was revealed inside the folders where documents were packed in additional envelopes and covers which were sometimes larger or smaller. Coloured slips, notes, and Varnhagen's comments were not only visibly open in the unit but were also hidden inside it in various places.

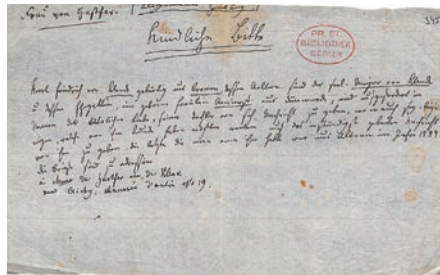
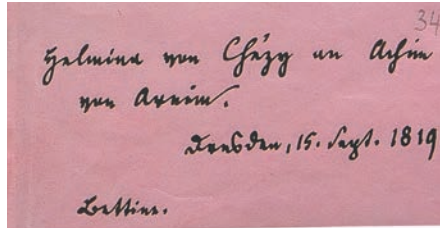
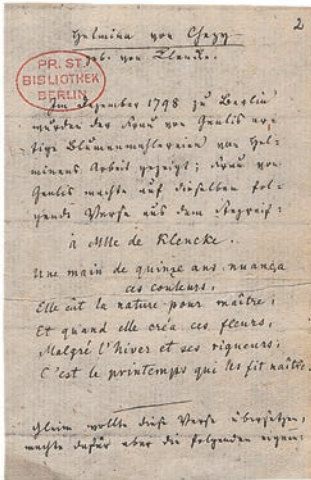


FIG. 3. A typical contents of the folder 'Personal materials':
3a (Varnhagen's note on Helmina von Chézy), 3b (Varnhagen's note fixed to the letter),
3c (portrait of Helmina von Chézy), 3d (personal note of H. v. Chézy)

The variety and richness of material at the level of one category is well illustrated by the ‘Personal materials’ folder, the content of which corresponds to the first group of objects described in Stern’s catalogue.⁴⁷ We will find here first a cover with various notes by Varnhagen about Chézy, two newspaper cuttings, a cover with the label ‘Bildnisse und Zeichnungen,’ with 14 artworks, part of the calendar from 1804 with a wedding wishes card, a cover with Helmina’s article for ‘Allgemeine Zeitung,’ notes in French under the title ‘Lettre sur L’Alsace à George Sand,’ an excerpt from a diary (December 31, 1841), notes for Varnhagen’s own works and three third-party letters about Chézy to Karl A. Varnhagen. The archives contained in this folder seem to reflect the personal collecting and archival rules of Varnhagen and L. Assing where the order introduced is arbitrary. Stern’s catalogue, therefore, only enables ‘orientation’ in the collection, leaving gaps and inaccuracies, and at the same time tells a story of the collection by preserving traces of Varnhagen’s historical and idiosyncratic system. On the other hand, our new proposal for cataloguing Chézy’s Nachlass comprises the following schematic structure:

Helmina von Chézy (1783-1856), née von Klencke

1. Notes by Varnhagen on Helmina von Chézy
2. Portraits, drawings
3. Letters from Helmina von Chézy
4. Poetry by Helmina von Chézy
5. Writings by Helmina von Chézy
6. Personal. Diary entries, notes by Helmina von Chézy
7. Prints and newspaper cuttings
8. Letters to Helmina von Chézy
9. Various letters to Karl A. Varnhagen
10. Old library folders and covers

The documents included in the ‘Personal materials’ category discussed here, which in Stern’s catalogue were not clearly delineat-

47 Ibidem.

ed and labelled due to their nature, have been broken down in the new catalogue proposal into the following four categories:

1. Notes by Varnhagen on Helmina von Chézy
2. Portraits, drawings
6. Personal. Diary entries, notes by Helmina von Chézy
9. Various letters to Karl A. Varnhagen

Another advantage of the new scheme is the classification and detailed description of all letters which are mentioned in Stern's catalogue under the category of outgoing correspondence. Thus, under the new scheme, Chézy's correspondence with Varnhagen and Maltitz within the archival unit (SV 47) is divided into incoming and outgoing correspondence, which results in these letters being placed in two categories (3 and 8), while the letters to Varnhagen from the third parties concerning Chézy have been moved to Category 9.

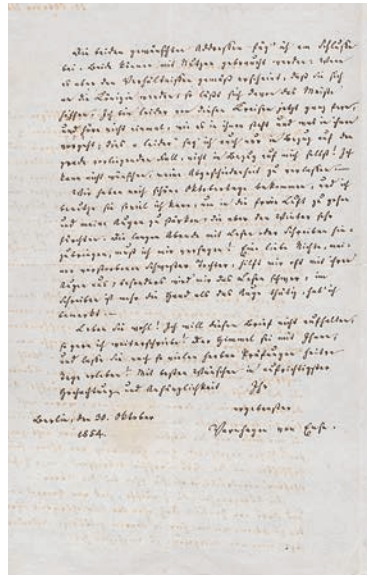
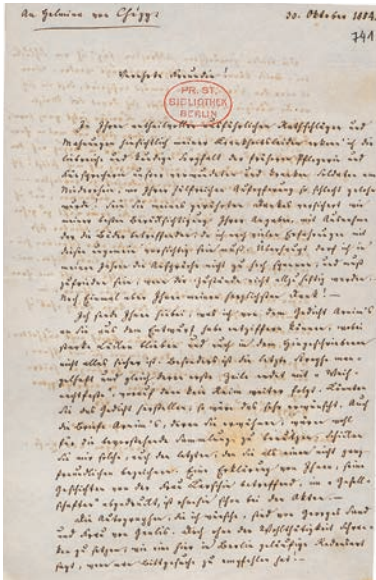


FIG. 4. Letter of Karl A. Varnhagen to Helmina von Chézy of 30 Oct 1854: 4a (recto) and 4b (verso).

To give an example, Varnhagen's letters to Chézy subsumed under Category 8 'Letters to Helmina von Chézy' are arranged as follows:

- 8.37 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 18.11.1835 fol. 731-732
- 8.38 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 11.11.1847 fol. 733-734
- 8.39 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 31.05.1852 fol. 735-736
- 8.40 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 18.01.1854 fol. 737-738
- 8.41 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 07.10.1854 fol. 739-740
- 8.42 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 30.10.1854 fol. 741-742
- 8.43 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 25.02.1855 fol. 743-744
- 8.44 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 01.06.1855 fol. 745-746
- 8.45 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 13.12.1855 fol. 747-748
- 8.46 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 21.01.1856 fol. 749-750
- 8.47 Varnhagen Karl August, Berlin, 25.01.1856 fol. 751-752

In the new catalogue, the above index replaces Stern's remark '11 letters from Varnhagen to her 1835-56,' with each entry identified here (letter) being additionally provided with a detailed reference.

Based on the applied scheme, it was possible to identify and catalogue all Helmina von Chézy's documents, while at the same time drawing on the tradition of research on the Varnhagen Collection (Stern's catalogue) and on modern solutions (the printed catalogue of Humboldt's Nachlass stored in the Jagiellonian Library which was mentioned above).

CONCLUSION

During the re-classification and preparation of the documents for folioing and given that the existing order and catalogue have historical value, care has been taken to ensure that the new proposal to catalogue the Varnhagen Collection generally preserves its existing structure and Stern's order. The modifications are concerned mainly with the arrangement of the objects and the degree of detail in their description inside the archival units, and not the main rule of the catalogue which is the alphabetical order initiated by Varnhagen and introduced for use with the entire collection by

Stern. As shown by the example of Helmina von Chézy, changes were made before cataloguing where there were evident errors (made by Varnhagen, Assing, Stern, or later archivists), where there was no division of documents into categories, or where documents of different categories were mixed up (see the original content of the 'Personal materials' category). In the new scheme, the order of documents is represented by the decimal system preceding individual catalogue entries. Sections and sub-sections correspond to the indexed structure of the collection and thus illustrate the stratified arrangement of documents within one archival unit while allowing the position of each document to be traced with reference to the whole collection.

The catalogue - one of the project outcomes - presents the content of eight archival units that have been made accessible to researchers as well as introduced into generally available databases. The work on it allowed us to put forward a theoretical description scheme and to test it in practice in our teamwork on archival units of different sizes and structures. This scheme may be applied to the description of other parts of the Varnhagen Collection to enable its comprehensive cataloguing in the future.

Translated by Władysław Chłopicki