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HISTORICAL RESEARCH



Buried Treasures: Hardly Known Files of Genealogical  
Significance in German Archives – 19th Century

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DR. EKKEHARD HÜBSCHMANN  
AN DER KIRCHE 7  
D-95499 HARSDORF  
GERMANY  
Fon +49 9203/688086  
Fax +49 3212/1024929  
contact@geepetee.de  
www.geepetee.de

## Handout

### 0 Federal and State Archives in Germany

In which archives files of the 19th century are stored is a very complex question caused by the historical development of the many German principalities. City archives can be easily found on the internet. The regional archives are called Landesarchive. Each Bundesland (Federal State) has its own Landesarchiv, which can consist of several archives in different cities. Hessen for ex. has a Main State Archives in Wiesbaden and two archives in Darmstadt and Marburg.

A list “Federal and State Archives in Germany” can be found on my website at  
[www.gepete.de/archives.htm](http://www.gepete.de/archives.htm)

### 1 The Registering of Jews : Judenmatrikel and Juden-Kataster

*Schutzbrief* 'letter of protection' and *Schutzjude* at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schutzjude> or  
<http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/13333-schutzjude> or  
[http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub\\_image.cfm?image\\_id=571](http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/sub_image.cfm?image_id=571)

Emancipation Laws At the beginning of the 19th century in almost all German states.

For ex. the Bavarian Jewish Edict of 1813 demanded of all Jews to be registered in the Juden-Matrikel.

In the introduction Gerhard Rechter, the late director of the State Archive in Nuremberg until 2012, explains the system of registration in the short chapter “The Jewish Edict of 1813” (page 6–7). The complete article can be found at my website at [www.geepetee.de/literat/Rechter\\_2003.pdf](http://www.geepetee.de/literat/Rechter_2003.pdf).

Matrikelstelle or short Stelle: a position in the register. It was not inheritable. Only if the local authorities agreed, a Jew could “move into” a vacant Matrikelstelle. An application for the permission to take residence in the place was compulsory.

Whilst the Jewish Registers hold information about the head of the family, in the district of Oberfranken

(Upper Franconia) the Jewish Cadasters also mention their wives and children. The title is:

**Kataster über die israelitischen  
Glaubens=Genossen in der Stadt Bayreuth**

Nachgetragen und berichtet am 14. Aug. 1843  
Bayreuth

Stadtarchiv Bayreuth, B32

**Cadaster of the Isrealite Co-Religionists in the  
City of Bayreuth**

Completed and Corrected on 14 Aug 1843  
Bayreuth

City Archive Bayreuth, B 32

The cadasters are stored in the State Archive Bamberg.

## 2 19th Century Vital Records

## 3 Establishing Residency and Marrying Files (Ansässigmachungs- und Verehelichungsakten AVK)

Most interesting are the proceedings leading to permission to establish residence. These are connected with the marriage intention files and contain detailed information about both families, sometimes marriage contracts.

## 4 Real Property Tax Cadaster

## Grundsteuerkataster

The land and property records tell us how the ancestors lived, what happened when an estate was inherited or purchased, if a house was owned by one, two or even four Jewish families.

### Bavarian Maps / Bayernatlas

Directly connected to the Real Property Tax Cadaster was the land surveying of the whole Kingdom of Bavaria from 1828 on. The Bavarian Survey Office published these colored historical maps, the so-called *Uraufnahmen 1808 to 1864*, online. They show the houses and from the numbering system, also the location of any associated field and meadow. In the online edition the 19th century maps match exactly present time maps, aerial views etc. See <http://geoportal.bayern.de/bayernatlas>  
This very helpful tool is available for nowadays Bavaria (right of the Rhine), not for Bavaria left of the Rhine, i.e. Rhineland Palatinate.

## 5 Court Files

## Gerichtsakten

The Amtsgerichte = Regional Courts on the lowest level deal with all kind of administrative and legal affairs. They have to transfer the older files from time to time to the state archives.

Registergericht

Handelsregister [business registrations](#)

Vereinsregister [registrations of associations](#) (eingetragene Vereine) mentioning the names of the board members

Fürsorge/Pflegschaft/Vormundschaften [public assistance / fosterage, wardenship / tutelages, wardships](#)

Nachlass-Gericht [probate court](#)

Todeserklärungen [declarations of death](#)

Juristische Verfahren (Prozesse) [judicial procedure, legal proceedings](#)

## 6 Emigration Files (Auswanderungsakten)

Emigration files can be particularly detailed since everybody had to apply for the permit to leave the country and had to present many documents as there are:

- birth certificate from the parish or rabbinat
- the public announcement in the Royal Intelligence Paper, the official journal.
- the right of residence had to be certified. If the applicant intended to come back, he had to declare that he wished to keep this right.
- a certificate from the political community that there are no reservations
- a certificate of release from the army: the *Militärentlassungsschein* containing details of his personal appearance (size, hair and eye brow colour, nose, forehead, chin etc)
- *Schulentlassungsschein*: a school leaving certificate
- in case of emigration: an application for the „Entlassung aus dem bayerischen Untertanenverband“, the release from the Bavarian subject union.

If you need professional help, if you like to learn which records concerning your relatives are held in German archives or if you like to know more about the services GPT offers, please visit

[www.geepeete.de](http://www.geepeete.de)

or send an email to

[contact@geepeete.de](mailto:contact@geepeete.de)

Dr. Ekkehard Hübschmann

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