



# How to find ancestors in German archives – and why?

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(State Archives of North Rhine Westphalia: [www.lav.nrw.de](http://www.lav.nrw.de) / [www.archive.nrw.de](http://www.archive.nrw.de))

## Proposal:

My speech's aim is to help through the rich and dense archival holdings in Germany and, furthermore, to inspire to ask about informational and historical context. I would like to introduce those archival holdings and sources in Germany and especially in North-Rhine-Westphalia, which are interesting for Jewish genealogy. My talk should give information not only about civil registers for the Jewish population (900 at Detmold), but it should also inform about digitizing and crowd sourcing projects. Adding examples of archival sources of the Jewish population in German archives I will show how to find Jewish ancestors, since you usually cannot find personal names in an archival database. Finally, the audience will have an impression about the online services and research tools of German archives as well as how to prepare a visit of archives in Germany.

## Schedule of my Speech and Some Links and Literature

### 1 Archives in Germany - How to find the archives you need?

- What are archives? Who is an archivist? See also the homepage of the International Council on Archives (<http://www.ica.org/en/discover-archives>).
- Categories of archives: state, municipality, private ... archives
- See for all archives all over the world:  
Archives School Marburg (<https://www.archivschule.de/DE/service/archive-im-internet/archive-im-internet.html>)
- important archival portals for Germany / Europe:
  - + "Archivportal D" (<https://www.archivportal-d.de/>)
  - + Archives Portal Europe (<http://www.archivesportaleurope.net/>)
- Institution for Jewish Archives / History in Germany:
  - + Zentralarchiv zur Erforschung der Geschichte der Juden in Deutschland (Heidelberg) (<http://www.uni-heidelberg.de/institute/sonst/aj/>).
  - + Institut für die Geschichte der deutschen Juden (Hamburg) (<http://www.igdj-hh.de/IGDJ-home.html>)
- Places of memory of the Holocaust, museums and local/regional research groups (mainly working in the name of memory of the Holocaust)

### 2 Central Holdings for Jewish Genealogy (examples)

- Civil status registers for the Jewish population: For example, you find about 900 registers of this kind for the big region of Westphalia and Lippe at Detmold at the State Archives of North-Rhine-Westphalia.
  - > See the brochure about genealogical research in the State Archives of North-Rhine-Westphalia (only in German):  
[http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/fachbereich\\_grundsaeetze/BilderKartenLogosDateien/Publikationen/LAV-Brosch-Generalogie.pdf](http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/fachbereich_grundsaeetze/BilderKartenLogosDateien/Publikationen/LAV-Brosch-Generalogie.pdf).
  - > See also  
[http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/ostwestfalen\\_lippe/service\\_familienforschung/index.php](http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/ostwestfalen_lippe/service_familienforschung/index.php).
- All state or communal documents referring to persons / individuals, e.g. inhabitant registers (= municipal), files of the courts (especially files of the declaration of the death of a person (Todeserklärung), files of processes about redress of the damage



by the Nationalsocialists (Wiedergutmachungsakten), land registers and registers of firms), see for more information, e.g.:

[http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/informationen\\_fuer\\_benutzer/handreichungen/index.php](http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/informationen_fuer_benutzer/handreichungen/index.php) and

<http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/westfalen/servicefuerfamilienforschung/index.php> and esp.

[http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/westfalen/servicefuerfamilienforschung/doerdelmann\\_grundbuch.pdf](http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/westfalen/servicefuerfamilienforschung/doerdelmann_grundbuch.pdf).

See for more information about sources about the Jewish population:

*Frank M. Bischoff / Peter Honigmann (Eds.), Jüdisches Archivwesen. Beiträge zum Kolloquium des 100. Jahrestags der Gründung des Gesamtarchivs der deutschen Juden zugl. 10.*

*Archivwissenschaftliches Kolloquium der Archivschule Marburg (Veröffentlichungen der Archivschule Marburg / Institut für Archivwissenschaft, Nr. 45), Marburg 2007.*

*Bettina Joergens (Ed.), Jüdische Genealogie im Archiv, in der Forschung und digital. Quellenkunde und Erinnerung (Veröffentlichung des Landesarchivs Nordrhein-Westfalen 41), Essen (Klartext-Verlag) 2001.*

### **3 How to find ancestors – Ways of Archival Research and Tools**

- Since one usually does not get names of individuals by researching archival online finding aids (within archival portals) it is necessary to understand the information you get about holdings, provenance and files or registers.

What kind of meta and context data lead you to persons? I will give an example.

And: Don't get mixed up with copies (of copies) which do not any more refer to their provenance or original archival holding or archives.<sup>1</sup>

- How do you prepare your visit of an archives? You find some hints and information in our image film: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_detailpage&v=rhFGPxlyYXw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=rhFGPxlyYXw).

### **4 Come together – Crowd Sourcing**

Crowd sourcing project for indexing the civil status registers of the Jewish population of Westphalia and Lippe: a cooperation of the State Archives of North-Rhine-Westphalia (Department at Detmold) and two genealogical organizations: [http://wiki-de.genealogy.net/Juden-und\\_Dissidentenregister\\_in\\_Westfalen\\_und\\_Lippe](http://wiki-de.genealogy.net/Juden-und_Dissidentenregister_in_Westfalen_und_Lippe).

We will be happy, if you join this amazing project! If you have questions or you need help translating the explanations don't hesitate to ask us.

#### **Announcement:**

Save the date of the 10<sup>th</sup> *Detmolder Sommergespräch*, 14<sup>th</sup> of September 2017 at Detmold.

“Genealogie, Verwaltung und Archive – vertrauenswürdige Informationen im Austausch” (language: German), soon you'll find the program here:

[http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/ostwestfalen\\_lippe/Veranstaltungen\\_Austellungen/index.php](http://www.archive.nrw.de/lav/abteilungen/ostwestfalen_lippe/Veranstaltungen_Austellungen/index.php).

*I am looking forward to the Conference at Orlando and the discussions!*

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<sup>1</sup> See my second talk about the relevance of information about the provenance and other contexts.