

CONSERVATION OF AUTHOR'S ESTATES (in German)

Enke Huhsmann (German Literature Archive Marbach)

The archives and libraries collected in the Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach are characterised by highly personalised working techniques and traces of use, which are made accessible and preserved for research purposes. Entries, notes or comments in the archived material shed new light on how authors worked as well as the way they handled their records and libraries. A special group of collections and object of research in their own right are the literary estates and libraries of exile writers and scholars. They are often separated from their former collectors and scattered over several locations and great distances, having been shaped by personal fates, historical developments and – in the majority of cases – wartime repercussions.

The authors' libraries in the public collections, enriched with dedications, inserts and hand-written notes, etc., are, in particular, subject to peculiarly complex requirements of preservation as uniquely original holdings containing more than the printed word. The actual printed work is further enriched with uncatalogued or undocumented, individual traces of work and use by the author or scholar to whom it had once belonged. For holdings from the 20th century onwards, provenance characteristics, i.e. traces of the previous owners of a book copy, are documented in the DLA as scholarly sources for research. Furthermore, in order to preserve these traces, it is important to raise awareness of physical traces of use on the binding or in the book block and traces of work in the manuscripts and to highlight conservation or restoration measures.

To this end, the author's library of Siegfried Kracauer (1889-1966) is to receive state-of-the-art protective wrapping in 2020 as part of a project funded by the Koordinierungsstelle zur Erhaltung schriftlichen Kulturguts (KEK; Coordination Office for Conserving Written Cultural Artefacts). All traces of Kracauer himself and potential traces resulting from transport, storage and accommodation, which are classified as belonging to the work, are to be identified, documented and preserved. This, with a focus on conservation techniques for damaged bindings, constituted the aims of a teaching research project with 5 MA students in 2020, which was part of a cooperation between the DLA and the CICS – the Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences of the Technical University of Cologne.

Project participants:

- Enke Huhsmann, Head of Holdings Conservation, Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach

- Dr. Caroline Jessen, Fellow of the Leibniz Institute for Jewish History and Culture – Simon Dubnow
- Prof. Dr. Andrea Pataki-Hundt, Director of Studies, Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences (CICS) Technical University of Cologne
- 5 students on the Master program (summer semester 2020)