



**Staatsbibliothek
zu Berlin**

Preußischer Kulturbesitz

Department of Early Printed Books

Historical Pamphlets

Pamphlets are printings of fairly short length that take position on a broad variety of questions of the day. As controversial and often partisan publications on disputes of a scientific, religious or political nature, they were written to enlighten or influence public opinion, and were thus intended for swift and broad distribution. Through reports of accidents, natural catastrophes, murderous deeds, festivals and the like, such pamphlets provide important documentation of the culture and history of their times.

The collection of historical pamphlets as a special fund of sources was formed at the suggestion of the historian Johann Gustav Droysen. Up until its evacuation during World War II, the collection covered the period from 1501 to about 1942. Today, the State Library still has about 3,000 historical pamphlets.

Due to the consequences of the war, there was a chance cutoff after the year 1628, i.e. in the middle of the Thirty Years' War. Over 4,000 pamphlets from the period 1629 to 1790 are located in the [Biblioteka Jagiellonska](#) in Kraków, Poland, now. The pamphlets from 1791 and afterwards on the Napoleonic wars, the Wars of Liberation, the Revolution of 1848 and on German history in the 20th century still have to be regarded as losses due to the Second World War.