



**Staatsbibliothek  
zu Berlin**

Preußischer Kulturbesitz

## **Department of Early Printed Books**

### **The Archives of the Decker Court Printing Office**

The archives of the *Deckersche Geheime Ober-Hofbuchdruckerei* encompass 69 volumes in folio which contain in chronological order all laws, decrees and regulations which had ever been printed for Prussian ministries in single editions. The Prussian State Library acquired this unique collection in 1926/1927, after it had been offered for sale by a descendant of the Decker family, one baron H.R. von Decker auf Schloss Dittersbach (Lüben County in Silesia); the publishing company had already ceased to be family-owned by that time.

The Decker publishers' dynasty of Berlin also acted as printers to the Prussian court and from 1763 to 1816 they exclusively exercised the right to publish the Prussian government publications. This is why the present collection offers a good and reliable compilation of Prussian edicts, which appear here in their original and authentic printed version.

Most of the single issues of Prussian edicts can also be found in later collections, which the State Library owns as well, but only in the Decker collection are they registered as single issues and arranged in exact chronological order. Hence the archive of the *Deckersche Geheime Ober-Hofbuchdruckerei* is a unique source for the history of law. Later volumes do not only contain edicts, but to an increasing extent also various other forms of printed matter such as ballot papers, share certificates, invitation cards or time-tables.

The files and correspondance of the Decker company, also acquired in 1927, are now kept in the Manuscript Department of the State Library as the "Archiv der Decker'schen Geheimen Oberhofbuchdruckerei 1712-1866". Moreover, the Landesarchiv Berlin keeps letter patents and privileges granted to the company.

#### *Further sources of Prussian Law*

Composite volumes relating to Prussian law, such as miscellanies, official as well as private collections of laws, are classified in the Alter Realkatalog (ARK) under [Jurisprudenz](#)>... > [Preußisches Recht](#) > [Quellen](#).

Two collections of edicts deserve special mention in this context: The *Corpus Constitutionum Marchicarum (CCM)* and the *Novum Corpus Constitutionum Prussico-Brandenburgensium (NCC)*. Conjointly they offer a compilation of Brandenburg-Prussian laws from 1298 to 1810, which, however, is not quite congruous with the Decker Archives: They differ with respect to the arrangement of the matter and also concerning the geographical scope. Moreover, not all of the edicts published have found their way into these collections.

Both CCM (Shelfmark: HA 10 Bo 72, HA 10 Bo 73 and HA 10 Bo 75) and NCC (Shelfmark: HA 10 Bo 76 and HA 10 Bo 77) have been put up in the General Reading Room; in addition they are also available as digital documents (['Preußische Rechtsquellen Digital'](#)).

The publication of laws was put into the responsibility of the Prussian state agencies by royal decree of 27 October 1810. For the period from 1810 to 1906 Prussian laws can be found in the Gesetzessammlung für die Königlich-Preußischen Staaten, which is also available in the General Reading Room (Shelfmark: HA 10 Bo 100).