

History of appraisal theory in German speaking region

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Overview

- German discourse
- Swiss debate
- Austrian discussion

German discourse

- Four milestones
- Third milestone = reading and discussion
- Final discussion

First Milestone

German Archival Conference, Koblenz 1957

1) Georg Wilhelm Sante / Wilhelm Rohr

- analysis of administration structures
- preserve the highest level of administration

2) Hermann Meinert

- Local records are important for local history
- Keep local records

3) Fritz Zimmermann

- Think about archival value of records

⇒ “kopernikanische Wende der Bewertungsdiskussion“

= complete turnaround of appraisal theory

Second Milestone

German Archival Conference Dortmund 1971

Hans Booms: Documentation plan

- criteria for archival value based on public perception
- Agreement with social groups about his criteria
- Starting points:
 - Provenance of records
 - List of historical events

2nd Milestone: West Germany

1970th and 1980th

- Discussion about appraisal criteria :
 - based on content of records
 - Wanted to consider the interests of researchers (historians)

⇒ standstill of the debate at the end of the 1980th

2nd Milestone: East Germany

- Some tools of appraisal:
 - 1965 principals to determine archival value (Grundsätze der Wertermittlung)
 - following different tools of appraisal
 - 1984 a kind of documentation strategy (Dokumentationsprofil)
- ⇒ Definition of historical areas and events to be kept, based on marxist and leninist theory

Third Milestone

Key questions for discussion:

- How German archivists understand the meaning of evidence in the 1990th?
- What relationship exists between administration structures, functions and social memory?
- 10 minutes to read the text
- 20 minutes to discuss the text

Fourth Milestone (last)

- Current debate

⇒ Two approaches

1. Used by State archives
2. Developed for City and county archives

4th m.: State Archives

- Horizontal and vertical appraisal
 - Analysis of structures and functions of the state administration
 - From top to bottom (horizontal)
 - the level of the agency which you appraise (vertical)
 - Only the records of the agency which deals with the records would be kept
 - Documentation of appraisal decisions with a filing plan

4th m.: City Archives

- A kind of documentation strategy called ‘Dokumentationsprofil’
- Holistic approach to create a social memory of a city or county
- Objective: to use the same criteria of appraisal for administrative and private records
- Consider five points

Dokumentationsprofil

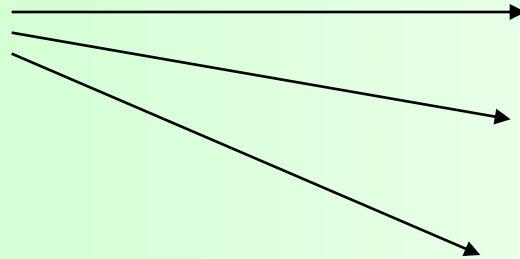
- Categorize local public life:

Main Points

Political life
Health care
Cultural life
...

Sub Points

Politicians
Political events
Polities



Dokumentationsprofil

2nd: to define documentation aims

- Key figures, events, institutions, structures etc.

3rd: to determine documentation degrees

- Both related to the categories

4th: to realise the documentation aims

- Identify and assort relevant records groups and records creators

5th: To analyze the archival value of the defined bank of records



Conclusion Germany

- Currently two approaches in competition
 1. State archives:
 - Analysis of structures and functions as base of appraisal
 2. City archives
 - View on local public life to create a social memory

Switzerland

- 1980th: guidelines
- 1990th appraisal practice related to eastern German principles
- Now: The Federal archives and federal administration work together to appraise records

French speaking Switzerland

- Adoption of the French-Canadian appraisal tool „calendrier de conservation“ (retention schedule)
- Main instrument to appraise records of the administration

Austria

- Only two conferences on appraisal in 2004
- No further debate about appraisal

Practice

- Federal level and some states:
 - administration decides which records would be preserved
- Vienna:
 - Archivists decide which records would be kept

Conclusion

Future of appraisal

- guidelines for digital records used all around the world
- Discuss appraisal development together
- Your thoughts?