

BIBLIOTHECA CRITICA

A View from East Berlin

A Scholarly Library of European Intellectual History
(19th & 20th Centuries)



Library of Professor Karlheinz Barck

East-West Intellectual History, Romance Studies & Aesthetics

We are delighted to offer for sale the extensive private library of the late Professor Karlheinz Barck (1934–2012), known in academic circles as Carlo Barck. As a renowned Romanist, literary historian and theorist of aesthetics, Barck was a defining intellectual figure with an extraordinary career.

As a scholar who lived and worked in the GDR, Barck devoted his career to researching the world outside his country. Despite the political restrictions of the Cold War, he maintained an intensive and continuous intellectual exchange with colleagues in the 'West'. He was a regular participant at the legendary interdisciplinary conferences in Dubrovnik (in what was then Yugoslavia) – a crucial, non-aligned meeting place where scholars from East and West could freely exchange ideas. Barck is best known as co-editor of the monumental encyclopedia *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe* (*Historical Dictionary of Basic Aesthetic Concepts*) and for his profound works on the European avant-garde.

This carefully curated scholarly library reflects decades of research and bears witness to the intellectual exchange between East and West. It comprises some 15,000 volumes, including rare editions, out-of-print academic monographs and indispensable reference works.

Key Thematic Areas

- **Romance Studies and Literary Studies:** Collections on French, Spanish and Italian literature from the early modern period to the end of the 20th century.
- **Aesthetics and Philosophy:** Key texts on the history of aesthetic theory, critical theory and European philosophy.
- **Avant-garde and Surrealism:** Specialised literature on European avant-garde movements, with a particular focus on French and Spanish Surrealism.
- **An Archive of the Cold War Era:** The collection reflects the specific realities of academic life in the GDR. It contains rare Western publications that were difficult to access from behind the Iron Curtain and were often acquired through his international network, alongside GDR-specific editions and translations of Romance literature.

Selected Authors

The following selection of authors' names reflects the subject areas of the book collection: Joyce, Derrida, Barthes, Bachelard, Mauss, Baudrillard, Bataille, Bacon, Foucault, Deleuze, Luhmann, Said, de Sade, Lacan, Freud, Hannah Arendt, Artaud, Breton, Tzara, Lautréamont, Aragon, Soupault, Ball, Rimbaud, Flaubert, Proust, Blanchot, Rousseau, Voltaire, Cervantes, García Lorca, Pessoa, Carpentier, Neruda, Werner Krauss, Ortega y Gasset, Góngora, Gracián, Borges, Fuentes, Rita Schober, Franz Jung, Gramsci, Lukács, Althusser, Carl Einstein, McLuhan, Alexander von Humboldt, Kristeva, Jelinek, Forster, Petrarch, Vico, Hegel, Brecht, Heine, Heiner Müller, Schleef, Kafka, Erich Arendt, Kant, Novalis, Auerbach, Benjamin. Numerous books are of archival quality (containing annotations, dedications, inserts, reviews, newspaper articles and the owner's own notes).

In addition, there are various dictionaries, encyclopedias and books in Spanish, French, Portuguese and English. The collection also includes a very large number of art and illustrated books. The works of individual authors (e.g. Walter Benjamin) are available in several editions, including international ones.

Special Features of the Library

- A unique blend of publications from the Eastern Bloc and Western academic literature, demonstrating the international scope of his research despite geopolitical boundaries.
- Working copies with handwritten marginalia by Carlo Barck, offering unique insights into the thinking of a scholar who acted as a bridge between two divided worlds.
- First editions, rare academic journals and seminal texts on the history of concepts.

This collection is an ideal acquisition for university libraries and specialist research institutes focusing on Romance studies, cultural studies or the intellectual history of the Cold War. It offers a unique opportunity to preserve the legacy of a scholar who overcame the Iron Curtain through the power of aesthetics and literature.

The library is offered in its entirety.

Price: 164,000.00 €

(exclusive of shipping and VAT if applicable)

The library can be viewed in central Berlin (Mitte) by appointment between 16th – 20th September 2026.

Please contact Mr Kai-Henning Gerlach at +49 179 4689506 (phone, Whatsapp, Signal)