# Leiden University Library

## Abstract

Leiden University Library (UBL) houses a wide range of relevant material for conducting research into collections from a colonial context. In addition to books, journals and manuscripts, the UBL also houses extensive archival collections and photographic material.

### History of the organisation

The donation of the Polyglot Bible by [Willem of Orange](#) when the University of Leiden was founded in 1575 also marks the symbolic establishment of the university library. The library was officially opened in 1587 and was located in what is now Leiden University's academy building on Rapenburg. Since the publication of the first library catalogue, the Nomenclator, in 1595, the collection has grown to include many millions of books, manuscripts and other types of documents. Since 2009, the various libraries that had been established at Leiden University over the years have been merged under the name Leiden University Libraries (UBL). The UBL consists of the general university library and the libraries for Social Sciences, Law, Mathematics & Natural Sciences and the East Asian Library.

With regard to research into colonial histories, the UBL manages a large relevant collection, particularly after the library took over the collections of the [Koninlijk Instituut voor de Tropen](#) (Royal Tropical Institute) and the [Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies](#) (KITLV) in 2013 and 2014 respectively. The library of the [Netherlands Institute for the Near East](#) was also incorporated into the UBL in 2018.

In addition to its collection of written sources, the UBL also manages a large number of [Special collections](#), some of which are also [digitally available](#). The [subject guides](#) provide more information about the wide range of available sources and where to find them. In addition to conventional books, the collection also contains tens of thousands of manuscripts, maps, cuneiform tablets and miniatures.

### Research

The UBL's [digital catalogue](#) can be consulted online and contains books, periodicals and other types of material. To facilitate your search, various [subject guides](#) are available. The digitised special collections can also be [consulted online](#). In addition to its extensive collection, the UBL also manages a large amount of archive material, both from Leiden University itself and from personal and other archives. The various archive collections are described in detail in so-called [collection guides](#). These contain extensive information about the available material. If you are unable to find certain information, you can always [contact](#) the organisation.

## Related Aids

- [Sources](#)
- [Scientific research in colonised territories](#)
- [Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV)](#)

## Primary sources

# Secondary sources

Website:

*Online catalogue of the Leiden University Library The online catalogue of Leiden University Libraries allows you to browse the entire library catalogue. Books, journals, other documents and archive material can be requested for reference through this website. To do so, a Leiden University user card is required.*

[https://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/discovery/search?vid=31UKB_LEU:UBL_V1](https://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/discovery/search?vid=31UKB_LEU:UBL_V1)

Website:

*Subject guides Guides by subject that can help you find relevant material for your research.*

[https://www.library.universiteitleiden.nl/subject-guides](https://www.library.universiteitleiden.nl/subject-guides)

Website:

*Collection guides This website provides access to the collection guides of the archives and collections of Leiden University Libraries. A collection guide provides a general description of the items within a collection or archive and provides information about the history and acquisition of the material. The collection guides on this website may also contain an inventory and links to digitised content.*

[https://collectionguides.universiteitleiden.nl/](https://collectionguides.universiteitleiden.nl/)

---

# Relevant Data

TO BE FILLED

_last edited by UNKNOWN as UNKNOWN on 2025-12-10

(notes: This event was automatically created because the YAML file's edit history was empty.)_