

# Stäckel, Paul Gustav | Encyclopedia.com

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(b. Berlin, Germany, 20 August 1862; d. Heidelberg, Germany, 12 December 1919)

*mathematics, history of science.*

Stäckel studied at Berlin and defended his dissertation in 1885. He wrote his *Habilitationsschrift* at Halle in 1891 and then held chairs at various German universities, teaching finally at Heidelberg. His interests were varied, for he worked with equal ease in both mathematics and its history. The chief influence was the work of Weierstrass. He specialized in analytical mechanics (particularly in the use of Lagrangians in problems concerning the motion of points in the presence of given fields of force), related questions in geometry, and properties of analytical functions. A linking problem for these fields was the solution of linear differential equations; Stäckel also explored the existence theorems for such solutions. His other interests in mathematics included set theory and, in his later years, problems concerning prime numbers. He was renowned among his students for delivering new sets of lectures every academic year, and he wrote on problems in mathematical education.

In the history of mathematics Stäckel's interests centered on the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He was especially noted for his role in instituting the publication of Euler's *Opera omnia*; and he also published editions of works, manuscripts, and correspondence of J. H. Lambert, F. and J. Bolyai, Gauss, and Jacobi. In addition, he edited several volumes in Ostwald's *Klassiker der Exakten Wissenschaften*. His interpretive articles dealt largely with the history of the theory of functions and of [non-Euclidean geometry](#). From indications in his and others' writings, it seems clear that locating his *Nachlass* is highly desirable.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

The most comprehensive list of Stäckel's works is in Poggendorff, IV, 1427 - 1428, and V, 1194 - 1195.

For a sympathetic obituary, see O. Perron, "Paul Stäckel," *Sitzungsberichte der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, Math.-naturwiss. K I., Abt. A (1920), no. 7.

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