



Claims Conference ועידת התביעות
The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

International Shoah Archivists Working Forum

Participant Information

General Information

Name and address of institution/archive:

Massuah Institute for the Study of the Holocaust
Tel Yitzhak
45805 Israel

Internet address of web site, if applicable:

www.massuah.org

A new Massuah Web site is expected to go online by the spring of 2004.

Brief description of archival collecting scope in regard to the Holocaust (please indicate any focus on specific geographic areas, topics, or time periods):

The Massuah archives contain rare collections of documents, publications, photographs, and displays.

Main archives:

1. The Ha-no'ar ha-Tsiyyoni and Akiva youth movements in Europe between the world wars, during the Holocaust, and during the She'erit Hapleta period.
2. A "Holocaust mail" collection containing thousands of letters and postcards from occupied Europe and a collection of World War II-era stamps.
3. A unique collection of thousands of hours of Holocaust survivors' testimonies on videotape.
4. Undifferentiated collections from the Holocaust and She'erit Hapleta eras: documents, photographs, artifacts, crafts, and works of art.

Microfilming and Digitization

Total estimated number of pages of Holocaust-relevant archival records (for purposes of estimating, please assume that 1 meter=10,000 pages and 1 foot=3,000 pages):

Estimated number of pages of original records:

The Massuah collections contain about 260 meters—2,600,000 items, of which an estimated 80 percent are original. Total original records: approx. 2,000,000.

Estimated number of pages of these original records that have been microfilmed:

Estimated number of pages of these original records that have been digitized:

20,000 items

Estimated number of pages of records microfilmed and/or duplicated from elsewhere:

20%—500,000

Estimated number of pages of these records microfilmed and/or duplicated from elsewhere that are on microfilm:

30 rolls of microfilm.

Estimated number of pages of these records microfilmed and/or duplicated from elsewhere that have been digitized:

6,000 items that were received on digital media.

Conservation of Individual Items of Particular Significance

If there are specific original archival materials in your collection that are of major historical significance and of exceptional intrinsic value that are in urgent need of conservation, please list them:

1. Seventeen personal diaries and original notebooks of poetry from the Holocaust and She'erit Hapletera eras.
2. 350 personal documents (labor permits, birth certificates, transit papers, I.D. cards, etc.).
3. Posters and banknotes from the Lodz ghetto.
4. Several hundred newspapers and publications.
5. Forty cloth artifacts—flags and pieces of clothing.
6. Illustrated albums; maps.
7. Ten metal artifacts.
8. Shoes.

If you know of specific original archival materials in collections other than your own that are of major historical significance and of exceptional intrinsic value that are in urgent need of conservation, please list them:

We are negotiating the acquisition of two important original collections:

1. Collection related to the Schindler affair—from the personal archives of Dr. Moshe Bejski.
2. Hannah Szenes collection—from the personal archives of the Szenes family.

Acquisitions

If your archive is actively acquiring Holocaust-relevant archival records, please briefly describe your acquisitions program, including an estimate of the average number of pages acquired annually and the sources for such acquisitions (private donors, other repositories, etc.): If your archive has an exchange program with other archives, please briefly describe it:

Does a list of your institution's microfilming and other acquisitions projects already completed and/or currently in progress exist? If so, in what form is it and how can it be accessed?

Cataloging

Briefly describe your current cataloging practices:

* Digitization of the Massuah archives is currently based on the Sapir Classic library and archive management program, manufactured by Idea Information Systems. Sapir was designed for libraries and was adapted for archive management. The program has many shortcomings, the most important of which is the lack of management tools. Many operations are performed manually. For example, there is no way of knowing how many items exist, how they are distributed, how many containers exist, their condition, and how full they are.

* Sorting mechanism in Sapir: the type of material (book, film, map, etc.) appears in the form of an item “notebook” that contains a specific number of fields, in a certain order, and defaults for cataloguing. Each type of material can contain different fields that are relevant to it, appearing in different order, with specific corresponding defaults.

* An item may be connected to a multimedia device such as a film, picture, audio file, or Web site. After the connection is made, the multimedia file can be invoked while the particulars of the item are being viewed. With an appropriate interface, the user may also go onto the Internet.

* Sapir has several types of searches and several ways of performing each search.

Types of searches:

1. Simple search, in which one value is sought in several selected fields.
2. Complex search, in which one value is sought in each field.
3. Guided search, for the inexperienced user. The search is performed in a small number of fields.

Options for performance of each search:

1. Logical condition between fields: in each field the user can stipulate an inter-field logical condition (or, and).
2. In each search, the user can invoke an exact linguistic search function: the value as it appears; lexical root (every word that has the same root as the word searched for); phonetic (every word that sounds like the word entered—soundex); synonyms; and variant Hebrew spellings.

Estimated proportion of Holocaust-related collections in your archive that are already adequately cataloged and in what language(s):

1. Most cataloguing is manual (cards for 95 percent of all collections, including 50 percent at various levels of indexing).
2. Digital cataloguing—35 percent performed.
3. Digital indexing—15 percent.
4. Thus far, cataloguing and indexing have been performed in Hebrew only.

Has your archive developed a controlled vocabulary for the cataloging of its collections? If so, please describe briefly. If not, please explain:

* Indexing of the library and of all archive collections takes place on the basis of a controlled vocabulary that has prepared gradually by the Massuah staff since 1992. The lexicon was developed on the basis of Subject Headings (as distinct from keywords), which, in the opinion of the professional team that supported us then, was suited to the needs of a relatively small pool.

* The lexicon is based on subject headings—main headings, subheadings, and sub-subheadings.

Are the cataloging records accessible in an electronic format? If so, are they accessible to the public (if the electronic catalog is available on the Internet, please provide the Internet address)?

An electronic catalogue is accessible to the public in the reading/collection rooms.

Is there more detailed information such as finding aids, survey notes, or other descriptive tools available for the collections in your archive? If so, please describe (if available on the Internet, please provide the Internet address; if not available on the Internet, please attach an example). Is such more detailed information available to the public?

Accessibility

Briefly describe your current policies regarding access to your collections.

- a. All types of materials are directly accessible today.
- b. The purpose of reorganizing the Massuah archives is to allow online access to all materials to which Massuah holds rights.

*Does your archive duplicate archival collections for other repositories?
If so, please explain under what circumstances:*