

USING HOLOCAUST DOCUMENTS ONLINE: THE CHANGING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ARCHIVIST AND THE USERS



23-24 November 2020 | Yad Vashem, Jerusalem



We would like to invite you to participate in a virtual international workshop on the Changing Relationship between the Archivist and the User, organized by Yad Vashem – the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, with the support and cooperation of EVZ – the Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future", on 23-24 November 2020. The Foundation "Remembrance, Responsibility and Future" (German acronym EVZ) was established in the year 2000 to pay compensation to former forced labourers during the period of National Socialism.

Since 2001, the EVZ Foundation has also granted humanitarian aid to survivors, promoted a critical examination of history and human rights. The Foundation is thus an expression of the continuing political and moral responsibility of the state, the private sector and society as a whole for Nazi injustice and towards the victims.

Yad Vashem – the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, stands at the forefront of Holocaust education, remembrance, documentation and research. The use of leading-edge technological platforms maximizes accessibility to the vast information in the Yad Vashem archival collections, making information and online educational initiatives available to an expanding and dynamic global audience.

The joint EVZ-Yad Vashem workshops provide a platform for discussions of contemporary questions, methodologies and programs, related to the accessibility of Holocaust documentation. In this workshop, taking place in the shadow of a the Covid-19 pandemic, we will deal with how open access to Holocaust documentation, and services provided remotely can redefine standard procedure and transform the way we interact, and we will explore the challenges and benefits these changes bring. Ever greater use of technology in the service of document accessibility raises new and complex professional and ethical questions.

Focusing on the test case of Holocaust documentation, the workshop will address the changing role of the archivist/reference expert in interaction with the user. We will attempt to define expertise in an age where large amounts and sometimes all source material and information is accessible online, and how this actuality influences changes in methodology and tools.

How does widely-used remote access to Holocaust documentation change the interface between expert and user? Is the role of the archivist to supply information? Is the role of the archivist to provide instruction in research methodology? Is the archivist the authority for the user? Does the archive have responsibility as the gatekeeper? What kind of users are archivists in relationship with (e.g. researchers, private persons, creators of apps and other tools, curators, developers, etc.)? Is the community of users becoming more diverse and what does this mean for archivists? Does direct access to the documentation make cataloguing

(metadata, archival descriptions) redundant and, if so, can this remove the document from its context? Does this require changes in cataloguing methodology? Is there a place for the user in improving descriptions and adding knowledge (crowdsourcing for example)?

These questions are always pertinent, however the shift to working remotely imposed upon us by the Covid-19 pandemic amplifies the need for a discussion on these issues and on various tools for dealing with the challenges.

Call for Proposals

The target group for this international workshop are Holocaust archival collection managers, Holocaust archivists and researchers, experts in making Holocaust documentation accessible, reference archivists, and anyone dealing with Holocaust documentation.

With the above questions in mind, the workshop will address these aspects of the topic:

- A. The place of the archivist/reference expert in the digital age
- B. Evolution of archival cataloguing in the age of open access and its relevance
- C. The Covid-19 pandemic as a catalyst for these changes

Proposals are now being accepted for individual presentations.

Each accepted proposal will be allotted up to 15 minutes for presentation followed by discussion. The workshop is geared toward group discussion by the participants on a variety of topics throughout the entire workshop, with the aid of presentations, and guest lectures.

We reserve the right to select proposals appropriate for presentation at the workshop. Additional applicants may be selected to participate in the workshop and its discussions without giving a presentation.

The workshop will be conducted in English and will take place on Zoom.

Note that the workshop sessions will be recorded. We will request that participants who will be presenting at the workshop send us their presentations and text. Our intention is to publish portions of the workshop proceedings online.

Please send a short proposal of no more than 500 words and a CV (including all relevant contact information).

CONTACTS

Send proposals to

Ms. Naama Leibman Shilo: naama.leibman@yadvashem.org.il

and to Mr. Hillel Solomon: hillel.solomon@yadvashem.org.il

The deadline to submit proposals is 21 September, 2020.

Notification will be sent via email by 1 November, 2020.



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