



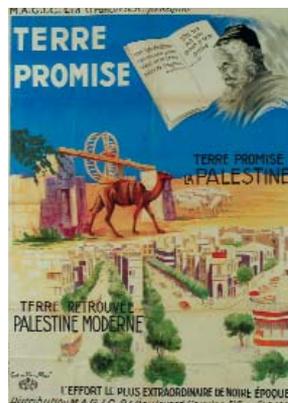
Israel

Dov Winer
The Jewish Agency for Israel

Policy scenario

The population at the end of 2004 numbers 6.8 million: 76.5% Jews (5,165 K); 15.9% Moslems (1,072 K); 2.1% Christians (142 K); and 1.6% Druze (110 K). The economy began to recover in 2004 following a crisis of three years: Business Week announced in September that the Israel hi-tech industry exports rose by 20% in the first half of the year and reached 6 billion dollars. The increase in the demand for hi-tech workers reached 120% with salaries for programmers rising by 15%. Investments by risk capital funds reached 1.4 billion dollars with the funds mobilising 1 billion dollars in 2004 compared to only 28 million in 2003. In the fourth quarter the economy grew at an annualised rate of 4.1% (annualised rate of 3.9% for the second half of 2004). The telecom market developments include convergence, increased competition and a fall in prices. CableTV reaches households are 75%; by digital multi-channel TV, 72%; mobile telephony per 100 inhabitants is 95%; and fixed phone lines per households, 95%. The number Internet users doubled in the last two years and reached 2.7 million in May 2004. About 58% of the households are connected to the Internet and among them 86% to broadband services (in October 600 K users to ADSL services and 320 K users through cable TV). The competition for broadband provision began as late as early 2002. Young people (12 to 17 years old) doubled the mean amount of time they spend surfing the Internet per week since 2002 while the share of time applied to other media went down (TGI, February 2005). The Israel Internet Society reports The number of domain names in Israel at the end of 2004 was 65,054, which represents a growth of 14% in comparison to 2003 (56,899). The policy stimulating competition is being persistently

pursued. CableTV companies established the HotTelecom Corporation which began providing VOIP telephony services in November; their universal extension is expected for the first half of 2005. The Partner cellular company announced its intention to offer fixed VOIP telephony packaged with cellular services; similar services are expected from international telephony providers. The competition among international call providers led to record low prices: .020-.025 Euro per minute for the first 60-120 minutes. CableTV announced an experiment with Video on Demand that will provide immediate services from a wider assortment of content; they seek to stress their interactivity advantages in contrast to satellite digital television, which is unable to provide interactive services (the satellite company is seeking to solve the problem through Internet services). Personal phone number mobility will be implemented in 2006 allowing subscribers to change providers without changing their phone numbers; the move is intended to increase competition. The tender for the selection of new license holders of the TV Second Commercial Channel is expected to be completed in 2005. The Ministry of Finance announced that then it is expected the consolidation of the distribution networks held by the Israel Broadcasting Authority and the Second Authority into a digital network. All parts of the country will then be able to receive the broadcasts of Channels 1 and 33 (public), and 2 and 10 (commercial) without payment. Israel maintains its status as a world-class centre for RTD with 4.2% of its GDP applied in this area and it has the world's highest concentration of start-up corporations outside of Silicon Valley.
www.iserd.org.il
www.iserd.org.il/presentations/isrelpresentationFPb/whyisrael_files/frame.htm





eGovernment Initiative – Standards, Accessibility and Usability

www.iserd.org.il/Idealist/StrategicObjectives/documents/ISERD_eGov_Infoday_18012005.zip

The Ministry of Finance coordinates a sophisticated initiative for eGovernment, which integrates all ministries, and is establishing highly developed services for citizens. Deployment of ID Support and Smart ID Cards to all citizens is to be completed by 2007; the service applications of the eGov Portal includes: information, secure mail, GIS, payments, forms, and actions. The Tehila program supports citizen connectivity through web access, hosting and security. The Internal layers interface with the citizens through Tehila and include Mercava (governmental ERP); cross-government HR management, finance, and logistics. The Ministry network is based on the Governmental Intranet: an enterprise portal, e-mail, and collaboration tools.

A Governmental Committee for Standards in eGovernment was launched in July 2004. Its agenda includes a user interface, use of XML as the leading standard for information integration, adoption of relevant standards, and the introduction of a governmental metadata set for marking information. Several WGs have been established:

- governmental interoperability: standards, information processing, web services, guidelines for development for horizontal applications, e-procurement, and addressing (URI)
- governmental websites: user interface, content and design; accessibility; guidelines for implementing the "Freedom of Access to Information Law"; information and knowledge management; channels – kiosks, digital TV, cellular etc.
- governmental content
- control and best practice

Jerusalem Declaration

The Jerusalem Declaration on Digitisation of Science and Cultural Heritage was adopted at the conclusion of the Jerusalem Conference held in October 2004 under the auspices of the statutory institutions who are responsible for scientific and cultural activities in Israel. The six-point declaration firmly acknowledged the work carried out in the NRG framework and the MINERVA project. The declaration calls for the development of a concerted policy for the digitisation of Jewish cultural assets, their long term preservation, and their re-incorporation into the contemporary life of worldwide Jewry as living assets re-creating Jewish culture in its variety and multi-faceted aspects. It calls for the preservation of cultural diversity, giving voice to the historical and contemporary creativity of Arab, Druze, Islamic and Christian cultures and recognising their tangible and intangible heritage.

The declaration adopted the *Charter of Parma*. It also stresses the Dutch Presidency NRG conference call: «to strategically integrate [the coordination of digital heritage] with its economic sectors of reference (such as culture, education, tourism, technology, research...) their policies and programmes, their policy-drivers (institutions, industries, users, general public,...) and their objectives in the enlarged Europe».

The Conference calls on the Israeli government to develop a national policy for the digitisation of scientific and cultural heritage. This policy will build upon the sophisticated communication and technological infrastructures already existing. It will integrate the combined efforts of its statutory institutions, cultural heritage sector, ICT educational programmes, broadcasting industry, eGovernment sector, and the ICT industry.

www.minervaisrael.org.il/s183.html



Parliament (Knesset) Committee Discuss Digitisation Policy

M.K. Michael Eitan heads the Committee for Internet and Information Technologies in the Israel Parliament (The Knesset). He included the Jerusalem Declaration in the agenda of its committee at the end of December 2004. The meeting was well attended with the participation of the coordinators of all MINERVA WGs in Israel and the various officers and institutions with interest in the eGovernment programme. The author of this report presented the background of the Lund Action Plan, the NRG framework, the MINERVA project, and the Jerusalem Declaration.

At the end of the ensuing discussion, M.K. Michael Eitan, together with Yitzhak Cohen, the senior deputy head of the General Comptroller Division of the Ministry of Finance (who also chairs the Israel Information Society Programme Committee), approved the digitisation proposal. Mr. Cohen will appoint an economist from the Ministry of Finance to carry out an in-depth analysis of the contribution of digitisation of science and cultural heritage to the national economy. The purpose of the project, to be carried out with the MINERVA coordinators in Israel, is to lay the groundwork towards the development of a comprehensive policy in this area.

Co-operation

1. National networks

MINERVA is coordinated in Israel by the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Jewish Agency for Israel. The coordinators invited all institutions with statutory responsibilities in the area of cultural heritage

to set up a joint forum, whose purpose is to advance the development of a national policy for the digitisation of Israel's cultural and scientific heritage.

The institutions taking part in this network include: The Israel National Archives; The Jewish National and University Library; The Israel Committee for Unesco; the Directorate for Culture at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports including the Department for Public Libraries and Department for Museums; The International Council for Museums in Israel; the Centre for Digital Information (MALMAD) and the Centre for Learning Technologies (MEITAL), both established by the IUCC (Inter University Computer Centre); the Pais Council for Arts and Culture (established by the National Lottery). The Israel Antiquities Authority and the Broadcasting Authorities are also expected to join this forum.

2. International co-operation

Consultation on Jewish Cultural Heritage Digitisation

The consultation was held during the VAST2004 conference (www.vast2004.org), which followed a year of consultations among the participants which included EPOCH, MINERVA, the MLA UK, ENAME, The European Association for Jewish Culture, The Institute for Jewish Policy Research, The European Day of Jewish Culture (B'nai B'rith Europe, the European Council of Jewish Communities, and Red de Juderias de Espana); The Hanadiv Foundation; The Alliance Israelite Universelle; and the Jewish Agency for Israel. The participants identified a common area of interest derived from a current European focus on the challenges posed by cultural diversity on the one hand and on the other, the interest of Jewish institutions to digitise cultural heritage in order to make them

accessible and to disseminate and re-integrated the assets into the cycle of Jewish life. The operative conclusions included: (1) A good practice survey on digitisation in close cooperation with the NRG (2) A mapping of controlled vocabularies in Jewish heritage in view of expanding access to relevant databases. (3) A feasibility study for a GIS layer mapping European archaeological findings related to Jewish culture, and (4) A conference to be held at the end of July 2005.

Israel UNESCO Committee

The Committee for ICT is headed by Prof. Niv Ahituv from Tel Aviv University. The development of international links includes Israel's participation in the WSIS; accessibility and e-Inclusion international initiatives; implementation of electronic documentation of cultural-related decisions of the government; and harnessing the potential of ICT for potential building and more.

6FP IST Programme

Israel has participated in the following projects relevant to digitisation and ICT applications to cultural heritage:

TIRAMISU

Coordinator: Optibase Partners: Emblaze, Arttic Israel. It addresses the problem of creation, delivery and consumption of audio-visual media across a wide range of hybrid networks and platforms, where security issues, such as intellectual property rights protection, privacy, access rights and transaction tracing, are of major concern.

U-BROAD

Coordinator: Metalink; Partner: Bar Ilan University. Ultra High Bit Rate Over Copper Technologies for BROADband Multiservice Access. The purpose is to

develop and integrate advanced access technologies for delivery of "true" broadband content over Ethernet-based networks to the customer premises. It aims at quadrupling the total bandwidth available to the end user.

There are Israeli partners in the following projects:

DIP (Data, Information, and Process Integration with Semantic Web Services)

Partner: Unicorn Solutions.

Semantic web service technology will allow structural and semantic definitions of documents to provide innovative architectures for knowledge management.

EPOCH (European Research Network on Excellence in Processing Open Cultural Heritage)

Partner: Ben Gurion University.

Effective and sustainable application of digital technology applied to the archaeological research and cultural heritage presentation at museums, monuments, and historic sites.

AIM@SHAPE (Advanced and Innovative Models And Tools for the Development of Semantic-based Systems for Handling, Acquiring, and Processing Knowledge Embedded in Multidimensional Digital Objects)

Partners: Weizmann Institute of Science;

Technion - Israel Institute of Technology.

The mission of AIM@SHAPE is to advance research in the direction of semantic-based shape representations and semantic-oriented tools to acquire, build, transmit, and process shapes with its associated knowledge.

ENABLED (Enhanced Network Accessibility for the Blind and Visually Impaired)

Partner: ALVA Innovision AHB Ltd.



Developing technologies that create universal accessible contents on the web, and algorithms that convert existing inaccessible contents into accessible; and developing (ubiquitous) tools that enable easy access to information, and interfaces that are adaptable and interoperable regardless where the user is and what equipment he is using.

MUSCLE (Multimedia Understanding through Semantics, Computation and Learning)
Partner: Technion – Israel Institute of Technology).
Machine learning and cross-modal interaction for the (semi-) automatic generation of metadata with high semantic content for multimedia documents. Improving interoperability and exchangeability of heterogeneous and distributed (meta) data to enable data descriptions of high semantic content (e.g. ontologies, MPEG7 and XML schemata) and inference schemes that can reason.

MINERVA Plus (Ministerial Network for Valorising Activities in Digitisation)
Partners: Ministry of Science and Technology;
The Jewish Agency for Israel)

Hebrew Paleography Project
By the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities and CNRS Centre National de Recherche Scientifique (Paris). The purpose of the project is to describe the graphic, technical, and physical characteristic of the Hebrew manuscripts from the Middle Ages. A total of some 6,400 manuscripts that are available at libraries in Israel, the US, France, UK, Russia, Italy, Ireland, Germany, Hungary, Denmark, Czech Republic and Egypt have been documented and indexed in a database that includes 700 fields with sophisticated indexing, updating and retrieval facilities. For each manuscript

graphics experts have prepared alphabetical tables, and photograph files are catalogued by the type and kind of the manuscript in chronological order.
Contact: Prof. Malachi Beit-Arie and Prof. Colette Sirat
beitarie@vms.huji.ac.il

Innovative digitisation technologies from Israel

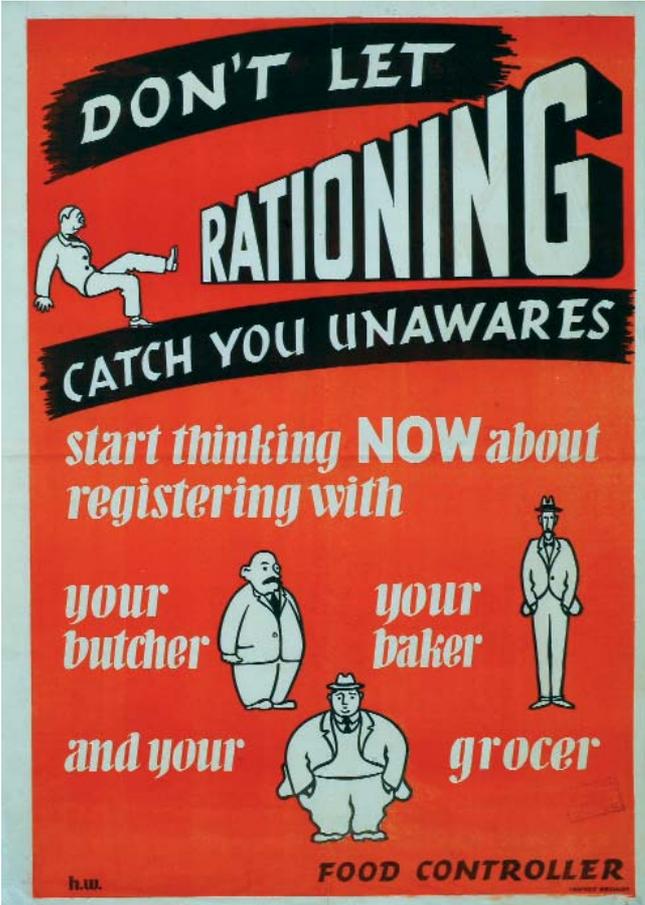
DIGITOOL
The ExLibris Corporation, a leader in the provision of multilingual OPACs (ALEPH), launched the DigiTool, a digital asset management tool that enables organisations of any size to manage, control, and share existing digital content or to embark on the digitisation of a collection. It also enables cataloguers and non-staff users to upload digital assets and create associated metadata.
www.exlibrisgroup.com/digitool.htm

OLIVE
The corporation developed an innovative ECM (Enterprise Content Management) system. XML is the key for their unified content management, preservation portability and exchange. Their technologies automatically turn existing documents and systems in XML. Lately it has expanded behind the original newspapers market (170) with installations in the British Library, Oxford University and a mass digitising assembly line at the US DoD.
www.olivesoftware.com/

IDEA
A consortium of 42 colleges in Israel contracted the digitisation of their libraries using the Sapphire Enterprise system. It is already installed in more than 990 libraries and archives like the Israel Museum and the



Tourism in Palestine © Central Zionist Archives



Food Controller – Rationing Poster © Central Zionist Archives

Invest in Fishing
© Central Zionist Archives



Holocaust Remembrance Authority (Yad Vashem). Services provided span cataloguing, reporting, workflow, procurement, messaging, Barcode, RFID and reporting.
www.idea-is.co.il

Euromed Heritage (MEDA)

The Israel Antiquities Authority is a partner to some regional projects:

- DELTA for the development of Cultural Territorial Systems. Partners include Algeria, Malta, Morocco and the Palestine Authority
www.imednet.it/delta/01-ENGLISH/deltaproject_en.html
- CORPUS Levant contributes to the preservation of local traditional architecture for its identity value, sustainable development and ancient housing stock rehabilitation
www.meda-corpus.net/
- The Byzantium Early Islam project's for a better knowledge and safeguard of Byzantine and Islamic cultural heritage
www.eumedis.net/en/news/id/209

EUMEDIS

The Israel Ministry of Tourism and the Israel Antiquities Authority are partners to DAEDALIS (among the partners are also Jordan and Tunisia) whose purpose is the modernisation of the cultural heritage field empowering the professionals with new services of the networked economy: Delivery of Mediterranean Destination Links in a Unified Environment.

WSA

The World Summit Award is a competition in the framework of the WSIS-Tunis (November 2005) that

seeks to demonstrate the benefits of the information society in terms of the new qualities in content and applications (www.wsis-award.org). In Israel it is coordinated by Susan Hazan, Curator of New Media (wsa-israel@icnm.net). Committees have been set up in the various areas for national competitions: e-Culture (The MINERVA Network); e-Government; e-Science; e-Commerce; e-Entertainment; e-Health; and e-Learning, with a special category on e-Inclusion.

Europrix – TTA

The EUROPRIX Top Talent Award is Europe's contest for innovative projects and creative contents for top students and young professionals using all multimedia channels and platforms, organised by the ICNM (International Centre for New Media, Austria). The categories are the following: Broadband/Online; Offline/DVD; Mobile Contents; Interactive TV & Video; Games Platforms; Interactive Computer Graphics; Content Tools & Interface Design; Cross Media. In Israel the competition is organised by MAKASH.
www.toptalent.europrix.org/
www.europrix.org.il
www.makash.org.il

In 2004 one of the three finalists in Cross-Media was an installation (The Web is a Living Organism) by a team composed of Mushon Zer-Aviv (<http://shual.com>), Yaniv Solnik and Yair Reshef from the Israel Centre for Digital Art (Galit Eilat).

3. NRG and MINERVA results, interpretation and impact

The work of the NRG in Israel sustained by the network of statutory institutions and the MINERVA Working Groups has had a substantial impact. There is an increased



awareness of international developments and the need to define a national policy. The substantial international presence from the NRG, MINERVA and the Digitisation Cluster projects strongly supported the local efforts.

MINERVA Working groups

Good Practice and Competence Centres

The coordinator of the WG is Orly Simon, Head of the Information Technology Department at the Jewish National and University Library (JNUL). The work focused on the current survey to map and identify good practices on digitisation of cultural heritage. This survey is now to be extended to Jewish cultural heritage resources in Europe to be held in close cooperation with the NRG representatives and other institutions from Europe. Sandra Siano-Weinreb from the eJewish.info staff has assumed responsibility to complete the mapping. Israel has assumed responsibility with Sweden in MINERVA Plus for WP to coordinate Digitisation Cycle Cost Reduction. A comprehensive literature review was carried out.

www.minervaeurope.org/structure/workinggroups/goodpract/costreduction/docindex.htm

A seminar on cost reduction was organised by the Swedish National Archives (Borje Justrell, Director for ICT) in Fransta, Sweden. Orly Simon jointly chaired the seminar and participants included Simon Tanner from King's College, London and Klas Jadeglans IT Manager at the Fransta Laboratories.

User Needs and Quality Framework for Common Access Points

Susan Hazan, Curator of New Media at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, coordinates the WG. The group started

meeting early in the project and in June set as its long term goal to develop a code of practice in Israel based on the ten Parma Principles of Quality of Cultural Sites. In July the group met with Gila Gertel Hasson, the coordinator for accessibility of the Israel Internet Association, and reviewed assistive technologies and accessible environments. The Jerusalem Conference included notable presentations in two workshops, one dedicated to accessibility (e.g. A blind user's perspective by Gidi Aharonovich) and another with leading practitioners from Israel who showcased their usability achievements. Susan Hazan has been selected as coordinator of the national finalists in Israel for the Global WSA 2005 Contest. The MINERVA network will coordinate the national competition in the e-Culture category.

Interoperability and Service Provision

Ora Zehavi from Haifa University and Amalia Keshet from the Israel Museum coordinate the WG. The group held several coordinating sessions and decided to focus their work plan. Dr. Judith Bar Ilan, Ora Zehavi and Rachel Kedar prepared a detailed proposal for mapping and defining a WalkThru among the various metadata sets used for cataloguing resources in Israel. At the Jerusalem Conference the WG focused on issues related to legal matters, copyright, and plans for expansion of the Creative Commons initiative to Israel.

Discovery of digitised content, multilingualism issues and thesauri

The WG is coordinated by Dr. Allison Kupietzki, Collections Database Manager at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem, who is working closely with Dr. Uri Miller from the staff of the eJewish.info project. This last project carried out in early 2004 was a comprehensive survey of controlled vocabularies related to Israel

and Jewish cultural heritage. The scope was mainly international and 29 vocabularies were identified. The questionnaire, adapted from Frans Van Assche's CEN/ISSS survey, now serves the MINERVA Multilingual Survey being carried out by the Hungarian National Library. The WG in Israel is supporting this effort and is seeking to identify further multilingual controlled vocabularies. Dov Winer is carrying a review of alternative initiatives for the integration of controlled vocabularies (SWAD SKOS; IMS-Vdex and CEN/ISS Vodex; and URI CORDRA).

Course on Digitisation

The work programme for MINERVA Plus in Israel includes the development and a first version of a course on digitisation of cultural assets. The course is planned for April 2005 and will be coordinated by Orly Simon from the JNUL. It is targeted to small and medium-sized cultural institutions (libraries, archives and museums). The translation of materials for the course has begun and there are advanced contacts for its expansion: in cooperation with MEITAL, the Israel Universities Centre for Learning Technologies, the feasibility of an online edition is being considered; in cooperation with EPOCH and the Jewish Agency for Israel, an online/face to face edition focused on Jewish cultural heritage digitisation is now being planned in detail.

Jerusalem Conference

The Jerusalem Conference on Digitisation of Science and Cultural Heritage (October 2004) brought together practitioners and researchers in these areas for the first time in Israel. It was held under the auspices of the statutory institutions in Israel and in close cooperation with MINERVA [The Ministry of Science and Technology

and the Jewish Agency for Israel], EVA Conferences, and Harvard University (Judaica Library).
www.minervaisrael.org.il

The Digitisation Cluster

(www.minervaeurope.org/digiccluster.htm) projects moderated several workshops in the second day: MINERVA (Pier Giacomo Sola), EPOCH (Prof. Franco Niccolucci and Dr. Sorin Hermon, CALIMERA (Breda Karun), PrestoSpace (Didier Giraud) and the CNR Italy (Prof. Oreste Signore). Additional lecturers from abroad included Nadezhda Brakker from the Russian Federation NRG and Violet Gilboa from Harvard University. The MINERVA WGs organised the workshops during the first day: Good Practices showcased some of the best projects currently being carried out in Israel; User Needs and Quality Framework explored accessibility, usability and user needs issues. The WGs on Inventories worked together on Interoperability and organised sessions that focused on culture, technology and copyright law. The workshops together with over 35 posters exhibited in the Israel Museum Youth Wing Agora Courtyard offered a welcome opportunity for all participants to meet and discuss their work. The conference concluded with the adoption of the Jerusalem Declaration of Digitisation of Science and Cultural Heritage (see above). A provisional date has been set for next year.

Seminar on the SQI

David Massart from the EUN (European Schoolnet) is active in the CEN/ISSS Learning Technology Workshop that is leading the development of the SQI. In January 2005 he moderated a seminar "The cockroach of repository interoperability - on the Simple Query Interface". The SQI is an Application Program Interface



(API) for querying heterogeneous repositories of learning objects.

www.prolearn-project.org/lori

Main digitisation initiatives

1. National portals for culture / networked digital repositories

The Jewish National and University Library (JNUL)

The Shapell Family Digitisation Project announced new digitised resources on its website. The Historic Hebrew Newspapers in early in 2004 included: Halevanon, (1863); Hamagid (1856); Havazelet (1863). The new additions include: Hameliz (Odessa and St. Petersburg, 1860-104) with over 33,000 pages (5,600 issues). It was the organ of the Russian Jewish Maskilim (Jewish Enlightenment) and early "Hoveve Tziyon". Another is Hazefirah (Warsaw and Berlin, 1862-1931) with over 45,000 pages and 9,200 issues; initially dedicated to news and science, and later, under Sokolow, become strongly identified with the Zionist movement.
<http://jnul.huji.ac.il/newspapers>

Maimonides Anniversary

At the 800th anniversary of the death of Moses Maimonides (Rambam) the library digitised and opened to the public its rarest manuscripts and books: part of the commentary on the Mishnah in Maimonides' own handwriting; various other 13th - 15th century manuscripts and several incunabula.
www.jnul.huji.ac.il/d1/mss/html/rambam_1.htm
At the end of 2004 an initial group of some 100 volumes, ranging from 15th century incunabula to early 20th century works, has been digitised with the support

of the Dorot Foundation. Among them: the Moreh Nevuhim (Guide for the Perplexed) by Maimonides (Rome, circa 1480) and a Passover Haggadah with a Ladino translation (Venice, 1609).

The JNUL Music Department has its 63,000 catalogue records converted to the MARC format and integrated into the general catalogue. New samples of digitised music from its National Sound Archives – Lag Ba'Omer and Hanukkah selections.

The Index of Articles on Jewish Studies database has been converted to the new frameless Aleph-500 interface.
<http://jnul.huji.ac.il/rambi/>

The Israel Union List (ULI)

It has been upgraded. The conversion of most of the academic libraries to the standard MARC format resulted in much more uniformity enabling the creation of a union catalogue with full cataloguing records (in contrast with the old ULI which was a brief-record master index to the holdings of the participating libraries).

The Israel National Archives

The first phase of the scanning and digitisation project is about to be completed with 1,100,000 frames (due to legal reasons the procedure will be to first to photograph in microfilm and then digitise). The selection is determined by demand and a goal to consolidate corpuses of documents. It included the massive digitisation of maps: 4,000 maps from the Mandate Period and the early years of the State. The next phase will be guided by demand; technologies for rapid digitisation will be introduced, as documents will only be required in digital form; resulting in a one-step procedure both for supplying the document and labelling on demand. Selection is determined by

Arab Football Club Al-Kawmi Sports Club
Opening of Football Season
© Central Zionist Archives



cataloguing, and preference will be given to documents already catalogued; the digitisation provider receives the catalogue file to which he adds: the number of frames scanned, and the name of file produced.

The tender for digitising 6,000 hours of audio recordings was completed and the contract awarded. The tender publication for the digitisation of video resources will be issued in the coming months; legacy video materials in a variety of formats are included, and some hundreds of stages require implementation in this project. Industrial scanning facilities for automating the processing of negatives, slides and pictures will soon be acquired. A good solution for the digitisation of the glass plate negatives has still not been found.

A standalone computer that grants access to all immigrants registers (Olim Books) was installed in the lecture room. The production of the National Archives website has been delayed. The large, standalone new audio and video digitisation project was also delayed due to legal/bureaucratic procedures; however a solution seems to have been found.

The planning for Phase II of the Scanning/Digitisation project is being completed and it will be more selective. Advanced negotiations are being held with (1) the Holocaust Museum in Washington which is interested in the documentation of the Eichmann and Demjanuk trials; testimonies and documents from survivors (2) the University of New York which is interested in foreign policy papers specially those related to relations with the USA. Negotiations are well advanced and the technologies of the OLIVE Corporation are being seriously considered.

The Israel Archives Network vision for a comprehensive network serving all public archives in Israel has been delayed due to legal/bureaucratic obstacles. Meanwhile the hardware was acquired and installed while the

obstacles are being surmounted. Boaz Avishar is the IT Manager of the Archives pmo55@int.gov.il.

2. Services for the users

Central Zionist Archives (CZA)

The CZA launched its archive, making the catalogues accessible to the public through the website.

Remote researchers can now access over 230,000 file descriptions, 250,000 photograph descriptions, and 25,000 descriptions of maps, posters and books.

www.zionistarchives.org.il

While the website incorporates displays of selected digitised documents illustrating the history of the Zionist movement, only a small amount of the 4 million digitised documents and 250,000 digitised photographs that are available in-house are at this time accessible on the website.

A very popular service of the archive is seeking relatives. The resources are described at:

www.isragen.org.il/ROS/ARCHIVES/archive-CZ0-2.html

The CZA holds a copy of the Immigrant Registers to Palestine/Israel, from 1919-1968, previously held at the Jewish Agency's Relatives Search Bureau. The 186 registers record the names in chronological fashion (in Hebrew) of those arriving in Palestine/Israel by ship, plane and even by foot. It also holds about 200 drawers containing over 650,000 alphabetically arranged cards (in Hebrew) of immigration candidates and immigrants to Palestine/Israel, covering the years 1920 – 1964.

Yad Vashem – Holocaust Memorial Authority

The Central Database of Shoah Victims' Names was opened to the public.

It currently holds close to 3 million names of Jews

commemorated in the database. This is an attempt to reconstruct the names and life stories of the Jews who perished in the Shoah. The names have been compiled from Pages of Testimony (forms with biographical data on victims submitted by family, friends, and acquaintances), gathered since the 1950s as well as from lists of names compiled for a variety of purposes by the Nazis and other entities in Europe during and after WWII. Millions of names that appear in historical documents have not yet been identified nor recorded in the database.

www.l.yadvashem.org/remembrance/names/site/home_names.html

Israel Antiquities Authority

It inaugurated its website which includes administrative information; articles; publications; educational programs and gallery of sites and finds. Several features are particularly attractive: exhibitions online, the most prominent being the Dead Sea Scrolls accompanied by experts' articles on their discovery, deciphering and preservation; interactive maps dotted with all sites that underwent conservation by the IAA. Each site is linked to descriptions of the processes for preservation and the means for accomplishment; a detailed glossary of conservation terms including illustrations; it was developed in cooperation with the conservation unit of the Getty Museum and creates a unified terminology aiding the surfer in reading the various articles. Contact: Yuval Baruch and Rachel Kudish-Vashdi kudish@israntique.org.il. www.israntique.org.il

LIQUID SPACES

It was a landmark digital art exhibit at the Israel Museum in Jerusalem in 2004. Alex Ward - Curator of Design and Architecture and curator of the exhibition

and Susan Hazan - Curator of New Media noted how 'Interactive art is rapidly becoming an integral part of the fabric of the urban environment from building facades to shop window dressings, from the way we are entertained and how we entertain ourselves and even to the way we visit museums and experience art'. The exhibit brought together the work of five young Israelis living and working in New York, coming from different backgrounds - industrial design, literature and film, music, architecture, and photography - and the common thread that connects them is the fact that their works are all digital, shifting from their electronic encryptions into material manifestations in the exhibition space. See: www.imj.org.il/eng/exhibitions/2003/liquid/

3. Emerging initiatives

DIGITISATION OF BROADCASTING ARCHIVES

Israel Broadcasting Authority

The archive gives research services to programs produced in the IBA and for other production companies in Israel and throughout the world. The holdings consist of about 100,000 hours of TV programmes in various genres (news, documentaries, entertainment, sports – both in Hebrew and Arabic) and in several film formats: 16mm, tapes, Umatic cassettes, betacam sp and Analog cassettes. The programmes are preserved in the archives and are catalogued textually on a mainframe computer from the 1980's. The digitisation project was launched in 2004. The first phase (2005) is dedicated to setting up the technical infrastructure: computer room, broadband lines and a media asset management system. All new footage will be digitised in mpg1 for viewing and rough



cut purposes; storage will be in mpg2 – 25 megabits. The director of the film archive is Billy Segal
 billys@iba.org.il.
 www.iba.org.il

Digitisation Program of the Second Authority for Radio and Television

The Authority is the regulatory body for commercial broadcasting in Israel. It announced the establishment of its information centre with the double purpose of documenting its activities and digitising its assets for public access and long term preservation. Background information will be uploaded including position papers, briefings for decision makers, and guidelines that were sent to the license holders. A central component of the information centre is the digitisation of the broadcastings from the channels overseen by the Authority. Since the establishment of Channel 2 and Channel 10 the Authority recorded their broadcasts. About 110,000 broadcasting hours should be digitised. The Israeli programs and films will be catalogued so that best access will be provided to these materials. Initially only well defined target populations will have access, such as researchers from the universities in the area of communications and other fields and institutions for advancing public causes. The director for strategy and research in charge of the project is Nechama Laor
 nechama@rashut2.org.il
 www.rashut2.org.il

The Israel Museum in Jerusalem Collections Database

The IMJ inaugurated a multilingual bi-directional collections database (Hebrew and English; Arabic and Russian planned). The database contains 95,000 object cards (catalogue cards) and 100,000 satellite cards

(restoration cards, gallery cards, artist cards). These cards are illustrated with over 20,000 digital images. The project included the construction of a bilingual lexicon of 100,000 terms. The Image Search Engine (IMAGINE) was installed in June and has 30 internal users. Eventually it will serve the public via the Museum's Information Centre and site.

Directorate for Culture – Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports Department of Museums

The tender documents for the acquisition of a uniform software platform for cataloguing the assets of recognised museums in Israel have been completed. The tender will be carried out as soon as the new State Budget is approved. The present plans are for when the provider will be chosen to carry out a pilot experiment in two museums (medium and large size). The tender follows a very successful CFI (Call for Information) that identifies a wide offer of excellent products available in the Israel market. The controlled vocabularies developed in the Israel Antiquities Authority and in the Israel Museum in Jerusalem will serve for cataloguing all the museum assets. Contact: Shlomit Nemlich shlomitn@most.gov.il

Department of Public Libraries

The department established a procedure for the joint acquisition of databases for all public libraries in Israel. Those include the Ynet Encyclopaedia, the Szold Database on Education and Social Sciences, the Haifa Periodicals Index, The Galim, and the Hebrew Law Data. The department also sponsors the Sasa Virtual Bibliographical Services for Public Libraries. Courses on the use of the Internet, computers, and databases are offered in coordination with the Israel Centre for Libraries. Contact: Victor Ben Naim

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Virtual Reality

Dr. Tamar Weiss (tamar@research.haifa.ac.il) from the University of Haifa through the Department of Occupational Therapy and CRI – The Caesarea Rothschild Institute for Interdisciplinary Applications of Computer Science leads in Israel the dissemination of Virtual Reality technologies and methodologies. The third VR Symposium (March 2005) has a focus on rehabilitation but also includes: Cooperative storytelling, 3D Face-to-Face collaboration, From presence to consciousness, Game based VR, Injecting Emotions into Simulations, Haptics as an input channel. <http://cri.haifa.ac.il/events/2005/vr/vr.shtml>

Cinematix

The National Museum of Science, Technology and Space in Haifa inaugurated a most innovative model of multi sensorial scientific cinema. This is the first project of its kind, worldwide, involving all the senses, all the time, and through all means. It provides a complete immersive virtual experience: three dimensional projection; a multi channel sound system for complete environmental involvement; "intelligent" chairs which move in two axes with six senses sensors; wind and aerosol effects for wind and water; a special smells system and an interactive system enabling the participants to influence the course of the program. Leon Recanati, Chair of the Museum Board invited Uri Yardeni from the Smart International Corporation to install the new cinema and take part in the production of the scientific films to be projected there.

Digital Culture at the Israel Internet Society

The ISOC-IL Conference prominently featured digital culture. One session dedicated to the music revolution focused on digital rights issues; with a further session covered issues of trust and personal recommendations, the museum at the click of a mouse and an insightful visit to the dark side of the Internet. The session on media over broadband featured the main players in the Telecom/Internet/Cable TV industry clearly indicating that convergence has definitely arrived in Israel. www.isoc.org.il/conf2005



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