

## The Archive.

### The role of the archive and its impact on a Shared Heritage

A Case study by Natalie Lang

#### 1. The topic of the tandem

Working in a tandem with Orly Zimerman, our research focuses on the following main questions: What is the role of the archive? How do archives work? In which ways are archives forming new narratives?

In order to explore these questions, we examine theories about the archive f.e. by Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, to better understand the concept of the archive. The main part of the research focuses on different levels of the archive. Orly Zimerman will address the micro level by researching a case study by photographer Liselotte Grschebina on a private collection from the Israel Museum in Jerusalem. I will focus on the macro level, that is the institutional and political level of the archive.

#### 2. The Archive: Institutional perspective

The central question for me is: "How do archives share heritage?" In order to pursue this question, I will deal with the project *Global Archives*, which researches and conserves literature by German or German-speaking authors who have gone into exile. It was initiated by the Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach (DLA). The specific project I will look at in the larger context of *Global Archives* is the Coordination Center for the Research of German-Jewish Estates in Israel. It was founded in 2012 to research hitherto unexplored archival holdings on the topic of *Traces of German-Jewish History in Israel*. The project is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office. Among others, a publication by Dr. Caroline Jessen was published in this context, which deals with the canonization of exile literature. It is understood that the project *Global Archives* ended in 2019, but a subsequent project called *Poetic Textures* was released this year, which combines research by the National Library of Israel (NLI) in Jerusalem and the DLA on archival material by Else Lasker-Schüler (1869-1945).

#### 3. Research Questions

Questions linked to the central question and applied to the project:

- How exactly does *Global Archives* work and what influence could it have on future narratives within archives?

- How is the heritage (literature) shared, with whom, especially looking at the digitalization of the archive material, and with what kind of intention?

Hence, the goal is to find out to what extent the concept of *Global Archives* – and archives in general – coincides with the cultural and political concept of a Shared Heritage.

#### 4. Methodology

My methodology is a mixture of the analysis of the literature, as mentioned above, and the analysis of the website *Global archives*, where I am deeply involved in the presentation of the concept of "shared heritage and / or contradictory heritage". In addition, a virtual meeting with Dr. Caroline Jessen from the DLA was held in August 2020, followed by an expert interview. Her assessment of the concept of "shared and / or contradictory heritage" and its significance for the archive will be analyzed and compared with other findings within the given literature, website and articles. On July 14, a zoom meeting of DLA and NLI took place on the new international research project *Poetic Textures* which will also be part of the analysis.

#### 5. References

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