

ABRAHAM ATSMON PAPERS, 1907-1994
1999.A.0151

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW
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Descriptive summary

Title: Abraham Atsmon papers

Dates: 1907-1994

Accession number: 1999.A.0151

Creator: Atsmon, Abraham, 1909-?

Extent: 3.0 linear feet (6 boxes)

Repository: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place SW,
Washington, DC 20024-2126

Abstract: The Abraham Atsmon papers consist of identification papers, biographies, correspondence, reports, narratives, photographs, newspapers, protocols, and minutes documenting Atsmon's family and pre-war life in Poland, his participation in a partisan brigade in the areas of Słonim and Brest during the war, his organization and leadership of a Holocaust survivor group (Sh'erit ha-Pletah) in the American occupation zone of Germany after the war, his support for the state of Israel, his emigration to Israel in 1948, and his subsequent efforts to record the Jewish resistance during the Holocaust.

Languages: Yiddish, Hebrew, German, English, French, Russian, Lithuanian

Administrative Information

Access: Collection is open for use, but is stored offsite. Please contact the Reference Desk more than seven days prior to visit in order to request access.

Reproduction and use: Collection is available for use. Material may be protected by copyright. Please contact reference staff for further information.

Preferred citation: (Identification of item), Abraham Atsmon papers, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Archives, Washington, DC

Acquisition information: Jacob Atsmon donated the Abraham Atsmon papers to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1999, and Dina Cohen donated an accretion in 2000. The accession previously cataloged as 2000.215 has been incorporated into 1999.A.0151.

Related materials: Digital images of some of the photographs in the Abraham Atsmon papers can be viewed on the Museum's website. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum also holds a memoir from Rebecca Atsmon, Abraham Atsmon's wife.

Accruals: Accruals may have been received since this collection was first processed, see archives catalog at collections.ushmm.org for further information.

Processing history: Julie Schweitzer, May 2013

Biographical note

Abraham Atsmon was born Abraam Isak Blumowicz in 1909 in Łomża, Poland to Jakob and Gola Blumowicz. He studied medicine at the University of Vilnius. His family was killed while trying to escape Łomża during the German invasion of the Soviet Union, but Atsmon survived, found his way to the Słonim ghetto, and joined the ghetto underground. He organized the ghetto's medical services and served as the director of its hospital and surgical department. He escaped the ghetto, joined a partisan group in Belarus, and ran a field hospital. After the war, he found his way back to Poland and then to the American sector of Germany. He intended to emigrate to Palestine and entered the Landsberg displaced persons camp. Atsmon was a political and social leader in the camp and helped create the Central Committee of the Liberated Jews in the American Zone of Germany. The Committee worked to improve conditions within the displaced persons camps, establish the political legitimacy of survivors, and promote emigration to Palestine and the creation of the State of Israel. In 1946, the American military government in Germany recognized the Committee as the legal and democratic representation of liberated Jews in the American zone. Atsmon married Rebecca Distenfeld Bodek in Landsberg in 1947, and the couple emigrated to Israel in June 1948 and changed their name from Blumowicz to Atsmon. Atsmon served as Surgeon General of the Israel Defense Forces from 1949 to 1956.

Scope and content of collection

The Abraham Atsmon papers consist of identification papers, biographies, correspondence, reports, narratives, photographs, newspapers, protocols, and minutes documenting Atsmon's family and pre-war life in Poland, his participation in a partisan brigade in the areas of Słonim and Brest during the war, his organization and leadership of a Holocaust survivor group (Sh'erit ha-Pletah) in the American occupation zone of Germany after the war, his support for the state of Israel, his emigration to Israel in 1948, and his subsequent efforts to record the Jewish resistance during the Holocaust.

Biographical materials include identification papers, membership cards, a resume, a brief biography, and requests for copies of Atsmon's medical school diploma.

Materials about the 51st Brigade primarily consist of historical narratives compiled in the early 1960s about a partisan group active in western Belarus during World War II. This series also includes meeting announcements and minutes, histories of the Słonim region, correspondence with Yad Vashem about the Brigade, and a list of Brigade members who died during the war.

Photographs depict Abraham Atsmon, his family members, friends, fellow partisans, and David Ben-Gurion. They document his family, military service, sports activities, university education, partisan activities, meetings of Jewish political groups, and the ORT school in Munich. Two photo albums document Atsmon's partisan and refugee friends and the Second Congress of the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in the American Zone of Germany.

Printed materials primarily consist of issues of Yiddish and Hebrew newspapers published by Jewish groups in displaced persons camps after the war. Additional printed materials include a 1935 Gestapo chart of political affiliations of Jewish organizations in Germany, invitations to the 1946 Conférence Européenne de la Résistance, a memorial booklet about the Jewish community of Łomża, a pamphlet about the ORT vocational school in Munich, an account of a Jewish partisan in the Słonim area during the Holocaust, and an account of the extermination of Jews in Lithuania.

Materials about Sh'erit ha-Pletah ("surviving remnant") consist primarily of reports and meeting materials documenting the political organization of Holocaust survivors in the American occupied zone of Germany after the war and are arranged in four subseries: 1) Central Committee of Liberated Jews, 2) Second Congress of the Central Committee, 3) Third Congress of the Central Committee, and 4) Subject files. Central Committee materials include correspondence, reports, and election materials documenting the work of the Central Committee and Atsmon's participation in that work. Second and Third Congress materials include reports, programs, and speeches. Subject files include appeals between former partisans in Germany and Palestine to support each other's causes and an unattributed manuscript describing the organizational activities of survivors after the Holocaust.

System of arrangement

The Abraham Atsmon papers are arranged as six series:

- Series 1: Biographical materials, 1945-1975
- Series 2: 51st Brigade, 1959-1994
- Series 3: Photographs, approximately 1907-1978 (bulk 1945-1948)
- Series 4: Printed materials, 1946-1959
- Series 5: Sh'erit ha-Pletah, 1946-1980 (bulk 1946-1950)

Indexing terms

Tsentral komitet fun di bafrayte Yidn in der Amerikaner zone

Jews – Poland – Łomża.

Holocaust, Jewish (1939-1945) – Belarus – Słonim.

World War, 1939-1945 – Jewish resistance – Documentation.

Holocaust survivors – Germany – Politics and government.

Holocaust survivors – Israel.

Jewish refugees – Germany.

Jewish refugees – Palestine.

Israel – Emigration and immigration – History.

Photographs

CONTAINER LIST

Series 1: Biographical materials, 1945-1975

Box	Folder	
1	1	Biography and curriculum vitae for Abraham Atsmon, approximately 1956-1975
1	2	Identification papers, 1945-1948
1	3	Request for medical diploma, approximately 1947

Series 2: 51st Brigade, 1959-1994

Box	Folder	
1	4	Correspondence with Yad Vashem about Pawel Proniagin, 1994
1	5	Historical narrative by Atsmon, Abraham, approximately 1960
1	6	Historical narrative by Bendt, Ahavah, approximately 1960
1	7	Historical narrative by Goldshtain, approximately 1960
1	8	Historical narrative by Inber, Aviezer, approximately 1960
1	9	Historical narrative by Liftinski, Ts., approximately 1960
1	10	Historical narrative by Moshkovski, Shabtai, approximately 1960
1	11	Historical narrative by Shliuvska, Yehudit, approximately 1960
1	12	Historical narratives by Doktorchuk, A., approximately 1960-1962
1	13	Historical narratives by Finkel, Ze'ev and Tamar Goldshtain, approximately 1960
1	14	Historical narratives by Karmon, Z., approximately 1959-1960
1	15	Historical narratives by Karmon, Z. and Golda Doktorchuk, 1960
1	16-18	Historical narratives, unattributed, approximately 1960-1962 (3 folders)
1	19	Letter announcing annual meeting, 1960
1	20	List of 51 st Brigade members who died during the war, 1959
1	21	Map of Belarus, approximately 1960
1	22	Meeting announcement and draft membership form, approximately 1960
1	23-24	Minute book and typed minutes, 1959-1960 (2 folders)
1	25	Notes, approximately 1960
1	26	Remarks by Atsmon, approximately 1960
1	27	Słonim history, approximately 1961-1980
1	28	Table of contents for project, approximately 1960
1	29	Yad Vashem inquiries, 1959-1960

Series 3: Photographs, approximately 1907-1978 (bulk 1945-1948)

Box	Folder	
1	30	Album 1, "In memory of the time we were arrested in Bayreuth," 1946 (see box 5, folder 1)
1	31	Album 2, Second Conference of the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in the US Zone of Germany, 1947 (see box 5, folder 2)

1	32	Atsmon, Abraham, at a doctors' conference in Tel Aviv, 1978
1	33	Atsmon, Abraham, at the Second Conference, 1947
1	34	Atsmon, Abraham, at the Third Conference, 1948
1	35	Atsmon, Abraham, in his office in Germany, 1940s
1	36	Atsmon, Abraham, marching with Philipp Auerbach and Jewish displaced persons, 1940s
1	37-38	Atsmon, Abraham, military service, 1930s (2 folders)
1	39-40	Atsmon, Abraham, postwar, 1945-1948 (2 folders)
1	41-42	Atsmon, Abraham, sports, 1920s or 1930s (2 folders)
2	1	Atsmon, Abraham, Wilno University, approximately 1929
2	2	Atsmon, Abraham, with Brest-Slonim partisans, 1940s
2	3	Atsmon, Abraham, with David Ben-Gurion, 1940s
2	4-5	Atsmon, Abraham, with his second wife and a group of friends, 1946 (2 folders)
2	6	Family of Abraham Atsmon, approximately 1907-1939
2	7	Group of friends at the Atsmos' house in Israel, approximately 1960s
2	8	Loose photographs from Album 2, 1940s
2	9-11	ORT school in Munich, 1940s (3 folders)
2	12	Political meetings, 1940s
2	13	Street scenes, 1940s

Series 4: Printed materials, 1946-1959

Box	Folder	
2	14	Conférence Européenne de la Resistance invitations, 1946
2	15	D.P. Express: Fun Jidiszn Lebn, 1946
2	16	Gestapo chart of political affiliations of Jewish organizations in Germany, 1935
2	17	Ibergang, 1947-1948 (see box 6, folder 1)
2	18	Jidisze Bilder, 1948
2	19	Jidisze Cajtung, 1947-1948 (see box 6, folder 2)
2	20	Jidisze Sport Cajtung, 1947
2	21	Memory of the Jewish Community of Łomża, 1947
2	22	Nitsuts, 1946
2	23	The ORT Vocational School in Munich, 1948
2	24	Der Tsailung fun a Yiddisher Partisan, by Josef Zaidnshtat, 1952
2	25	Unzer Moment, 1947 (see box 6, folder 3)
2	26	Unzer Weg, 1947-1950 (see box 6, folders 4-7)
2	27	Vernichtung der Juden in Litauen: Tatsachen aus den Jahren 1941-1945, 1959
2	28	Der Widerstand, 1947-1948
2	29	Dos Wort, 1947-1948 (see box 6, folder 8)

Series 5: Sh'erit ha-Pletah, 1946-1980 (bulk 1946-1950)

Subseries 1: Central Committee of Liberated Jews, 1946-1950

Box	Folder	
2	30	Agreement between the Central Committee and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 1947
2	31	Cardboard wallet containing correspondence and notes, approximately 1947-1950
2	32	Election list #3, approximately 1947 (see box 6, folder 9)
2	33	Election rules, approximately 1947 (see box 6, folder 10)
2	34	Letter from Peisach Piekatsch, 1949
2	35	"Organizacionelle struktur un formen fun dokumentacje, buchfiring und barichtn far di regionale un ortike komitetn fun der Szeerith Haplayta in der amerikaner zone in dajtszland," 1947
2	36	ORT schools and activities, 1948
2	37	Records documenting Atmon's work for the Central Committee, 1946-1950
2	38	Report about internal organizational differences, 1950

Subseries 2: Second Congress of the Central Committee, 1947

Box	Folder	
3	1	Clipping from Unser Weg with pictures of the Second Congress, 1947
3	2	Invitation, 1947
3	3-4	General report, 1947 (2 folders)
3	5	Program, 1947
3	6	Protocols, 1947
3	7-11	Section reports, 1947 (5 folders)
3	12	Speeches by Col. George R. Scithers and Leon Retter, 1947

Subseries 3: Third Congress of the Central Committee, 1948

Box	Folder	
3	13-14	General report, 1948 (2 folders)
3	15	List of section reports, 1948
3	16	Program, 1948
3	17	Resolutions, 1948
3	18-21	Section reports, 1948 (4 folders)
3	22	Speech by David Treger, 1948

Subseries 4: Subject files, approximately 1946-1980

Box	Folder	
4	1	Appeal to partisans in Palestine to join Sh'erit ha-Pletah, 1948
4	2	Appeal to survivors in Germany to join the fight for Israel, 1946-1948

4	3-7	Manuscript about survivors after liberation, approximately 1980 (5 folders)
4	8	Medical services, 1948
4	9	Partisan identification card, approximately 1946
4	10	Miscellaneous, approximately 1972-1979 (see also box 6, folder 11)

Oversize materials, 1947-1950

Box	Folder	
5	1	Album 1, "In memory of the time we were arrested in Bayreuth," 1946
5	2	Album 2, Second Conference of the Central Committee of Liberated Jews in the US Zone of Germany, 1947
6	1	<i>Ibergang</i> , 1947
6	2	<i>Jidisze Cajtung</i> , 1947-1948
6	3	<i>Unzer Moment</i> , 1947
6	4-7	<i>Unzer Weg</i> , 1947-1950
6	8	<i>Dos Wort</i> , 1947-1948
6	9	Election list #3, approximately 1947
6	10	Election rules, approximately 1947
6	11	Map of the town of Slonim, depicting borders of ghetto, undated Map segment (copy), depicting region between Minsk, Volhynia, and Hrodno, undated