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Review of the database Testaments to the Holocaust

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Testaments to the Holocaust. Thomson Gale. Contact publisher for pricing information.
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[Visited Mar'06] The more than 100,000 images in this database were scanned from the microfilm collection of the same name published in 1998 by Thomson's Primary Source Microfilm (PSM). They originally came from the renowned collection of the Wiener Library in London. Items are arranged in five categories: over 1,200 eyewitness accounts, about 4,000 photographs, over 400 Nazi propaganda materials (many of which are very rare), various Wiener Library publications from the 1930s to the 1960s, and the library's biographical index cards. One can either browse four indexes or keyword-search the full text; however, because the majority of the collection is in German, one should use German spellings (e.g., Warschau as well as "Warsaw"). Use of period terminology is needed (e.g., Ausrottung, Judenfrage); the word "Holocaust" only retrieves 15 items. The use of diacritics is supported, and there is also a German-language interface. Documents are displayed as image (.jpe) files, and search terms are helpfully shaded in yellow when items are retrieved. The user can zoom in or out and search within an entire document after retrieval. One can only save pages individually (i.e., page by page), rather than downloading an entire document. However, the built-in Print command allows users to view/print up to ten pages in PDF format. Links to articles can also be e-mailed. The Wiener Library's bibliographic record for the item is displayed on the bottom of each screen.

Also included are an introduction by Ben Barkow, director of the Wiener Library, as well as two essays on the Holocaust by Nikolaus Wachsmann and Dan Stone, both of the University of London. The site does not contain a title list, and, surprisingly, the User Guide that accompanied the PSM microfilm collection (and which lists each item in the collection) is not available on or linked to by this site; however, it is still available on the Thomson-Gale Web site at <http://microformguides.gale.com/Data/Download/9009000R.pdf>. Scholars and students will find a wealth of primary source materials in this database. Summing Up: Recommended. Upper-level undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty/researchers.—J. A. Drobnicki, York College, CUNY