



Smithsonian

National Museum of Natural History

Guide to the Thomas Seligman films, 1977 and 1988

Human Studies Film Archives
Museum Support Center
4210 Silver Hill Road
Suitland 20746
hsfa@si.edu
<http://www.anthropology.si.edu/naa>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Human Studies Film Archives
Title:	Thomas Seligman films
Identifier:	HSFA.2015.09
Date:	1977 and 1988
Creator:	Seligman, Thomas K.
Extent:	5 Film reels (90 minutes; color sound; 1,600 feet; Super8; 8mm) 4 Video recordings (7 hours; color sound; VHS) 0.25 Linear feet
Language:	Undetermined .

Administrative Information

Acquisition Information

Received from Thomas Seligman in 2015.

Preferred Citation

Thomas Seligman films, Human Studies Film Archives, Smithsonian Institution

Restrictions

The collection is open for research. Please contact the archives for information on availability of access copies of audiovisual recordings. Original audiovisual material in the Human Studies Film Archives may not be played.

Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

Scope and Contents

Films shot by anthropologist Thomas Seligman in Papua New Guinea, Algeria, and Nigeria in 1977 and 1988. Collection contains supplementary materials.

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or Anthropology Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Crafts
- Domestic and family life
- Marriage customs and rites
- Rites and ceremonies
- Silverwork
- Tuareg (African people)

Types of Materials:

- Sound films
- Video recordings

Places:

- Africa
- Algeria
- Mount Hagen (Papua New Guinea)
- Niger
- Oceania
- Papua New Guinea

Container Listing

Thomas Seligman Film of Papua New Guinea: Middle Sepik and Mount Hagen Sing-Sing, 1977

5 Film reels (90 minutes; color sound; Super8; 8mm)

Notes: Full film record shot in Papua New Guinea by anthropologist Thomas Seligman, of the Mount Hagen sing-sing as well as shorter segments of footage in Middle Sepik villages. Depicted at the sing-sing are several villages' chant and dance displays, mostly by men, as well as a smaller number of women's performances and a bamboo and guitar orchestra. The performances encompass a range of ornaments, dress, body paint colors and patterns, masks, and dancing, and several groups often perform at the same time. Villages represented include: Kambaramba, Timbunke, Mindimbit, Aibom, Yentche, Korogo, [Kukaku?], [Angrinan?], and the military band of Goroka. Western anthropologists and tourists are present. Other footage includes the Asaro (3z(Bmudmen(3y (Bof Kenitasara Village, as well as canoe carving and woodworking in Middle Sepik villages (at times accompanied by chanting and dancing). Second film reel records daily life in Middle Sepik villages. Filming locations include Mindimbit Village and a larger town (Mount Hagen?). Depicted are a wide range of everyday tasks including whittling and carving canoes; sculpting clay pots; a village ceremony involving two large crocodile figures manipulated by dancers using poles; and another large ceremony beginning at the foot of a large temple. Both ceremonies involve choreographed dance, ceremonial attire and face paint, and musical accompaniment. Final shots are of a Western family, presumably at a resort.

HSFA 2015.9.1

Thomas Seligman Research Video Project: Tuareg People, Niger, 1988

4 Video recordings (7 hours; color sound; VHS)

Notes: Full film record shot by anthropologist Thomas Seligman, recording a desert crossing from the Hoggar Mountains in Algeria to the Agadez region of Niger from October 5-14, 1988. Filming locations in Algeria include: Assekrem (plateau in the Hoggar mountains), Idles, Tazrouk, Wadi [Tamkress?], and the route to In Guezzam; filming locations in Niger include the desert north of Arlit and around Iferouane, as well as the villages of Timia and Azel. Footage is largely of the Tuareg people Seligman encountered on the route, filmed both from afar and from within villages; activities depicted include agricultural tasks, making tea, drawing water with animals and machinery, weaving, carving, and saddlemaking, as well as families posing for portraits in Azel. Also depicted are several stops along the desert crossing, including shots of mountains, rock formations, waterfalls, and general vistas. First hour of video is sound and the rest is silent. Second cassette records the Tuareg wedding of Mohamed Amoumoun and Hawa Moussia in Agadez, Niger, from 15-16 October 1988. Footage includes the greeting of

guests and a performance by a children's choir; a reception and tea; the henna ceremony; dances of men, of women and men, and of camels; and a visit to the bride. Depicted are a wide variety of formal clothing, hairstyles, shoes, and jewelry (both Western and traditional), and a number of posed and candid portraits of attendees. Third video cassette records an interview with Saidi Oumba and Andi Ouhoulou (both Tuareg) as well as footage of daily social life. All segments shot in Agadez, Niger, October 18, 1988. (Note that footage of interview itself is silent with no subtitles; however, Oumba and Ouhoulou do model several variations of formal clothing and accessories, shot from close-up to long. Interview conducted by E. Warner with Abdilahi as translator.) Village footage is relaxed; particularly of note is the footage of Ouhoulou braiding hair among a relaxed group of women and girls, including braiding the hair of a woman accompanying Seligman. Fourth video cassette documents the Oumba family making silver in Agadez, Niger, October 1988. Footage is of the full silvermaking process, including firing raw materials, modeling, hammering, shaving and final detailing on products that include jewelry and figurines, with close-up shots on each step. Craftsmen are the men of the Oumba family, who talk amongst themselves as they work. Brief footage near end of woman working with embroidered fabric.

HSFA 2015.9.2