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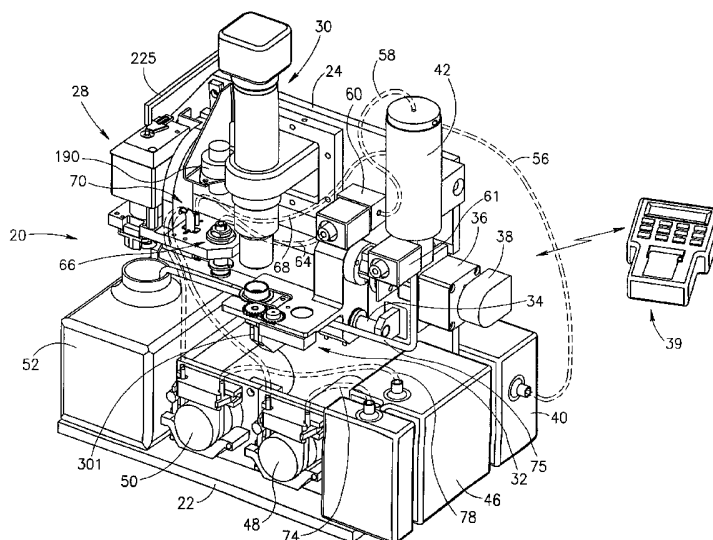
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- (74) Agent: **REINHOLD COHN AND PARTNERS**; P.O. Box 4060, 61040 Tel Aviv (IL).
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR PROCESSING AND TESTING A BIOLOGICAL SPECIMEN



(57) Abstract: An apparatus for analyzing liquid specimens, the device comprising at least one specimen handling station for obtaining preparation on a specimen carrying device, and an imaging station fitted with an optical image capturing device for analyzing the preparation. A carriage with a specimen carrying device receptacle rotatably retains the specimen carrying device and is displaceable between a loading station and an unloading station with respective positions at the stations. An incremental displacement mechanism for displacing at least one of the specimen carrying device and an imaging device so as to obtain at least one consecutive image of the preparation.

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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No

PCT/IB 02/00651

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 G01N15/14 G01N1/28 //G01N33/48,G01N33/86,G01N21/89

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G01N

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5 783 446 A (RIBI HANS O ET AL) 21 July 1998 (1998-07-21)	1,2,4-7, 9,12,14, 16,19, 20,23, 25-29, 32-35
Y	column 1, line 55 -column 1, line 4 column 4, line 39 -column 5, line 22 column 5, line 51 -column 5, line 61 column 6, line 63 -column 6, line 67 column 7, line 49 -column 9, line 16 column 9, line 36 -column 9, line 50 column 11, line 29 -column 13, line 5 column 13, line 40 -column 13, line 46 -/--	8,10,11, 13,17, 22,24, 27-30, 51,55



Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.



Patent family members are listed in annex.

* Special categories of cited documents :

"A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance

"E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date

"L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)

"O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means

"P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

"Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

"&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

24 October 2002

Date of mailing of the international search report

18. 02. 2003

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int. Application No

PCT/IB 02/00651

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
	column 13, line 67 -column 14, line 57 column 15, line 21 -column 16, line 6 figures 1-8 ---	
Y	US 5 856 194 A (EAST JR RICHARD C ET AL) 5 January 1999 (1999-01-05)	1,2,4-7, 9,12,14, 16,19, 20,23, 25-29, 32-35,51 64,65
X	column 1, line 9 -column 1, line 32 column 1, line 54 -column 1, line 67 column 3, line 60 -column 6, line 13 column 7, line 9 -column 9, line 7 column 11, line 7 -column 11, line 20 column 12, line 7 -column 12, line 17 column 12, line 56 -column 13, line 17 column 13, line 32 -column 13, line 40 column 14, line 35 -column 14, line 50 column 17, line 35 -column 21, line 26 figures 1-32 ---	
Y	EP 0 337 300 A (TORAY INDUSTRIES) 18 October 1989 (1989-10-18) page 7, line 45 -page 9, line 46 page 10, line 10 -page 10, line 27 page 12, line 36 -page 13, line 5 figures 1-3,16,17 ---	8,10,17, 24,27-30
X	US 5 730 697 A (AUCHINLECK GEOFFREY FLETCHER) 24 March 1998 (1998-03-24) column 1, line 5 -column 1, line 29 column 1, line 46 -column 1, line 54 column 2, line 34 -column 2, line 67 column 3, line 24 -column 4, line 14 figures 1-3 ---	64,65
Y	US 3 687 632 A (NATELSON SAMUEL) 29 August 1972 (1972-08-29) column 1, line 15 -column 1, line 35 column 1, line 58 -column 2, line 13 column 5, line 4 -column 6, line 32 column 6, line 52 -column 7, line 6 column 7, line 45 -column 8, line 9 column 10, line 29 -column 11, line 20 figures 1-10 ---	11,22, 23,55
Y	US 5 365 084 A (COCHRAN DON W ET AL) 15 November 1994 (1994-11-15) abstract column 4, line 57 -column 5, line 56 column 6, line 22 -column 6, line 37 column 11, line 14 -column 12, line 33 figures 1,5-9 --- -/--	13

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/IB 02/00651

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	<p>US 3 826 622 A (NATELSON S) 30 July 1974 (1974-07-30) column 4, line 71 -column 5, line 35 column 7, line 22 -column 8, line 14 column 8, line 55 -column 9, line 12 column 10, line 70 -column 11, line 4 column 11, line 21 -column 11, line 31 figures 1-8</p> <p>-----</p>	64,65

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

ational application No.
PCT/IB 02/00651**Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)**

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:
2. ☒ Claims Nos.: 36-50, 52-54, 56, 57
because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210
3. ☐ Claims Nos.:
because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

see additional sheet

1. ☐ As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.
2. ☐ As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.
3. ☐ As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:
4. ☒ No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:
1-35, 51, 55, 64, 65

Remark on Protest

- ☐ The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
- ☐ No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

Continuation of Box I.2

Claims Nos.: 36-50, 52-54,56,57

Present claims 36-50 relate to an extremely large number of possible apparatus. In fact, the claims contain so many options, that a lack of clarity (and/or conciseness) within the meaning of Article 6 PCT arises to such an extent as to render a meaningful search of the claims impossible.

Claims 52-54, 56 and 57 which refer to an analyzing method are drafted as dependent claims of device claims 48 and 50, respectively, both referring to a cone-and-plate couple characterized by different features in each of these two claims (48 and 50). It is unclear what "an analyzing method according to claim 48" or, likewise, "an analyzing method according to claim 50" should mean. Furthermore claims 52 and 54 refer to a "step (d)", and claims 56 and 57 to a "step (e)" of a method: however, these method steps (d) or (e) have not been specified in any of the preceding claims. For claims 52-54, 56 and 57 it is therefore unclear for which subject-matter protection is sought.

Consequently, the search has been carried out for those parts of the application which do appear to be clear and concise, namely claims 1-35, 51 and 55, as well as claims 64 and 65 (for claims 64 and 65 another Non-Unity objection was not raised, as a service to the applicant).

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims, or parts of claims, relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure.

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

This International Searching Authority found multiple (groups of) inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. Claims: 1-35,51,55,64,65

Liquid body-specimen analyzer and related method

2. Claims: 58-63

Kit for use with liquid-specimen analyzer

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/IB 02/00651

Patent document cited in search report		Publication date	Patent family member(s)	Publication date
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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

In International Application No

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