



# Learning by doing

Digitization of cold war and human rights AV collections at OSA using ffmpeg-based solutions **\_a case study**

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**OSA is part of CEU  
1995**

**facilitate research +  
education**

**Founding funds: RFE/RL  
Research Institute's  
material**



# AV holdings 2019

15'000 hours of time based media

80% analogue

film



video



audio



500'000 photo prints + negatives

95% analogue

**in over 70 archival series**



# Video formats

VHS PAL + NTSC

S-VHS PAL

BETA SP PAL + NTSC

Hi8

MiniDV

U-MATIC

+ DIGITAL, various codecs,  
unconsolidated



# Audio + Photo formats

Open reel tapes 1/4 inch

MC

born digital. various codecs

b&w prints

color prints

35mm b&w + color negatives

born digital. various compressions



# Highlights of AV



# Interior Ministry propaganda films Hungary **1955-1989**

Border patrols  
at the Iron  
Curtain, covert  
surveillance  
and managing  
secret agents:  
almost 300  
propaganda  
and  
educational  
films.

**16mm**

**35mm**





# Chernobyl. Video interviews by Svetlana Alexievich **1996**

Voices from  
"the zone":  
interviews  
with survivors  
of the  
Chernobyl  
disaster ten  
years after  
the fact.

**VHS**  
**PAL**







# Hungarian home movies **1925-1985**

Hungary at home, at play, and revolting on the streets: amateur films documenting six decades.

**BETA**  
**SP**  
**PAL +**  
**MOV**



● ● ● | Soviet and Russian TV  
monitoring **1985-1994**

840 hours of  
Soviet Central  
Television  
1985-1991 and  
Ostankino  
Television  
1992-1994  
monitoring

**VHS**

**PAL**





# IHRLI Video Materials on the Former Yugoslavia Wars 1990-1995



Donation by  
Cherif Bassiouni,  
Chairman of the  
UN Commission  
of Experts and  
President of the  
International  
Human Rights  
Law Institute  
(IHRLI) at DePaul  
University,  
Chicago, Illinois

**VHS**  
**NTSC**



# Videos on regime change in Hungary 1988-1996



3000 h of video  
from an  
**independent**  
media group.  
Opposition  
movements,  
demonstrations,

**S-VHS**

**PAL**





# Soviet Propaganda Film Collection **1947-1987**

Popular science, industry,  
agricultural, army, nature,  
music, youth and sport films,  
and also some newsreels.

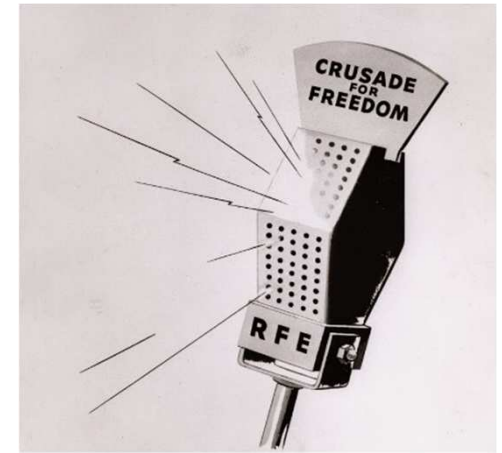
**16mm**





# RFE / RL 1953-1995

## Russian language Broadcast Archive



26'147 unique  
audio files that  
were produced  
and broadcast  
by RFE/RL's  
Russian  
Services.

### MP3





# Monitoring of the Iraqi Television 2003



Off-air recordings  
by OSA of  
patriotic news  
and propaganda,  
broadcast by Iraqi  
State Television  
during the first  
three weeks of  
the 2003  
American-led  
invasion of Iraq.

VHS

PAL



# PHR Training Videos 1995-1999



Programs and footage from 1995-1999 on Physicians for Human Rights' work to identify victims of the Srebrenica massacre, including educational programs as well.

**VHS**

**PAL**





International Monitor

Institute videos **1980-2002**



Genocide  
Archive **5'000**  
hours of video  
documenting  
genocide in  
Europe, Asia the  
Middle East and  
Africa in  
the 1990s and  
early 2000s.

**BETA**

**SP**

**NTSC**



# AV digital preservation. Preparation phase1

2013 Inventory of analogue AV holdings

- Extent and format per series
  - Date of analog carriers (age)
  - Descriptive metadata available Y/N (=if catalogued or not)
  - Copyright holder: OSA / not-OSA / orphan
- Priority list for scheduled digitization



# Preparation phase2 Vision for the future

2016 business case by AV archivists + IT  
negotiated with the management  
→ institutional commitment \$\$

Consensus: OSA needs a  
consultant=external expert

Terms of reference TOR phrased



## External expert

- to assess OSA's capability for long-term digital preservation
- to define standards, practices, systems, workflows and tools for digitizing AV content for long-term preservation
- to develop a digital preservation strategy



# Consultancy + training March 2017

- Built on the understanding of the reference model for OAIS
- Readiness to learn + a set of skills for transcoding and using ffmpeg@OSA
- 2-day consultancy + training in ffmpeg, qctools
- 2017.07: “Microservices in AV Archives”
- Workflows+tools: defined and designed



# Workflow 1: Digitization and Pre-Ingest\_AV staff

Manual part of the workflow, managed  
by the AV team

- Start with raw materials = archival  
analogue master
  - scenario1: contents already  
described;
  - scenario2: contents will be described  
following digitization



## Workflow 1: Digitization and Pre-Ingest – cont.

Through identification assignment (physical barcoding), chipping barcode into AMS, digitization, quality control, and approval the *preservation master* is created and is on external HDD, submitted to IT

**\_equipment, settings and artifacts by**  
**Darius Krolikowski, AV Archivist**