



Learning by doing

Digitization of cold war and
human rights AV collections
at OSA using ffmpeg-based
solutions_**a case study**

Zsuzsanna Zadori
Head of AV Unit OSA
zadori@ceu.edu



**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.

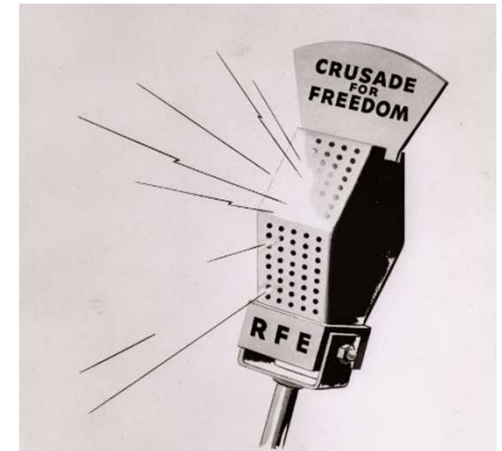
16mm





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