



# Report

**on the Activities of the Open Society Archives  
between October 2001 and November 2002**

Budapest  
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## **I New Challenges – New Approaches**

At the end of 2001 OSA decided to redefine itself, its mission and its position, in both professional and the political terms. OSA had reached the conclusion that, as one of the largest archives of the history of Communism and Human Rights in the world, and definitely the most important in the former Communist part of Europe, it has no choice but to address those burning political and human rights issues that emerged and came into focus during the years of transition. OSA therefore now seeks to extend the target groups of its activities beyond the members of narrow professional scholarly communities to university students and junior scholars in the region, to teachers, and to the interested public at large. This calls for a larger storage area, more room for researchers, seminar rooms, spacious common areas such as an exhibition hall, a projection room, and a public auditorium.

The search for new premises, which started almost a year ago, has been successful. The building, the former Goldberger textile factory, is a rare piece of Art Nouveau industrial architecture in the heart of Budapest, five minutes' walk from the CEU complex. After renovation and appropriate reconstruction the Goldberger building, with its large atrium and unusual spatial possibilities, would serve as an ideal multifunctional site for the extended mission of OSA: expanding its public programs, enlarging the exhibition space, organizing permanent exhibitions and regular lecture- and film series, involving the students and scholars of the region in its research programs, and also for housing the constantly growing collections of OSA in one single location.

In June 2002 CEU Rt. signed the purchase contract with the previous owner of the building, and OSA/CEU signed the lease agreement with CEU Rt. for an indefinite period.

The two-story, flat-roofed Art Nouveau edifice is in a fair state of preservation. In the course of renovation and reconstruction a new, steel-framed high roof will be added and the building will be adjusted to meet the needs of an archival and research center.

CEU Rt. offered a substantial contribution to the renovation of the building but OSA will have to seek further funding for the reconstruction. OSA also offered its savings from the three previous years, USD 0.54 million, towards the building costs, and in June 2002 OSA embarked upon its first fundraising campaign, which is expected to secure USD 3.2 million by the end of 2003.

## **II Inside OSA**

### **A Staff**

Mr. Leszek Pudlowski, OSA's former Chief Archivist left OSA in August 2001 and his position was vacant for more than a year. During this time Mr. Pavol Salamon, Acting Chief Archivist took over the duties. OSA conducted two full interview series in its search for the new Chief Archivist and finally the right person was found: Ms Anna Svenson from the Lund Regional Archives, Sweden. She will start working for OSA in March 2003.

Under the circumstances OSA decided to keep its operations on a low budget basis and not to increase its permanent staff, but instead engaged temporary assistants, MA and Ph.D. students, for short term archival projects and exhibitions.

### **B Equipment**

This year there were no major additions to OSA's stock of hardware, which was purchased in 2001, except for the server for the new Martus project and two NTSC players for OSA's audio-visual studio. The NTSC-VHS player is a multi-system converter and is of primary importance in OSA, whose audio-visual holdings are collected from different parts of the world. The Beta NTSC player, a piece of professional studio equipment, is necessary for OSA to access the large number of NTSC films it has in its holdings.

By the end of October 2002 Windows 2000 had been installed in OSA and its e-mail system had been upgraded from GroupWise 5 to GroupWise 6.

### **C Holdings**

#### **1 New acquisitions**

Between October 2001 and November 2002 the greater part of the donations – which were made to OSA in unusually large quantities and more frequently than in previous year – were mostly on the audio-visual side. The largest donation is the film collection of the International Monitor Institute, representing 6000 hours of footage about genocide, among it the most extensive coverage of the Balkan war. The 251 films from the Croat Television Monitoring project, a recent addition to OSA's holdings, cover the media representation of the same war. Educational and documentary films from the Hungarian Interior Ministry and a large private photo collection donated by the Privát Film és Fotó

Alapítvány and the audio-visual heritage of film director Pál Schiffer, donated to the Archives by his daughter Katalin, add a special flavor to the varied fields covered by OSA's holdings.

The textual holdings were enriched by the documents of the predecessor of the Open Society Institute, Russia, the Cultural Initiative Foundation documenting the first efforts of philanthropy in Russia. János Kis, philosopher, donated his samizdat collection to OSA, György Horányi, scientist and organizer and spokesman of the Hungarian Democratic Charta movement deposited the entire documentation of the movement with OSA, while David Rohde, journalist, reporter in Srebrenica, gave OSA his unique collection of materials relating to the Balkan war. Below is a more detailed list of acquisitions.

(a) Textual materials

- Cultural Initiative Foundation,
- Personal Papers of György Horányi,
- János Kis, samizdat collection,
- Personal papers of Kálmán Mizsei,
- David Rohde's collection relating to Srebrenica,
- Posters, flyers, relating to the Election Campaign (more on this in OSA's Outreach Projects),
- Approx. 250 movie posters from the beginning of the 90s,
- Materials of Amnesty International, Hungary.

(b) Library materials

- Database of Hungarian slide films (text files & digitized pictures) donated by the publisher Arcanum to OSA with the right of Internet publication
- Library of a former professor of the Academy of Marxism, Hungary
- Minor donations from different sources (Prof. Edward A. Corcoran, Andras Hegedus, Béla Király, László F. Kiss, Patricia Kennedy Grimstead, Nikita Okhotin)

(c) Audio-visual materials

- International Monitor Institute, 6000 hours of film on genocide between 1992 and 2001,
- Hungarian Interior Ministry, educational and documentary films,
- Privát Film és Fotó Alapítvány, photos,
- Croatian Television Monitoring,

- Documentary and feature films of film director, Gvardiol, Zelimir,
- Films of Pál Schiffer,
- Films related to the OSA exhibitions (InterNational Theatre, Forced Bathings in Hungary, North Korea, Sex and Communism),
- SHOAH Holocaust interviews,
- A series of photos from the RFE/RL studios on CD,
- CEU Public Programs on VHS,
- Minor donations of documentary films, among others from the Krasnogorsk Film Archives in Russia and the Russian Space Archives, Russia.

## **2 Processing**

This year the main focus of processing was on Human Rights and samizdat materials (including the Red Archives and the Samizdat Archives); however, excellent progress was made with the processing of the RFE/RL materials in general. The Records of the Hungarian Unit are completely processed, updating the list of Biographical Card Files will soon be finished. Two audio-visual collections are also completely processed: the educational and training films of the Workers' Militia and the films of the Privát Film és Fotó Alapítvány (a collection of home movies.) A more detailed list of materials (fully or partly processed) follows:

### (a) Textual materials

- East European Area Research and Analysis Department,
- Subject Files of Barbara Donovan,
- Records of the Hungarian Unit ,
- Biographical Card Files,
- Records of the Polish Unit,
- Red Archives,
- Current Information Affairs,
- Publications Department,
- Samizdat Archives,
- Open Media Research Institute, Balkan Section Files,
- Records of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights,
- International Science Foundation Box list,
- The files of Analyst Aurel Bereznai,
- Publications of Human Rights Watch,
- The database of the Hungarian biocards edited, checked, annotated.

#### (b) Library materials

- 200 boxes of periodicals catalogued,
- the entire periodical database restructured; new search interface created,
- 200 political slide films from the 50s and 60s digitized,
- the database of Hungarian slide films edited.

#### (c) Audio-visual materials

- Monitoring of Television of Bosnia and Herzegovina,
- Monitoring Russian Television,
- Workers' Militia, educational films,
- Privát Film és Fotó Alapítvány, collection of home movies.

### **D Research Related Activities**

#### **1 Reference Services**

In the period between October 2001 and November 2002 the OSA Research Room and Reference Services saw a slight increase in off-site requests and new enrollments, although the number of on-site visits decreased by 6 per cent. However, there was a dramatic increase in the number of archival units (archival boxes, microfilm/microfiche, VHS tapes and library materials) served in the Research Room. This means that the intensity of the utilization of OSA materials and OSA's reputation in general increased. In percentages the number of new researchers grew by 21 per cent (214 as against 176 last year), 18.8 per cent more copies (14,772 as against 12,427 last year) were produced, and 256 per cent more archival units served (4,718 as against 1,836 last year).

This change can be attributed to the increased PR activity of OSA within, and also outside CEU, to the close cooperation that OSA entered into with the different departments (particularly with the Legal, History and Gender Studies departments), to the change of focus of its grants policy and to increased public activities related to its exhibitions. Two other major factors contributing to the intensive use of OSA materials are the full text search option of the entire holdings on the OSA web site and the Russian language support, both new features added in the course of 2002.



At the request of RFE/RL OSA prepared its policy on access to sensitive materials and upgraded the Researcher's Statement to this effect. In both cases access to personal data in RFE/RL materials was more strictly regulated than access to such data in other materials.

## **2 Grants**

OSA's decided to slightly shift the focus of its grants policy (available on the OSA web-site since April 2002) towards Human Rights issues, while retaining support for archival activities at the top of the list of priorities. Besides this, it offers research grants and internships to researchers working on topics that are related to OSA's current exhibitions or unprocessed holdings.

- (a) Research Grants: Between October 2001 and November 2002 OSA received 65 applications from 27 different countries and offered 12 research grants for grantees from 9 different countries. The topics covered by these grants are published on OSA's web-site. OSA's latest research grant call was addressed to the Recent History Research Institutions in Russia, Poland and Rumania respectively, for research into RFE/RL related materials.
- (b) Internships: OSA welcomed interns both from inside and outside CEU and announced a joint internship program with the Human Rights Students' Initiative stream at CEU starting from January 2003.
- (c) Thematic Grants (former Research Support Grants) were offered to 9 institutions and individuals for a wide range of topics in the field of archives and Human Rights, the list of which is available on OSA's web-site. Among the grants recipients from the archival field were the Polish KARTA Foundation, for a new electronic catalogue project of their photo collection, the Russian Space Archives and the Memorial Institution, both for an electronic catalogue project; in the Human Rights field Béla Szandelszky for a study and photo series on revisiting the scenes of the Balkan war.
- (d) The Support for Research in Recent History program was continued. The largest grant supported the production of a Balkan history textbook, which was successfully completed, the book is in print and will soon be tested in the History Department of CEU. Another substantial grant was offered to a trio of Hungarian historians to support research into the history of the wealth of the Hungarian Jewry from August 2001 till April 2002. The materials for a two-volume monograph have been collected, publication is under way.

## E Records Management

OSA is the archives of the Soros Network and in this capacity it has to deal with the records management issues arising from the fact that many of the Soros Foundations have already been or will soon be closed down. This is why the foundations in EU accessing countries and regional program directors were contacted and all legal and technical issues about the records of these foundations were discussed before they are closed. OSA's main focus is on the Russian foundation, as it is to be closed down in the spring of 2002.

In CEU OSA initiated the drafting and implementation of a records retention schedule and carried on the routine work of records retrieval and disposal in the CEU Records Center.

## F Electronic Services

Progress in the field of Electronic Services has been most impressive and has contributed to the success of OSA's professional and public activities in every field. The development of OSA's on-line guide to its holdings has boosted the number of on-line requests and been used by many researchers. One OSA research grantee from Lithuania summed this up by saying

"Thanks to the finding aids on your web site  
I could find out what I will need [...]  
It saved me a few days stay [in Budapest]"

Electronic Services play an important part in OSA's international and in-house outreach programs: they developed the Open Archive Initiative compliant server, which will be run and maintained by CEU and runs and maintains the Backup Server of the Martus Project, an international human rights abuse reporting system.

**1 The on-line Guide to OSA holdings** combines all available kinds of finding aids to the archival and library materials (archival unit descriptions, authority records, reference information papers, virtual exhibitions, publications). Currently the Archival Finding Aids database contains 408 Series descriptions in 99 Fonds. (Among those 175 units available to the public, including 125 series for the Fonds HU OSA 300, Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute. The number of processed Containers available on-line is 5,900,478, including 5,766,028 from Fonds HU OSA 300.)

The library on-line periodicals database provides browse access by Subject, Language and Country of Publication, as well as advanced search functionality by ISSN, date scope and random text search. It includes 5,855 Periodical Titles with 46,987 database entries describing issues in Dublin Core compliant format.

- 2 The Web site visiting rate** has been growing steadily if not dramatically due, at least in part, to the recently introduced metadata search and Dublin Core compliant on-line database. The average number of successful requests per day is over 8,000 and about 115,000 distinct hosts are served. On average about 100,000 Mbytes of data are transferred per day.

### **III OSA Outreach Projects**

Since its foundation OSA has always been very active in the international scene. It has initiated many projects, and supported many professional institutions, projects and drives. In 2001 OSA surveyed its past activities and current engagements in the national and international context and arrived at a decision to step up its outreach activities in every possible direction.

Internationally OSA's most prominent action was the foundation of the International Federation of Human Rights Archives, an initiative it had long since cherished before the Federation actually became reality. The first common action of the Federation will be the draft Martus Project policy on the maintenance and operation of this system.

On the national level OSA utilized its professional know-how in the course of the Hungarian election campaign by preserving e-mail and cell phone messages supporting, criticizing, accusing or parodying the parties and candidates standing for election, along with messages calling for election rallies.

In-house OSA, continues its exhibition series but has also started its own educational project, a credited course on archives and internship for Legal Department students.

#### **A International Archival Projects**

- 1 The International Federation of Human Rights Archives** was founded by OSA and ten other Founding Members in September 2002 in order to improve communications and the flow of information among the members and to strengthen their position on an international level.
- 2** OSA was granted partner status with full rights in **INKOMKA** (The International Comintern Archives Project) which aims at creating and making publicly available the database of the 20,000,000 items and a selection of 1,000,000 images of the Comintern Archives in digital format.

- 3 A Backup Server for the Martus Project**, a software system which creates, stores and retrieves abuse information in encrypted format received from Human Rights grass-root NGO's and activists working under dangerous conditions, was set up in OSA in October, 2002.
- 4 Campaign Archive (Kampányarchiv)**: between the two rounds of the 2002 parliamentary elections in Hungary, the Open Society Archives invited all recipients of e-mails and cell phone text messages related to the parliamentary elections to forward them to OSA. A large number of messages were preserved. OSA also offered technical and methodological advice to other archives which are capable of receiving, processing and archiving such messages.
- 5** OSA takes an active part in and contributes to the **Parallel History Project on NATO and the Warsaw Pact**, which seeks to collect, analyze, and interpret these premier sources for the study of contemporary international history.

## **B In-house Educational and Research Projects**

In line with a decision taken in 2001 OSA took its first steps towards joining in the educational activities of the Central European University and offered a credited course on archives in the Legal Department and an internship program in the Human Rights stream. In the next academic year OSA is planning to participate in the Gender Studies and the History Departments.

- 1 Corroborating Human Rights Violations**: the course (consisting of seven seminar meetings) provided a complex overview of the Archive as a special repository of knowledge and the specific problems related to documents on grave violations of human rights.
- 2 Human Rights Internship** was offered to Legal Studies MA and Ph.D. students to work on the processing of OSA's human rights-related collections under the supervision of a staff-archivist starting from January, 2003.
- 3** OSA developed the **Open Archives Initiative (OAI)** compliant server, eprints.ceu.hu – currently running in Beta mode, to serve as an electronic document repository run and maintained by CEU, which is fully interoperable with academic electronic libraries.
- 4** OSA started its **film series** for the public in October 2002. The first set, watched by a full house in the Galeria Centralis, was a selection of films by Leni Riefenstahl.

- 5 Students** from different Budapest universities are invited to OSA and given a tour of the Archives (for example, in November 2002 students from the Budapest University of Economics and the Hungarian Film Academy visited OSA).

## **C Galeria Centralis**

OSA continued its tradition of organizing six to seven exhibitions in its own exhibition hall each year. Between October 2001 and November 2002 seven exhibitions were organized; six of them were installed in the Gallery and one that had already been to several countries went to Holland. OSA's plan to open up its activities to a wider public took shape in a series of public events related to the exhibitions. On the occasion of the Millennium exhibition, which opened on 31 December 2001, a workshop for secondary school history teachers and a conference on the 2001 Millennium events was organized. The Sex and Communism exhibition opening was followed by a public lecture on Sex and Politics in the Soviet Union and in January 2003 by a film series on the same topic.

- 1 Millennium** (Dec 31, 2001 – February 28, 2002): a summative exhibition about all the most important publicly funded millenary events, programs and works of art in Hungary without commentary; the exhibition spoke for itself.
- 2 InterNational Theatre** (March 15, 2002 – April 7, 2002): this exhibition presented, to a Hungarian public deprived of the possibility of having such a theatre, those significant, structurally and esthetically transparent multi-use theatre buildings that were internationally acclaimed in previous years' competitions.
- 3 Unerasable Communism** (April 11, 2002 – May 28, 2002): an exhibition of the work of Károly Kelemen, painter.
- 4 Forced Bathings in Hungary** (June 13, 2002 – July 14, 2002, together with the Roma Press Center) offered an insight into how Gypsy Settlements were disinfected, and their inhabitants shaved, stripped and humiliated, during Socialism.
- 5 Helsinki Travelling Exhibition**, based on Human Rights documents received from the International Helsinki Federation, traveled to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- 6 DPRK (North Korea)** (September 13, 2002 – October 27, 2002): a photo exhibition offering rare glimpses of the world's most closed-off country. North Korea's Stalinist system was revealed, from the ritual worship of the late president Kim Il Sung to the country's current agricultural crisis.
- 7 Sex and Communism** (November 28, 2002 – February 16, 2003): an exhibition based on private and official photos, documents, movies, personal testimonies describes more than merely sexual practices.

## **D Publications and Conferences**

### **1 Publications**

OSA opened a new web page dedicated to its own publications and those of scholars closely related to OSA. In 2001/2 two important publications were added:

- (a) Russia's "Trophy" Archives—Still Prisoners of World War II? by Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam.
- (b) Reference Information Papers (RIP), compiled by staff archivists, are thematic finding aids aiming to guide researchers to all the relevant archival materials at OSA that relate to a certain topic. Issues of the RIP series are published irregularly, and always reflect the status quo of the holdings. The latest issue, No. 9, in the series is on Human Rights and was published both in electronic and paper format in 2002.

### **2 Conferences**

In 2001/2002 the staff of OSA not only attended conferences as participants or presenters but also organized a workshop for secondary school teachers of history and a conference of its own on the occasion of the Millennium exhibition. The papers read by historians, sociologists and art-historians at the conference were collected and will be soon published both electronically and in paper format.

The staff of OSA attended more than fifteen conferences both in Hungary and abroad. The conferences were closely related to the main professional interests of OSA, archives, recent history, human rights and informational rights, for example:

- Training Workshop for public officials on the implementation of the Freedom of Information Act in Bulgaria, February 2002, Sofia;
- Training Workshop for public officials on the implementation of the Romanian Law on Free Access to Information of Public Interest, March 2002, Bucharest;
- "Human remains management: Law, Politics and Ethics", May 2002, Geneva;
- Initiative for Policy Dialogue "Transparency Taskforce" lead by Joseph Stiglitz, September 2002, New York;
- Conference of the Society of Hungarian Archivists, September 2002, Kaposvár;
- Open Democracy Review, October 2002, Cape Town;
- Parallel History Project meeting, November 2002, Zurich;
- Colloquy on Archives Activities, November 2002, Strasbourg;
- "What Access to official Documents?" on the implementation of the Recommendation on access to official documents, November 2002, Strasbourg.