

New Testament and Archaeological Slides from the Harvard Divinity School

LDI Project Final Report, May 23rd, 2007

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Submitted by Daniel Hawkins, Assistant Project Manager



Introduction

The goal of the New Testament and Archaeological Slides from the Harvard Divinity School project was to enhance access and increase use of the 8900 slides held by the Harvard Divinity School used for teaching and research by faculty and students within Harvard Divinity School, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, and the Division of Continuing Education. The slides are the result of over thirty years of collecting and research of archaeological images from the Early Christian period represented by archaeological sites and museum collections in Mediterranean area. The images include archaeological sites primarily in Greece and Turkey, architecture and architectural detail, statues, coins, and close-ups of inscriptions. At project's conclusion, approximately 8400 slides were successfully digitized by a local vendor, deposited in DRS (by the HCL Digital Imaging Group), cataloged in OLIVIA, and are available to the public from VIA. The discrepancy between the initial goal and the number of slides actually digitized was due to the omission of a set of slides that were published on a CD and were under copyright from that publishing project. This project has succeeded in making the bulk of the collection images more easily accessible to faculty and students for teaching and study by

providing a clear method for searching and viewing the materials using Harvard University Library centralized systems and services.



Implementation & Project Timeline

In May of 2004, the project team was assembled. The graduate student catalogers then began the process of creating surrogate records in OLIVIA. For every slide in the collection that was to be scanned, a surrogate record was created. At the same time, the project managers and the image activities coordinator began meetings with members of the Digital Imaging Group (“DIG” at Widener Library) and Stephen Chapman to review best practices for the reformatting phase. Two scanning vendors were chosen as finalists, and submitted samples of their work. Stephen Chapman, the LDI reformatting consultant, drafted the metadata schema that the DIG would utilize when depositing scanned images into the DRS. Sue Kriegsman, the OIS LDI liaison, assisted in the contract negotiations between HDS and the chosen scanning vendor, Boston Photo, as well as provided overall guidance to the HDS project staff in all phases of the project. The original contract negotiations took longer than expected resulting in a delay in beginning the reformatting phase. The first batch of slides originally went to the scanning vendor in February 2005.

It was discovered during the initial processing of Batch 1 in March 2005 that the file sizes of the images would be far larger than originally estimated. This was due in part to the fact that the images created from the 40mm slides would be larger than those of the 35mm slides. Also, at about the same time, the LDI Executive Committee adapted the new guidelines for scanning 35 mm slides “*Scanning 35mm Slides—Guideline to Produce Digital Masters*” that were developed by the Visual Materials Working Group. The Guidelines increased the recommended scanning resolution size for 35mm slides to the minimum of 2400 ppi, the recommended setting being that of 3600 ppi. The LDI Executive Committee recommended that the project use the new reformatting guidelines for the slides reformatting process. LDI provided additional funding to cover

the costs associated with the DIG's processing of the additional DVD media required to store/transfer the larger file-size images.

It also became apparent that there were color correction problems that needed to be addressed when we received the initial Batch 1 images back from Boston Photo in March 2005. The scope of work agreed upon in the original Boston Photo contract did not initially include color correction of the deliverable digital images. It became apparent that this would be necessary due to the poor quality of the raw scans, and the contract was renegotiated in April 2005 so that Boston Photo would also be responsible for color correction on all digital images. As a consequence, Batch 1 needed to be rescanned at the higher resolution (including color correction) and was re-delivered to Boston Photo on May 1st. Funding for the resulting increase in the per-slide cost (for the increased file sizes, and color correction) was acquired partially from LDI, and partially from internal HDS funds. Boston Photo then proceeded with the color correction of all the images to match what the original slides looked like when they were first developed; not necessarily how the slides looked in their current state.

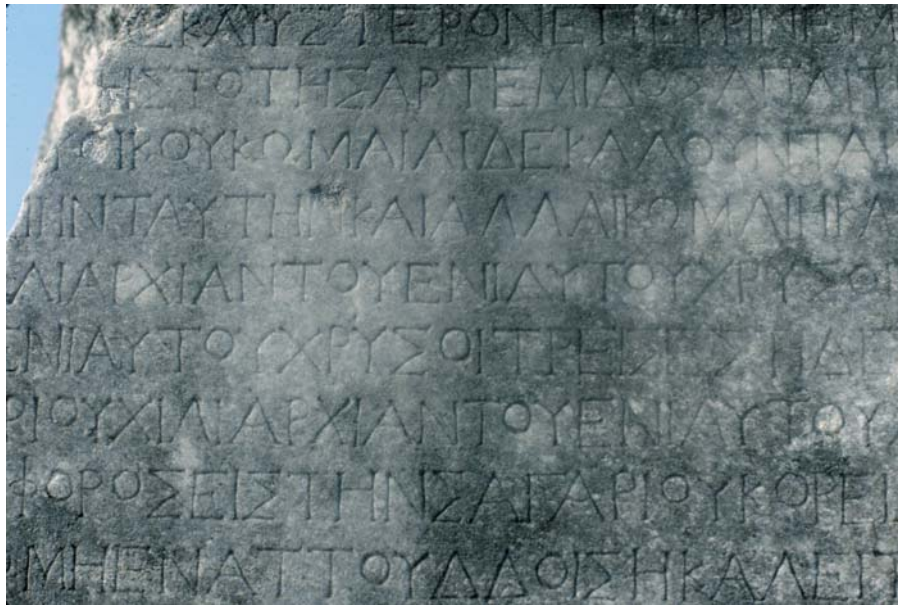
In an effort to bring the project schedule back on track for the June 2006 completion date, the Boston Photo contract was also renegotiated to reduce the term of the reformatting agreement from 18 months to 12 months. This was achieved by having Boston Photo process monthly batches consisting of 750 slides, as opposed to the original batch size of 500. After these initial delays and problems getting the reformatting phase off the ground, the rest of this process proceeded smoothly and the reformatting phase was completed in June of 2006.

Though cataloging continued throughout the reformatting phase, only about 25% of the cataloging work had been completed by June 2006. Our full time cataloger (Amy Philips) had left the project in early December 2005, leaving us with a vacancy in a key role. This role was temporarily filled on a part-time basis by Michael Bradford, Serials and Electronic Resources Librarian at the Andover-Harvard Theological Library (eight hours/week). We began the hiring process immediately, but the position remained vacant until the new project cataloger began work on April 1st, 2006. In addition to the turnover in the full-time project cataloger position, we also lost all three original (graduate student) project catalogers between August 2005 and January 2006. We hired three new catalogers, but this naturally caused delays in productivity. The training process for the entire cataloging staff, as well as the discovery of cataloging errors and incomplete records that were supposedly completed by the original staff led to the most significant delays in the project schedule.

As the graduate students created the work/site records, the project cataloger reviewed them for compliance with library cataloging practices and the project guidelines. The project cataloger would then link images to the work/site records, and then export these records to VIA. The project cataloger also produced bi-monthly cataloging reports, which were forwarded to the Assistant Project Manager, then presented at our monthly cataloging team meetings. The project cataloger was responsible for the documentation of all the cataloging decisions and guidelines. The cataloger worked closely with Alix Reiskind from the OLIVIA steering committee to answer questions and make appropriate decisions with respect to the OLIVIA cataloging system.

The second incarnation of the project cataloging team did a phenomenal job in the final year of the project to create robust and well-indexed records in OLIVIA that greatly enhance the value of the completed digital materials in VIA. Their dedication and hard work on the project were vital to the successful completion of this initiative on January 26th, 2007.

Several faculty members have already begun using the digitized materials, and we continue to promote the collection. The Andover-Harvard Theological Library has highlighted the collection on their website (http://www.hds.harvard.edu/library/collections/digital/nt_slides.html), and images from the collection were featured at a conference held at HDS on May 10th -14th: "From Roman to Early Christian Thessalonikē: A Conference on Religion and Archaeology" (<http://www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/events/Thessaloniki/index.html>).



Project Staff

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Alix Reiskind, Visual Resources Librarian at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, served as OLIVIA Consultant for the project catalogers throughout the project, 617-496-8673

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Sue Kriegsman, LDI-MAP Program, Harvard University Library, Office for Information Systems

Amy Phillips, Project Cataloger, Andover-Harvard Theological Library, Harvard Divinity School, 617-495-2176 (worked on project from 2004 – December 2005)

Shana Drake, Project Cataloger, Andover-Harvard Theological Library, Harvard Divinity School, 617-495-2176 (worked on project from April 2006 – January 2007 project completion)

Robyn Walsh, *Jeffrey Keiser*, *Cavan Concannon*, *Heidi Wendt*, *Stephen Hebert*, *David Mihalyfy*, Harvard Divinity School, Graduate Students as subject specialist catalogers.



Project Budget

The total amount spent to date from the LDI grant-funded portion of the total project funds is \$151,468.00, with a remaining balance of \$367.00. The funds were spent on part-time graduate student catalogers salaries/fringe (\$45,869.00), full-time project cataloger salaries/fringe (\$38,540.00), LDI-MAP service (\$31,455.00), Boston

Photo reformatting expenses (\$30,866.00), DIG expenses for deposit into DRS (\$4400.00), and supplies such as slide storage boxes for transfer to vendor, CD/DVD media, etc. (\$338.00).

The total amount spent to date from the HDS IT & Media Services-funded portion of the total project funds is \$81,746.00. The funds were spent on the full-time project cataloger salaries/fringe (\$79,677.00), part-time graduate student catalogers salaries/fringe (\$817.00), and Boston Photo reformatting expenses (\$1,252.00).

The total amount spent to date from the HDS Andover-Harvard Theological Library-funded portion of the total project funds is \$32,623. The funds were spent on the full-time project cataloger salaries/fringe.

Lessons Learned

- We encountered various difficulties in staffing the project with part-time student catalogers
 - Did not have a clear understanding of project goals. Project objectives were confused with pre-existing research projects undertaken for faculty member by same students (initially).
 - Need objective employees – not former research associates of the faculty member
 - Students could not devote the time that is needed for a project of this scale – i.e. their academic work takes precedence, causing missed productivity goals
 - The likelihood of turnover during the term of the 2-year project is very high
- Cataloging could have been done more efficiently, and records would be of higher quality with two full-time catalogers, as opposed to one full-time cataloger and three part-time student catalogers.
- Better organization of physical collection was needed prior to start of the reformatting phase
 - Consolidation of collection into uniform storage boxes
 - Creation of a new inventory, not reliance on old spreadsheets and card catalogs
- Delays in cataloging were also caused by the discovery of incomplete or unfinished work by previous student catalogers. This might have been avoided by utilizing full-time catalogers as opposed to part-time students.
 - Portions of work that we thought were completed by some of the student's required significant additional work.
 - This was only discovered after the project cataloger began to QC their records after the departure of two out of the three student catalogers.
 - Lack of consistency in the project staff, as well as vacancies led to inconsistent QC.
- Preparation of physical slide batches should have been done with a more systematic approach.
 - Students prepared batches by grouping certain topical areas, not by numerical accession numbers.
 - This made the process of compiling batches and resorting slides difficult, because batches were comprised of slides taken from many different physical slide storage boxes.
 - This made tracking what was scanned, and what wasn't more difficult to manage.
- Cataloging the images is difficult when a digital image does not yet exist for a given record. Cataloging productivity increased greatly in the later phases of the project after the scanning was done and digital images deposited into the DRS were accessible in OLIVIA.

