

## LDI Round 8

### Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online

Slavic Division, Widener Library / Davis Center Collection, H.C. Fung  
Library

### Final Report

#91 JR HARVARD UNIVERSITY REFUGEE INTERVIEW PROJECT COPY NO CASE NO -1-

Final Questionnaire - 4

INTERVIEWING TIME:           2 Nov 1950           0930 - 1200 W1-01  
                                  3 Nov 1950           0920 - 1245 G1-25  
                                  4 Nov 1950           0230 - 0445 P6-7, SOT  
                                  7 Nov 1950           0930 - 1205 G1-P2  
  0930 - 1210 P3-10  
  0130 - 0445 P11-Att. Bve

Afternoon of 2 Nov, respondent could not come - had to go for medical examination

PLACE OF INTERVIEW           Munich

FACT SHEET DATA

1	Female
2	55
3	Great Russian
4	Single
5	Not in Army
6	Continued for B
7	Middle Sch 12 years, 1939-41 Pedagogical Institute, spec. course in philological faculty.
8	Rural
8a	1935 moved from rural to urban
9a	Respondent arrested or imprisoned
9b	Member of family not arrested or imprisoned
10a	Respondent rank-and-file intellectual
10b	Family clergy
11	Teacher
12	1943
19	Non-party

REV:1

No. 91 JR HARVARD UNIVERSITY REFUGEE INTERVIEW PROJECT -3-  
Work Section

31 22

(1) From 1918 to 1928 I worked in a primary school in our village as a teacher and I was also in charge of the school. Then from 1928 to 1933 I only taught. I was no longer in charge of the school. I taught classes one through four. Then from 1933 to 1935, I worked as a bookkeeper for a kolkhoz in the village and then for an artel that made baskets and other such items, and I moved to a city, a large city in the Donbas. Then in 1936, I went back to teaching, I taught first at a complete secondary school in this large city, and then I taught in a primary school in the same city. That is, first I taught for one year, from 1936 to 1937 in a desiatiletka and then I went to teach in a semiletka. I taught the fifth and seventh classes. I taught Russian language and literature.

(What work did you do during the war?) I taught until the Germans came to our city in June of 1942. After that I did not work much, only about three months, because the Germans permitted only one Russian school for the whole city and that was a primary school. All of the other schools were Ukrainian and I worked for only three months because the Germans were slow in permitting a primary Russian school to be opened.

(Why did you leave teaching for the period from 1933 to 1935?) I am the daughter of a priest, my brother was in the White Army and he perished during the civil war. I felt this very much. My father died in 1920 and I taught in the same village where my father had been priest. The people liked me there but the authorities did not. I felt it very much that I was a priest's daughter and it was very hard. I was in charge of the school in the village up until 1928, when I gave up that job and continued on as a teacher until 1933. At that time the director of the school

#### Submitted by:

Project Manager Bradley L. Schaffner,  
Richard Lesage, Maggie Hale and Hugh Truslow  
March 24, 2009

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## **PROJECT STAFF**

### **Project Manager:**

Bradley L. Schaffner, Head, Slavic Division, Widener Library, Harvard College Library.

### **Project Associates:**

Prof. Terry Martin, Department of History; Executive Committee, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies

Prof. David Brandenberger, Department of History, University of Richmond, Richmond; Associate, Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University

Ernest Zitser, formerly Librarian, Davis Center Collection, H.C. Fung Library, Harvard College Library

Hugh Truslow, Librarian for the Davis Center Collection, H.C. Fung Library, Harvard College Library

### **Project Team:**

Richard J. Lesage, Digital Projects Librarian, Imaging Services, Widener Library, Harvard College Library

Maggie Hale, Librarian for Collections Digitization, Imaging Services, Widener Library, Harvard College Library

Enrique Diaz, Designer/Multimedia Specialist, Harvard College Library, Harvard College Library

Imaging Services, Widener Library, Harvard College Library

### **Project Advisors**

Robin Wendler, Metadata Analyst, Office for Information Systems, Harvard University Library

Stephen Chapman, Preservation Librarian for Digital Initiatives, Weissman Preservation Center, Harvard University Library

## **SUMMARY**

The Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online (HPSSS Online) is a joint digital project of the H.C. Fung Library and the Slavic Division of the Widener Library, funded by the Harvard University Library's Library Digital Initiative. Production of the digital collection was undertaken in 2005-2007 by staff of the Imaging Services department of the Harvard College Library (HCL).

The Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online provides access to digitized materials selected from the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System (HPSSS). The digital collection consists chiefly of summary transcripts of 705 interviews conducted with refugees from the USSR during the early years of the Cold War. A unique source for the study of Soviet society between 1917 and the mid-1940s, the HPSSS includes vast amounts of one-of-a-kind data on political, economic, social and cultural conditions. The HPSSS's value is compounded by the fact that it was compiled in English and organized according to a rigorous social science framework, making it accessible to a broad range of students and scholars.

Source materials for the digital project are from the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System conducted by scholars and specialists of the Harvard Russian Research Center from 1950 to 1953. Data gathered in the HPSSS, as well as related reports and analyses, were originally housed at the Harvard Russian Research Center, renamed Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies (DCRES) in 1996. In the fall of 2005, the HPSSS materials in the DCRES collection were transferred to the H.C. Fung Library of the Harvard College Library (HCL).

## **BACKGROUND TO THE HARVARD PROJECT ON THE SOVIET SOCIAL SYSTEM**

The Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard at Harvard traces its origins back to 1948-1950, during the early days of the Cold War. One of the center's first major research projects, secured by director Clyde Kluckhohn, concerned an exhaustive study of Soviet society based on hundreds of interviews conducted with former Soviet citizens displaced by WWII.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The project was financed by the Human Resources Research Institute, an Air Force intelligence agency based at Maxwell Field, Alabama. According to Contract 33(038)-12909, signed in June 1950 and renewed biannually until January 1954, the center was to study Soviet society concentrating on its defense capabilities. Research was to focus on party and state administration, the military, economy, education, health care and nationality policy; other topics included family life, partisan activities during WWII and popular reactions to the German occupation. The independently-minded Harvard team reconfigured this agenda, ultimately spending over \$900,000.

Initially termed the “Project on the Soviet Social System” or “Harvard Refugee Interview Project” the HPSSS was designed to take advantage of the latest advances in social science research. Kluckhohn appointed the sociologist Alex Inkeles as HPSSS research director; Inkeles quickly added the social psychologist Raymond Bauer as co-director. Together with a prominent team of specialists, Inkeles and Bauer attempted to use the quantitative and qualitative analysis of detailed questionnaires and highly structured interviews to devise an empirical model of Soviet society.

Between September 1950 and May 1951, the Inkeles-Bauer team conducted some 705 interviews in Munich and New York (343 general “Series A” interviews and 362 more specialized “Series B” interviews) and collected over two thousand questionnaires. The interviews were transcribed and duplicated by ditto-master for analysis and preservation; the questionnaires were tabulated and discarded. By mid-1951, the Series A and Series B ditto-masters had been bound into two sets of reference volumes, the first running 37 tomes in length and the second 24. Both were deposited in the HCL in 1953 after elementary indexing. Since that time, only two microfilm copies have ever been made of the project: one for the Air Force in 1952 and one more recently for HCL.<sup>2</sup> Sections of the project were also computerized according to a primitive “recode” during the late 1980s.<sup>3</sup>

## **PROJECT BENEFITS**

A unique source for the study of Soviet society between 1917 and the mid-1940s, the HPSSS boasts vast amounts of one-of-a-kind data on political, economic, social and cultural conditions. The HPSSS’s value is enhanced by the fact that it was compiled in English and organized according to a rigorous social science framework making it accessible to a broad range of students and scholars. The project’s breadth, depth, and English-language accessibility endow it with enormous potential, both as a pedagogical tool in the classroom and within a wider community of specialists on Soviet history, literature and cultural studies. However, since 1953 problems of access, poor indexing, compounded by age-related degradation of the ditto-master originals had hampered proper utilization of the HPSSS materials. The digitization of the HPSSS interviews and manuals, and their delivery through a fully web-based searchable electronic resource, has dramatically improved access to the materials. The new electronic resource was used by Professors Terry Martin and Benjamin Tromly in their courses in 2007.

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<sup>2</sup> *Project HRRRI* (Cambridge, Mass. and Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Harvard University Russian Research Center; Human Resources Research Institute; Air Force Personnel and Training Research Center; Officer Education Research Laboratory, 1952), 110 microfilm reels; 16 mm. (OCLC: 21313328); Harvard College Library Imaging Services, 2000: 19 microfilm reels; 35 mm.

<sup>3</sup> *Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System, 1950-1951: Life History Interview Recodes* (Ann Arbor: Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, 1990-91), OCLC: 25197337.

## **PLANNING OF THE HPSSS ONLINE**

Planning for the project started in the spring of 2005, with members of the project team, associates, and advisors, meeting to review the materials and discuss current use and the way in which the materials could be best described and delivered through Harvard's digital library infrastructure.

Based on the recommendations of those most familiar with the collection and its use, it was decided to give first priority to the digitization of interviews of Schedule-A and Schedule-B, and some manuals and guides to these interviews. Digitization of the Fainsod/Friedrich preliminary interviews, although not a first priority, was also identified as highly desirable. Due to limits on project funding, these materials were not included in the project.

A finding aid in Harvard's Online Archival Search Information System (OASIS), was considered the most reliable and permanent means of description and access to the digital collection over time. Materials digitized would be listed in this finding aid, along with the corresponding links to the digital versions delivered through Harvard's Page Delivery Service (PDS).

Digitization for the project would be done by Imaging Services, a unit within HCL providing a broad range of reformatting services. Although both Schedules A and B had been microfilmed, Imaging Services staff determined that the poor quality of the original materials (the interviews consist of mimeographed pages with a purple type where the text is often unclear or the print has faded) resulted in microfilm images of inferior quality that could not be scanned for digital conversion.

Existing copies of the interviews were reviewed to determine the condition and number of pages and to identify the appropriate sources for digitization. Two known paper copies existed of Schedule A, a bound copy at the Davis Center Library and a Widener disbound copy at the Harvard Depository, the University library system's remote storage facility. The only known paper copy available of Schedule B was a disbound Widener copy at the Harvard Depository (the copies had been disbound for microfilming). The disbound copies, totaling approximately 26,300 pages, were selected for the project as they could be more easily handled in digitization. When pages of interviews were found to be missing from the Widener copy of the A-Schedule, replacement pages were obtained from the bound copy of the H.C. Fung Library. There are only a few instances of such replacements, and they were noted in the OASIS finding aid. The manuals, indices, and guides (approximately 1,500 pages) were digitized from originals held by the H.C. Fung Library.

As the faculty advisors indicated that the ability to search the full text of each interview would be of tremendous value to the scholarly community, project staff explored keyword searching of the text as a primary means of access to the content of the interviews. Due to the poor quality of the original copies, initial tests of Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software on the page images proved unsatisfactory and project staff

determined that keying the text or OCR correction would be needed to successfully meet the need for full text searching.

With advice and help from Reformatting Advisor Stephen Chapman and Bill Comstock of Imaging Services, project staff developed a Request for Information (RFI) and sent it to three vendors. The RFI identified qualified companies that could provide preliminary pricing for the transcription —via keying, or via OCR with correction—of machine-printed English text to ASCII files (txt format). The ASCII text was to be at the page level, preserving the word order of the originals. Project staff expected that the level of accuracy mandated for the ASCII quality would depend on pricing, and vendors were asked to indicate price differences at the typical unit(s) (e.g., character, word, and page) and typical accuracy thresholds. Other than joining end-of-line hyphenated words into a single word in the transcribed file, no text processing or markup was required.

Following the RFI, a Request for Proposal (RFP) was sent to two vendors. In the RFP, HCL Imaging Services sought to outsource two production tasks to a capable service bureau: creation of highly accurate transcriptions from source digital page images and production of tab-delimited files that associate page numbers with file names.

Imaging Services selected Data Conversion Laboratory, Inc. (DCL) based on the quality of samples, cost, and positive reviews from another Harvard project utilizing this vendor. Due to the quality of the input files, DCL could not guarantee a specific level of accuracy, but committed to making a best effort to record the data precisely. They projected accuracy levels similar to those in the samples provided. Given the quality of the sample and their acknowledgement that the quality of the page images did not lend itself to a predictable accuracy rates, Imaging Services found this agreement acceptable.

It is important to note that the keying of the interviews did not eliminate the need for direct capture of the source materials. David Brandenberger, Project Associate, provided the following reasons for making images of the original transcripts available:

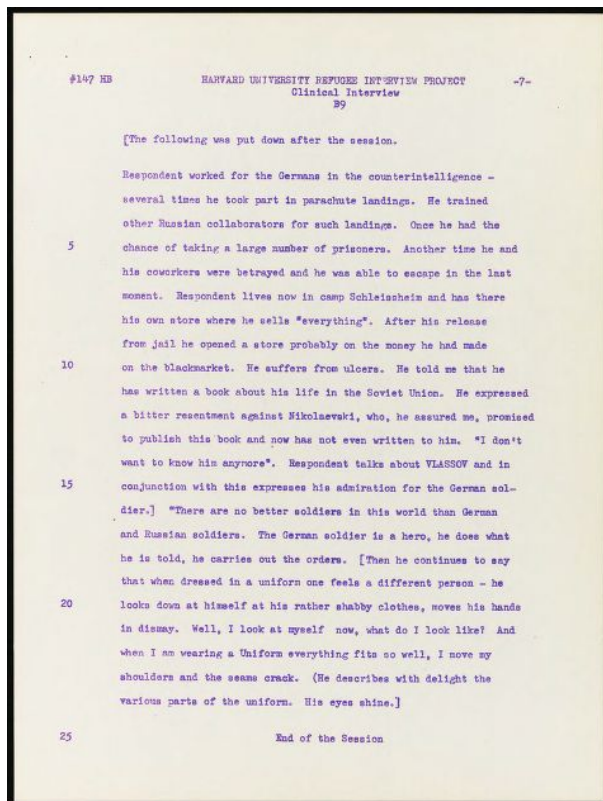
- 1) the HPSSS interview transcripts are "working copies" rather than standardized, edited and polished book chapters. As such, they have important idiosyncrasies (spelling irregularities, foreign words, purple prose, struck-out text) that a historian can tease meaning from. For example, what may seem like awkward wording or syntax to a non-specialist may to a historian be evidence of the literal translation of an obscure Russian expression or proverb. Transcription of this material into a text file would make these idiosyncrasies harder to spot and generally make the entire document look more formal, polished and standardized than it really is.
- 2) transcription of the interviews into a more formal and polished framework would reduce their usefulness as an archival document in the classroom. Many undergraduates have never had exposure to the raw and unpolished world of archival documentation; the HPSSS Online project offers a chance to challenge such students with something other than standardized, perfectly legible fonts and formatted pages that they are familiar with from textbooks and online newspapers. Put another way, the HPSSS Online project allows the historian the opportunity to

emphasize to students that reading an archival document is not necessarily the same as reading a printed page.

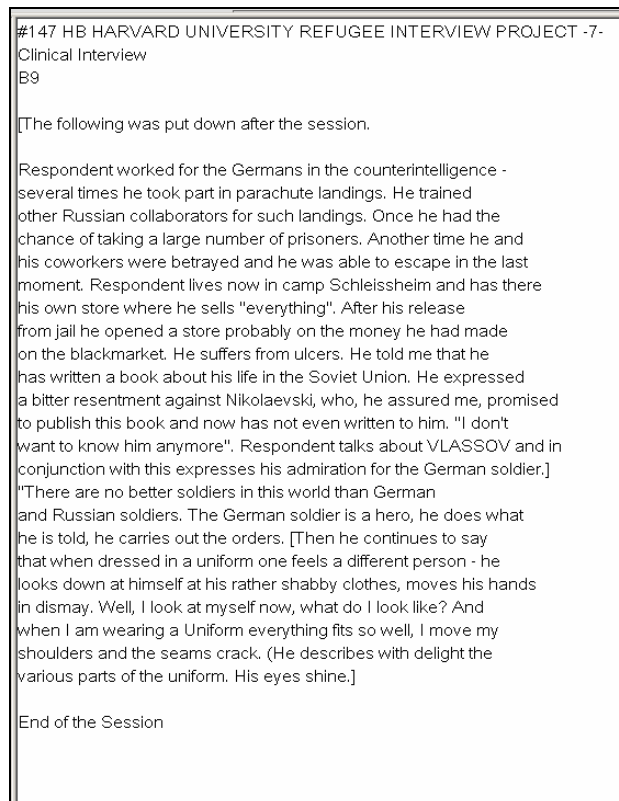
3) transcription risks introducing distortions into the text as data entry technicians accidentally "correct" misspellings, add missing words or fix "incorrect" syntax in the interviews. Having the image of the original document available would allow students and researchers to quote the HPSSS interviews with total confidence that they are quoting from the original source itself.

4) transcription would likely eliminate the hand-drawn figures, charts and diagrams currently present in some of the interviews.

In addition to searching the text of each individual interview, the advisors also desired the ability to search across all interviews, and to search into Schedule A or B only. With this in mind, the project team determined that each interview would be digitized as a single digital object, with the PDS label reflecting essential data about the interview, as well as the original location of the interview transcript in the bound volumes of the A- or B-Schedule. A search interface using the Full Text Search Service (FTS) would be incorporated into a webpage for the HPSSS online.



*Direct capture of pages images*



*Corresponding text file*

## **PRODUCTION OF THE HPSSS ONLINE**

### ***Intellectual Control and Metadata Input***

All source materials were collated, and peculiarities in pagination noted. Duplicate pages were temporarily removed, and a note was made to identify missing pages needing replacement. For the interviews, essential descriptive data was extracted from the first page of the interview, or accompanying biographical face sheet, if present, to serve as labels for the PDS. For manuals, the data was extracted from the title pages. All data was entered into spreadsheets, which were later converted into text files to generate labels for the PDS. The spreadsheets were also used to track any problems in the production delivery of page images or keyed text files, and their quality control. Information from the spreadsheets was also used in the creation of the finding aid.

### ***Reformatting***

Approximately 27, 800 pages were reformatted in the project. Two workflows were established for digitization: a studio camera workflow and a sheet fed workflow. For materials for which only one copy was known to exist (Schedule B and the manuals and guides, approximately 9,300 pages) digitization was done utilizing a studio camera. For materials with duplicate copies, approximately 18,500 pages, project staff used a document scanner equipped with a sheet feeder. TIFF images were created as master copies, with lossy compressed JPEG2000 images for delivery.

### ***Text Conversion***

Imaging Services established a workflow in which JPEG images of the pages were sent to the vendor (DCL) on CD-ROM and text files were returned via FTP in a specified directory structure corresponding with the page images. Upon receipt, the text files underwent a quality control review. Following the review, with some minor correction of keywords appearing in the text, files and descriptive metadata were made available to the programmer in Imaging Services, where a METS file was created.

### ***Storage***

Following digitization and text conversion, deposit packages, including METS files, page images and text files, and accompanying metadata files were created by Imaging Services staff and deposited into Harvard's Digital Repository Service (DRS) for long term storage, maintenance and access. The Harvard College Library is covering the costs of DRS Storage. Original materials are retained by the Widener Library and the H.C. Fung Library at the Harvard Depository.

## DISCOVERY AND ACCESS

### *Finding aid*

Project Archivist Richard Lesage created a finding aid to the digitized HPSSS materials and made it available through OASIS, Harvard's union catalog of finding aids. The finding aid contains contextual information on the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System and the digital project as well as an inventory of all Schedule A and Schedule B interviews, and the various manuals and guides digitized in the project. Links are provided to the digital version of each interview, manual and guide delivered through the PDS.

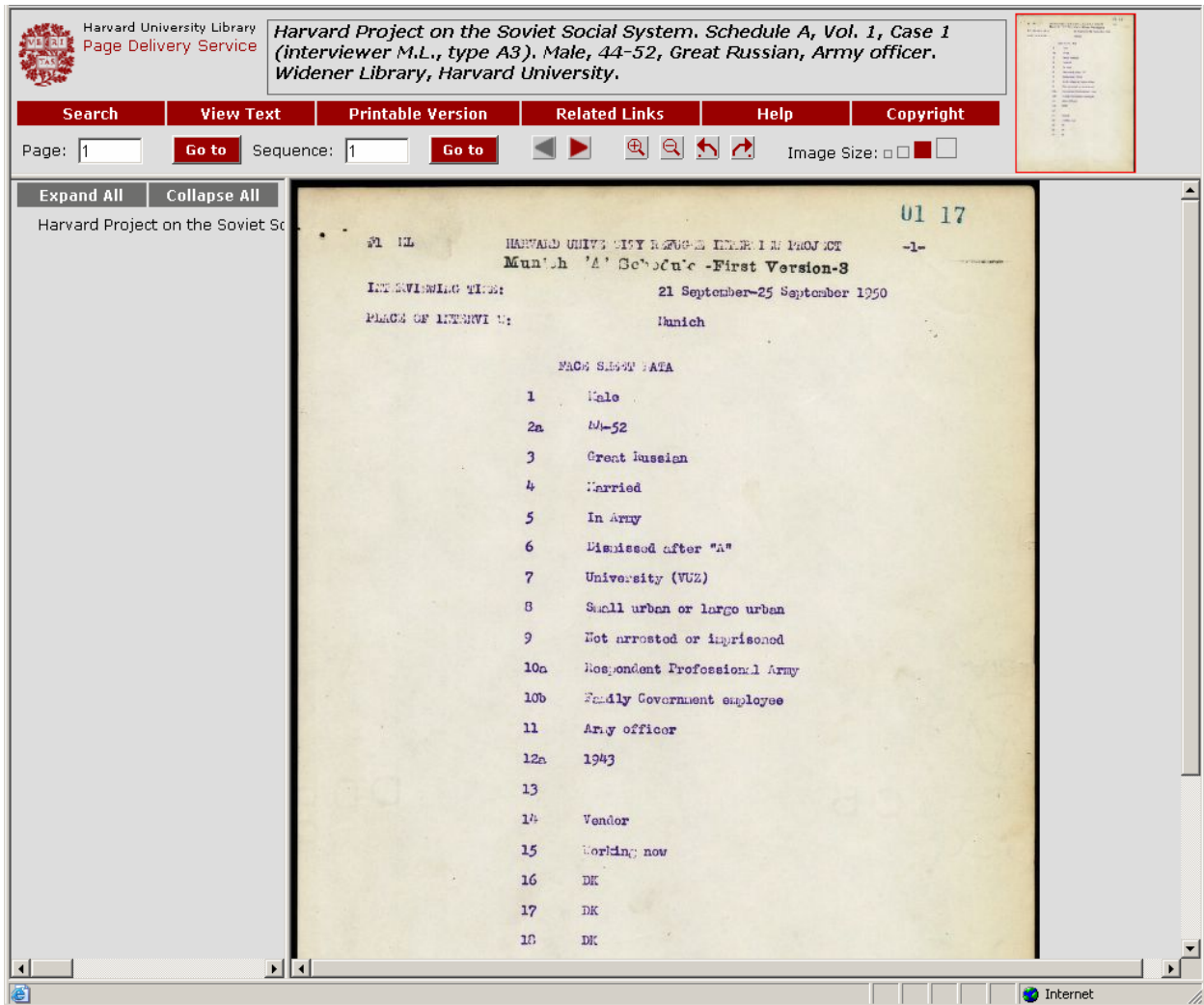
The screenshot shows the OASIS (Online Archival Search Information System) interface. At the top, it identifies the Harvard University Library and the specific finding aid: "Harvard University. Russian Research Center. Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Digital Collection: Interviews and Manuals: A Finding Aid". The page includes navigation tabs for "Full Finding Aid", "Summary: Context", and "Digital Content". A "Table of Contents" sidebar on the left lists various sections like "Descriptive Summary", "Historical note", and "Bibliography". The main content area features the title "Harvard University. Russian Research Center. Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Digital Collection: Interviews and Manuals: A Finding Aid" and the Harvard College Library logo. Below the logo, it provides the address "Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 02138 USA" and the copyright notice "©President and Fellows of Harvard College, 2007". A "Descriptive Summary" section follows, detailing the repository (H.C. Fung Library), creator (Harvard University), title, quantity (705 digitized transcripts and 7 manuals), and abstract (a collection of digital facsimiles of transcripts of interviews conducted with Soviet émigrés to West Germany, Austria, and the United States).

HPSSS Digital Collection Finding Aid <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:fun00001>

### *Page Delivery Service*

Each interview, manual or guide is a unique digital object delivered through the PDS. Descriptive label information for the digital object is displayed in the PDS. The PDS allows a user to page through the digital object or to go to a specific page. The option of a printable version is provided in the PDS, allowing for a PDF of the digital object to be created on the fly for downloading or printing. Users can choose to view the page image or the keyed full-text behind the page image. The PDS also allows for the viewing of the page image in various sizes and for zooming in on specific parts of the image. For each object, in the "related links" section of the PDS, links are provided to the HOLLIS record and the finding aid. For Schedule A and B interviews, a link directly to the related Manual for Use is also included.

Within the PDS it is possible to search the keyed full-text of the interview, manual or guide by using Harvard Library's Full Text Search Service (FTS). The FTS provides a mechanism for the indexing and retrieval of textual digital objects. Search options include Boolean operators, quoted phrases and proximity.



Page Delivery Service interface

### Website

To provide the ability to search across all interviews, or into Schedule A or Schedule B, project staff developed a website that provides an FTS search form to search multiple digital objects. In addition to the Search interface, the website provides contextual information, background on the history of the project, and assistance with searching and using the collection. Links directly to manuals and guides are also provided, as well as a link to the finding aid in OASIS to allow users to browse the list of interviews.

**HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY**  
 HOLLIS CATALOG   HOURS   RESEARCH CONTACTS   HARVARD LIBRARIES SITE   SEARCH THIS SITE:  GO

Home > Collections > The Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online

## The Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online

The Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online provides access to digitized materials selected from the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System (HPSSS). The digital collection consists chiefly of summary transcripts of 705 interviews conducted with refugees from the USSR during the early years of the Cold War. A unique source for the study of Soviet society between 1917 and the mid-1940s, the HPSSS includes vast amounts of one-of-a-kind data on political, economic, social and cultural conditions. The HPSSS's value is compounded by the fact that it was compiled in English and organized according to a rigorous social science framework, making it accessible to a broad range of students and scholars.

- [About the HPSSS Collection](#)
- [Working with the HPSSS Online](#)
  - [Searching and Viewing](#)
  - [Manuals and Indexes](#)
  - [Finding aids](#)

### Search the text of project materials

▲ Search results will open in a new browser window.

Select sort order for results:

Select material to search:

- All Interviews
  - Schedule A Interviews only (Personal life histories)
  - Schedule B Interviews only (Special topics)
- Manuals

Type keywords or phrase:

[Help With Search Terms](#)

Page Last Reviewed: April 7, 2008

HPSSS Online Website: <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:hul.eresource:hpsoviet>

### ***Additional access***

Links to the finding aid and to the website were added to existing bibliographic records for Schedules A and B in HOLLIS, Harvard’s online bibliographic catalog. The Project Archivist also created a record in HOLLIS for the website, with a link to the resource as well as to the electronic finding aid in OASIS, and registered the website as a Harvard “Digital Resource” so that the website can be found in the electronic resources section of Harvard’s Library Portal.

### **STAFFING**

Richard Lesage, half-time Digital Projects Librarian in Imaging Services, served as the Project Archivist for the Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online. Richard coordinated the project, including communications and deliveries to Imaging Services and DCL; providing quality control review of digital objects; created the EAD encoded finding aid for the project; and working with Enrique Diaz of the HCL Communications Office in the creation of the project finding aid. Maggie Hale provided assistance in

project planning and management throughout the project. Brad Schaffner, Head, Slavic Division, Widener, was the project manager.

## **PROJECT SCHEDULE**

The Harvard Project on the Soviet Social System Online started on October 1, 2005. Reformatting and text conversion were completed by the fall of 2006, however additional time was needed for web site development and completion of the finding aid. The website went live in February 2007, with the finding aid appearing in OASIS in the January 2008.

## **BUDGET**

LDI project funding was used for the reformatting, including digitization, keying, METS file creation and deposit to DRS.

Total LDI project expenditures for reformatting: \$94,543.50

Project cap: \$100,000

	Estimated costs	Final Costs
Text digitization, METS file creation and deposit	\$71,320	\$72,033.70
Keying of text by DCL (as sub contractor to Imaging Services)	\$28,680	\$22,509.80
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$94,543.50</b>

## **USE OF THE HPSSS ONLINE**

Since going live in February 2007, the HPSSS Online has seen substantial and increasing use both for teaching and research. Evidence of this is not only the data collected on traffic to the site, but also conversations with Harvard teaching faculty and emails received from researchers and educators interested in the collection.

For the period January 2007 through January 2009, the HPSSS Online site received a total of 9,046 page views, with 56.2% of those coming from the United States, followed by the United Kingdom (9.5%), the Russian Federation (8.0%), Canada (4.5%), and Germany (3.0%). Visitors from all other countries each represented less than 2% of the total. (See chart below.) While only 22.1% of the 1,122 U.S. page views of the site were from Massachusetts, 79.7%, or 894, of those were from Cambridge, indicating the strong use of the collection for teaching here at Harvard.

Traffic to the site has varied widely by month (again, see chart): there was a notable spike in traffic in February 2008, after the finding aid appeared in OASIS in January 2008. Other notable monthly increases in usage occurred in September, October, and December 2009. Some of this can perhaps be attributed to classroom use in the fall semester.

As mentioned earlier in this report, the new electronic resource has been used by Professor of Russian Studies Terry D. Martin and visiting lecturer Benjamin Tromly in their history courses. Professor Martin had previously used the print version of the collection for his “Everyday Life in the Soviet Union” course. Professor Martin has noted that in addition to the vastly increased ease of access to the materials that the online resource represents, the search functionality allows students to quickly interrogate the collection and use responses to particular interview questions as a means to generate research questions.

Email inquiries that the Davis Center Collection has received on the resource have come from across the U.S. and Canada, and from Switzerland and England. Some are from researchers using the interviews as sources for books on broader topics (displaced persons in Europe, a global history of food during World War II) while others are from professors using the materials for teaching history and sociology. One history professor from McMaster University in Ontario noted that the honors students of her course on historical methods “especially raved about the documents on HPSSS.” She added, “What an incredible collection and service the digitization project is for scholars and students.”

