

Reunited Digital Archive of Ossip Mandelstam

Development of hypertext of author's texts, comments to the texts, research literature and graphic images of texts manuscripts

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Abstract:

The paper covers project on reunification of texts of Ossip Mandelstam with comments and graphic images of the text.

Introduction

Works of Ossip Mandelstam (O.M.) may be considered one of the major accomplishments in Russian literature of the 20th century. Numerous conferences both Russian and International, publications of his works, and translations into other languages testify to increasing interest to the works of O.M. However there is no critical digital edition of his texts combined with adequate scholarly comments.

Noteworthy that manuscripts of O.M. are scattered in numerous archives on a global scale, first of all in the USA (Princeton University) and Russia, but also in other states (France, Izrael), that is a challenge to the scholars preparing new critical editions and studying the history of texts and poet's biography.

Mandelstam Society (MS) [1] is currently planning reunification of the whole body of O.M.'s archival documents (manuscripts and documents related to his biography). Scope of this work is rather large and therefore at the first stage we plan to make a hypertext of basic edition of O.M.'s texts together with comments as well as digital reproduction of images of manuscripts and biographical documents from several Russian archives the Internet. The list of archives to be digitized at the first stage of the project include Russian State Archive of Literature and Arts (Russian acronym is RGALI), State Archive of Russian Federation (GARF), Central Archive of Federal Security Service (TsA FSB). We have submitted an application to Arts and Humanities Research Board (UK) for support of this project.

1. Digitization of texts and comments

Texts of O.M.'s works are to be prepared following the principles of Russian Virtual Library (see an individual presentation about this project), based on the texts of Collected Writings (in 4 volumes), published by MS. Thus the latest developments in literature history and criticism of Mandelstam's texts will be incorporated both in the texts and in the comments.

2. Digitization and publication of manuscripts

Original manuscripts (kept in RGALI) and biographical documents (RGALI, GARF, TsA FSB) are to be scanned in high resolution by the staff of these archives following the specifications developed by MS. Manuscripts are to be scanned by commercially available flatbed scanner and a technology of image high-resolution capturing with the help of digital camera and other available components will be developed in parallel for handling the fragile manuscripts. Resulting high-

resolution images (600 ppi minimum) will be used for conservation at the server of Oxford Text Archive (OTA) (<http://ota.ox.ac.uk/>) and for conversion to medium- and low-resolution copies (300 and 75 ppi), available to the users. Batch conversion of high- to low-resolution images will be performed by the code developed within the project. Catalogues of manuscripts and biographical documents will be digitized and converted in hypertext with thumbnails linking to low-resolution images (75 ppi), available to the reader via web-browsing software. Pages with low-resolution images will also include user interface interacting with server-side image processing software that will project selected fragments of medium resolution image (300 ppi) into a browser window, thus “zooming in” the needed fragment of manuscript.

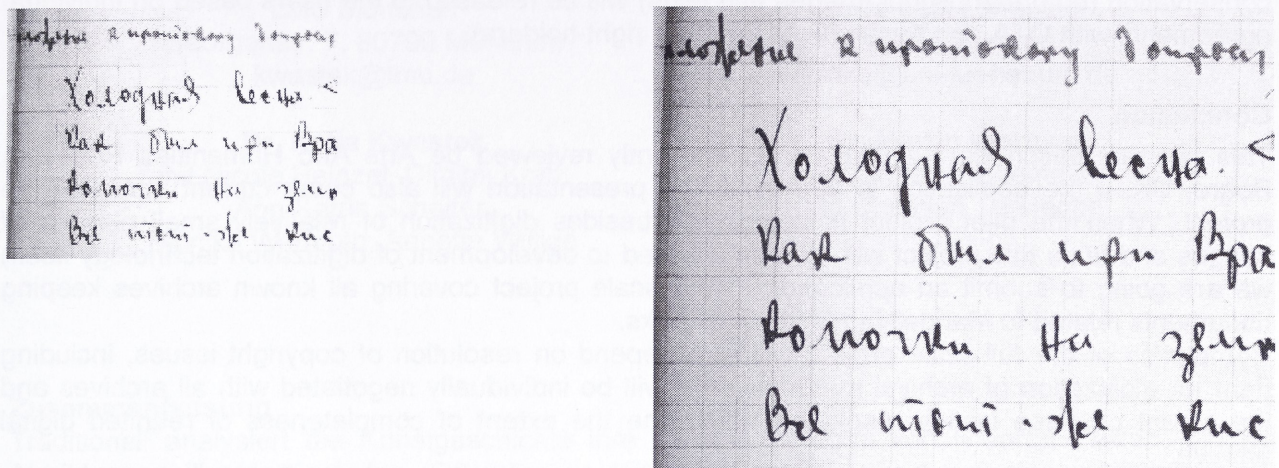


Figure 1: Low-resolution (left) and high-resolution (right) fragments of the same manuscript

Similar links to low-resolution images will be made from the texts for which the manuscripts will be available as well as the reverse links from image and archive catalogues pages to the texts of Mandelstam. Similarly if the comment to the text refers to a manuscript available in the array of images, the hyperlink from the text of the comment to digital image will be made.

Mandelstam's site - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View Go Bookmarks Tools Help

http://rvb.ru/mandelstam/m_o/sitedraft/krym2.htm

Mozilla Firebird Help User Support Forum Plug-in FAQ demovendors.asp Н.Доброхотова, Е...

Mandelstam's site

Осип Мандельштам

Images Холодная весна. Бесхлебный, робкий Крым
Как был при Врангеле, такой же виноватый.

- Manuscripts Колючки на земле, на рубищах заплаты,
- Documents Все тот же кисленький, кусающийся дым

Texts Все так же хороша рассеянная даль,
Деревья, почками набувшие на малость,
Стоят, как пришлые, и вызывает жалость

Archives Пасхальной глупостью украшенный миндаль

Природа своего не узнает лица.
И тени страшные Украины и Кубани -
На войлочной земле голодные крестьяне
Калитку стерегут, не трогая кольца...

Лето 1933, Москва
variant1 variant2
image1 image2
Comments

3. Conservation vs. presentation

All navigation elements and metadata (descriptions of manuscripts and archive catalogues) will be presented in two languages, Russian and English and in two formats, XML with TEI DTD [3] (in accordance with OTA requirements to conservation of texts and images), and in HTML 4.0 [4] together with CSS 2.0 [5] for presentation (display) to the user in so called “thin client” mode, i.e. in browsing software like Microsoft Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator, Mozilla, Opera) without additional software to be installed on user’s computer. All materials of the archive are to be prepared at the workstation and then uploaded to the server. Conversion between formats and hyperlinking will be done in semi-automated way using Xmarkup code [6]. Materials prepared for conservation (both manuscript images and texts) will be released to the users based on individual agreements with OTA and the archives (or other right-holders).

Conclusion

This abstract describes the pilot project currently reviewed by Arts And Humanities Research Board, UK. If the application is approved, the presentation will also cover current status of the project. When the pilot project is completed (besides digitization of relatively small number of images and texts this project will be also devoted to development of digitization technology itself) we are going to submit an application for full-scale project covering all known archives keeping documents related to Mandelstam’s life and works.

Completion of the full-scale project will also depend on resolution of copyright issues, including right for digitization of archival materials, that will be individually negotiated with all archives and the extent of these issues resolution will define the extent of completeness of reunited digital archive.

When the major stage of the project is completed, we are going to arrange the sequences of images following the sequence of text drafts, however it would be premature to discuss this topic in details.

References

1. Web-site of Mandelstam Society: http://www.rvb.ru/mandelstam/m_o/
2. Arts and Humanities research Board: <http://www.ahrb.ac.uk/>
3. Text Encoding Initiative. The XML Version of the TEI Guidelines — <http://www.tei-c.org/P4X/>
4. HTML 4.01 Specification — <http://www.w3.org/TR/REC-html40/>
5. Cascading Style Sheets, level 2 revision 1. CSS 2.1 Specification — <http://www.w3.org/TR/CSS21/>
6. xMarkup utility — see Russian description at http://rvb.ru/soft/xmarkup/xmarkup_170.htm