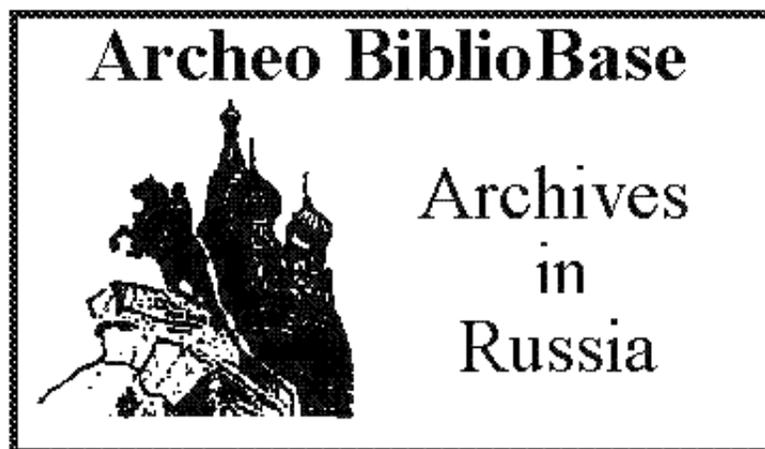# ArcheoBiblioBase

Dutch-Russian Cooperation Expands Russian Archive Directory
Last update of current page: 7 April 2015

The International Institute of Social History (IISH/IISG) in Amsterdam is cooperating with the Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration (RANEPA/RANKhiGS) for further expansion of the ArcheoBiblioBase (ABB) Internet directory and bibliographic information system for archives in the Russian Federation.

On the based of an agreement signed in 2013, a mirror website for ABB is now available on the RANEPA website in Moscow.

Founded by Dr Patricia Kennedy Grimsted, an Honorary Fellow of both IISH and RANEPA, and Associate of the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Harvard University, the extensive directory is based on collaborative directories published under her supervision in Russian and English:

Archives of Russia: A Directory and Bibliographic Guide to Holdings in Moscow and St. Petersburg, 2 vols.
(Armonk, NY/ London: M.E. Sharpe, 2000), and
Arkhivy Rossii: Moskva i Sankt-Peterburg: Spravochnik-

obozrenie i bibliograficheskii ukazatel'
(Moscow: "Arkheograficheskii tsentr," 1997). The ABB website currently displays data nearly 400 archives and manuscript repositories of the Russian Federation (with an additional 70 administering agencies) for which coverage has recently been updated. (The ABB database itself contains data for over 200 additional repositories for which updating is still needed.)

Moscow and St. Petersburg coverage currently extends to 195 federal, local state and non-state repositories, including libraries, museums, and academic institutions. Presenting data about unpublished sources of all types and periods, from the Archive of the President of the Russian Federation (AP RF) to film studios and factory museums, it provides basic reference for those using traditional state and CPSU records, medieval manuscripts, and personal papers. The directory provides a starting place to locate manuscript maps, folk songs, motion pictures, genealogical data, technical documentation, and architectural drawings, to name only a few among the specialized sources covered. Data for individual institutions and their various divisions includes their history (with all of their previous names and acronyms), and brief characterization of holdings. Notes about access provisions and working conditions in each repository augment researcher-orientation. Data about reference facilities include annotated listings of guides and specialized finding aids (total over 8,000 records), with links to available digitized editions.

Basic listings also extend to 186 state archives throughout the Russian Federation, together with available guides and other reference listings.

This ABB coverage should alert researchers in all disciplines to the wealth of archival holdings of all types and historical periods. As ABB on-line coverage expands to a wider range of repositories, governmental and non-governmental, this directory with accompanying bibliography of reference aids significantly opens "intellectual access" for research opportunities in Russia.

Currently coverage is only in English, but funding and staff assistance are being sought to add Russian-language data, updating the 1997 Russian directory *Arkhivy Rossii*.

The Internet infrastructure for ABB with its unique CMS

database was developed and continues to be maintained by the [International Institute of Social History](#) (IISH), in Amsterdam. ABB substantive CMS data on archives and their reference bibliography is being regularly updated at RANEPA by Natalia Maslova, with data from Rosarkhiv (Federal Archival Service of Russia) and other sources and bibliographic assistance from the State Public Historical Library (GPIB). Websites are now maintained by both IISH and RANEPA.

IISH and RANEPA cannot be responsible for errors or inadequacies of this coverage, but welcome comments and suggestions. Users comments, corrections, and suggestions may be submitted directly to the [editors](#). Corrections will be verified with the archive involved before posting.

We regret that staff limitation makes it impossible to answer reference inquiries. (See more advice below)

- [Archives Covered](#)
- [Printed Directories](#)
- [Reference Bibliography](#)
- [Databases and Microform Finding Aids](#)
- [Research Inquiries/Arrangements](#)
- [Genealogy/Family History](#)
- [Of Related Interest](#)

Archives Covered

Moscow and St. Petersburg

1. The current fourteen federal archives administered by the Federal Archival Agency of Russia—Rosarkhiv (labelled "B" from the ABB database), as last reorganized in March 1999.
   ([Table of Contents](#))
2. Archives of major federal agencies with the right to the long-term retention of their own records (labelled "C" from the ABB database).
   ([Table of Contents](#))
3. Local municipal and oblast archives in Moscow and St. Petersburg (Leningrad Oblast) (labelled "D" from the ABB database).
   ([Table of Contents](#))

4. Archival holdings of Academies, Universities, and Research Institutes (labelled "E" from the ABB database). ([Table of Contents](#))
5. Archives of non-governmental/independent institutions (labelled "F" from the ABB database). ([Table of Contents](#))
6. Archival and manuscript holdings of major libraries (labelled "G" from the ABB database). ([Table of Contents](#))
7. Archival and manuscript holdings of selected major museums (labelled "H" from the ABB database) ([Table of Contents](#))

   Russian Federation
8. Regional State Archives (outside Moscow and St. Petersburg) ([Table of Contents](#))

*Repository entries preceded by an asterisk and with a number starting with zero are archival administrative agencies rather than actual working archives.

During 2014 we are gradually adding additional coverage of archival holdings in museums in Moscow and Saint Petersburg (updating Part H of the 2000 printed volume). Further expansion is planned to update coverage in Part E, especially reflecting changes in repositories under the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAN), if and when they are officially revised. Coverage of holdings in additional independent (non-state [NGO] and private) institutions (Part F) is being considered, as funding and staff permit.

Russian translation of selected ABB coverage of federal and local state archives in the 2000 ABB English edition (with many updates) is currently presented on the official Rosarkhiv Russian-language "Arkhivy Rossii" portal: http://www.rusarchives.ru . Researchers are advised to compare the data provided at that Russian site, which also includes recent news about Russian archival developments

and publications.

Eventually we also hope to add expanded bibliographic coverage of General Archival Reference Literature, updating Part A in the published directories, when funding and staff permit.

Printed Directories

Most of the archives listed in Parts B through H are described in the **ABB printed directory**, *Archives of Russia: A Directory and Bibliography Guide to Holdings in Moscow and St Petersburg* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2000). The English edition is considerably expanded from the Russian-language edition, *Arkhivy Rossii* (Moscow, 1997). However, the present internet versions of Parts B through H have been considerably updated from the printed edition, to the extent possible with expanded bibliography of reference literature.

Reference Bibliography

Many of the archives here described are covered in more detail in general archival guides and in many cases their own Internet websites (most only in Russian). Many component holdings have been listed or described in more detail in specialized reference publications, many of which are listed in the bibliographies for reference literature under each repository.

Many more general publications predating 1999 are listed in Part A (General Bibliography) of the published English edition of *Archives in Russia* (2000). Updated coverage of general reference archival literature in the ABB database for Part A is in preparation, and eventual release on the Internet site is planned. A selection of literature and more recent publications for several sections of Part A (last updated 2008) now appear in the PDF file **Reference Bibliography**. Among specialized sections are those covering general directories (including those for regional archives), directories of libraries and museums, sources related to the Second World War, personal fonds (i.e. fonds of personal papers), and genealogy and family history.

Databases and Microform Finding Aids

Guides to Russian Archives
(Putevoditeli po rossiiskim arkhivam)

This vital Internet project provides online public access to an extensive database now encompassing fond-level listings in recent published guides to selected Russian state archives, with brief annotations nearly 230,000 archival fonds (record groups). The project, initiated cooperatively by the University of Kansas and East View Publications in collaboration with Rosarkhhiv, is described in English and Russian on the Rosarkhiv website, with the federal and local state archives included in the project listed at: http://guides.rusarchives.ru/.

It should be noted that the project as of 2014 includes digital versions of 34 recent guides for 10 of the 14 Federal Archives (Part B). For regional archives (Part RusFed) another 101 recent guides are included for archives in 15 republics, 5 krai, and 34 oblasts and autonomous regions, in addition to Moscow and Petersburg. The guides covered in the database are listed at: http://guides.rusarchives.ru/browse/b....

Hot links to the database are provided for ABB bibliographic listings of all of the guides included in the project, as well as to the electronic versions of the individual guides. It should be noted that ArcheoBiblioBase has full bibliographic citations for many more guides to many more archives, and it is to be hoped that eventually more of these will be covered in the 'Guides to Russian Archives' database.

Central Catalogue of Fonds (TsFK) The Rosarkhiv official
website also provides the possibility of searching the Central Catalogue of Fonds, as of early 2014, covering nearly 600,000 fonds (record groups) of federal and regional archives of the Russian Federation at http://cfc.rusarchives.ru/CFC-search/. The database is searchable in Russian, but one must enter the name of the fond to be searched.

Databases of Fonds (record groups) and Opisi
(inventories/finding aids) Many Russian archives are
providing full lists of their fonds (record groups) on their websites, and some even provide lists (often with annotations) for the *opisi* within fonds. ABB coverage of those archives provides hot links to those databases or registers of fonds and *opisi* where such lists are available.

Microform editions of guides and other reference literature ArcheoBiblioBase bibliographical listings for individual items, in addition to indicating a few major holding libraries, also indicates microfiche editions available commercially. While most Soviet-period finding aids for archives are now out of print, microfiche editions for most of the listings for repositories in Moscow and St. Petersburg (Leningrad), especially for those published before 1976, by the former IDC Publishers in Leiden, edited by Patricia Grimsted. Since IDC was taken over by Brill Publishers (Leiden), marketing of the archival finding aids series has been discontinued, although copies of the microfiche may be found in many research libraries.

At the end of 2009, East View Information Services released a collection of microfilm finding aids for regional state archives in the Russian Federation that includes some general reference directories as well as guides to individual archives. The collection was prepared as a preservation project for the Slavic and East European Microfilm Project (SEEMP) of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAASS), and the films are available for Interlibrary Loan through the Council on Library Resources. The publications included are indicated accordingly in ABB bibliographic listings. Regrettably, East View was unable to make copyright arrangements to market copies of the microfilm, and many regional archives declined participation in the project.

Research Inquiries/Arrangements

Reference inquiries should be addressed either to individual archives, or when in doubt as to the relevant archive, to the Federal Archival Agency (Rosarkhiv). Most Russian archives are now prepared to handle inquiries themselves. Researchers are advised to check the Russian website of individual archives, as well as recently published guides and directories before inquiry. Electronic inquiries can be addressed to individual archives or to Rosarkhiv in Moscow (rosarhiv@archives.ru), but staff shortages may prevent immediate reply, especially for English-language inquiries.

Routine official socio-legal inquiries from Russian citizens or their relatives can be handled either by direct written application to individual archives from individuals within the Russian Federation or through Russian consulates abroad.

Research/travel arrangements. Many different options are open to foreign research visitors seeking research and travel arrangements in the Russian Federation. A number of independent academic groups (including institutes under the Academy of Sciences) and commercial travel services on the Russian side have been offering individual or group arrangements for archival research.

Visitors with plans for archival research in Russia should be sure to arrange for an appropriate visa for 'scientific-technical relations' (nauchno-tekhnicheskie sviazi). Ordinary 'tourist' or generic 'business' visas are not considered appropriate for research in archives, particularly in the context of recent problems foreign researchers have experienced.

One non-profit American-sponsored group has established a program with the International University of Moscow (Mezhdunarodnyi universitet v Moskve) to provide archival arrangements for advanced academic researchers. Information can be obtained at the website of Praxis International (formerly the Center for the Study of Russia and the Soviet Union): http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/history/ge....

The service is particularly recommended for those beginning archival research, and others who need assistance with visa, transport, housing, and specific archival arrangements. Praxis can arrange visa invitations for scholars from any country, but new rules require that they apply for the visa in their country of citizenship or in a country where they are registered as residents for at least 90 days. Prospective applicants can inquire at rusarchive@yahoo.com c/o Arch Getty.

N.B. The Praxis website includes updated information regarding visa and Russian residency and registration requirements for foreign visitors, which may prove helpful even for those not visiting under Praxis auspices.

An English translation of the '**Regulations for the Work of Users**' in Reading Rooms of State Archives of the Russian Federation, issued by Rosarkhiv in 1998, is available at this

website. That remains an important document with which foreign researchers should be acquainted.

The original Russian version is available on the Rosarkhiv website: http://www.rusarchives.ru/lows/pravil.... Other legal documents relating to Russian archives will also be found at the "Arkhivy Rossii" website (http://www.rusarchives.ru/lows/list.s...).

Research service in Russia can best be arranged directly through individual archives, which are usually prepared to handle such services on a fee-for-service basis or to recommend an experienced outside researchers. The Federal Archival Agency (Rosarkhiv) cannot recommend unauthorized individuals or commercial groups offering research services and copies of documents from Russian archives.

Genealogy/Family History

Regretfully, neither IISH nor RANEPA, nor other ArcheoBiblioBase associates are able to handle family history and/or related genealogical inquiries. Furthermore, neither the Federal Archival Agency (Rosarkhiv) nor many Russian archives are staffed or equipped to answer extensive or complicated genealogical inquires of a 'family history' nature, although some archives have been improving services in this regard. Unless the exact archival repository holding the needed documents has already been identified, family-history inquiries should normally be addressed directly to more specialized genealogical services, as listed on our **Genealogy/Family History page**.

Of Related Interest

- *Archives in Russia Ten Years After.* See the volume edited by Stefan Creuzberger and Rainer Lindner (Hrsg.): *Russische Archive und Geschichtswissenschaft. Rechsgrundlagen Arbeitsbedingungen Forschungsperspektiven.* Frankfurt/Main: Peter Lang, 2003.
    The volume contains reports by several Russian archival leaders regarding research and declassification problems, along with contributions of a number of Western scholars who have been working recently in Russian archives. See

especially the article by Patricia Grimsted, "Archives in the Former Soviet Union Ten Years After: Between Law and Politics; OR, 'Still Caught between Political Crossfire and Economic Crisis'," which serves to update the "five" and "seven" year coverage below and includes bibliographic references to other related literature.

- *Archives in Russia Seven Years After: "Purveyors of Sensations" or "Shadows Cast to the Past"?* by Patricia Kennedy Grimsted. Washington, DC: Cold War International History Project (CWIHP), October 1998. CWIHP Research Paper no. 20. Download as a PDF-file from the CWIHP website: (http://www.wilsoncenter.org/publicati...), or order by e-mail from CWIHP (coldwar1@wwic.si.edu).
  The CWIHP edition has a new preface and expanded ch. 12 (reference facilities), providing limited updates for the 1997 Amsterdam edition.

- *Archives of Russia Five Years After: "Purveyors of Sensations" or "Shadows Cast to the Past"?* Amsterdam: International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, 1997. IISG Research Paper, no 26. Download as a PDF file: http://socialhistory.org/en/publications/archives-russia-five-years-after or http://www.iisg.nl/publications/grimsted.pdf.

top