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The Russian Archival Affair at the Boundary of Centuries

LARIN, Michail, *The Russian Archival Affair at the Boundary of Centuries*. *Atlanti*, Vol. 19, Trieste 2009, pp. 279-284.

Original in English, abstract in English, Italian and Slovenian, summary in English

Descriptors: *general (3.1.1.), other (3.2.9)*

Key Words: *archives, Russia, archival development, archival fond*

The Soviet Union collapsed at the end of XX century. In the new established Russian state the system of archival management has been created which basically kept the basic features of the Soviet archival affair and however, received the democratic development and the new forms of the archival organization, both at a level of the state, and federal and regional municipal levels. The condition of the archival affair in Russia and the basic directions of archival modernization at the boundary of centuries are analyzed in the report.

LARIN, Michail, *Il caso archivistico russo al confine dei secoli*. *Atlanti*, Vol. 19, Trieste 2009, pp. 279-284.

L'Unione Sovietica è crollata alla fine del XX secolo. Nel nuovo stato russo è stato creato un sistema per la gestione degli archivi che ha so-

Introduction

In the late 80s of the last century the Concept of the archival affair development in the country has been developed¹. It is necessary to notice, that the forecast was made for the Soviet Union's archival affair, for still a powerful state but already torn apart by internal contradictions, for state waiting ahead a political and geographical disintegration, economic and social crash.

First of all, the Concept has the analysis of a situation while preparing the forecast. Alongside with positive characteristics of the archival affair's organization in the country, the Concept stressed some negative factors of an archival affair's development in the USSR:

- lacks of the legislation;
- lack of initiative in the archival administrations;
- a low quality degree of administrative decisions;
- a residual principle of archival financing;
- an incompetent sight at archives as on institutions of minor administrative value;
- an insufficient level of legal, material, technical, and social provision of archives.

From today's positions it is possible to notice, that above mentioned so called «negative factors» have safely existed during two decades. A number of problems existed at the end of the last century is as well actual now, as on a decline of reorganization.

At the same time, in conditions of the new Russian statehood creation, some basic changes have appeared there in archival business.

1. Changes in the archival legislation

Analyzing the development of an archival affair in modern conditions, it is necessary to note, that the Russian archival affair is based on the legislation. At the beginning of 1993 the Legislation

1. *Contsepsiia razvitiia arkhivnogo dela v SSSR do 2010: nauchn.doklad / VNIIDAD*. - M., 1989. - 77 c. Stored in the OCNTI VNIIDAD 27.06.1989, N 071.

«About archival affair and archives» was accepted. The new law devoted to archives in the Russian Federation was accepted in 2004². Creation and acceptance of this new Law - is a great achievement of the Russian archivists. Its substantive provisions are revealing in the "Rules of the storage, acquisition, control, and use of records of the Russian Federation Archival fond and other archival records in the state and municipal archives, museums, libraries, and organizations of the Russian Academy of Sciences" (2007)³.

2. Management

Russia possesses one of the most powerful and complex systems of archives in the world.

For the archival management there exists a central administrative organ, called the Federal Archival Agency in system of the Ministry of Culture, which submitted 14 federal archives, the All-Russian Archival Science and Records Management Research Institute (VNIIDAD - in Russ. abbrev.) and a number of the serving organizations. Regional state archives (over 200) are managed by the local authorities, municipal archives (over 2400) - are managed by municipalities. Federal executive authorities, agencies, and other organizations are creating their own archives inside their structures. Both private (not state) archives and commercial organizations dealing with the archival services have appeared within the framework of uniform legislative and methodical norms.

According to the articles of the Russian Federation Constitution, the archival branch of the country is not built in the hierarchical system based on administrative methods, but is united due to traditions, corporation and methodical unity in the sphere of archival practice.

3. Optimization of the country's archival fond structure

The primary goal of archivists consists in a choice of scientifically proved ways and methods of the structure updating from the documentary fond, i.e., all set of records created in the state.

In a rank of the major works executed in Russia on this direction, it is necessary to name an integration of the Soviet Union Communist Party's archives into the structure of Archival fond of the country. For the documentary fond formation the important role belongs to the acceptance of international standard ISO 15489:2001 «Records Management»⁴ as a national standard, and development of Rules of records management in the Russian Federation federal executive authorities⁵. Rules are disseminated over the organization's office-work with records independently of a kind of the record's carrier.

Methodical recommendations on creation of nomenclatures⁶,

stanziamente recepito i tratti fondamentali di quello sovietico, e tuttavia ha ricevuto lo sviluppo democratico e le nuove forme di organizzazione archivistica a livello sia statale che federale, regionale e comunale. Nella relazione si analizza lo stato dell'arte dell'organizzazione archivistica russa e le direzioni principali di modernizzazione archivistica al confine dei secoli.

LARIN, Michail, Skrb za ruske arhive na meji stoletij. Atlanti, Zv. 19, Trst 2009, str. 279-284.

Sovjetska zveza se je v XX. stoletju zelo spremenila. Z vzpostavitev nove ruske države je nastal tudi drugačen sistem upravljanja z arhivi. To je razvidno iz temeljnih potez, ki se zrcalijo tudi v osnovnih potezah ruskih arhivov, še posebno se to vidi, ko jih primerjamo z demokratičnim razvojem in novimi oblikami organizacije arhivov, tako na državni, zvezni in regionalni ravni. Zato v prispevku analiziram in prikazujem modernizacijo, ki je zajela tudi ruske arhive.

SUMMARY

The article deals with the archival development in Russia, starting the review of the question in the former Soviet Union as far back as the late 80s. Nowadays the Russian archival affair is based on the new legislation, accepted in 2004. Creation and acceptance of this new Law - is a great achievement of the Russian

2. The federal Law from 22.10.2004 N 125-FZ «About archives in the Russian Federation» // Sobranie zakonodatel'stva Rossijskoj Federatsii. - 2004. - N 43. - St. 4169.

3. Pravila organizatsii khraneniia, komplektovaniia, ucheta i ispol'zovaniia dokumentov Arkhivnogo fonda RF i drugih dokumentov v gosudarstvennykh i municipalnykh arkhivakh, muzeiakh i bibliotekakh, organizatsiiah Rossijskoj akademii nauk // Bull. normat. aktov federalnykh organov ispolnitelnoi vlasti.-2007.-N 20.-S. 5-92.

4. СИБИА. GOST R ISO 15489-1-2007. Records management. Obshchie trebovaniia.-M., 2007.-III, 19 s.- (the National Standard of the Russian Federation).

5. Tipovaia instruktisia po deloproizvodstvu v federalnykh organah ispolnitelnoi vlasti: utv. Priказom Minkultury Rossii ot 08.11.2005 N 536. // Bull. normat. aktov federalnykh organov ispolnitelnoi vlasti.-2006.- N 10.-S. 5-68.

6. Metodicheskie rekomendatsii po razrabotke primernykh nomenklatur del / VNIIDAD. - M., 2005. - 32 s.

archivists. They also created and published the "Rules of the storage, acquisition, control, and use of records of the Russian Federation Archival Fond and other archival records in the state and municipal archives, museums, libraries, and organizations of the Russian Academy of Sciences" (2007). The Federal Archival Agency in system of the Ministry of Culture is a central administrative organ, submitted 14 federal archives, the All-Russian Archival Science and Records Management Research Institute (VNIIDAD - in Russ. abbrev.) and a number of the serving organizations. Regional state archives (over 200) are managed by the local authorities, municipal archives (over 2400) - are managed by municipalities. Federal executive authorities, agencies, and other organizations are creating their own archives inside their structures. The primary goal of archivists will consist in a choice of scientifically proved ways and methods for records appraisal and permanent storage. Methodical recommendations on creation of nomenclatures, on creation of rules on office-work for the organizations were developed for federal agencies. The problem of electronic records is urgent for Russia too. In recent years the methodical recommendations on work with electronic records in office-work and archives of the state organizations are developed. Over the last few years archives carry out a serious work to integrate the scientific finding aids of the state and party archives. Various means of automation, first of all, a typical

methodical recommendations on creation of rules on office-work for the organizations⁷ were developed for federal agencies. Monitoring of a condition of work with documents in the state departments is carried out on a regular basis.

The technique and the maintenance of the records appraisal is continuously improved, and especially in view of change of structure of the documents created in the organizations. In this connection it is necessary to note a permanent job of experts on perfection of the List of typical administrative records with the retention periods for their selection on archival storage.

The problem of electronic records is urgent for Russia. In recent years the methodical recommendations on work with electronic records in office-work and archives of the state organizations, and also the recommendation to the state archives on the organization of permanent (long-term) storage of electronic documents are developed within the framework of the Federal program with a special purpose «Electronic Russia».

Both methodical documents are the first similar manuals in this rank created for the archives of organizations and state archives on the work with electronic records, in particular, on records appraisal, acquisition, control, preservation and use.

The project of the "List of typical administrative documents creating and forming in federal executive authorities in the electronic and digital form with the indication of records schedule" was developed in parallel with methodical recommendations. This List is also important for the electronic records appraisal.

At the same time, we still did not manage to convince our society and state that it is necessary to supplement the normative-legal base with the law on records management. Without this law it is difficult to provide a study of the basic tendencies of records creation, to make an order in the documentary fond of the country, to reduce volumes of records circling, to unify systems of the documentation.

The fact, that D.A. Medvedev, President of the country, holds under his personal control the development of an information society and «electronic government» in Russia, adds some optimism; the acceptance of the electronic records bill is planned to fulfill in the frame of legislative work by 2010.

4. Development of the Archival fond records control

Over the last few years archives carry out a serious work on this direction concerned with the integration of the scientific finding aids of the state and party archives. Various means of automation, first of all, a typical program complex «archival fond» (now the fourth version is under introduction) are developed and installed. In 2008 all federal archives, 91 % of regional state archives, 51, 9 % of municipal archives took part in this system⁸.

It is necessary to note, that within the framework of scientific

7. Organizatsionno-rasporiaditelnaia dokumentatsiia. Trebovaniia k oformleniu dokumentov: Method. Rekomendatsii po vnedreniu GOST P 6.30-2003 / VNIIDAD. - M., 2008. - 90 s.

8. Kiselev I.N. Arkhivnye informatsionnye tehnologii na sovremennom etape.// Otechestvennye arkhivy. - 2008. - N 4. - s. 25.

maintenance of this direction, experts of VNIIDAD have performed a work of special complexities - they have created the Uniform qualifier of documentary information of the Russian Federation Archival fond (EKDI)⁹. The importance of this really huge work can hardly be estimated. It should be mentioned, that a practical use of the qualifier in state archives, including in a program complex «archival fond» has already begun in Russia.

5. Usage of records

The main object of archives is to grant public a retrospective documentary information, adequate to public requirements, to involve an optimum volume of archival fond in the country's social, economic and cultural development and to put a retrospective documentary information at the public's disposal, to supply consumers with exhaustive information, in proper time, and in the convenient form (under conditions of the records safety).

In our opinion, nowadays archives have achieved the most evident results in a sphere of records usage. The huge number of the documentary collections and directories revealing structure and contents of the country archival fond was published. Exhibition work has especially amplified. The Exhibition Hall of federal archives with constant expositions of archival records was established in Moscow.

The archival sites are developing. The portal «Archives of Russia» has 115 directories; other archival sites have 196 directories of various types and kinds¹⁰.

In the years under review a lot of attention has been given to problems of access to archival records, in particular to records containing the personal data, the biographic and genealogic information, to other problems of all-round use of archival documents in various purposes, to the archival «Rossika».

6. Technical equipment and informatization of archives

Realization of this direction is conducted due to introduction of the new reading rooms equipment for the researchers work in a dialogue mode with databases; due to the granting of the convenient and operative multiplying technical equipment to researchers and more wide transition (with the using of technical progress) on a direct information interchange with various technical liaison channels.

Analyzing a modern condition of this matter, it is possible to note, that in technical and technological especially computer equipment we have stepped far forward. Many archives have an interesting experience of the information systems development. For example, in the State archive of the Russian Federation the information retrieval system «GARF-online» is under development combining the reading

program complex «archival funds» are developed and installed. In 2008 all federal archives, 91 % of regional state archives, 51, 9 % of municipal archives took part in this system. The Russian archives have achieved today the most evident results in a sphere of records usage. The archival sites are developing: the portal «Archives of Russia» has 115 directories; other archival sites have 196 directories. In the years under review a lot of attention has been given to problems of access to archival records, in particular to the records containing the personal data, the biographic and genealogic information. Analyzing a modern condition of the archival development, it is possible to note, that in technical and technological, especially computer equipment, the Russian archivists have achieved some results. For example, in the State archive of the Russian Federation the information retrieval system «GARF-online» is under development combining the reading room with the archival repository by uniform information system. Over the last few years several new archival repositories have been constructed: a new building for the Russian state historical archive in Saint Petersburg, a building for the Russian state archive of the Navy a building for the state archive of Omsk region, and in a number of other cities of Russia. Many federal and state archives have received additional modern repositories. Formulating some priority objects for the development of archives in the country, first of all it should be mentioned, that the archival service requires increasing its status and expansion its competence, particularly in a sphere of documentary maintenance of management. In the nearest future archivists will pay the greater attention to a problem of optimization of structure of the records accepted for the state archival storage, to records selection for permanent storage. Thus, archival affair on a boundary of centuries in the Russian Federation appears as harmonious enough, effectively working mechanism constantly developing during practical activities and basing on the scientific principles and legislation.

9. Edinyi klassifikator dokumentnoi informatzii Arhivnogo fonda RF / VNIIDAD. - M., 2007. - 662 s.

10. Kiselev I.N. Arhivnye informatsionnye tekhnologii na sovremennom etape. // Otechestvennye arhivy. - 2008. - N 4. - s. 30.

room with the archival repository by uniform information system, which every time fixes a site of an archival folder, forms statistical reports on the archival records usage.

Introduction of the given system will improve considerably a work with visitors in the archival reading rooms, strengthen the control over the archival folders and records delivery, and expand volume of information resources given to users.

7. Storage of the archival fond records

Technical equipment and hardware have a very important meaning for the state archives. A complex of specific tasks on maintenance of the records safety and on technical equipment consists of:

- construction of new buildings and reconstruction of available archival repositories;
- creation in all state archives of material (climate, biological, physical and chemical) conditions of records storage on the various carriers providing their long preservation and a regular control;
- increasing terms and volumes of records restoration and preservation in wide scales providing safety of originals and especially valuable records on the basis of new progressive technical equipment (photo-restoration, computer application, new kinds of the restoration equipment, paper and other carriers).

In the years under review several new archival repositories were constructed: new building for the Russian State Historical Archive in Saint Petersburg, new building for the Russian State Archive of the Navy, new building for the state archive of Omsk region, and in other Russian cities. Many federal and state archives have received additional modern repositories.

However, the final decision of the problems concerned with the storage areas for acquisition and accommodation of modern records is still not found.

8. Prospects and conclusion

Let's try to imagine the probable trends of archives and archival affair development in the coming decade.

The Concept of long-term social and economic development of the Russian Federation is one of the sources helping to form our representations about the future archival affair development¹¹.

The purpose of the Concept - is to define the ways and methods for providing of the steady increase of well-being of the Russian citizens, strengthening of the national safety and dynamical development of economy in long-term prospect (2008-2020), strengthening of the Russian positions in the wide world community. Despite of

11. Konceptsiia dolgosrochnogo socialno-ekonomicheskogo razvitiia RF na period do 2020 goda: utv. Raspriazheniem Pravitelstva Rossiiskoi Federatsii ot 17.11.2008 N 1662-r // Sobranie zakonodatelstva Rossiiskoi Federatsii.-2008. - N 47. - St. 5489.

financial and economic crisis, the Russian Federation does not refuse to perform the articles of the given Concept in its key parameters.

Proceeding from the concept, it is possible to formulate some priority objects of the archival affair development in the Russian Federation.

First of all, the archival service requires increasing its status and expansion its competence, particularly in a sphere of documentary maintenance of management. Several functions of a legal regulation of an archival affair demand a special support, such as: scientific - and methodical maintenance, interrelations of federal, regional and municipal authority levels; interdepartmental regulation of questions concerned with the records and archives management.

The program of informatization of an archival affair and records management should be developed corresponding to a modern level, based on the system approach with the usage of typical program decisions, standards and formats of documents and with the best experience of different archives. It is expedient to support concepts of regional systems of informatization with the use of archival resources, including Internet, to improve technical equipment of archives.

Active use of the automated systems of electronic records circling and the informatization of the control organs have led to the creation of the significant part of the administrative documentation i.e. various databases, registers, cadastres which have no paper analogues (copies). These electronic documents are created, applied and stored only in an electronic type. The existing infrastructure of archives is not capable to provide the acquisition, storage, safety, management and a control over the archival electronic records conditions of storage. Therefore, in our opinion, there is a necessity to create the specialized federal archive for electronic records storage (FAED).

It is probable, that in the nearest future archivists will pay the greater attention to a problem of optimization of structure of the records accepted for the state archival storage, to perfect the criteria of records selection for permanent storage, to examine their value together with the broad audience of experts.

In our opinion, a so-called outsourcing will take an important place in the archival business, especially when non-profile functions for archives will carry out some specialized organizations.

Thus, archival affair at the boundary of centuries in the Russian Federation appears as harmonious enough, effectively working mechanism, constantly developing and modernizing together with practical activities, basing on the scientific principles and legislation.