

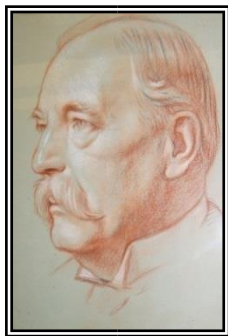
THE
LONDON
LIBRARY

A guide to the Russian collections

THE
LONDON
LIBRARY

THE MÄRIT
AND HANS RAUSING
RUSSIAN
COLLECTIONS

Introduction



Sir Charles
Hagberg Wright

The London Library's extensive collection of Russian material covers a wide range of printed works with a strong emphasis on the period from the early 19th century to the present day. From its foundation in 1841, the Library has aimed to maintain a broadly representative collection of literature in all major European languages.

The Russian element was introduced by Robert Harrison, Librarian from 1857 to 1893, who had previously spent several years in Russia working as a tutor and lecturer. His successor, Charles (later, Sir Charles) Hagberg Wright (Librarian from 1894 to 1940) had an even stronger interest in Russia, its culture, literature and current affairs, having received part of his education in that country and being personally acquainted with Gorky and Tolstoy among others. Harrison and Hagberg Wright purchased a very great number of literary works from Russia as well as reference material and societies' publications.


The London Library continues to devote a part of its foreign collections budget to the acquisition of Russian monographs, focusing mainly on contemporary literature and fiction, biographies and historical works, art books, reference works and other cultural studies, building upon the historic strengths that have been developed over several generations.

Since 2006 the Russian Collections have been named in honour of Märith and Hans Rausing, whose generous benefaction to the Library is helping to ensure that these uniquely accessible collections remain available for the readers, researchers and writers of the future.

Understanding shelfmarks

The Library's collections are divided into broad subject areas (History, Literature, Topography, for example) and then into smaller areas, arranged alphabetically. Within each section, books are generally arranged by author name but edited titles are filed under the book title instead. Check the Catalyst record for the 'shelved under' information.

In order to make the most effective use of space, the collection is also shelved by size. Check the end of shelf marks for the notations 4to (quarto), Folio and Folio Extra Large that may indicate a different place to look for the books.

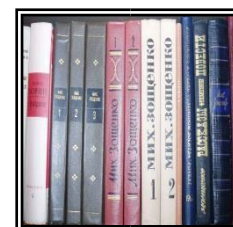


BOOK
A Russian diary
 Politkovskaja, Anna.
 2007
 Shelved Under: Politkovskaja, Anna.
 Available at [London Library History \(H. Russia\)](#) >

Above is an example of a book record from the catalogue. Here you can see that the book is shelved under the author's name and that it is available (i.e. on the shelf) in the History section (H), in the sub-section for Russia and then shelved under the author Politkovskaia.

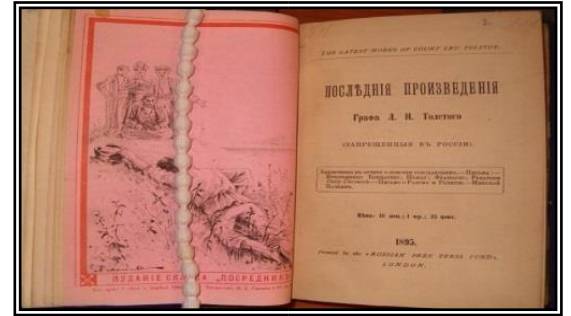
Literature

The Russian Literature Collections include editions of collected works of all major Russian and Soviet writers, as well as individual works of poetry, drama and essays by a wide range of authors, all in the original Russian. For all major 19th century authors, contemporary editions (printed using the old spelling conventions) are found alongside more modern ones (using post-1917 spelling).



Following the works of each individual author you will also find works of literary criticism (in all languages) on them. The coverage spans works from the 12th century (e.g. Slovo o Polku Igoreve) to the present-day, and there is an active acquisitions policy for contemporary Russian literature combined with an attempt to fill gaps in the collection retrospectively (e.g. emigré and underground authors from the Soviet period). Some works by Ukrainian, Belarusian and other former-Soviet nationalities are also included, mostly in Russian translation (and with a very few in the original languages). A notable number of volumes of Literaturnoe nasledstvo (literary criticism and previously unpublished archival material about major Russian/Soviet authors) are also included.

The Library holds a particularly rich collection of Tolstoy's works from the 1890s and 1900s, including, notably, his banned works, his less well-known religious and philosophical works, and also criticism of his literature and thought from this period. There is also a considerable number of reprints of Tolstoy's works from 1917, and re-readings of his works in the light of the revolution. The Library also has a substantial collection of first editions of Tolstoy's works, both in Russian and in translation and also of the poets of the Silver Age (eg Akhmatova, Belyi, Tsvetaeva etc.).

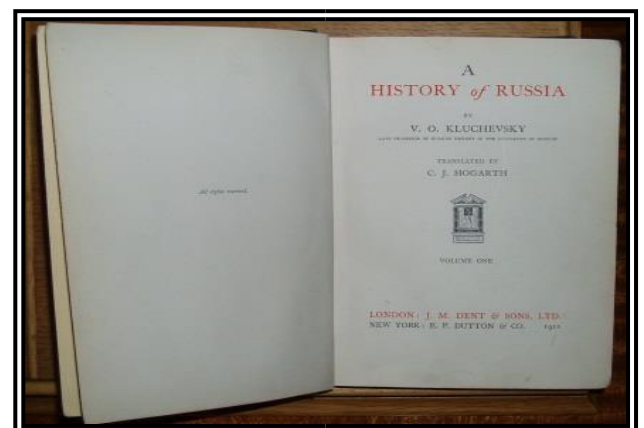


Example of Tolstoy's pamphlets, banned in Russia

History and Biography

The shelfmark H. Russia covers a wide range of material in all languages on the history of Russia since its earliest origins, through the Soviet period to the present-day Russian Federation. Works on the histories of former Soviet Union Republics are also included here. The collection is extensive, including all major histories of Russia and the Soviet Union from Shcherbatov's work in 12 volumes (1791-1794), to the more recent Istoriiia SSSR in 11 volumes (1966-1980). Works on the Russian Revolution, and subsequent civil war, of 1917-1923 can be found in the shelfmark H. Russian Revolutions.

There are particular strengths in political history (for example pre-revolutionary and anarchist movements) and foreign policy (including diplomatic relations). Books on the history and theory of communism (including the history of the International and of individual communist and socialist parties), together with the majority of the works of Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin are also included.



The Library's collection covers works on the governmental institutions of the whole region, including material on constitutions, elections, parliaments etc, and a large collection of works on the economic, social and cultural history of the region. Each of the tsars of the 19th century (and some earlier ones) has their own shelfmark, containing significant collections of biographical material and histories of the country in the period of their reigns. There are a large number of books on Russian military history and many of the former Soviet

Republics or regions within the Russian Federation have their own individual shelfmarks in the History stacks.

The Library's collections are particularly rich in biographical material in both Russian and English on literary authors, monarchs and members of tsarist and aristocratic families, statesmen, politicians and revolutionaries, together with the complete *Russkii biograficheskii slovar'* (25 volumes published between 1896 and 1918, plus the 8 new volumes that are currently being produced). The Library holds a notable collection of publications issued by the Socialist-Revolutionary Party in 1902-1903, mainly historical and political essays, but also party manifestos and programmes. Another significant resource is the collection of political pamphlets from the period 1917-1919, including speeches of political leaders, political programmes and other writings associated with the February and October revolutions (including British publications).

Periodicals

The Library holds many periodical titles related to the Russian collections for example *Novyi Mir*, *Russian Review*, and *Slavonic Review*. Some of these titles are no longer subscribed to, or are defunct, but the Library retains back issues in its collection. Some titles may be online only or kept off-site. Please check the online catalogue for details of holdings.

The latest issues of periodicals are available for consultation in the Reading Room, with earlier issues bound as volumes and shelved in the basement or off-site, available for loan. Through the online catalogue, members can view a range of electronic journals – as well as other electronic publications and databases – in the library or remotely. There is also access to JSTOR, an electronic periodicals archive that allows members to access back-runs of over 750 additional periodical titles.

In addition, the Library has retained on open-access shelves its extensive collection of earlier periodicals. This includes, for example, several short runs of periodicals that sprang up in 1917 or shortly after, concerning political and social issues associated with the Revolution (eg *Letopis' Revoliutsii* from 1923; *Nashe Edinstvo* from 1917-1918). Another strength of the collection is represented by pre-1917 Russian language periodicals published outside Russia by dissident and émigrés groups and outlawed political parties (eg *Budushchee* from 1911-1913; *Iskra* from 1901-1905).

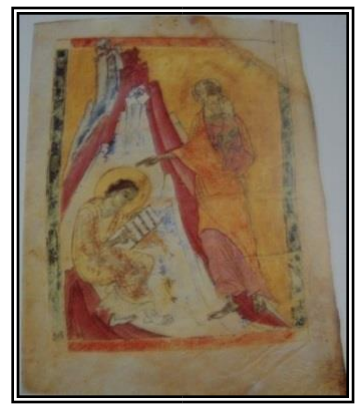


The Library has also retained runs of a number of art history, literary and historical periodicals published in Russia before the Revolution.

The Library possesses a wealth of historic periodical material issued by Russian and Soviet institutions and learned societies, including the Academy of Sciences and its dependent institutes. Subject areas covered in particular depth include history, literature, the sciences, archaeology and geography (especially of the Caucasus and Central Asia).

Art

The Library's large collection of art books includes a wide range of material on Russian art and artists. There are books on individual artists as well as catalogues of major exhibitions held in St Petersburg and Moscow and catalogues of major art galleries and some private collections. There are a considerable number of books on manuscript illumination, from Russia and other former Soviet countries and several key large-scale Russian and Soviet publications on art history, including *Istoriia russkogo iskusstva*, published by the Academy of Sciences in 13 volumes, 1953-1964; Gnedich's *Istoriia iskusstv* in 3 volumes, 1897; and Grabar's *Istoriia russkogo iskusstva* (6 volumes – incomplete), 1909- 1913.



Topography and travel

The Library's extensive collection of topographical material covers a wide range of material, including works on the geography of Russia and the Soviet Union; archaeology in Russia and the territories of the former USSR; and the history of (and general information on) individual towns and cities (eg Moscow, Novgorod, Kiev etc.), including their buildings, museums and other sights.

The section also includes some books of maps and plans of cities and a notable range of memoirs and travellers' impressions by foreign visitors to Russia, particularly during the 18th and 19th centuries.



The Library's collections are particularly rich in travel literature from the 18th and 19th centuries covering the whole of Russia, Siberia, Central Asia and the Far East, thanks to a significant donation from the journalist and traveller John F. Baddeley (1854-1940). The collection includes travel memoirs and accounts of the Far East, the Middle East and the Caucasus in particular, as well as atlases and maps, statistics, surveys and other official publications.

Dictionaries and reference works

There is an extensive range of Russian dictionaries including some older language dictionaries (such as Dal's four-volume dictionary, 1903-1909) alongside the most recent works; also included are a number of major Soviet publications, such as Slovar' russkikh narodnykh govorov (in 25 volumes, but never completed) and Slovar' sovremennogo russkogo literaturnogo iazyka (in 17 volumes, 1950-1965).

The Library's Philology section contains a range of English-language books about various aspects of the Russian language, including its usage, grammar and history, as well as a good representation of the main works of the major Russian linguists of the 20th century.

The collection of reference works in the Library's Reading Room includes the most recent editions of the Great Soviet Encyclopedia in both Russian and English (volumes of the previous edition are available for loan). The Library also possesses the more up-to-date single volume Bol'shoi entsiklopedicheskii slovar' and the 3-volume Kratkaia rossiikaia entsiklopediia (2003) together with the pre-Revolutionary Entsiklopedicheskii slovar' (published in 43 volumes in St Petersburg between 1890-1906).