

The Jewish Theological Seminary of America

Memorandum

TO: Prof. Evgenii Starostin  
Dr. Ilya Altman

DATE: 30 Dec. 1991

FROM: Samuel Norich  
Ismar Schorsch

SUBJECT: Archive Project 1992

We are very pleased that good progress was made in discussions which were held in Moscow with JTS Provost Professor Ivan Marcus on December 17th and 18th. We would like to summarize our understanding of our work plan on the archive project for calendar year 1992.

1. We understand that the list of collections you prepared in advance of the meeting represents virtually all Jewish archival collections in Moscow depositories. Non-Jewish collections (i.e., government ministries) relevant to Jewish history will be included in a second document which will be ready in early January prior to David Fishman's departure for New York.

2. The geographic expansion of the project will take place during the next year. This should be facilitated by (a) reaching an agreement with Mr. Ilyashevitch of Leningrad, who has done most of the work needed for a Guide to Jewish materials in Leningrad depositories (especially the Central Historical Archive); (b) reaching formal agreements with the Central Archival Administrations of Byelorussia and the Ukraine, where archives are under the centralized control of Republic authorities. The main Moscow lacuna at this time is the October Revolution Archive (TsGAOR). We understand that all of its Jewish collections have been found, but locating relevant materials in its general collections is a vast undertaking. TsGAOR has agreed to undertake such a survey for a fee of 100,000 rubles or slightly over \$1,000 at the current exchange rate. This should be discussed with Mr. Marek Web in February.

3. It is further agreed that you will represent openly to any and all archivists the true nature of the organization which is sponsoring the survey and indicate that it is a joint venture among JTS, YIVO and the Russian State University of the Humanities.

4. Three publications will be issued in 1992: (a) a list of collections from the "Special Archive of the USSR" which houses collections of German-Jewish, Austrian-Jewish and many French-Jewish organizations; (b) a full guide to the collections housed in the two Communist Party archives in Moscow, currently being prepared by Professors Ustinov and Kior of RGGU, which should be

completed during the course of the year; (c) a survey of Jewish collections in museums, libraries and other non-archival depositories in Moscow, being prepared by Professor Starostin under his grant from the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture.

5. It is our understanding that Dr. Altman thinks that it will be possible for a first draft of the entire Guide to be in hand by the end of 1992. This timetable seems far too optimistic to us: we would expect the compilation of preliminary lists to be completed by the end of 1992, and a full guide by the end of 1993. Perhaps we should consider the feasibility of this timetable at the midpoint of the July 1 report.

It is also my understanding that you will provide us with quarterly reports on the archival project throughout 1992, namely, on 1 April, 1 July, 1 October and 1 January 1993.