

WELCOME TO [THE EUROPEAN LIBRARY NEWSLETTER!](#)

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**EDITORIAL**  
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In an effort to highlight The European Library partners and their unique role as national libraries, we have invited our colleagues across Europe to participate in our Newsletter editing process. In this issue, we have asked [Elena Zimina](#), Deputy Director of International Communication Department of the [Russian State Library](#) in Moscow, to act as Chief Editor.

This issue features an introduction of Dr. Victor V. Fedorov, Director General of the RSL, a presentation of the "Aeroflot History in Posters" exhibition jointly coordinated by the RSL, and a general presentation of the RSL collections.

*"The Russian State Library joined The European Library as a [Full Participant](#) on the 6th of August 2007" says Elena Zimina. "A tremendous amount of work has been done since. The RSL [Electronic Catalogue](#) is accessible and searchable through The European Library portal, along with the collections of other national libraries of Europe. Leading specialists from across Europe are participating in the creation of The European Library portal and, in particular, the development of its advanced technologies. At the same time, the RSL is building its own national electronic library and dealing with the same tasks in Russia as The European Library, that is why the shared experience is so valuable to us."*

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**DIRECTOR'S CORNER: Dr. Victor V. Fedorov, RSL General Director**  
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**The Director's corner is dedicated to directors and chief executives of national libraries across Europe. Dr. Victor V. Fedorov, Director of the Russian State Library, gives us a brief presentation of the role and position of the RSL in Russia and more widely in Europe.**

*"The intellectual treasures gathered by the Russian State Library offer a unique and trusty opportunity to hold knowledge; the Library also offers a new vision of the world by providing permanent access to learning and understanding of the developments within our society.*

*In Russia, the RSL offers access to the following special facilities and collections:*

- *The Universal Museum of Book, founded in the 1920s;*
- *The Central Library of Armed Forces, founded in 1929;*
- *An All-Russian collection of theses in all the fields of knowledge;*
- *Exchange-and-reserved stock of 1,5 million items;*
- *"Informcultura" science and information centre;*
- *A collection of items on library science and biology;*
- *The Centre of Oriental Literature with its collection of 700,000 documents*
- *An electronic collection of theses;*

- About 200 virtual reading halls, which have been opened in libraries and educational institutions in around 70 cities up to now.

*Additionally, the RSL carries out the mission of national libraries which is to collect, preserve and give access to a universal collection of items, presenting the knowledge accumulated by mankind."*

Victor V. Fedorov  
General Director of the Russian State Library  
Candidate of Economic Science

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**IN FOCUS: The RSL presents the "Aeroflot History in posters"**  
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**Aeroflot - Russian Airlines – celebrates its 85<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Russian State Library, along with the Russian State Archive of Social and Political History, the Aeroflot Museum, the New Gallery Arts Fund and the "Contact-Culture" publishing house presents a unique exhibition featuring the history of Aeroflot in more than 60 posters. The collection provides colourful anecdotes depicting Aeroflot's commercial and promotional campaigns over the years.**

Aeroflot has become one of the most popular and successful commercial airlines; it represents Russia's entire historical air transportation industry. However, its definitive branding was only adopted in 1932 following a number of previous names: "Dobrolyot" (*Добролёт*), "Rosavaikhim" (*Росавиахим*) and "Aviaxim" (*Авиахим*).

In the early days, the company not only transported passengers but also mail and cargo to new east and westbound routes. It also carried out other more unusual tasks, including pest control! Rodents and insects were used in Soviet propaganda as symbols of the "decaying bourgeoisie", so the "fight against pests" had a double meaning. In 1925, *The Society of Friends of Chemical Defence and Chemical Industry*, "Dobrokhim" set up by Leon Trotsky, merged with "Dobrolyot"; the main purpose was to "construct a reliable fence of toxic gas to protect the new society"!

During the Khrushchev period however, the fence was lowered and the psychological battle moved to a rather racy field; beautiful Russian air attendants gradually replaced Politburo members on the covers of the popular *Ogonyok* magazine.

*"The 'Aeroflot History in Posters' exhibition has considerable value because of its political nature" says Nina Baburina, arts critic, researcher of the Russian State Library and Soviet period poster expert. "Posters represent one of the most politically loaded genres of fine arts and the chronological sequence of productions dedicated to the 'homeland wings' represent an exceptional milestone in the art of propaganda in Russia".*

*"It is very honourable and a fantastic opportunity for a commercial company of any scale and age to be part of an art exhibition" adds Lev Koshlyakov, Deputy General Director of Aeroflot. "The collected posters that are anchored in Russian history have brought back to the surface an incredibly rich material of forgotten facts and milestones; all these anecdotes give us the experience of a unique 'aviation carnival'".*

Exhibition catalogue available in PDF format at: <http://www.pro-act.ru/aeroflothistory.pdf>.

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**IN DEPTH: RSL OPAC – 3 million records in 200 languages!**

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**Natalia N. Kasparova (Head of the Catalogue System Board) and Mikhail E. Shvartsman (Head of the Computer Systems Research Department) tell us more about the Russian State Library collections and their incredible holdings.**



*"The OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) of the RSL contains bibliographic information on rare and modern printed books, periodicals, maps, music, electronic resources and other documents – in total 3.8 million records" says Natalia.*

*"The bibliographic records give access to roughly 3 million titles in more than 200 languages – Russian, of course, but also 80 languages within the Russian Federation and 50 foreign languages. The material available in our OPAC covers a vast chronological period, from the XVI to the XXI century. The RSL electronic collections are available through the "Electronic Library" option on [www.rsl.ru](http://www.rsl.ru) site and through [The European Library Collections](#) section"*



*Alongside the OPAC, the RSL provides other digital collections: "The electronic collections of the RSL are mainly constituted by books published in Russian during the USSR and Russia periods. There is also a collection of 30.000 books issued during the XIX century and published in European languages" adds Mikhail.*

*"This collection is stored on CD's and we are planning to incorporate it into the Electronic Library. Our main electronic collections were set up via special projects, essentially financed by scientific or humanitarian foundations."*

*"Here is a short list of those collections:*

- 1. Memory of Russia – 19000 pages; pioneering Russian books of XV-XVI cc in Old Slavonic language;*
- 2. Meeting at the Frontiers – 20000 pages; RSL/Library of Congress joint project on the digitization of documents dedicated to the history of development of Alaska and Siberia;*
- 3. Open Russian Electronic Library (OREL) – 15000 books, maps, printed and sheet music, and open-access theses.*
- 4. Electronic Library of dissertations – 180000 theses.*
- 5. Electronic library of limited access (for RSL visitors only) – 9000 items."*

*"The RSL doesn't have any national programme of digitization; we implement our own institutional programmes. Because of financial restrictions, our OCR (Optical Character Recognition) activity is not widespread We use instead batch recognition. PDF double-layered files are created; the first layer is in "picture" format and the second is the recognized text. This text, while not being seen by the end user, is used in the search tool."*

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IN BRIEF
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+ EDLPROJECT: THE TREASURES BEHIND THE 67 NEW COLLECTIONS

EDLproject was a targeted project funded by the European Commission under the eContentplus Programme and coordinated by the German National Library. The project started in September 2006 and was successfully completed in February 2008.

In concrete terms, The European Library has benefited from a massive boost of collection integration through EDLproject; the National and University Library of Iceland for example presents an amazing digitised collection of antique maps. The content of the collection is based on the book Kortasaga Íslands (A history of cartography of Iceland) by Haraldur Sigurðsson.

Selected material from the Photographs Catalogue of the National Library of Ireland gives access to stunning images; while most of the collections are historical, there are some contemporary collections.

If you wish to know more about the 67 new collections now available from the portal, we invite you to browse through the rich COLLECTIONS of The European Library.

+ MORE EXPOSURE THROUGH COLLECTION DESCRIPTION TRANSLATION

The European Library collection descriptions are currently available in English and in the native languages of the Full Participants. In an effort to extend the multilingualism of the portal, Lizzy Komen will coordinate an ambitious task; to provide truly multilingual collection descriptions in 27 languages by July 2008, 35 languages by the end of 2008.

"There are various benefits to this translation task" underlines Lizzy. "First of all, end users will be able to understand better what collections are about and what to expect. It will also help them discover native resources held in other countries. Secondly, it will assist the partner libraries in promoting access to their collections and objects without stumbling on language barriers. Finally, there will be an increase in multilingual content and therefore a better exposure of The European Library to search engines like Google."

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JOBS AND CAREERS
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The European Library office & Europeana are seeking a highly motivated employee for the following position:
- Project Leader

Do you know the person who wants to work on one of the most exciting projects in the cultural heritage area ever? Are you allowed a secondment?

The job is based at the Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, The Netherlands. Interested? Then click on this link and send us your CV.

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ABOUT THE NEWSLETTERS
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