

# NATIONAL HISTORICAL ARCHIVES OF BELARUS IN GRODNO

by  
**Karina P. Batrakova**

**The National Historical Archives of Belarus in the city of Grodno is one of the major archives of Belarus.**

The Archives is located in the center of the town, in a building that in itself is a historical piece of architecture built at the end of the eighteenth century. The archives keeps documents of regional, district and provincial authorities, economical, financial, educational, medical, philanthropic and other institutions and organizations of Grodno region for the period of early nineteenth-twentieth centuries. Some archival fonds, i.e., family fonds, contain documents from as early as the sixteenth-eighteenth centuries. Archival documents contain information regarding the history of Grodno region in its historical borders and also Vileyka, Disna, Lida and Oshmyany districts of Vileyka region of the Russian Empire.

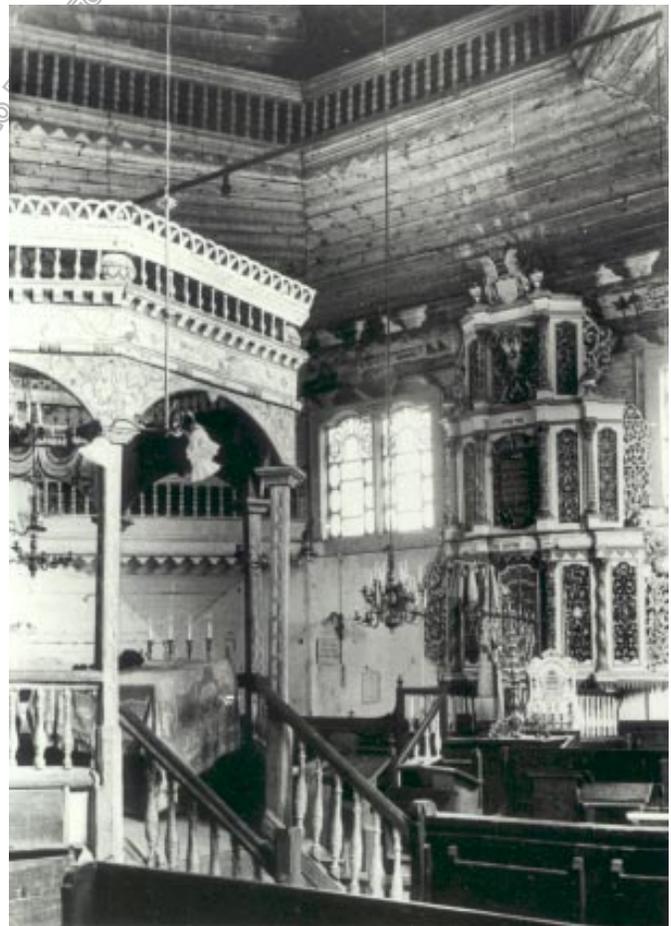
Data in the archival documents reflect the opening and functioning of industrial enterprises, market conditions, transportation, specifics of land processing and agriculture, construction and repair of buildings and structures, purchase and sale of land, and cultural events.

A separate set of documents contains genealogical information. These documents are of great interest to people interested in their ancestry and, as a result, the archives are trying to help as much as possible.

Genealogical information is mostly contained in the fonds of local authorities, financial and tax institutions and some documents of religious institutions.

Archival documents contain specific information regarding the genealogy of the Jewish population of the region. You can particularly find such information in the fonds of Jewish institutions, metric record books of synagogues, census records, documents about the elections of rabbis and other files. We have to note here that documents of synagogues and Jewish institutions are not complete which sometimes is the reason for the lack of information for certain towns and regions. The same can be said regarding the fonds of religious institutions of other faiths.

Genealogical research is one of the most important directions of archival work.



Old synagogue in Grodno, c. 1936 (source: Polska Akademia Nauk Instytut Sztuki)

**Karina Petrovna Batrakova** is the director of the National Historical Archives of Belarus in Grodno. She graduated from the Moscow Historical-Archival Institute. She began her work at the National Historical Archives of Belarus in Grodno in 1959 and has served as director of the archives since 1986. During her work in the archives, she made significant contributions to the development of archival systems and administration. In 1990, she was awarded the title of Honored Cultural Worker of the Republic of Belarus. She actively participates in the publishing activities of the archives, both international and national scientific conferences, gives speeches and writes articles (for the media) on the subject of documents in the archives.

#### National Historical Archives of Belarus in Grodno

2 Tizengauza Square  
Grodno 230023  
Republic of Belarus  
Tel: 375/0152/44-94-66, 47-28-56



Synagogue in Wolpa, c. 1925 (source: Polska Akademia Nauk Instytut Sztuki)



Synagogue in Wolpa, c. 1925 (source: Polska Akademia Nauk Instytut Sztuki)