Propaganda Supporting the German ‘New Order’ in the Occupied Territories of the Kursk Region, October 1941 – September 1943: Intelligence Reports of the NKVD for the Kursk Region

Abstract

One of the least studied issues of the functioning of German occupation regime on the territories of the USSR, seized by the German armies and those of their allies, is organization of mass propaganda and psychological warfare aimed at the local population. Various archival documents testify that Nazi leadership paid much attention to the ideological support of their expansionist war in the East. Planning of mass propaganda activities with regard to both the civilian population of the Soviet Union and the Red Army servicemen involved considerable
workforce and means of Nazi Germany. The article studies how German occupation authorities and local collaborators organized a large-scale propaganda campaign for the population of the occupied areas of the Kursk region in 1941-1943. The article draws on the data of intelligence reports and bulletins of the 4th department of the NKVD for the Kursk region, mass printed pro-Nazi editions published in this part of the occupied Central Black Earth region, and archival investigatory files of former accomplices of German invaders prosecuted for treason in the post-war period. The authors focus on German use of mass print media that circulated in district centers of these strategically important for the German command region. Nature of pro-Nazi newspapers of the Kursk front-line zone is assessed – stylistic devices and materials pitch. Particular attention is paid to collaborators, who were engaged the German occupation authorities to prepare pro-Nazi newspapers. The article introduces facts that throw light on the nature of psychological warfare initiated by the German occupation authorities and aimed at the civilian population.

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Keywords

Sources, archives, collaboration, occupation, German ‘New Order’, mass media, Nazi propaganda.

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