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Materials of Soviet Press as a Source on Preparation of the Krasnodar Trial in 1943

Abstract

The article reveals the role of the Soviet print mass media in preparation of the first open trial of the Nazi invaders' accomplices in Krasnodar in July 1943. The trial represented a crucial point in the Soviet media policy, and studying its goals, features, and effects is of great scientific importance. Soviet newspapers, a powerful means of state propaganda, always maintained the discourse of the paramount, that is, issues of most importance for the authorities at the time. Therefore, studying of the mediatization of the Krasnodar trial allows to clarify some factors, which accounted for the handling of the case. Use of newspaper publications and photographic materials broadens the source base for studying the 'Soviet Nuremberg.' The research uses

content analysis of publications in a regional newspaper 'Bolshevik' (edition of the Krasnodar Krai and City Committees of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and the Krasnodar Krai Soviet of the Workers' Deputies) for the first half of 1943. The research registers an uplift in the propaganda of the 'policy of retaliation,' aiming to incite hatred toward the enemy. Statistics and facts of the Nazi atrocities on the liberated occupied territories were to feed these emotions. Dynamics of publications on the issue can also be attributed to a need to produce the necessary effect worldwide, that is, to face off the provocative 'newsbreaks' of the Nazis and their allies. The first open trial of war criminals, held in Krasnodar in 1943, included the issue of Nazi judicial responsibility in the world agenda. This high profile trial provided framework for representation of the particulars of the Nazi atrocities. Materials of the Krasnodar trial translated into all Soviet media. Representation of the Krasnodar trial in the Soviet print media was distinguished by its scale, integrity, and conformity to ideological standards. Such representation of war crimes on the territory of the USSR and of their impending retaliation provided means for an effective solution of crucial national and foreign policy problems.

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Keywords

Historical sources, Great Patriotic War, Krasnodar trial of 1943, Nazi invaders, collaborators, crime, Soviet press, media policy.

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