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Minutes of Meetings of the District Chiefs of the Krasnogorodsk Region as a Source for Studying the Nazi Occupation in the Kalinin Region: 1941–44

Abstract

The article is to study the everyday life of the Soviet population under the Nazi occupation as it remains insufficiently studied yet. One of the author's tasks is to introduce new sources into scientific use. The study reveals informative capabilities of documents on governance in the

occupied territory using microhistorical approach and involving methods of text data analysis. The article reviews minutes of meetings of the staff of civil administration of the Krasnogorodsk region chaired by the German commandant. On the eve of the Great Patriotic War the region was a part of the Kalinin region; in 1941–44 it was under occupation. Then the German commandant was chief representative of the authorities in the region. The staff of the regional administration and its chief (including chiefs of the districts and villages) followed his directions. The districts more or less corresponded to village soviets. The meetings of the commandant with the administration staff were held regularly. The records of meetings found by the author in the fonds of the Velikiye Luki department of the State Archives of the Pskov Region date back to early 1943. The data analysis of the documents suggests that most often discussed issues were administrative and civil order matters, for instance, functions of military and civil administration and forms of their interaction. The job duties and powers of different civil administration staff and their requirements were often clarified, as well as regulations for getting passports and collecting data on population composition and various aspects of the region's economic life. Much attention was paid to arrangement and implementation of agricultural work, the most difficult matter was lack of draught animals. Deadlines and terms for obligatory delivery of agricultural products were constantly reiterated. Issues related to the social sphere: bread rationing, accommodation of refugees, orphans, and homeless children, their provision with food supplies were mentioned. There are rare references to schools and hospitals mentioning the shortage of funds for their reconstruction and heating. At the meetings ideological work with the attendees was carried out, resulting in moral and material rewards for those who collaborated with Nazis. The commandant constantly reminded of the necessity for recruitment of reliable persons to auxiliary forces and warfare units. Thus, the study of the records shows that top-priority tasks of the invaders were maintaining order and supplying resources to the German army.

Keywords

History of everyday life, archival documents, Great Patriotic War, Kalinin region, historical sources, Nazi occupation, collaboration, chief of the district, commandant.

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