

УДК 355.48(439)(09):930.25(4)

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Documents of the 2nd Hungarian Army in the Archives of Russia, Hungary and Italy

Abstract

The utter defeat of the 2nd Hungarian Army (counting 205,000 soldiers) in the battle near Voronezh in winter 1943 was Hungary's most serious military defeat in all its history. There are two world largest cemeteries of Hungarian soldiers in the Voronezh region; over 30,000 Honvedseg are buried there. The Central Archive of the Russian Ministry of Defence (TsAMO RF) stores documents on the Army and the Hungarian General Staff, among them report "Lessons learned in the battle actions of the Hungarian Army at the Eastern front in 1942" and the report "Description of battle actions of the Hungarian corps and divisions near town Tim and village Uryv in 1942." Hungarian prisoners of war wrote a report "Inner contradictions and weak points of the Hungarian Army: 1942." Of great value are battle reports of the Hungarian officers and orders on the 2nd Hungarian Army labor battalions organized from Jews, Gypsies and left-siders. The TsAMO fond 203 "Field control of the Voronezh front" includes over 200 statements on the invaders' brutality, all drawn up in 1943. Fond 2100 "Great Patriotic War

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Wednesday, 07 April 2021 05:50

documents collection” of the State Archive of the Voronezh Region stores several dozens of Hungarian documents, among them investigatory files on Hungarian war criminals. Documents of the 2nd Hungarian Army are collected in the Central Museum and the Archive of the Ministry of Defence in Budapest. They describe the preparation of the Hungarian troops to be sent to Russia, battles for the bridgeheads on the Don, where 27,000 were lost, the Hungarians’ defeat. The Federal Archive of Germany has several thousands documents on the Wehrmacht and Hungarians operations, including a 100-pages report “Voronezh Battle” of the 2nd German Army (army group “Weichs”). In the Archive of the Historical Bureau of the Italian General Staff in Rome documents on cooperation of Italians and Hungarians comprise 20 fonds: fonds 1-11 are a collection of Italian soldiers’ diaries; fond H2 is on partisan detachments; fonds I-3 and I-4 contain documents of the General Staff and the Italian General Headquarters. Book published in Voronezh “Battles in the Voronezh land as seen by the Russian and the invaders” marked the beginning of the Hungarian documents publication; 5 volumes of “The War on the Voronezh land in 1942-1943 in documents of the Red Army, Wehrmacht and its allies” are being published. About 40 Hungarian documents have been introduced into scientific use, another 30 (from fond 500 of the Central Archive of the Russian Ministry of Defence) are to be published.



Keywords

Archives, historical sources, 2nd Hungarian Army, labour battalions, TsAMO RF fonds, State Archive of the Voronezh Region, Central Museum and Archive of the Hungarian Ministry of Defence, Federal Archive of Germany, Archive of the Historical Bureau of the Italian General

Staff.

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Submitted 11.04.2017, published:

FILONENKO, N. V. Dokumenty 2-i vengerskoi armii v arkhivakh Rossii, Vengrii, Germanii i Italii [Documents of the 2nd Hungarian Army in the Archives of Russia, Hungary and Italy. In Russ.]. Vestnik arhivista – Herald of an Archivist, 2017, no. 3, pp. 143-154.

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Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом журнале ВЕСТНИК АРХИВИСТА. Ознакомьтесь с условиями подписки [здесь](#) .