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Archival Fonds on the History of Soviet Prisoners-of-War in Norway in the Days of the Second World War: Materials from Russian and Norwegian Archives

Abstract

The article presents a comprehensive description of archival collections of the Norwegian and Russian archives, which contain the bulk of the primary sources on the history of the Soviet prisoners-of-war in Norway in the days of the Second World War. Content analysis and interpretation of the whole array of sources in the studied fonds allow to write a complete and accurate history of the German captivity in general, and that on the territory of occupied Norway in particular, and also to establish the number of the Nazi regime victims. The authors have studied seven fonds of the State (National) Archive of Norway (Riksarkivet) and two fonds of the

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Thursday, 15 April 2021 05:38

State Archive of the Russian Federation (GARF) and the Foreign Policy Archive of the Historical-Documentary Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (AVP RF). Fonds of the State Archive of Norway are of great scientific value for reconstructing the history of the Soviet war captivity in Norway. Among them are the fond 'German trophy archive'; the fond of the German Commander-In-Chief in Norway; documents of two fonds of the German military engineering group – Todt Organisation, in which the Soviet POW were used as labor force; the fond of the Office of the Administration of Refugees and Returnees Affairs; the fond of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF); and personal provenance fond of Major L. Kreyberg, who was responsible for repatriation from the Troms province. And the fonds of the 'Office of the Commissioner of the SNK of the USSR for Repatriation F. I. Golikov' (State Archive of the Russian Federation) and 'Department for Norway' (AVP RF) significantly complement the Norwegian archival data on the following topics: living conditions of the Soviet POWs in the Nazi camps in Norway, process of the Soviet prisoners-of-war repatriation back to the USSR. At the same time, the authors note uniqueness and significance of the documents from the Russian archives, which trace fates of the former POWs after their return. To be sure, some sources on the topic are excessively ideological, which reflects contradictions between the two political systems, the competing blocs, and the allies. However, the method of comparative analysis, the principles of consistency and complementarity of sources allow to make these sources quite representative and reliable.



Keywords

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Thursday, 15 April 2021 05:38

Documentary sources, Russian archives, Norwegian archives, Second World War, soviet POWs, Norway.

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