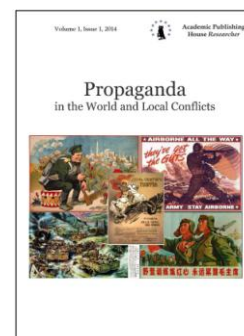


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## Mass Collaborationist Print Media in the Kursk region during the German Occupation

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### Abstract

The article is devoted to the organization of the German occupation authorities and their collaborators from among the local collaborators of large-scale psychological war against the population of Kursk region in 1941–1943. As the information base used in documents that are stored in the archives of the Russian Federal Security Service of the Office of the Kursk region and Belgorod region. Particular attention is given to the use of the German invaders mass of publications that began to emerge in the regional and in many regional centers of the Kursk region. The German command after the defeat near Moscow was forced to make certain adjustments to the policy of the occupation authorities for the development of civil and military collaboration in the population occupied Soviet territory. One such area was the intensification of mass propaganda of the population of the occupied territories, as well as Soviet prisoners of war. Considered filling newspapers with information materials, ways of presenting it. Identified individual stylistic features of the pro-Nazi newspapers published in Kursk frontline during the German occupation. It presents information on the individual editor in chief of the collaborationist mass of publications that appeared in the Kursk region in the occupation period.

**Keywords:** Kursk frontal area, the collaboration, the occupation, the German "new order", mass publications, psychological warfare, anti-Semitism.

### 1. Introduction

Since ancient times, warring parties have actively used various means of information influence on their adversaries. While initially most of these included deliberately distributed rumors, in the late 19th – early 20th centuries, much increased use was made of a wide range of printed materials (e.g. leaflets, posters, brochures, newspapers). The start of World War II revealed that the arsenal of information influence tools, employed by governments in times of armed conflict to affect both the military and the population in occupied territories, became significantly larger and was substantially modified. Clear evidence of this can be found in events that took place in the territory the USSR temporarily occupied by German troops and their allies. The invaders then embarked on the work towards their strategic goals using a system of total terror against the local population, brutally suppressing the slightest displays of anti-fascist sentiments and activating a large-scale propaganda campaign. It is the latter component that is highlighted by this paper.

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## 2. Materials and methods

The scientific problem that this paper aims to address deals with an attempt to spotlight characteristics of propaganda activities, particularly those using mass collaborationist print media, undertaken by the German occupation authorities in the temporarily occupied territory of the Kursk region in 1941–1943. In parallel, the paper will also determine specific features of these media.

The paper adopts the method of quantitative analysis of archival materials (investigation and legal proceedings documents and captured documents) stored in FSS (FSB) territorial directorates for the Kursk and Belgorod regions. Essentially, the materials become subject for scientific examination for the first time. Another method used includes linguistic analysis of lexical and stylistic devices used by the mass collaborationist media which were published in the Kursk front-line zone between October 1941 and August 1943.

## 3. Discussion

Throughout the post-war period, the scale and types of cooperation with the German invaders, voluntarily offered by some Soviet citizens (collaboration), were generally glossed over by Soviet social studies. In the context of the topic discussed here, an exception, perhaps, is the work by I.A. Ivlev and A.F. Yudenkov (Ivlev, 1988).

O.V. Romanko, who describes the Soviet historiography on the problems of mass collaborationist propaganda printed in the USSR territory occupied by German troops, says in one of his monographs: "Soviet historical studies provided an eminently one-sided coverage of the German occupation policy in the Soviet territory. Specific topics were typically very extensively studied. These included the occupiers' crimes against the civilian population, economic and cultural plundering in the occupied areas, etc. On the contrary, despite the diverse literature on the occupation, Soviet researchers completely "overlooked" a number of its aspects, such as the revival of the church in the occupied areas, military and political collaboration of Soviet citizens, and methods and tools of psychological brainwashing of the population applied by Nazis. Even such seemingly well-studied topics as guerrilla movement and underground resistance were not all what the official historiography used to describe" (Romanko, 2009: 3).

Removal of the ideological constraints and declassification a large array of archival documents from the World War II period contributed to more intense research work on a wide range of issues that were previously inaccessible by Russian experts. At the turn of the 21st century, Russian history had to go through a crisis point when it created new methodology and approaches and received a large number of primary sources which enable us to redefine the phenomenon of active cooperation between Soviet citizens and German invaders in 1941–1945.

Researchers turned their attention to details of the active cooperation which individual Soviet citizens and German troops and their allies established in the temporarily occupied territory. Propaganda activities as part of in the general strategy in the psychological warfare waged by the German occupation authorities in the occupied territory of the Soviet Union, came into the focus of scientific research by V.A. Gorelkin, N.V. Filonenko, S.K. Bernev and A.R. Bormotova (Gorelkin, 2003; Filonenko, 2003; Bernev, 2008: 9-11; Bormotova, 2010).

Papers by V.A. Makedonskaya, T.D. Shvets, V.M. Shestova and O.L. Sorokina contained a significant amount of factual material on the psychological brainwashing by the German propaganda machine of the population in the occupied territories in order to develop its loyalty to Nazi Germany (Makedonskaya, 2011: 102-108; Makedonskaya, 2013: 144-149; Sorokina, 2014: 77-109).

Despite the considerable number of historical studies on a wide range of problems related to the Nazi propaganda in the occupied Soviet territories, articles that examine the efficiency and effectiveness of the Soviet counter-propaganda remain scarce. One of the few works is the article by A. Cherkasov and M. Shmigel (Cherkasov, Shmigel, 2013: 4-9).

Russian historians E.N. Shantseva, A.V. Tsvetkov, D.Yu. Astashkin and I.V. Gribkov accomplished a series of dedicated studies on the German propaganda in the temporarily occupied territories of the Soviet Union, which aspire to identify regional features of the pro-fascist mass print media produced by local collaborators engaged in for the purpose (Shantseva 2010: 55-59; Tsvetkov, 2012: 125-134; Astashkin, 2014: 9-12; Gribkov, 2015: 49-56).

Meanwhile, we still lack clear understanding of the massive amount of information on the characteristics of the civilian collaboration with the propaganda organs of the German occupation authorities in the Kursk front-line zone. An explanation is that virtually all materials on the former active accomplices of German invaders from this category of traitors to Russia (former agitators, editors for collaborationist newspapers, heads of propaganda departments in city and regional councils, created by the occupation authorities in the occupied territories) continue to be stored in the archives of the territorial offices of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSS), and researchers still have extremely limited access to them.

#### **4. Results**

At a meeting by A. Hitler with top party and military leaders of Germany, July 16, 1941, the leader of the German Nazis fostered the need to restore newspaper in the occupied USSR territories to be able to influence the local population ([GARF. F. 7445. Op. 2. D. 162. L. 441-443](#)).

One of the directives, released by the German command and published in large print Nazi edition "Feldtzeitung", said: "Victory in this war will be won, first of all, of course, with sword. But the victory of the sword should be secured with the complete victory of the German cause in the conquered land. Any good propaganda in favor of Germany accelerate our victory shedding as little blood as possible. It is necessary to remember that the entire population of the Soviet Union has accustomed to intense propaganda in two decades. So, the struggle against Bolshevism is a struggle with weapons in hand and polemics with the Bolshevik propaganda" ([RGASPI. F. 17. Op. 125. D. 167. L. 25](#)).

On the eve of World War II, a military propaganda agency was created in Nazi Germany under the Wehrmacht High Command – the military propaganda department ([Wedel, 1962: 20](#)).

Early in June 1941, Chief of Staff of the operational command of the Wehrmacht Supreme Command (OKW), Colonel General Alfred Jodl approved an OKW circular – Directive on the Use of Propaganda in Operation Barbarossa. The Directive defined key goals, forms and methods of propaganda efforts. The key goals of propagandist influence on the Red Army military and civilian population in the front-line zone included: intimidating the enemy, enhancing defeatism, creating a positive image of the Operation, undermining the authority of the state, military and political leadership of the USSR, fuelling discontent with the situation in the country among the civilian population, motivating people to loyalty to the Wehrmacht troops, etc. ([Dashichev, 1975: 134](#)).

Along with guidelines on the launch of the propaganda campaign against the Red Army, the document also contained a list of numerous propagandist activities targeted at the civilian population. The general basis of the propaganda effort among the civilian population was to be the message that Germany wanted to "liberate" the people living in the USSR from the "tyranny of the Bolsheviks." According to the Nazi propaganda, Germany's only adversaries were the Soviet government and the Communist Party. In addition to this message, which reflected the essential political goal of the aggression released by Nazi Germany, this propaganda was, however, designed to clearly explain to Soviet citizens that from now on it would have to work for the benefit of the Third Reich.

The Directive attached the overriding importance to the need to carefully conceal further goals of the war from the population at early stages. Neither future partition of the USSR nor the fundamental destruction of the socialist economy and social achievements should be mentioned in propaganda materials ([Myuller, 1974: 91](#)).

Before the start of the war against the Soviet Union, the Nazi Ministry of Propaganda published over 30 million leaflets and colorful pocket-size propaganda brochures in 30 languages of the USSR ethnic groups and prepared a number of propagandist radio broadcasts. By June 1941, there were 17 propaganda companies as part of the Wehrmacht forces ([History of the Second World War, 1974: 316](#)).

There were propaganda departments functioning in commandant's offices and council in occupied cities and major rural settlements. All German institutions, which operated in the occupied areas, were required to engage in propaganda matters.

The occupation authorities in the occupied territories promptly began paying careful attention to the information support for their activities. Analysis of RGASPI documents uncovers

the fact that collaborationist newspapers were launched almost everywhere in republican, provincial and district centers occupied by German troops (RGASPI. F. 1. Op. 2. D. 11. L. 65-67).

Invaders leveraged different techniques, methods and tools depending on the area occupied. For example, Z.A. Fedorova who reviews the massive ideological campaign started by the German command among the population of the occupied territory, says: "After taking Kalinin, the invaders quickly formed a powerful propaganda apparatus which consisted mainly of radio and newspapers... A big role was put on broadcasting: presenters read German newspapers, gramophone records were played back, and the repertoire included Russian folk songs along with German works" (Fedorova, 2014: 129).

In addition, developers of the German propaganda programming often gave the information allegedly received from Red Army soldiers who were left behind their units and were captured.

Despite the great costs incurred by Germany to conduct the propaganda war, it launched production of periodicals and other mass print media throughout the USSR territory occupied by German troops.

German invaders resumed the publication of pro-fascist newspapers and information leaflets and brochures almost everywhere in the Kursk front-line zone. The main purpose of these print media was to bring orders issued by the German command and collaborationist authorities, created by the occupiers, to the notice of the local population.

Special information boards were installed in typical places of mass gathering of people virtually in all major towns in the Kursk front-line zone. These boards displayed various propagandistic materials, such as pro-fascist newspapers, agitation posters, orders by the commandant's offices and local collaborationist authorities and so on.

Examination of the documents stored in the 4th department of the NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) Directorate for the Kursk region (AUFSSB RF po Kursk. obl. F. 4th department of the NKVD Directorate. D. 228. L. 20) makes it possible to draw up a list of all pro-fascist mass printed media issued in this region during the German occupation (Table 1).

**Table 1.** The list of occupational newspapers published in the Kursk region between 1941 and 1943.

No.	Name of print edition	Years of publication	Place of publication
1.	Voskhod (a daily newspaper for Russians)	1941–1942	Belgorod
2.	Kurskiye Izvestiya (a weekly newspaper of the local government)	September 1942 – January 24, 1943	Kursk
3.	Novy Put (a newspaper for the population in the liberated areas)	1942	Lgov, Kursk region (from May 30, 1942 published in Kursk)
4.	Posev i Zhatva (a biweekly supplement to the Novy Put newspaper)	1942	Kursk
5.	Rylsky Novy Put	1941–1943	Rylsk, Kursk region
6.	Dmitrovskaya Gazeta	1942–1943	Dmitrovsk, Kursk region
7.	Novaya Zhizn (an official newspaper of the Sary Oskol district administration and city council)	1942–1943	Sary Oskol, Kursk region
8.	Golos Naroda (an official newspaper of the mayor's office of the Lokot national okrug which included the Mikhailovsky, Dmitrovsky and Dmitrievsky districts, Kursk region)	1942–1943	Volokonovka, Kursk region

The Novy Put (New Way) newspaper was initially published in Lgov, and from May 30, 1942 in Kursk. Since that time, its chief editor was G.I. Filshin who remained as chief and responsible

editor of the newspaper until January 1943. Starting from September 1943, the newspaper was renamed *Kurskiye Izvestiya* (Kursk News) (AUFBSB RF po Kursk. obl. F. AUD. D. 9515. L. 2).

*Kurskiye Izvestiya* was a 4-page news sheet for the occupied territory. It published regulations and orders by the Kursk city council, related to the city matters and people who lived there. The section Sketches on Kursk contained local materials on how the occupation authorities established a new life in Kursk, such as opening a library (*Kurskiye Izvestiya*, 1942: December 20), launching an inn for visitors from nearby villages (*Kurskiye Izvestiya*, 1942: November 29).

The position of chief executive editor was given to G.I. Filshin, born in the year 1881, in the Novezhnoe village, Oboyan district, Kursk province (Ivnyansky district during the war), to the family of a priest. He graduated from the Kiev Theological Academy in 1912 and was a teacher at a local university in Kursk. He was arrested by the NKVD in 1937 for "anti-Soviet agitation" but was released as there was no proof of his actions. The following fate was in store for Filshin. He escaped with German military units after Kursk was liberated by the Red Army and remained abroad until 1945. After returning to the USSR, he was arrested May 17, 1948 and soon was convicted by the MIA's military tribunal for the Kursk region under Art. 58-1 "a" of the RSFSR Criminal Code and sentenced to 25 years in a correctional labor camp with confiscation of property (AUFBSB RF po Kursk. obl. F. AUD. D. 9515. L. 3).

Official communications of the German High Command and propaganda articles for editorials of the occupation newspapers were received as ready-made texts already prepared for printing – bulletins from the Berlin OAD Press Office (Ostraum-Artikeldienst). Materials from the bulletin were widely utilized by newspapers and sometimes filled almost entire printed space. The bulletin's editor was Vilhelm Stein, a former press attache at the German Embassy in Moscow (RGASPI. F. 17. Op. 125. D. 178. L. 1-3).

*Posev i Zhatva* (Sowing and Reaping) seemed to be a purely agricultural newspaper but its powerful ideological potential was immediately visible. Articles urging local residents to make compulsory agricultural supplies to German troops (*Posev i Zhatva*. 1942. No. 4) and calls for copying German production processes (*Posev i Zhatva*. 1942. No. 1) were replicated by every issue of this newspaper.

*Rylsky Novy Put* (New Rylsk Way) published caricatures of I.V. Stalin and various pro-fascist propaganda materials.

*Novaya Zhizn* (New Life), a 4-page newspaper, was published in the town of Stary Oskol and appeared on a weekly basis. Its executive editor became V. Nikonov. The newspaper often reprinted materials from central German editions, mainly from the *Völkischer Beobachter*. A typical example is illustrated by the article World War 1942 (*Novaya Zhizn*, 1943: January 17).

Another newsletter widely distributed in Kursk was *Posledniye Novosti* (Latest News), a Russian language edition, published and delivered from Berlin (Kepov, 2002: 31). The above list should also include *Zarya* (The Dawn), a 4-page newspaper, which was also published in the German capital and sent to the occupied USSR area 2 times a week (on Wednesdays and Sundays). *Zarya* primarily focused on ideological materials (*Zarya*, 1943: July 28).

Kursk also regularly received an occupation newspaper *Rech* (Speech) published in Oryol (GOAPIKO. F. P-2. Op. 1. D. 223. L. 76).

During the German occupation, the following mass print media were published in the south-eastern part of the Kursk region: in Belgorod and Belgorod district – *Voskhod* (Sunrise) and in Prokhorovka district – *Zapadnye Vesti* (Western News).

*Voskhod* (Woszhod – Aufstieg) went out from late 1941 to early 1943. Its editorial office and printing house took the building of the former editorial office and publishing house of *Belgorodskaya Pravda* (Belgorod Truth) on Lenin Street. After all Belgorod streets were renamed – an accomplishment undertaken by the fascist invaders following the occupation of the city – the new address of the *Voskhod* printing house and the newspaper was 59, Field Marshal General von Brauchitsch Street and from March 1942 59, Bangofstrasse (Vokzalnaya).

This pro-fascist edition had two editors throughout its short history. Since February 8, 1942 (No. 15 of the newspaper), it indicated Ja. A. Morozov as the editor, and starting from September 6, 1942 (No. 56 of the newspaper), the latter was succeeded by V. Strakhov.

November 9, 1941 saw the first issue of the newspaper. It retained the same title that people who lived Belgorod knew very well – *Belgorodskaya Pravda*. However, the newspaper bore a new

slogan: "End of Bolshevism means the liberation of the Russian people", which existed until September 3, 1941.

Since mid-December 1941, the newspaper began to appear under a changed name – Voskhod. The first page of the renamed newspaper contained an explanation by the editorial office clarifying to readers the reason for the decision to modify the name: "On Sunday, December 14, 1941, the old name of the newspaper – Belgorodskaya Pravda – has passed into oblivion. The newspaper will now be entitled Voskhod. The title Belgorodskaya Pravda has been the last vestige of the Bolshevik rule in Belgorod, which we have dispelled. Under the new name Voskhod, the Belgorod population will be able to confidently move into the future, to a new life and new construction in the areas cleansed of the Bolshevik infection. Through the Voskhod newspaper, people will also take part in the life of Germany and other countries" (Voskhod, 1941: December 14). The editors thanked the people of Belgorod in advance materials they would send.

Specific stylistic similarities of individual collaborationist editions and regional Soviet newspapers of the pre-war years were indicated by historian S.K. Bernev: "In order to lend their print products greater credibility, the German propaganda agencies tried to preserve Soviet titles, formats, fonts, and style in newspapers" (Bernev, 2008: 9).

Similar processes took place in many temporarily occupied territories of the USSR. For example, a collaborationist newspaper *Za Rodinu* (For the Motherland) went out in the Leningrad region between the autumn of 1942 and the summer of 1944. A thorough study by D. Astashkin into the entire array of materials published in the print edition revealed that "... the population in the occupied Novgorod territory received the collaborationist press in the familiar style and only propaganda messages changed. Instead of the customary praise of Communists, the press regularly published accusations against the "Bolshevik yids" (Astashkin, 2014: 10). According to him, this can be explained by the fact that this newspaper was created by the same authors who were engaged in the journalistic activity in the North-western RSFSR before the war.

Analysis of the file of collaborationist Voskhod, which was published in Belgorod, identifies the following qualities characteristic of this print edition throughout its existence.

1. Each issue of the newspaper was imposed into pages based on one and the same pattern. First pages were devoted to official communications of the German authorities and front-line summary reports, which covered the success of Nazi Germany and its satellites, demonstrating the inevitable victory of the Axis Powers. Here are some of the headlines of such articles: "German forces in Rostov", "German forces approaching Stalingrad", "Fortress of Hong Kong in the hands of Japan", "Japan at the door of Australia." At the same time, not even the tiniest news of the German defeat or casualties near Moscow and Stalingrad could be found in any of the newspapers. They at best sparingly informed of the tactical retreat planned by the German army.

2. A former active collaborator of the German invaders, V. Samarin, wrote in his recollections: "The German propaganda ... had two very primitive lines: 1. The German army liberated the Russian people. 2. The blame for all sufferings of the Russian people should be put on Jews" (Svershilos. Prishli nemtsy (It has happened. Germans came), 2012: 283).

These two lines can be also traced in individual articles in the Voskhod newspaper. For example, an editorial entitled "24 years of Bolshevism" said: "The day before yesterday marked 24 years of the Bolshevik terrorist regime... The Russian worker was promised that the Bolshevik revolution would break out to ensure the general freedom and equality. But what did this freedom and equality look like? Russian peasants were deprived of their land and farms which they acquired over the years of hard legal work. The entire peasantry were repeatedly doomed to severe famine. All those, who resisted the insane Bolshevik regime, were shot in batches or exiled to certain death in Siberia...

Russian workers did not receive the paradise which he was promised in long-winded speeches but received a hell... With a starvation diet and miserable wages, Russian workers had to live year by year while yids ran affairs in Moscow and lived a life of luxury at the expense of Russian workers and peasants. The yids and yid parasites were supported by the State Political Directorate which drowned all discontented citizens in the riches of Karelia and Siberia... End of Bolshevism is the beginning of freedom of the Russian people!" (Voskhod, 1941: November 9).

3. The German propaganda continuously promoted the proposition that the actual enemy of Russians were "bandit elements." The occupational propaganda referred these to the as anti-fascist

underground resistance, Soviet patriots and guerrillas. Therefore, pro-fascist periodical publications that appeared in occupied Belgorod in 1941–1943 were often filled with materials which classed guerrillas as criminals who targeted their activities at undermining the "resurgent life."

4. A considerable amount of material described the "construction of a new life" and achievements of the new pro-German rule. For example, the article "On the road to a complete recovery" in the Voskhod issue dated April 5, 1942, wrote: "...the interrupted school process has been resumed, some artisans and craftsmen are working freely, houses are being repaired, streets cleared and so on." The newspaper published announcements informing of the opening of the city library and stores, of the beginning of studies in schools, of new productions in the Belgorod Drama Theatre or movie shows in the cinema.

Late in January 1942, the newspaper launched a new column – Answers to Readers where officials representing the occupation authorities and the collaborationist leadership of the city council responded to various questions regarding daily needs, such as "When will the market resume its work?", "When will electric lighting be installed in city apartments?", "When will we be able to travel by train to Kharkov?" and similar questions. As the newspaper gave no names of the authors of the questions, it is currently impossible to find out whether Belgorod residents actually asked these questions or they were invented in the editorial office. As for the answers, the editorial office said that they were received from the German city commandant, Hauptmann Sauer and assistant mayor I.I. Rozhkov.

5. The Voskhod newspaper reflected large-scale programs to "reform the Russian village," initiated by the German command. The attempts to reform the Russian village are demonstrated in the following headlines: "Liquidation of collective farms," "First steps of the new village," "Manage and use the land as the owner!", "The peasantry is Europe's vital force," "Wages in the public estates."

6. The highly militarized economy of fascist Germany had to cope with a burning need for labor after World War II began. Addressing this challenge was a major goal set before the occupation authorities and their accomplices from the number of active collaborators. A massive propaganda campaign was launched at the local level.

The newspaper heavily propagated a "comfortable and decent life" for those who would choose to go to work to Germany. The point is that the population to be sent to work in Germany was first mobilized in the occupied south-eastern part of the Kursk region on a voluntary basis. Headings of such articles speak for themselves: "Russian workers travel to Germany," "The European unemployed find jobs in Germany," "Delegation of peasants in Berlin."

Calling on the population in the occupied USSR territory to go to work for the Third Reich, the German propaganda machine promised to provide previous jobs back at home after a one-year employment, free transportation there and back, meals throughout the trip, working clothes and salaries on an equal basis with German workers. To sound more convincing, the newspaper published letters from Russians who left to work in Germany as follows: "We like our work, we live in new barracks, got new clothes, and live well" (*Voskhod*, 1942: October 9).

The occupation authorities in the Stary Oskol district put actively in practice one of the lines in the economic policy adopted by Nazi Germany in the occupied territories – the mobilization of workforce for the needs of Nazi Germany.

Here we should cite the full text of the document – an announcement by the Stary Oskol occupation authorities dated September 14, 1942: "A Job Center is now operating on Glavnaya street, 48, in Stary Oskol. All local organizations and other public institutions, as well as private enterprises are now allowed to hire workers of any specialization only if they have been sent by the Job Center.

Applications for workers are submitted at the Job Center by employers in person. This mediation is provided by the Job Center free of charge from the opening of the Job Center. Any employments are prohibited, except for those provided by the Job Center, even if the work is to be done for military units and is free of charge.

All able-bodied residents of the above settlements, aged between 16 and 45, of both sexes, who are not currently on permanent service in military units, are required to report for registration at the Job Center" (*AUFSSB RF po Belgor. obl. F. 10. Gr. 1. Op. 3. D. 10. L. 57*).

According to estimates made by K.A. Shevyakov, 5,623 thousand people were sent to Germany for forced labor. Of them 3 million died of starvation, excessively hard labor and torture (*Lyudskiye poteri (Casualties)*, 1995: 180). Of course, these statistics could not be disseminated in mass pro-fascist publications appeared in the occupied territories.

The German occupation authorities were increasingly focused on the collaborationist print media at the local level. The Voskhod newspaper came out once a week (on Sundays) first seven months; from July 1942, it was published twice a week (Thursdays and Sundays); from September 8, 1942 four times a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday), and from October 20, 1942, the newspaper began to come out every day, except on Monday. The newspaper constantly increased its circulation – from 10 thousand to 27 thousand copies. The price of the 2-page newspaper also grew – 10, 30, and 50 kopeks and when it started to appear on 4 pages, the price already reached 1 ruble. Subscriptions to Voskhod could be bought at the printing house's office.

For the pro-fascist newspapers published in the Kursk front-line zone to be able to reach the population, heads of the localities were obliged to distribute them among the people living in the occupied settlements. For example, every month, the Oboyan District Administration allocated to the head of the Chekmarevka village 20 copies of the pro-Nazi newspaper Voskhod, published in Belgorod. It was the duty of the village head to disseminate this edition among the population for 15 rubles per newspaper. Money earned from the sale of the newspaper, the head should transfer to the Oboyan District Administration (*GAKO. F. P-3580. Op. 1. D. 54. L. 76*).

## 5. Conclusion

Russian historiography on the World War II collaboration has been demonstrating a surge in interest to the problem among Russian researchers in recent years.

Massive propaganda activities launched by the Nazi occupation authorities, with collaborationist printed editions as active participants, on the one hand, aimed to create chaos and spread panic in the minds of the people living in the occupied territory and on the other hand to inspire their loyalty to Nazi Germany and bring them to worship its leader – Adolf Hitler.

An analysis of archival documents uncovered by the USSR state security services shows that large-scale propaganda efforts taken by the German command among Soviet citizens in the Kursk front-line occupied by the German army set the goal of planting the ideology of submission to the Third Reich as one of its priorities. And "seeds" of the Nazi propaganda sometimes found fertile soil.

For propaganda purposes in the occupied Kursk region, the German command made use not only of newspapers. A number of brochures, such as "Who is Hitler" and "For them, the war is already over," were published in significant circulations. The following books: "Adolf Hitler and children," "Adolf Hitler and workers," "Hitler – liberator," "What is the German superiority," "Why Europe wins," "Modern Germany," "Work in Germany," "Struggle against Bolshevism is the duty of each patriot," "War and new order," "Socialism of penal labor," "The new order of land use" (*AUFSB RF po Kursk. obl. F. 4th department of the NKVD Directorate. D. 228. L. 15-24*).

However, with the progressive introduction of the overall system of terror, humiliation of national dignity and complete sacking of material resources in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, the overwhelming majority of Soviet citizens, who found themselves in the occupation, realized the true nature of the German invaders. This fundamentally changed the attitude of the local population to the occupiers, and no propaganda was able to overcome it.

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