

SOURCE STUDIES

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Source 'Studies in the history of the Belarusian SSR during the Great Patriotic War.

It researches the regularities of the sources' emergence and their fact-based descriptions of the war events. It develops the most optimal schemes of sources classification, methods of their identification and their use in historical research. It is directly related to the level of historical research development and depends on it, it serves as its peculiar indicator. The science of Source Studies uses the scheme of dividing sources which was developed earlier and used to this day by historical source studies according to the types of physical, written, oral (folklore), linguistic, ethnographic, film-photo documents, and phono-documents. Written sources, divided into the following main groups based on their origin, species and author's characteristics, i.e. documents of state bodies and employees' social organisations [Decrees of the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Praesidium of the Supreme Soviet of the BSSR; resolutions and orders of the Council of People's Commissars (CPC, SNK) of the USSR and ones of the CPC of the BSSR, ones of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) and the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of Belarus; documents of underground Party bodies and republic organisations; military operation documentation; documents of the All-Union Leninist Young Communist League and Leninist Young Communist League of Belarus, etc.]; periodical printing; [memoirs](#), personal diaries, correspondence; documents of German Nazi invasion, punitive and other bodies and organisations are in the most active use.

The very first days of the outbreak of invasion (the following days after June 22, 1941) witnessed the beginning of the sources formation which ended with the victory of the Soviet people in the war, but some sources were continuing to be composed much later (for example, memoirs, etc.). Many sources reflected the history of the national war in Belarus against the German Nazi invaders have been published. Most of the sources have not been published and kept in state and departmental archives, museums, libraries, and private individuals and are in the everyday environment (for example, some folklore, ethnographic, linguistic sources). A necessary precondition for the effective identification of sources is the study of the features of the Party-building during the war years, history of state bodies, institutions, and organisations [including intelligence, counterintelligence (including German Nazi ones)], their record-keeping management, etc. Scientific source criticism which determines the originality, time, and place of source formation, author (authors) and reveals its real capabilities to disclose in an unbiased manner certain events in the source, clarifies operative motives for forming the source, degree probabilities of the information contained therein, etc. is of great importance when using sources. Conducting source criticism contributes to raising the level of scientific research, prevents from references to improbable, tendentious sources that distort the true picture of the events that took place during the war years.

One of the ways to obtain a set of unbiased scientific facts is a comprehensive sources study, comparative analysis of sources that cause doubt in the researcher, with the help of documents whose content probability is guaranteed by authorship or some other sign. Comparative analysis of conversations with soldiers, partisans, and underground members recordings content made in 1942–1945 with the memories of the same people written 30–40 years after the end of the war is of interest.

Independent monographs, articles, and other scientific works can act as source studies [for example, a collection of articles 'Belarus during the Great Patriotic War: Topics of Historiography and Source Studies' (1999); article 'Memoirs of Participants of the Partisan Movement in the Period of the Great Patriotic War as a Historical Source: (Experience of the Analysis of Memoirs of the First Babrujsk Partisan Brigade History)' (1961) by A. A. Kurnosov] as well as source studies' chapters, sections, paragraphs of historical studies. All these works draw attention to the location, number, origin place, and sources authorship, their commonality and difference characteristic features, research methodological techniques, etc.

Since the 1960s, reference books, thematic reviews, descriptions of documentary materials stored in archives, museums, and libraries were prepared and published. The formation of the source base on the partisan movement and Party-Patriotic underground history were studied. The work of the Party bodies of the republic along with the Institute of Party History under the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus (until 1991) was analysed to establish the activities of underground Party, Komsomol, anti-Fascist organisations and groups, efforts in collecting memories of partisan movement and underground members by special commissions under the leadership of the collection sector and memoirs publication of the Institute of History of the Academy of Sciences of the BSSR and others. Once the efforts in the organisation, identification, collection of documents and materials completed, the time for their in-depth source study has come.