

LOCAL HISTORY. BRASLAV DISTRICT DURING NAZI OCCUPATION 1941-1944

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World War II problems become topical nowadays not only in scientific, but also in political discourse. The paper is focused on the north-west region of Belarus during German occupation. Basing on the documents of the public record office of Vitebsk region (Belarus), the author reconstructs everyday life of people, analyzes social and economic interaction, and implementation of occupation policy in the multi-ethnic border area. The research gives us a full view of survival strategy of a “small man” in Belarus and the eastern regions of Latvia and Lithuania during World War II.

Key words: history of everyday life, period of German occupation, survival strategies, border region.

Examination of the collaborationist administration documents allows for reconstruction of everyday life of the Belarus population during Nazi occupation, and seeing the perception of the occupation regime through the eyes of a “small man”. The way of life of people in Braslav district of General Region Belarus (*Generalbezirk Weißrusland*) of the Reichskommissariat Ostland will be described in this article.

The free movement of inhabitants was considerably limited in the occupied territory of Belarus. Within the boundaries of the Ostland, trips (movement) were potentially possible only after receiving the permission signed by the head of the district. Trips to Eastern Belarus, territory of the taskforce group of the Central Army, were only allowed to officials of the local paramilitary administration for conducting official matters, but were forbidden for civilians. The entrance into Belostok (*Biaystok*³) district, and on the whole, into the territory of the Reich, was forbidden. The movement of residents in definite circumstances was even limited within the territory of the Ostland. For instance, in January 1942 entering of Latvia was banned for residents of Braslav district because of the typhus epidemic in Latvia (National archives of Vitebsk region (NAV f. 2841, sch. 1, af. 1, p. 15). However, the quarantine measures were taken too late – the epidemic struck Braslav district, as well. In order to localize it, services in churches, Roman Catholic churches and Prayer houses were temporarily interrupted under the order of Braslav District Council of January 13, 1942 (NAV f. 2841, sch. 1, af. 1, p. 16).

However, taking into consideration the front-line position of the district, migration of population in Belorussian-Latvian-Lithuanian cross-border area in previous decade, some residents were given permission by Gebietskommissariat to permanently or temporary enter other General Region of Ostland or the territory of General Region Belarus Belarus.

Gebietskommissariat received residents’ applications for migration to Latvia and from Latvia to Braslav district. In May, 1944 the application from two sisters, coming to reside in Belarus, was considered. The sisters asked permission to move from Latvia (having arrived in 1938) to Braslav district in order to help in their brother’s farm (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 148, p. 11). In October, 1942 Glubokoye Gebietskommissariat received an application from Stanislav V. (first name), living in Zarasai district, Lithuania, who asked permission to move to Belarus to his brother-in-law who worked as an auxiliary worker in fish industry in Drisvati (*Дрысвяты*). In his application, Stanislav V. had declared not being able to support his family because of the small piece of land (2 hectares) owned by him. It was emphasized, that this man had good reputation in Latvia and had not collaborated

with Soviet power. Being positively known also in Belarus, since he was looking for a job, he mentioned it as a fair reason for his movement (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 15).

On September 10, 1942 the Braslav District Council gave a resident Honorata R. (first name) an opportunity to entry the general governorship (in Krakov district), which was approved by Gebietskommissariat in September, 1942 (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 33-34).

In another case Gebietskommissariat rejected (16.04.1942) two women's application for moving to Latvia (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 22). The application for moving might have been rejected due to political reasons. April 28, 1942 Braslav District Council informed the resident of Warsaw Branislava V. (first name) about disallowing her moving to reside in the district and her marriage to a local resident, since such marriages between Polish and Belorussian people were possible only after receiving special permission (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 22). On April 17, 1942 Gebietskommissariat turned down the application of a female resident who wanted to move to her husband in Vilnius one month before the childbearing (Gebietskommissariat considered that in this case the husband had to come to his wife). (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 59, p. 56, 57). Requests for trips to the territory of Reich in East Russia were also rejected (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 59, p. 11).

Citizens could require a repeated permission on crossing the border between Gebietskommissariats. The principal of a Belorussian school, citizen I. (the first letter of the name) asked a permission to go to Latvia, because in Silene volost of Ilukste district (*Silene*) lived his father, a pastor of Old Believers' Community, whom he wanted to ask advice how to run the farm and handle the apiary. The mother of this citizen applied with the same request (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 59, p. 33-34). Some applicants could own property outside General Region Belarus (a house in Vilnius or homestead in Latvia), and they asked for regular permission in order to take care of their property (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 59, p. 29).

There were requests for permissions to go to Germany to work there, although residents of Belarus rarely agreed to become *Ostarbeiters*. In January 1944 such a wish was expressed by a 20-year-old citizen of Braslav volost Evgenji M. He asked Gebietskommissariat's permission to enter Danzig, because he was permanently disturbed by partisans and his brother lived and worked in Danzig. A 19-year-old citizen of Braslav, Kazimir V. wanted to find a job in Germany, where his acquaintances worked (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 148, p. 46).

It goes without saying, that such requests were granted. Sometimes those already working in Germany, through the employment exchange, sent requests the Gebietskommissariat, asking permissions for their relatives to go to Germany, and the Gebietskommissariat, in its turn, ordered the local administration to prepare departure documents (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 148, p. 47).

It should be noted, that the border between general regions of Ostland was often very conditional; the representatives of military branches could cross the border without official permissions. For example, on basis of the report by the burgermaster of Drisvjati volost, the Braslav District Council asked the chief of Braslav police to investigate the cases of Lithuanian policemen coming to the district and milling grain in the Drisvjati mill. According to the Belorussian officials' opinion, the milling of grain was done by Lithuanian people and Lithuanian police just covered these actions (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 43).

The Report of October 3, 1941 by the District Council to Gebietskommissariat revealed increase of profiteering in the district. The profiteering was characterized as "terrible", because of the flow of tradesmen from the front-line districts of Eastern Belarus and Latvia (Daugavpils, Kraslava) who were buying up food products from farmers in huge amounts. The inflow of tradesmen from Latvia, Belorussian officials explained by the fact that Latvian people had not paid taxes for two years already (this opinion was not explained in documents), and they had large amounts of cash resources, and, on the whole, Latvia was considered to be much richer, as a result, the Letts were buying up food without paying

attention to real prices. It was also pointed out that Latvian populace did not trust the Soviet currency, and tried to get rid of it by buying up provision in Braslav district. For instance, the head of Kraslava cooperative society Romuald R., was entrusted to import from Braslav to Kraslava 1000 kg of salt and 150 kg of berries (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 12, p. 11). It became known that the starving populace of the eastern part of Belarus also did not pay any attention to prices and tried to buy goods, which they had been lacking for a long period of time. Consequently, the local administration noted that the district had started to experience shortage of provisions and asked Gebietskommissariat to take measures in order to prevent this tendency (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 12, p. 3).

There was no freedom of choosing a living place within the General District Belarus. Those, living there before the beginning of the war between the USSR and Germany, were allowed to live in the district. The rest of residents were considered potentially unreliable and were allowed to live in the district only after getting a special permission from Glubokoye Gebietskommissariat. Though, in the end of 1941, the Gebietskommissariat noticed the presence of people having arrived during the last months from Minsk and Vilnius and demanded from the local administration to stop giving out residence permissions. The local administration compiled lists and to provide information about those people (name, place they had come from, nationality) and sent them to the Gebietskommissariat immediately (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 12, p. 15). The Gebietskommissariat also received permission requests from those residents who had lived in Braslav district till September 1939, and had moved to the West, because of being afraid of Bolsheviks' persecution (Bolshevik – a member of Social Democratic in 1903 in Russia) and wishing to return (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 59, p. 8).

To move to another living place, residents were obliged to submit application to the volost administration, which examined it and passed for examination to the District Council with reference of any objections for moving of a particular person, e.g. Drisvjati Volost Administration in April, 1942 informed that it had no objections to citizen Ivan (first name) B.'s moving to the district. The man was in charged of a dairy farm. It was pointed out that the applicant and his family had good reputation, had not taken part in any politician organizations, had a piece of land, and had already lived in this locality before 1939 (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 20).

The Braslav citizen Silvestr S. submitted an application for permission for his granddaughter to live in the town in order to attend school (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 50, p. 88).

The peasant Pjotr S. (first name), a resident of village Pystoshka (*Пустошка*) in Braslav, requested (January 6, 1944) permission to move to his sister in village Janijshki of Sharkovchinskij district (*Янишки*). The request was substantiated by the fact that his farming had been ruined during an operation (it was not defined exactly, but it might have been a punitive operation against partisans) (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 148, p. 54). A widespread reason for movement was persecution by the partisans. A resident of village Skurjati of Boginskaj volost (*Скюрята*), Leon Z., a Pole, Catholic, in May 1943, asked the permission for his family to move to Vidzi of Svjantjanskij district of General Region Latvia (*Відзы*), in order to be under protection of the police, because his son was killed by partisans and his farm was ransacked (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 148, p. 22, par. 22).

Postal services were intended for the needs of Wehrmacht and for occupation institutions. Postal services were banned for civilians (NAV f. 2849, sch. 1, af. 2, p. 39). The exception was made for relatives of *Ostarbeiters*. In February 1942 Braslav District Council made an attempt to organize postal communication with Latvia. They applied to the head of the post office in Daugavpils. It was suggested to make the transmission between Braslav and Latvia through the Silene post office; mailings planed to be taken by a commissioner of Braslav District Council (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 9, p. 26)

Some civilians did not have any personal document (identity card). In order to get it, one had to prove the authenticity and credibility of the assignable personal information. The trustworthiness of the information was witnessed by the head of the administration, by giving a document with a date of birth, place of residence, information about parents, nationality, worship (religion) and vocation indicated in it (NAV f. 2849, sch. 2, af. 5, p. 18).

The war separated families; location of many civilians was unknown to their families. In order to find their missing relatives, people turned to local administration for information (local administration registered the time and reason for a person having left an area). As a rule, the men mobilized in the Polish Army and missing during World War II (who died, or who were in Soviet or German prisoner-of-war camps (POW)) were looked for by their relatives. There was also evidence about people missing during the period of Soviet power. The latter obviously were moved or shoot dead by the NKVD soldiers (the National Committee of Home Affairs), but their relatives, of course, were not informed about it. Only after establishing German power, these people were looked for (NAV f. 2848, sch. 2, af.r 11, p. 1, 3, 4, 8). Theoretically, after the auxiliary (secondary) local (district, volost councils) administrations were established, local residents had to refer to them for solving different problems. Though, it was observed that many residents applied straight to the administration of Glubokoye Gebietskommissariat, omitting local administration. People disbelieved the competence of the local administration. It resulted in issuing a special regulation by the Gebietskommissariat, according to which, it was forbidden to refer to the Gebietskommissariat omitting local administration (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 17, p. 7).

Actually, it was very widespread tendency for local civilians to apply straight to the Gebietskommissariat omitting local administration. The Gebietskommissariat in Glubokoye usually sent the applications back with recommendation to appeal to the local administration or to the Gebietskommissariat in prescribed manner, through the institutions of local administration. To illustrate the situation, an application of a civilian Katrin K. (first name) who lived in village Sakorin of Edskaj volost (*Сакорин*) to the Gebietskommissariat might be presented. In her application, Katrin K. complained about her father who in 1922 promised to leave all his property to her and her husband as legacy, because they gave the dowry to the second daughter. Nevertheless, some weeks before his death, her father got married for the second time and, according to his will (1934), all his property was inherited by his second wife. The will was considered dishonest, because her father made it when 80 years old and was not capacitated. It was also mentioned that he had written it under the pressure of his second wife. The applicant asked to declare the legacy illegal and to return her father's property. This application can be considered a typical legal action. The applicant was advised to appeal to the Magistrate of Braslav district (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 25).

This tendency proves that the level of local civilians' confidence to Belorussian collaborationist administration was low. It was thought to be an adjunct to German occupation structures and was thought to have no real power. Besides, people understood that German administration was much better provided with scarce goods, or had exceptional rights to distribute them. Practically, it related to alcohol. Already in October 1941, Germans noticed huge flow of applicants in Glubokoye Gebietskommissariat. Under the claim of wedding, christening and other, people asked for spirits. Consequently, local administration was asked to examine all these application (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 12, p. 7).

Local residents suffered the violence from the administration staff, especially from the police. This violence became apparent as illegal searches and requisitions. For example, on March 12, 1942 two foresters and a policeman entered the house of the peasant Arsenij L. (first name) who lived in Perebrodskaj volost. Being drunk, they broke the lock and looked through the shed, broke the locks of cupboards and searched the cupboards, taking a bottle of vodka with them. The peasant lodged a complaint in the District Council of Braslav region. However, the result of this matter remained unknown NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 59, p. 13).

During job interviews the attention was paid to the biography of applicant for collaborationist administration. Those people should have been loyal to the new regime. The head of Braslav district had to provide information to the *gebitskommissariat* about those members of the staff who had worked for KGB (the committee of State Defence), or those who had supported the Soviet power before. Information about the Jewish “*mestchane*” (petty bourgeois) or about those who were married to Jewish “*mestchane*”, about the people, loyal to the Soviet power, or those who were ex-members of Masonic lodges or similar secret organizations had to be provided. The term “*mestchane*” related to people whose, at least, grandfather or grandmother was a Jew (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 15, p. 40).

In 1944, *Gebitskommissariat* established the fact that the local administration staff was exaggerated and needed to be reduced, which was done, accordingly (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 14, p. 22). The reduction of civil service, apart from reasonable reducing, was also done for necessity of permanent sending of employees to Germany, which was, actually, quiet difficult to do. As a result several employees were selected for sending to work in the Reich.

The salaries and provision of the collaborationist administration staff in the occupied territory of Belarus were somewhat better than those of the majority of population. Besides, the executive of the local administration in his letter on October 25, 1942 to the head of the Agriculture Department wrote about the misery of the majority of staff. He complained about poor provision of food products and tobacco in comparison with other districts. He also complained about the absence of special canteen in Braslav (there was one for the police, but the administration staff was not allowed to use it). He informed that the staff members had exchanged everything for food from peasants. The *Gebitskommissariat* noted that all the dismissed employees (those considered unreliable) were employed by the Fish Department, ZTO (Central Trade Community) or in Agriculture Department, where they were better provided with food and manufactured goods than the administration staff, and even were engaged in profiteering. Consequently, many administration employees were willing to be dismissed in order to have other job. The head of the district asked the head of the administration either to improve the conditions of the administration staff or to take food benefits from the “*fraudsters and profiteers*” away (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 37).

There also were household conflicts. Despite the strict occupation legislation, household disorders among local people took place rather often. On September 21, 1941 in one of the homesteads of Braslav region, a group of young people attacked the house of a citizen. They threatened with killing the men inside and to expose the women to violence. They were cutting doors with a knife and breaking windows. The reason of this attack, according to the investigation by the police, was jealousy of the attacker group leader, since the victim’s daughter was with another young man. (NAV f. 2847, sch. 1, af. 8, p. 10-12).

During the battles in summer 1941 and temporary anarchy (absence of power) the populace plundered the state storehouses. The occupation authorities saw the USSR property as the property of the German State. The plundering was considered illegal even during the time of anarchy. All the stolen goods were retrieved by involving the police. On October 18, 1941 the chief of the local police issued an order to inspect all the residents of the place Slabodka (*Слободка*) in order to find goods robbed from the state storehouses. Forty policemen were sent to carry out this inspection (a large-scale action for such a small township). The policemen had two witnesses with them and were given instructions to make up a list (a document) indicating all the retrieved items (NAV f. 2847, sch. 1, af. 1, p. 3).

During the years of occupation, as well as in any period of history, different crimes took place. In 1941, before magistrates appeared in General Region Belarus, the punishment for criminals was decided by the police (NAV f. 2847, sch. 1, af. 2, p. 6-7). The heads of the districts had a right to decide upon the fine for defaulters (except for Germans from the

Reich) of about 50 R.M (Reichsmarks; 500 roubles), and, if repeated, the fine of about 100 RM (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 59, p. 44).

Those arrested were kept in Braslav prison, sometimes in the administration building. For example, civilian N. was put under seven days arrest for having stolen wood (NAV f. 2847, sch. 1, af. 17, p. 31). During 1941, Braslav District Council heard the criminal and administrative cases of 175 civilians (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 167, p. 1-25). From July 21 till October 10, 1941 there were 46 prisoners accused for Soviet power agitation, hiding their LKSMB membership (komsomol or Youth Communist League (YCL), contacts with the Red Army, escaping from prison-camps, communicating with the Jews or with NKVD, political activities during Soviet power, being executives of kolhoz (collective farms); as well as those accused for violations not connection with politics: hooliganism, murders, thefts, cheating, slaughtering of somebody else's pig, hard drinking (2-3 days of arrest), keeping weapons (NAV f. 2848, sch. 2, af.r 11, p. 1-4), special attention should be paid to the last (keeping of weapons).

After fights during the war, weapons were frequently owned by people. Keeping a weapon (by a civilian) was considered a grave crime by the German authorities; however, weapons were used, besides, not to fight the occupants. For example, in September 1941, in village Perebrodže (*Перебродье*) the resident P. was arrested by the commandant of the police post in that place. The man was accused for firing. The commandant had heard firing at midnight in the neighbouring village, but the courage to go there and arrest the man he had only in the morning. During the investigation it was found out that a group of men, after consuming alcohol, arranged firing from the rifle of the accused – about 20 gunshots. Other arrested men informed that there were more weapons in the village. P. showed that all allegedly the rifle was found in the bath where home-made vodka was distilled (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 2-9). The carrying of guns by local residents (except the police) was allowed only in particular cases and only with the permission of Gebietskommissariat (the base-direction of A.Rosenberg on June 12, 1942 and H.Lose on October 16, 1942) (NAV f. 2849, sch. 1, af. 2, p. 55).

Punishments for absence from work within framework of labour service were typical. Traditional punishment for absence from work without plausible reason was corporal punishment (up to 25 lashes), the arrest of different length (sometimes with formulation “till complete correction”), fine about 10 R.M., or forced labour. NAV f. 2847, sch. 1, af. 21). The District Council, on the basis of Gebietskommissariat's authorization, asked the police to arrest and to bring civilians, trying to avoid the corporal punishment, to the places of it. (NAV f. 2847, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 34, 35).

Penalty was inflicted on those having caused losses to somebody else's property. So, the head of Braslav district levied the civilian a fine of 20 R.M. (on August, 1942), because the man had left his horse in the field without keeping an eye on it, the horse injured the horse of the man's neighbour (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 168, p. 6). There was information about the presence of prostitution in the district already in autumn 1941 (NAV f. 2847, sch. 1, af. 2, p. 12). Such offences as arbitrariness, beating, cheating were found in administration documents of Braslav region; punished like the absence from work.

There was one infringement of the law, not typical for other territories of the occupied Belarus: avoiding the compulsory going to baths. The local administration initiated the obligatory attendance of baths by citizens of Braslav in order to prevent the spread of epidemic diseases in the region. However, some citizens tried to avoid this, and they were imposed a fine of about 10 roubles (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 170, p. 1-7).

Sometimes children participated in committing crimes, too. For example, the executive of Braslav Volost Administration made the principal of the school in Urban (*Урбаны*) to find and punish the school-children for breaking off the road signs (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1,

af. 131, p. 22). At times, crimes were committed by Germans themselves. For example, on June 29, 1942 in Druya (*Друя*) two Germans in civilian clothes broke in in two shops and beat up several workers, and burgermaster (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 137, p. 6).

During Soviet power, the property of many civilians was taken away and given to other people. Naturally, with coming of Germans the people offended by the Soviet power appealed to the local administration, demanding to return their property. However, the German administration was not willing to meet these demands, since they considered the forfeit property to be the property of Germany. The Germans did not want to create a precedent of the restitution of the nationalized property, foreseeing large amount of similar applications from the civilians of West Belarus. At that time, the local Belorussian administration sympathized with people in such cases and could satisfy their requests only, if the property was in use of another person. For example, the Belorussian administration satisfied the request of the civilian M. who had asked to return his ship and two lambs, given to civilian A. by the Soviet administration. The seriousness of considering these matters can be judged by the fact that the Belorussian administration assigned it to the police, even allowing to take away objects being in the territory of another volost, i.e. out of their competence (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 171, p. 22).

In August 1941, the head of Braslav district received an application from the resident of Miorskaj volost (*Миёры*) Helena P. who was in charge of her mother's (Solomea G.) estate – 10 hectares of land and buildings. Her mother was moved to Kazakhstan in the spring of 1940 by the Soviet power. The civilian was asking for a permission to start a search for her mother's property, which was taken by the kolhoz members, the harvest and buildings became the property of the kolhoz (collective farm) "Fighting Partisan", which was organized in honour of Cheressy. She was also asking the ex-collective farmer to give back the reaped rye (but not used seeds) or to compensate it financially (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 9).

At the beginning of the occupation, the people faced information vacuum. Contradictory gossips were the main source of information at that time. Together with organizing local administration, the mechanism of propaganda was formed: leaflets, orders of the occupation authorities and publications. In order to cover larger part of the populace by propaganda materials, local administration organized informative desks in every locality on which the propaganda publications were placed. It was also recommended to hang them up in crowded places, for instance, in canteens and restaurants. The materials were recommended to be given, first of all, to teachers who, as an educational element, had to spread the information among the rest of civilians (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 16, p. 2). Apart from propaganda sheets and leaflets in volosts, the maps with information on the movement of the Wehrmacht to the East were placed (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 57, p. 5). All the Soviet announcements were obligatory disposed of (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 17, p. 8). The propaganda publications by the partisans and members of underground administrations were introduced weakly in the region, at least until the end of 1942.

From recollections of the resident of Braslav region Gorbatenko, there appeared information about the existence of a German caricature poster. The border territories of Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania and the caricature of three persons were drawn there. The Latvian was gathering weapons and ammunition from his land, though he had already covered himself with weapons, the Lithuanian was hanging over the territory of Belarus with a torch in his hand (illustration of the expansion attempts of the Lithuanian nationalists), and the Belorussian who was sitting in bushes with the distiller in his hands, not caring about anything else. In the eyewitness's opinion, the poster reflected the view of Germans towards the national character of the three neighbouring nations (*Памяць: Гісторыка..* 1998, p. 306).

At the end of 1941 – beginning of 1942 broadcasting in Braslav was restored. All radio sets had to be delivered to the authorities (required by the occupation authorities in order to avoid residents of Belarus receiving information from the not occupied territory of the USSR). Instead, stationary radiosets were allowed. There were 271 users of Braslav radio centre (NAV f. 2848, sch. 2, af. 18, p. 5-9) in February 22, 1944. Institutions and organizations, finance departments, fire stations, hospitals, the power plant and citizens (a hairdresser, the prior of the Roman Catholic church etc.) were applying for obtaining radio spots (NAV f. 2848, sch. 2, af. 20, p. 3; NAV f. 2848, sch. 2, af. 19, p. 6, 7).

There appeared situations when radio set was the only source of information for civilians of remote villages. Some civilians were applying for a permission to have radio sets at their homes, promising to code them and to use only German or Warsaw radio stations. As the doctor Bogdan N., living in a remote village in Opsovskaj volost, where press was not delivered, pointed out: the radio set was the only “culture company” (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 11). Most probably such requests were not answered.

During occupation civilians had different duties in accordance with the labour service. Only those registered in the employment exchange as unemployed, handicapped, or not able to work because of illness or trauma (their incapacity had to be proved) could be legally out of work. In such cases their unemployment documents were presented to the employment exchange. These documents had to be signed by the local doctor or by the burgermaster of the Volost. For instance, person with a heavy form of tuberculosis was considered incapable of rough labour, cut of extremities – limited ability to work, rupture – deprivation of working abilities for 55% etc. (NAV f. 2838, sch. 1, af. 247, p. 3, 4, 5, 11, 136). There was a huge amount of such documents, thus proving the fact that a lot of people tried to get legal possibility for avoiding work. A part of these documents were received by bribing doctors.

The owners of horses had to use their animals for compulsory animal-transport services that took a lot of strength and time and delayed works on their own land. Many owners tried to avoid this service. The administrative department received a list of 52 civilians of Opsovskaja volost who on February 3, 1942 avoided these duties. Those having larger piece of land were punished more severe than others. Another list of the same kind (including 19 persons) was provided the by Drisvjatskaj Volost Administration in March 1942. There were such commentaries as “stubborn”, “beat the elected“(the head–E.G) added (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 18, p. 4, 5).

The amount of Braslav civilians trying to avoid these duties can be seen in the report of the head of the Braslav employment exchange to Gebietscommissariat. The head of the employment exchange stated the fact of mass avoiding of urgent work (sent by the employment exchange). The reason for regular short delivery of workers was also the exaggeration of the local administration staff: “if demanded workers, we always face the village headmen and there are about 700 of them in the area, or the gangers for the fight against snowdrifts, there are about 340 of such people in the area, as well as the Fish Department (300 persons), state estates, the forestry and other departments (all the mentioned people were not to do such kind of work). Thus, if we ask for 20-30 workers, only 2-3 will come to do the work”. The conflict of interests in using the same workers for several times was noticed. Thus, the Volost Administration not willingly appointed the owners of horses to do the work, because they preferred to use them for animal-transport service. (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 148, p. 49). The document, dated with January 18, illustrated the tendency: many civilians strived for having a job in local administration in order to be free of the compulsory service.

Local residents were also exploited to work outside the region, e.g. in Latvia. In July 1942, there started selection of people for work (for 2-3 months) in the suburbs of Riga.

Volunteers were promised to be paid 0.34 R.M an hour for a worker and 0.44 R.M for a trained man, plus travelling allowance 1.5 R.M a day for unmarried and 2.5 R.M for married workers. The food was promised to be the same as for soldiers of the Wehrmacht (but the food costed 0.7 R.M a day; this money was deducted from their wages) (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 19, p. 30).

In May 1942 the Volost Administration was ordered to make up a list of the unemployed specialists and workers to be sent to Germany. By making up such lists, special attention was paid to those whose residence in that very region was undesirable (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 62, p. 42). Naturally, those people were first to be sent to Germany. This was widely practiced in the whole territory of the occupied Belarus.

The labour recruitment for work in Germany was the reason of mass trying to avoid it, many men hid in forests. In order to calm down civilians Glubokoye Gebietskommissariat on August 14, 1942 instructed the local administration to inform people that the labour recruitment was finished and would not be repeated. To make the runaways come back, it was promised that those having come home before September 1, 1942 would not be punished, whereas others would be judged "the bandits" and would be executed. It was emphasized that partisans had been destroying the property of those working in Germany, and it was necessary to pay compensations to them at the expense of the relatives of those not coming home until September 1, 1942 (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 54, p. 10).

Because of hard work and life conditions the residents of Braslav district tried to escape the workplaces in Germany. In February 1943 the head of the district ordered the volost burgermasters to find 6 workers, having run away from their working places in Germany (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 55, p. 92). Obviously, the fear of being sent to Germany led to the following: at the beginning of 1943 the Volost Administration informed that there were no teenagers at the age of 14-18 years to fulfill duties, although there were 897 girls and 915 boys, in total 1812 young people in the district (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 55, p. 74, 81-83). This tendency was due in other districts of Belarus, too, because young people were afraid (justly) of being sent to work in Germany after training.

The rural populace of the occupied Belarus was on self-provision, citizens (working or being legally unemployed) received food by cards. In September 1942 there were people receiving food by cards: 3210 people in Braslav district, 1340 people in Sloboda district, 867 – in Boginsk district, 811 – in Opsovskaj district, 412 – in Plisskij district, 890 – in Drisvajnskij district (in total 7530 people in the region). The week ration at that time was: 1050 grams of bread, 200 grams of mixed flour, 200 grams of cereals, 100 grams of oil, 250 grams of meat, 75 grams of salt (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 137, p. 17).

The occupation authorities tried to minimize the number of civilians to be provided with food. In December 1941 the bookkeeper Josef G. applied to Braslav District Council for -receiving food-cards for his family. He confirmed that his wife had a piece of land of 2,46 hectares, but they were farming only 0.86 hectares, because the rest of it was not suitable for cultivation. They owned a cow, but they did not owe a horse, and they could not provide themselves with enough bread. The application was rejected; probably the administration thought that the man could find a way to provide his family with food by himself (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 12). There was another case in March 1942, when Jacob L. applied to the District Council where he was working as translator. He asked for subsidies from the local doctor as he had to buy additional food for his mentally ill daughter, since her condition demanded nourishing diet, her clothes turned into rags, but his salary was not big enough to buy all the necessary items, also because of the high prices. The application was rejected (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 17).

In order to maintain the population, already in autumn canteens were opened; but there was not enough food for the local people, because Wehrmacht soldiers actively attended

these canteens, as well. Consequently, a special order was issued by the Gebietskommissar, i.e. soldiers were not allowed to attend canteen without special food-cards. This information was disseminated in canteens (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 12, p. 9). The situation with nourishment in Braslav orphanage was extremely difficult (30 children lived there in 1943). The head of the orphanage applied to Zonderfuereer for potatoes for children, since it was the only food stuff (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 130, p. 23).

Part of the population could use electricity, but the use of a light bulb had to be well justified, for example, by doing important work at home. The power plant staff could use electricity for free (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 1).

Besides from hospitals and outpatient clinics, there was also a chemist's shop in Braslav. There was extreme shortage of medical remedies, and there flourished chemists' profiteering with drugs, which was found out by the Department of Health Protection (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 245, p. 61). The Council doctor in Glubokoye, by a special directive, prohibited local doctors to send the sick to German doctors for getting medicine (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 245, p. 34). The lack of professional doctors resulted in the use of the Jews. Jewish specialists were working in chemist' shops in Braslav district, they were getting, as well as in other districts, half of the salary received by the Christian people (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 245, p. 11).

The epidemic of camp-fever (lous-borne typhus) in General Region Belarus had a permanent character and Braslav district was not an exception. Besides the already mentioned epidemic in 1942, the disease broke out later, too. For example, during the period of October 25 – November 25, 1943 five cases of typhus were recorded in the district; the sick were taken to hospitals and their houses were disinfected. No quarantine measures could prevent people from moving from one area to another, from one council to another, from one general region to another. This movement together with lack of food, absence of personal hygiene objects etc. led to the spread of the disease.

A special unit (epidemic column) was formed to fight the epidemic; disinfection, bathing of people in baths, activities in order to find lice, and agitation work was done by them (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 130, p. 32). Typhus patients were immediately taken to hospital, the treatment account was later sent to the Volost Administration of the patients' domiciliary. For example, the patient Helena R. who lived in Braslav district, had to pay 8 R.M for her treatment in the Braslav hospital from December 22, 1941 till January 3, 1942 (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 245, p. 4).

The circulators of more serious infections (typhus, rabies, tuberculosis, sexually transmitted diseases, scarlet fever and others) were subjects to obligatory hospitalization. In case of refusal people were hospitalized by force. The doctors in outpatient clinics were not allowed to cure patients suffering from sexually transmitted diseases, these patients underwent stationary treatment. In case a patient with the above mentioned diseases or just suspected of having them was found, the doctor had 24 hours to inform the district doctor, to examine the a sick person, and to organize disinfection of the premises, the police were asked to participate, if necessary (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 245, p. 63).

More careful medical examination or treatments for civilians were limited. For example, on March 18, 1944 the civilian of Druja Iosif T. received a notice, that as a result of accident, which had happened 6 months ago, he had bronchial hemorrhage (the result of the rupture of a lung), in order to find it, an *x-ray* picture was necessary to be taken (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 130, p. 45). Only in exceptional cases, when the masticatory function was destroyed, local civilians were allowed to have dental plates. The dental technicians were allowed to make dental plates only in according with the prescription of dentists and this prescription had to be authorized by Gebietskommissariat (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 59, p. 25).

Naturally, because of the lack of doctors and medicine, the mortality rate was high during the years of occupation. However, not always diseases were the reason for death. Reports, sent to Sanitary Department of District Council, on the number of dead people in Braslav district, can be taken as an example. During July 1943 10 people died, 5 of them were killed by partisans, 2 were killed (not mentioned by whom), 1 person died because of being too old, 1 from tuberculosis and 1 from intestinal infection. During November 1943 5 people died: 1 was killed, 1 was tormented, 1 got drowned, 1 from typhus, 1 from croup. During December of the same year 8 people died. All of them died of diseases such as blood poisoning, croups, typhus, abdominal diseases, diphtheria, tuberculosis and whooping cough. The age of the ill people ranged from 11 months till 69 years of age (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 245, p. 42, 45, 47).

People of German nationality receive medical treatment much easier, for example, on the basis of the order of Gebietskommissariat. On July 25, 1942 German children had to undergo compulsory medical inspection in the outpatients clinics in Braslav (there were 5 children, judging by their names, *Volksdeutsche*) (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 245, p. 18). Doctors had to immediately inform the German police and present the personal data and place of residence of the wounded, brought to hospital; Germans considered those people as potentially being partisans (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 130, p. 3).

On the basis of the order of Gebietskommissariat on March 2, 1942, the town population had to take care about cleanness of streets and sidewalks near their houses. The owners of houses had to clean the territory every day. In dry weather the territory could be swept only after it had been made wet, not to raise clouds of dust. The collected garbage had to be stored on special area, according to the directives. It was prohibited to store dung and garbage between houses or on the other side of fences. The unpaved roads had to be swept regularly. The heads of local administration promised to determine special places for keeping carriages, and it was allowed to feed horses only there. Cleaning of territories in front of municipal houses, squares, and parks was done (if possible) by the Jews (without paying them). They were organized in labour columns (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 15, p. 28).

Gebietskommissariat ordered to fight rats, the carriers and transmitters of contagious diseases. Considering the lack of poison, it was advised to kill rats by other means. It was recommended to take control measures, to destroy rubbish, to clean cellars, to stick chinks of floor, walls, doors, windows. The equipment for catching rats was described: a boat with nails and a heavy stone, catching of rats in a closed room with the help of a lamp, penning of rats in bags, pots etc. placed in corners (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 233, p. 16). This information was given to all the heads and doctors of the volost administrations and disseminated among local civilians.

All the owners of property had to insure their property. Braslav District Council made the head of the Finance Department to finish the insurance process in the district until August 15, 1942. Since the head of the Finance Department was thought to be idle, he was asked to hasten the process (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 29), but people regularly refused to pay. On March 1, 1944 there were tax liabilities amounting to 102840.3 R.M in the district. Opsovskaj Volost Administration did not present information on insurance process of (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 148, p. 22).

In autumn 1941 private shops and public catering establishments were opened. In September 1941 the permission on opening a bakery in Druya, a butcher's shop in Vidzy, a canteen in Braslav were obtained. It was also allowed to open a tea-room canteen in New Pogost, and a canteen in Braslav, with prohibited selling of alcohol. In December 1943 butcher's shop was opened in Vidzy (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 233, p. 24, 46, 49, 55, 52, 62).

To get permission, one had to apply to the District Council. It concerned also the already operating enterprises (some of them were opened at the time of Soviet power). The

demands to enterprises selling food or providing hairdressing service were similar to that of nowadays: sanitary inspection of premises and certificates of the owner and staff. The maintenance of safety measures and fire safety activities were obligatory. The owner of a shop had to have special permission for selling alcohol. In order to open a photographer's the owner had to get a special permission, as well. The expenses on inspection of premises and official registration were paid by the business owner himself. All the documents had to be sent to the District Council (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 233, p. 42).

Some entrepreneurs started their enterprises in the first months of the occupation without obtaining special permissions. The local administration noticed that a civilian of Braslav region Kazimir L. had opened a canteen illegally. He was found out to have bought and then sold the meat of an illegally slaughtered animal. Kazimir L. was imposed a fine of 50 R.M (500 roubles) for illegal business and his canteen was closed (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 168, p. 8).

On October 20, 1942 Gebietskommissariat issued an order for opening a canteen in the district center. It was allowed to use only 15 kg of meat or meat products, only 30 liters of beer and 3 litres of vodka a day. The prices were fixed by the head of the district. It was recommended to equip 2 rooms for guests, if possible (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 233, p. 10).

The German and the local administration were trying to adjust prices of goods and services. It was easy to do in registered by the District Council organizations and offices, but very difficult at the markets. Profiteering was widespread at the markets, and, despite the strict prohibition by German authorities, exchange trade was frequent as well. The threats to be punished for it did not help. The head of the Council issued an order to establish special commission for adjusting the prices of essential goods and food (on October 3, 1941) (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 232, p. 4).

Earlier, in September 1941, there was a commission which consisted of members of the Administrative Department of the District Council (there was one Jew, his presence was the example of the lack of specialists); this commission adjusted prices on live weight of the cattle (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 232, p. 24).

The prices for food in a canteen: a portion of bread cost 0.5 roubles; a beet soup (served cold) cost 1.5 roubles; a portion of fish (small) – 2 roubles; stuffed cabbage, a portion of fish, fried lamb, or veal chop cost 3 roubles; a portion of beefsteak, a portion of rump steak, a portion of steak, a portion of schnitzel, a portion of pork chop, a portion of stuffed fish cost 4 roubles (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 232, p. 27). To illustrate the prices of goods and services, let's look at prices at the hairdresser's and the canteen in Braslav on August 15, 1941: shaving – 1.5 roubles, a hair cut, washing of hair or a female hair cut cost 2 roubles, a close to skin hair cut with the help of a clipper – 1 rouble, hairstyle – 1 rouble (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 232, p. 16).

The German authorities' attempts to control prices were caused by scanty earnings and small ration of local residents. The German administration was under necessity to guarantee stable prices for essential goods received by the food cards, in order not to provoke mass actions and to have an opportunity to exploit human resources of Belarus. Nevertheless, prices for some goods increased due to the authorities' decision. On October 25, 1941 the price for 1 kg of salt increased by 2 roubles, because it did not match the prices for milk and fat (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 232, p. 1). Until autumn 1941 prices for all foodstuffs increased legally: bread from 1.1 roubles for 1 kg to 1.4 roubles for 1 kg; rye from 0.9 roubles for 1 kg to 1.3 roubles for 1 kg; wheat from 1.2 roubles for 1 kg to 1.8 roubles for 1 kg and etc. (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 232, p. 2, 29).

Taxes were imposed on trade at the markets. According to the resolution of Braslav District Council on September 1, 1941 the following one-time taxes were collected: for the food trade from a cart – 3 roubles; for the entrance of a cart into market – 1 rouble; for the

trade from hands – 1 rouble. Along with peasants the one-time tax was collected from handicraftsmen selling their self-made goods, and from the residents selling foodstuffs produced in their own farms (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 188, p. 1).

The holidays on the occupied territory of Belarus were as follows: the main religious holidays of the Orthodox and Catholic churches (Christmas, Easter), the 1st of May (the Fest of Work in Germany), the 22nd of June (the day of “release” of Belarus); on the 1st of May all the administrative buildings had to be decorated with greenery and with Belorussian national flags (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 17, p. 20). The 2nd of May was a shortened working day (till midday) and the members of collaborationist administration was holding meetings where they explained the meaning of the holiday to the staff (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 19, p. 51). On the 6th of January all the Orthodox people worked till midday and on the 7th and the 8th of January they had days off (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 19, p. 51).

The 22nd of June was also a day off, since it was considered a day of the “release” from the Bolshevik yoke. It was ordered to arrange meetings of the residents and schoolchildren in all volost centers (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 19, p. 83). The 20th of April was also a day off; it was the birthday of A.Hitler (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 62, p. 32).

The heavy heritage of the Polish power became apparent in strained relations between the Belorussian and the Polish people during the war. Domestic conflicts and sometimes sharp confrontations between the representatives of both nations in Braslav, as well as in other regions of Western Belarus, were observed. Despite mass deportations of the Polish people by the Soviet authorities; there still were considerable amount of Poles in the region. Detachment of the Krajovaja Army (*Armia Krajowa*) and members of Polish underground organization acted. There were cases when, if the head of the local administration was a Polish, Belorussian people underwent discrimination and vice versa. In March 1942 the members of the rural community Jiguti sent an application to the executive of the administration in Vidzy. They complained about their village executive (evidently, a former Polish *osadnik* (*osadnicy*) who was blamed for discriminating the Belorussians: appointing in cart out of turn, high quota of deforestation, and help to the Polish residents in hiding cattle from inventory. The peasants required the volost burgermaster to dismiss the village executive. In the report, made by the burgermaster during the questioning of residents of the village, the fact that the village executive had discriminated Belorussians was confirmed. As a result the village executive was dismissed from his post (NAV f. 2848, sch 2, af. 4, p. 10).

Already at the beginning of 1942 Gebietskommissariat noticed the partisans’ raids and dissemination of leaflets in some volosts of the district. The information was received from German military units, and Gebietskommissariat criticized the executives of the volosts and villages for the light-minded attitude towards the threat of partisans, since none of them had informed him about the partisans’ actions (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 15, p. 38).

In 1943 the partisan movement became stronger. The collaborationists, their families were subject to partisan persecution. The officer’s work was made more complicated by actions of partisans. During the partisans’ activities, the Volost Administration building in the village Drisvjata was burned (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 14, p. 16). Already at the end of 1943, all the executives of the volost administrations and the village executives informed Gebietskommissariat about all the actions of partisans (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 62, p. 74). The executives of the Volost Administrations and the village executives had to fulfill their duties also because partisans threatened them at first. A partisans’ visit to the executive of Gritunskaj community on September 8, 1943 was described: “Today at 6 a.m the bandits, 8 persons, came to me. Four of them carried weapons and four did not. Judging by the appearance they were the Jews, the Gipsies and one of them was Russian. I was not at home. They threatened my wife and children, took the sheepskin coat, shoes, service jacket,

the saddle and burned all the documents, the lists of poll taxes and lists of horse insurers” (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 19, p. 36). The attention was paid to the description of the partisans by the village executive in order to bring in more convincement: the Jews and the Gipsies, because the Germans often mixed notions “a partisan”, “a Jew”, “a communist” and it was reflected by the vocabulary of collaborationist administration.

As a result the Germans started punitive operations, during which civil people were killed in the districts where the partisan activity was the most. The most extensive operations took place in autumn 1942 and autumn 1943 (the punitive operation “Fritz”). For firing to the gendarme and the police patrols, the execution of all the villagers and burning of the villages, where the incident happened, took place (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 19, p. 84). In total, during occupation 1646 people died in the district (before the war the population of the district was 43717 people), 3739 people were sent to work in Germany, 2339 houses were destroyed, from 10621 localities, 97 were destroyed completely. Also 8608 residents of Braslav and townships Vidzy and Druya from 17800 people died (Памяць: Гісторыка.. 1998, p. 377, 378).

Besides Belorussian partisans, the power of the Polish Resistance acted in the district. Braslav was included in Vilnius district of the Krajovaja Army, where the 23rd Braslav and 24th Drisvjatskij of the Krajovaja Army were formed. Taking into consideration the huge amount of Belorussian people who were Catholics and considered themselves Polish and the ethnic Polish people, there was a good basis for formation of the Polish Resistance (Памяць: Гісторыка.. 1998, p. 355-359).

There was Jewish population in the territory of Braslav district till 1942 and the German and auxiliary administrations paid special attention to them. On the second day of the occupation of Braslav the Germans collected all the Jews drove them away into a bog. In the morning they were allowed to come back home, but their houses had already been pillaged by the Germans. In localities with great Jewish communities (Braslav, Edi, Opsa, Druja, Vidzy), Jewish councils (*Judenrat*) were made.

From the very first day, execution of small groups of the Jews and individual Jewish people took place and they were buried outside the Jewish graveyards. As a result, the wives of those killed applied to the head of Braslav district, asking for a permission to rebury their husbands in the Jewish graveyards according to the Jewish traditions. On the applications of three wives from the township Druya the resolution “moved” was put (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 7).

In March 1943 the Jews from Braslav were moved to the ghetto. On July 3, 1942 the mass mess and execution of prisoners of the ghetto took place with participation of the Germans and the local police. Mobile gas chambers (*Gaswagen*) were used. Soon the second ghetto was established in Braslav (it was called “Opsovskoje ghetto”, because basically the residents of township Opsa were placed there). On March 19, 1943 it, together with other ghettos, was liquidated (Памяць: Гісторыка.. 1998, p. 381-385).

The counting of the Jews was organized. Those Jews who came to the district after the beginning of the war were counted separately (adults, children and specialists among them). Statistics were made up for volosts and the populated locations (Braslav and townships). Until 1942 there were 2666 Jews registered in the territory of Braslav and its districts (NAV f. 2848, sch 1, af. 85, p. 1-40).

On the request of the German authorities, volosts administrations provided them with information about mixed marriages of the Jews. There were several marriages in some volosts. The volost administrations presented information on wives and husbands of both nationalities, adding their comments, for example, “did not come back from the Polish-German war”. It was noticed that all the Jews married to Belorussians or to Poles adopted Christianity. In one of the cases it was emphasized that Christianity had been adopted 40

years ago and the person did not have anything common with Jews. Obviously, that local residents and local administration did not see any difference between each other and they did not demonstrate the anti-Semitism in their relations to those people, sometimes even trying to protect them. Unfortunately, the documents gave no clue of further destiny of those people and the attitude of the German authorities towards them (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 7, p. 17-23).

In accordance with the resolution of Braslav District Council of August 25, 1941 the indemnity was imposed on Jewish people (living in 28 communities, 6066 people). Every Jew had to pay 100 roubles; 600.000 roubles in total (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 237, p. 6). The Jews often faced requisitions; the first was made by the Wehrmacht. Later the local administration made lists of the forfeit Jewish property (NAV f. 2848, sch. 2, af. 6, p. 1). The property of those Jews not living in ghetto was also taken into consideration ((NAV f. 2848, sch. 2, af. 5, p. 1-10).

The survival of Jews depended on their value in the eyes of the occupiers. At the beginning of the war, the German administration noticed that range workers who were craftsmen were the Jews. Naturally, their quick liquidation would lead to a serious cadre problem. Thus, the decision of “Jewish question” in General Region Belarus was made gradually, in accordance with the needs of economy. Jewish specialists worked in many enterprises of Braslav and its districts: in butter-dairy, in food cooperative “Gaspadar”, in departments of the District Council (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 8, p. 1-9, 13, 14).

Jewish workers were not permitted to move more than 3 km away from their working places (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 8, p. 21). Jewish people got about 50% of an amount allowed to the Belorussians – 125 grams of bread a day (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 8, p. 31). Taking into account scanty amounts for Belorussian people, the Jews were put in extreme conditions, and doing the hard work was impossible. It was understood by the heads of enterprises and by the local administration, as well. That was why Jewish specialists engaged in hard jobs got raised amount of bread, besides, this process took mass character, because almost all the Jews were engaged in hard work (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 8, p. 26, 49, p. 3).

The mass movement of the Jews to ghettos worsened the situation with provision of specialists: enterprises either lost them at all or wasted time on delivering them from ghettos. Because of this Glubokoye Gebietskommissariat decided to bring some of Jewish specialists and their families back. For example, in the township Miory a dentist, his wife, a nurse, and his assistant could live outside the ghetto. In township Leonpol: 9 craftsmen, 4 tailors, a sewer, a shoemaker, a watchmaker, a painter, and 36 members of their families lived outside the ghetto (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 46, p. 1–11). With time they were liquidated, too.

After the Jews were put in ghettos, the organizations, interested in Jewish specialists, applied to the head of the gendarmerie in Braslav with the request to be given the necessary amount of Jewish workers for a definite period of time. For example, on May 14, 1942 the General Department of Braslav District Council asked the head of the gendarmerie to give him 8 Jewish people for cleaning of floors in the department. In April 1942 the council asked to give Jew Sholom Z. a passing who worked in a veterinary clinic as a vet in Braslav (NAV f. 2848, sch. 1, af. 10, p. 18, 19).

What concerns the attitude of the Christian people towards Jews, it was sympathetic. For hiding Jews, a person was executed. For example, on February, 22, 1943 the police from Opsovskij district killed 28 people (women, old men and children) from village Labetskij for having hidden a Jew at their homes by turn. The fact that they had committed the obligatory delivery of products did not save them (the men survived, because at that day they had carried products to Braslav) (Памяць: Гісторыка.. 1998, p. 302-303). There were a lot of similar cases when Polish and Belorussian people gave food and shelter to the

Jews, trying to escape the execution. However, some residents of Braslav wanted to make profit out of the Jewish tragedy. For information against a Jew, Germans paid 3 kg of salt. There were also those who asked the Jews to pay for the accommodation (in many cases gold) (Памяць: Гісторыка.. 1998, р. 386-388).

Thus, the analysis of Nazi occupation in the context of a separate region allows for characterizing of the everyday life of the Belarus residents quite completely; and allows for reconstructing the survival strategy of a “small man” during the years of World War II.

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Kopsavilkums

LOKĀLĀ VĒSTURE. BRASLAVAS RAJONS VĀCU OKUPĀCIJAS LAIKĀ (1941–1944)

Jauhens Hrebeņš

Pašlaik II Pasaules kara problemātika kļūst arvien aktuālāka ne tikai zinātniskajā, bet arī politiskajā diskursā. Rakstā īpaša vērība ir veltīta Baltkrievijas Republikas ziemeļrietumu reģionam vācu okupācijas laikā. Veicot Vitebskas apgabala valsts arhīvā (Baltkrievija) esošo avotu pētniecisko kritiku un analīzi, autors rekonstruē iedzīvotāju ikdienas dzīvi, līdztekus analizējot viņu sociāl-ekonomiskās mijiedarbības formas un okupācijas politikas realizāciju multietniskajā pierobežu reģionā. Veiktais situatīvais pētījums ļauj izprast “maza cilvēka” izdzīvošanas stratēģiju, kā arī interpolēt datus uz citiem Baltkrievijas, Latvijas un Lietuvas austrumu reģioniem II Pasaules kara laikā.

Atslēgas vārdi: ikdienas dzīves vēsture, vācu okupācijas laiks, izdzīvošanas stratēģijas, pierobežu reģions.

Резюме

ЛОКАЛЬНАЯ ИСТОРИЯ. БРАСЛАВСКИЙ РАЙОН В ПЕРИОД НАЦИСТСКОЙ ОККУПАЦИИ 1941–1944 ГГ.

Евгений Гребень

В настоящее время проблематика Второй мировой войны является наиболее актуализированной не только в научном, но и политическом дискурсе. В данной статье особое внимание уделено истории северо-западного региона Беларуси в период нацистской оккупации. На основании документов Государственного архива Витебской области автор проводит реконструкцию истории повседневности жителей, социально-экономических отношений, а также специфику реализации оккупационной политики в приграничном и мультинациональном регионе. Проведенное ситуативное исследование позволяет характеризовать, также весьма полностью восстанавливать стратегию выживания “маленького человека” Белоруссии и сопредельных территорий во время Второй мировой войны.

Ключевые слова: история повседневности, период нацистской оккупации, стратегии выживания, приграничье.