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**FEAT OF THE CHECHENS DURING THE GREAT PATRIOTIC
WAR IN MODERN HISTORIOGRAPHY**

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Abstract

History has not known such examples of heroic deeds, courage, boldness, and military skill, which the soldiers of the Red Army demonstrated during the Great Patriotic War against the German fascist invaders. The Soviet soldier sacrificed his life in the name of victory, boldly faced off with an enemy tank, covered the embrasure of an enemy bunker or earth and timber bunker with his body without hesitation, rammed an enemy plane, etc. Tens of thousands of people from the Checheno-Ingush ASSR, along with all Soviet soldiers, wrote many heroic pages of the antifascist victory and increased the valiant glory of our country. According to the recent studies, the number of Chechens who fought against the Nazis during the Great Patriotic War was more than 40 thousand people. The historical literature reflects the contribution of the Chechen people to the antifascist victory. The paper investigates modern regional historiography in terms of the military and labor feat of the Chechen people during the Great Patriotic War. The main attention is paid to new trends and approaches to understanding the military theme, its key and debatable issues. The authors tried to impartially, based on extensive documentary materials, carry out an objective study on the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War. A tremendous amount of work has been done to find and investigate secret documents and materials about the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War and their deportation in 1944.

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1. Introduction

In 2020, our country celebrated the 75th anniversary of the Great Victory of the Soviet people over German fascism. The path to victory turned out to be difficult and bloody. All the peoples of the Soviet Union defended the country and made their contribution to the defeat of the common enemy. In those terrible years of the Great Patriotic War, at the cost of the lives of twenty-seven million citizens of the country and incredible efforts of the entire society, we defeated the German fascist invaders and their allies, defended the independence of the Motherland and saved humanity from the brown plague. Descendants keep the bright memory of those who selflessly strove for victory over the worst enemy of mankind for long 1418 days and nights, at the front and in the rear. There is not a single part of the USSR, which would not have been affected by heavy losses and hardships of war. In memory of those who fought side by side, regardless of nationality, who died on the battlefield in the name the Motherland, who died in fascist concentration camps, historians and publicists must objectively report the history of the war period of all peoples of Russia and the former Soviet Union.

2. Problem Statement

The historical literature reflects the contribution of the Chechen people to the antifascist victory. Over the years, works were published, which covered certain aspects of the participation of the people of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR in the Great Patriotic War. Yet it can be argued that this problem is still one of the 'blank spots' in the general history of the war period of our country.

To date, no generalized complex works on the worthy contribution of the Chechen people to the antifascist victory have been published. Moreover, the issue of the participation of Chechens in the Great Patriotic War was for a long time banned for historians of the USSR. In addition, the Chechen scientists themselves for 13 years (due to the unjustified and criminal deportation of the entire Chechen people in 1944 to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan) had no opportunity to publish and carry out research into this issue. During the period from the deportation to the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the party leadership of the Soviet Union, through propaganda, ideological, and sometimes repressive levers, created an artificial image of Chechens as bandits, traitorous collaborationists, etc.

Even today, a number of publicists, historians and individual politicians, through distorting facts, distorting sources, falsification, and often elementary conjectures, contrary to historical truth, try to revive the old Stalin–Beria labels of 'accomplices of the occupiers', 'traitors to the Motherland', 'bandit elements', etc. imposed by the official propaganda to label the entire Chechen people, as well as the Karachais, Balkars, Ingush, Kalmyks, Crimean Tatars, Germans, Greeks, and Meskhetian Turks. The falsifiers invented the myth of the 'white horse', which the Chechen people intended to present Hitler, and some authors declared about the 'mass betrayal of the Chechen people during the Great Patriotic War' (Tsutsulaeva, 2009).

The authors of such statements clearly contradict the proven scientific facts, and doubt the content and legal assessments of such fundamental legislative acts as: Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR 'On the recognition of illegal and criminal acts of repression against peoples subjected to forced resettlement, and ensuring their rights' of November 14, 1989; Resolution of the Congress of People's

Deputies of the RSFSR 'On the victims of political repression in the RSFSR' of December 11, 1990; the decree of the Cabinet of Ministers of the USSR 'On the cancellation of the decisions of the former State Defense Committee of the USSR and the decisions of the Government of the USSR in relation to the Soviet peoples subjected to repression and forced resettlement'; Law of the RSFSR 'On the rehabilitation of repressed peoples' of April 26, 1991, and other federal and republican legislative acts. These acts unambiguously and unconditionally define and legally formalize two main issues: 1) accusations of treason against the Chechen people and other repressed peoples are a 'policy of slander' and 'slandorous attacks'; 2) deportation of peoples, including the Chechen people, is 'serious crimes' against the 'foundations of international law' and 'one's own state', this is 'illegality and lawlessness', 'the tragedy of all Russia'.

3. Research Questions

The theme of the Great Patriotic War is inexhaustible, new facts are constantly being revealed. A great deal of books, novels, stories, essays, memoirs of our famous military leaders, memories of war veterans, films, photographs, etc. are devoted to this theme. Based on the numerous document archives and the publication of collections of documents and materials, historians were able to study the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War and their deportation in 1944. This paper analyzes the works by Russian (regional) historians Oshaev (1990, 2004), Ibragimov and Khatuev (2005, 2007, 2015), Tsutsulaeva (2019, 2009) and others, dedicated to the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the military and labor feat of the Chechen people during the Great Patriotic War in modern regional historiography.

5. Research Methods

The methodological basis of the study was the principles of objectivity, scientific nature and historicism, which imply the study of facts and events in all their diversity, in specific historical conditions of their emergence and development, and highlight both the positive and negative aspects of the historical literature. Based on the principle of historicism, we examined the opinions of Russian historians through the prism of specific historical conditions and in chronological order.

6. Findings

The famous Chechen writer Khalid Dudayevich Oshaev has done a huge amount of work to collect materials about the participants in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. Oshaev (1990) continued to scrupulously collect information about two hundred and forty Chechens, Ingush and other representatives of the republic who defended the Brest Fortress. Prior to the publication of his book, it was considered that the Chechens and Ingush did not participate in the defense of the Brest Fortress.

In 2004, the Archive Department of the Government of the Chechen Republic published a large book primarily based on the materials of Oshaev (2004) dedicated to the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. The book includes two stories by the writer related to the deportation of the Chechen people in 1944.

Based on the document archives, Oshaev (2004) showed the participation of 275 soldiers from Checheno-Ingushetia (255 Chechens, 9 Russians, 9 Ingush, 1 Balkarian, 1 Kumyk) in the defense of the Brest Fortress. However, the author argues that these data are inaccurate. This is due to the fact that every day, as a result of the search and the use of new document archives and memories of war veterans, more and more names of Chechen soldiers appear in the list of those who performed a heroic deed in Brest in 1941. Oshaev does not just list the defenders of the Brest Fortress in alphabetical order, he provides a brief information about these people.

The works by Ibragimov and Khatuev (2005) significantly contributed to the historiography of this issue. Thus, in the work *Contribution of the Chechen people to the antifascist victory during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945*, the authors used the available published materials to reveal the historical truth about the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War. The authors illustrated part of examples of military and labor feats of the Chechen people in the struggle of all the peoples of the USSR against Nazi Germany. The work tells about the courage of Magomed Uzuev, Akhmad Akhmadov, Akhmad Magomadov, Saki Visaitov, Ismail Ismailov, Yahya Alisultanov, Abukhazhi Idrisov, Dashi Akayev, Khanpasha Nuradilov, Hansolt Dachiev, Movladi Visaitov and many others.

In 2007, the above authors published the work *The truth about the participation of the peoples of the Chechen Republic in the Great Patriotic War* (Ibragimov & Khatuev, 2007). The work provides a historiographic review of works devoted to the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War. Having studied and analyzed all the historical literature, the authors came to the conclusion that all attempts to minimize the contribution of the Chechen people to the antifascist victory during the Great Patriotic War are baseless, they are falsification and slander (penal offense) against the Chechen people and have nothing to do with historical science.

In the same year, the next work by Ibragimov and Khatuev (2007) on the contribution of the Chechen people to the victory of the Great Patriotic War was published. This work is valuable since it is the first attempt to summarize all the available information about the participants – representatives of the Chechen Republic in the Great Patriotic War.

The document archives used in the work by these authors confirm that in the first days of the war the republic became one of the most important regions of the country for supplying the front with aviation gasoline, diesel fuel, weapons and other resources.

In addition, the sources used in the work evidenced that the Chechen soldiers, despite the fact that their people were deported in February 1944, showed courage, firmness and loyalty to the Motherland, and defended the country, as well as the European countries, from the fascists. The authors report that many commanders and officers, at the risk of being convicted, tried to keep the best, brave, reliable soldiers of the Chechen nationality, as well as soldiers of other repressed nationalities.

In the year of the 70th anniversary of the Victory, the book by Ibragimov and Khatuev (2015) *Feat for the Motherland* dedicated to the participation of representatives of Chechen-Ingushetia in the Great

Patriotic War. The book consists of 8 chapters. Based on the previously used sources, the authors showed that the representatives of Checheno-Ingushetia were at all fronts of the Great Patriotic War, they mastered various military specialties. These are infantrymen, tankmen, cavalrymen, artillerymen, snipers, pilots, and others. They were members of the resistance groups in Europe and partisan detachments, who honestly and conscientiously served the Motherland.

No doubt, the authors have done a lot of work to study the issue of the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War. However, little is known about the courage and heroism of many Chechen soldiers. It is necessary to intensify the search and collection of information about the Chechen soldiers. In my opinion, it is necessary to involve young scientists in this work, to intensify the work in the central archives of the country, and to introduce new interesting document archives into scientific circulation. Sometimes the same information is repeated in different works. Much has been done, but much more remains to be done.

I believe that the work on the search and publication of new documentary sources will continue in order to deeply and objectively cover the issues related to the participation of the Chechen people in the Great War and their contribution to the Victory. New document archives stored in the Central AMO RF (Podolsk) should be used to investigate these issues. Although, unfortunately, the problem of secret documents is still actual.

In May 2010, in Grozny, the Government of the Chechen Republic together with the Academy of Sciences of the Chechen Republic held an All-Russian Scientific and Practical Conference dedicated to the 65th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. The conference participants emphasized the urgency of this issue and noted that it has not been sufficiently studied yet. This is due to the fact that every day, as a result of the search and the use of new document archives and memories of war veterans, more and more names of Chechen soldiers appear in the list of those who participated in the Great Patriotic War.

This unique book for the first time brings together materials that show the military and labor feats of the representatives of six deported peoples in the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. Moreover, such studies are relevant for educating the younger generation in the spirit of patriotism and respect for the military and labor feats and traditions of peoples subjected to illegal and inhuman Stalinist repression, deportation and genocide. I believe that this work on the creation of such scientific works will be continued in the future.

The Books of Memory prepared by the Archives Department of the Government of the Chechen Republic are of high relevance. The first book was published in 2010, the second one appeared in 2013. In our country, the compilation and publication of the Books of Memory, which include brief and personal information about each defender of the Motherland, has preserved the historical memory of the participants in the Great Patriotic War. This work was carried out in the late 80s and early 90s of the XX century in our country. However, due to the events that took place in the republic during this period, the Book of Memory was not published. In 2010, the Book of Memory was published thanks to Magomed Nurdievich Muzaev, the director of the Archive Department of the Government of the Chechen Republic. In a short time, they managed to collect significant material for the compilation of the first Book of Memory about their fellow countrymen – participants in the Great Patriotic War. The Book includes

information about 25 thousand defenders, of which 12 thousand are representatives of the Chechen and Ingush peoples. The second Book of Memory was published in 2013. The structure of the book was similar to that of the first Book of Memory.

No doubt, there are some shortcomings and omissions in the book. However, the main thing is that this book forever immortalized the names of the participants in the Great Patriotic War.

Thus, the Book of Memory comprehensively studies the significant contribution of the peoples of Checheno-Ingushetia at the front and in the rear in the name of the Great Victory. The publication of the Book of Memory, which revives the memory of everyone who died during the Great Patriotic War, will serve as an important factor in the patriotic education of the younger generation.

7. Conclusion

Thus, analysis of the historical literature on the participation of the Chechen people in the Great Patriotic War yields the conclusion that a lot of work has been done by historians. The historians revealed that in 1941–1945, the Chechen people took part in all major battles, the feats of soldiers, sergeants and officers were awarded high awards, including the title of Hero of the Soviet Union, and they became an object and subject of special study. Analysis of the literature confirms the dedication of the working people behind enemy lines, their participation in the work of industry, agriculture, and in the construction of defensive structures and transport. Yet a lot still needs to be done in this direction. The publication of a generalized work on the contribution of the Chechen people to the antifascist victory is of relevance. In addition, the access to state archives and documents that were 'top secret' and 'not subject to disclosure' for many years expanded the possibilities in the study of these issues. Analysis of published documents, identification and study of document archives allow reconstruction of true historical events in order to show the contribution of the Chechen people to the Great Victory. A comprehensive study of the available sources is necessary to cover the issues of the participation of Chechen people in the 1941–1945 war and their deportation to the eastern regions of the former USSR during the Great Patriotic War. However, part of the Chechen soldiers managed to stay at the fronts of the Great Patriotic War. They showed courage and heroism, fought against the fascists, reached the western borders of the USSR, participated in the liberation of European countries, and stormed the citadel of fascism – Berlin (Tsutsulaeva, 2019).

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