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Olha PASHKOVA

PhD (History), Researcher of the Research Centre for Military History, Ivan Cherniakhovskiy National Defence University of Ukraine, 28 Povitroflotskiy Avenue, Kyiv, Ukraine, postal code 03049 (black_swift@ukr.net)

ORCID: 0000-0002-6525-4613

Ihor YEVSIEIEV

Researcher of the Research Centre for Military History, Ivan Cherniakhovskiy National Defence University of Ukraine, 28 Povitroflotskiy Avenue, Kyiv, Ukraine, postal code 03049 (evseev8@ukr.net)

ORCID: 0000-0003-1450-1378

Ольга ПАШКОВА

кандидат історичних наук, науковий співробітник науково-дослідного відділу проблем історії війн і воєнного мистецтва науково-дослідного центру воєнної історії Національного університету оборони України імені Івана Черняхівського, проспект Повітрофлотський, 28, м. Київ, Україна, індекс 03049 (black_swift@ukr.net)

Ігор ЄВСЄЄВ

науковий співробітник науково-дослідного відділу проблем історії війн і воєнного мистецтва науково-дослідного центру воєнної історії Національного університету оборони України імені Івана Черняхівського, проспект Повітрофлотський, 28, м. Київ, Україна, індекс 03049 (evseev8@ukr.net)

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HISTORIOGRAPHY OF ACTIVITIES OF THE RED ARMY AND WEHRMACHT BODIES ON THE STUDY AND USE OF THE COMBAT EXPERIENCE DURING WORLD WAR II

Abstract. The purpose of the research – the goal of the article is to elucidate the main scientific and cognitive, scientific and organizational factors of formation, epistemological and substantive features and specific achievements of the leading directions of historiography of the analytical bodies system to study and generalize combat experience of the main participants of World War II to improve the activities of the existing generalization system of combat use of the Armed Forces of Ukraine. **The research methodology** is based on the principles of historicism, objectivity, comprehensiveness and integrity, systematicity and, in addition to basic research methods, it is also based on the methods of historiography as a special historical discipline that studies theoretical and epistemological, social and institutional foundations of the process of scientific knowledge of the past (historiographical institutional, historiographical conceptualization, historiographical synthesis, historiographical

source studies, etc.). **The scientific novelty** consists in doing an in-depth analysis of the historiography created by military historians of the formation and operation of the system of studying and generalizing combat experience during World War II, which contributed to the development of martial arts and improved training of personnel of the warring parties. **The Conclusions.** The article focuses on the analysis of the main stages of historiography research process: the first – from the beginning of World War II to the 90s of last century and the second – modern, which dates back to 1990. There have been identified, systematized and characterized the main groups of historiographical sources covering the activities of the bodies on the study and use of combat experience during World War II. The results of the work of these bodies are a valuable factual array for research. In order to improve the functioning of the existing system of study and use of experience in the Armed Forces of Ukraine, the authors suggest implementing in its activities the dissemination of generalized combat experience gained in the anti-terrorist operation / Joint Forces operation by means of special periodicals.

Key words: historiography, World War II, historical experience, military art, history of science, military history, military research.

ІСТОРІОГРАФІЯ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ ОРГАНІВ ЧЕРВОНОЇ АРМІЇ І ВЕРМАХТУ З ВИВЧЕННЯ ТА ВИКОРИСТАННЯ БОЙОВОГО ДОСВІДУ У РОКИ ДРУГОЇ СВІТОВОЇ ВІЙНИ

Анотація. **Мета дослідження** – розкрити основні науково-пізнавальні та науково-організаційні чинники формування, гносеологічно-змістові особливості та конкретні здобутки провідних напрямів історіографії діяльності системи аналітичних органів з вивчення й узагальнення бойового досвіду основних учасників Другої світової війни з метою удосконалення діяльності чинної системи узагальнення бойового застосування Збройних Сил України. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на принципах історизму, об'єктивності, всебічності і цілісності, системності та, окрім базових методів дослідження, спирається на методи історіографії як спеціальної історичної дисципліни, яка вивчає теоретико-гносеологічні та суспільно-інституційні засади процесу наукового пізнання минулого (історіографічний інституційний, історіографічної концептуалізації, історіографічного синтезу, історіографічного джерелознавства тощо). **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що зроблена спроба поглибленого аналізу створеної військовими істориками історіографії становлення та діяльності системи вивчення й узагальнення бойового досвіду у роки Другої світової війни, яка сприяла розвитку військового мистецтва і поліпшенню підготовки особового складу протиборчих сторін. **Висновки.** У статті проаналізовано основні етапи процесу дослідження історіографії: перший – від початку Другої світової війни до 90-х рр. минулого століття та другий – сучасний, який бере свій початок з 1990 р. Виявлено, систематизовано й охарактеризовано основні групи історіографічних джерел, що висвітлюють діяльність органів з вивчення та використання бойового досвіду в роки Другої світової війни. Результати роботи цих органів становлять цінний фактологічний масив для наукових досліджень. З метою удосконалення функціонування напрацьованої системи вивчення та використання досвіду у Збройних Силах України авторами пропонується впровадити у їх діяльність розповсюдження узагальненого бойового досвіду, набутого в антитерористичній операції / операції Об'єднаних сил, у війська (сили) через спеціальні періодичні службові видання органів військового управління.

Ключові слова: історіографія, Друга світова війна, історичний досвід, воєнне мистецтво, історія науки, воєнна історія, воєнно-наукові дослідження.

The Problem Statement. Historiography of World War II includes a significant number of publications: documentary publications, scientific and memoir literature. A characteristic feature of a modern stage of the Ukrainian historical science development is the search of new approaches and methods in the study of World War II issues by scholars. The activities issues of the bodies on the study and use of combat experience of the warring parties during World War II is of a considerable interest to domestic researchers. The organization of their work is of

a practical importance under modern conditions. This is primarily due to the need to generalize and introduce into the activities of the components of the security and defense forces of Ukraine the combat experience acquired in the anti-terrorist operation and the operation of the Joint Forces. After all, combat experience is necessary for the development and implementation of the latest methods of combat fight, the organization and conduct of military operations, the improvement of the content of the combat (service) training of personnel of the military formations of Ukraine (Hrebeniuk, Hrytsiuk & Shchypanskyi, 2020, p. 190).

From this point of view, undeniable interest is an in-depth analysis of a rather solid historiography of the formation and activity of study and generalization system of combat experience created by domestic military historians, formulation on this basis of innovative principles of military art (at the highest levels of generalization of combat experience), which emerged during World War II (Hrytsiuk, Lysenko & Kydon, 2020, p. 58).

The mentioned military and analytical system in the Red Army (which worked under the auspices of the General Staff of the RSCA and improved during the war) included a relevant regulatory framework, a clear hierarchy of information processing and generalization bodies (at the level of the General Staff, headquarters of military branches and military units – departments, divisions, authorized specialists, etc.), staff of appropriately trained and experienced professionals.

The system was able to process and summarize a large array of combat and operational documents, information and analytical materials of the Active Army. At the final stage of the war there was Department for the use of war experience of the General Staff, the journal “The Military Thought” was published, and combat experience was disseminated, the relevant experience was exchanged by holding of relevant conferences and meetings in the troops, which contributed to increasing the hostilities effectiveness, the military art development (Hrytsiuk & Yevsieiev, 2020, pp. 92–99; Lysenko, Sehedra & Fyl, 2020, p. 176).

The Analysis of Recent Researches and Publications. The study of this issue was highlighted in the scientific works of modern domestic scholars: V. Hrytsiuk (Hrytsiuk & Yevsieiev, 2020), S. Sehedra (Sehedra, 2012), B. Semon and O. Skriabin (Semon & Skriabin, 2014), foreign researchers – D. Glanz (Glanz, 2009). Among the Soviet and Russian scholars, there are the works of M. Alekseev (Alekseev, 1980), V. Valkov (Val’kov, 2013), M. Vasyliiev (Vasil’ev, 2013), S. Gladyshev (Gladyshev, 1987), V. Golubovich and M. Lomov (Golubovich & Lomov, 1981), E. Grakina (Grakina, 1989), V. Dashichev (Dashichev, 1967), E. Korshunov (Korshunov, 2013; Korshunov & Rupasov, 2016), E. Krynyko (Krynyko, 2012; Krynyko & Kropachev, 2012), S. Kropachev (Krynyko & Kropachev, 2012), M. Ryazanov (Ryazanov, 2000), N. Tarkhova (Tarkhova, 2005), A. Tolmacheva (Tolmacheva, 2006), A. Kharkov (Har’kov, 1990), S. Shtemenko (Shtemenko, 1968; Shtemenko, 1981), as well as several fundamental collective works and monographs.

The scholars’ focus on this issue is quite natural and is due to the fact that modern military art, especially its theory, is primarily the result of generalization of the previous wars experience. However, in many of the presented scientific works, the historiography of the activities of the bodies on the study and use of the combat experience during World War II is covered superficially and contains isolated references to scientific sources and archival materials only. In addition, the study of the Soviet period was characterized by ideological stereotypes that interfered with an objective assessment of the combat experience.

The purpose of the article is to elucidate the main scientific and cognitive, scientific and organizational factors of formation, epistemological and substantive features and specific

achievements of the leading directions of historiography of the system of analytical bodies to study and generalize combat experience of the main participants of World War II to improve the activities of the existing system of generalization of combat use of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

The Results of the Research. The content of the works, in which researchers referred the activities of the bodies for the study and use of the combat experience, differs significantly depending on the period of society development, changes in the methodology of military and historical research, the emergence of new sources, including declassified archival materials, etc.

The historiography of the study of the activities of the corresponding bodies of the Workers 'and Peasants' Red Army (hereinafter referred to as the Red Army) and the Wehrmacht can be conditionally divided into two stages: the first stage – the period of World War II (from 1939 to the beginning of the 1990s); the second stage is post-Soviet or modern (from the beginning of the 1990s to the present time). Each stage has certain historical conditions; objectives, forms and methods of scientific research; the state of the source base and the degree of accessibility to archival materials; ideological orientation and the others (Vidnianskyi, Hrytsiuk & Lysenko, 2019, p. 6).

At the first stage, the problem of sources became one of the most important factors influencing the development of the historiography of the specified problematics. For a long time, a huge array of the Soviet sources was closed to domestic and Western researchers of military history. At their disposal scholars had official Soviet publications mainly, in which published memoirs of the Soviet military leaders began to be added from the end of the 1950s. Such materials were quite biased and subjective (Gluharev, 2015, p. 61). They, as a rule, reflected the actual side of the events of the war years and are characterized with heroic and patriotic pathos in relation to the sacrifice of the Soviet citizens during the war (Lysenko & Pyliavets, 2019, p. 94).

One of the first scientific works of this stage, elucidating the work of the Red Army bodies for the study and generalization of the combat experience during World War II, was the collective monograph “The Defeat of the German Forces near Moscow”, which was published in 1943. The authors of the monograph highlighted the work of a group on the study of the combat experience, which on a temporary basis included representatives of the Red Army General Staff and scholars of the Military Academy of the Red Army General Staff. The task of the group was to study combat experience of the Red Army during the initial period of the Great Patriotic War (from November 16, 1941 to January 31, 1942), to generalize it and to develop practical recommendations for the troops (Shaposhnikov, 1942, p. 6).

In 1965, the Soviet scholars of the Great Patriotic War History Department of the Marx-Engels-Lenin Institute completed their work on a six-volume edition “History of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941 – 1945”. The authors of the last, Volume 6, assign an important role in generalizing the experience of war to the institute of officers of the General Staff under the command of fronts and armies (this structure was actually called the Group of Officers of the Red Army General Staff (The Central archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, f. 4, d. 11, c. 70, pp. 428–430), as well as to the bodies for the use of the combat experience created in the central departments of the People’s Commissariat of Defense and the command staffs of the military branches (Istoriya Velikoj, 1965). The use of a sufficiently large array of the source base of the study allowed the authors to elucidate the work of the Red Army bodies on the use of the war experience more deeply than in other publications at that time.

Among the memoirs of the first stage, the work of the former head of the Operations Directorate of the General Staff of the Red Army during the war S. Shtemenko “The General Staff during

the War” stands out. In detail S. Shtemenko writes about the activities of the Group of Officers of the General Staff of the Red Army (Shtemenko, 1968, pp. 138–140) and the heroism of the representatives of this group, about important decisions made on the basis of their reports on the study and generalization of the war experience, however, the memoirs lack a critical analysis of the work of officers of the General Staff of the Red Army, contained in the works of other authors.

At the beginning of the 1960s, materials of the German historians, war diaries and memoirs of direct participants in World War II began to be published in the Federal Republic of Germany. In 1962, a complete list of directives and orders of the Supreme High Command of the Wehrmacht was published. Based on these sources, V. Dashichev, at that moment the head of the Foreign Military History Department of the Editorial Board of the Military and Historical Journal, in the scientific work “Top Secret! Only for the Command” notes that the journals on military actions and military diaries were systematically kept in the staffs of military units, formations, branches and types of the Wehrmacht. These documents were supplemented with directives, orders, combat reports, etc. Generalized documents of the combat experience were transferred to the archives of the armed forces branches, whose work was coordinated by a special department “History of the Wehrmacht”, which was established in 1940. Due to the importance of this department in writing history and generalizing war experience, in 1942 it was subordinated directly to A. Hitler (Dashichev, 1967, p. 12).

From the 1980s onwards, in scientific journals on military topics, in particular in “The Military Historical Journal” and “The Military Thought” magazine, articles began to be published on the research issues of the activities of the Red Army bodies on the study and generalization of the combat experience during World War II. In the course of the historical description of the hostilities, some authors included excerpts from archival documents of the generalized combat experience in their publications, which were processed during the war by the appropriate structures. For example, M. Alekseev, describing the East Prussian operation, cited in his work the excerpt from a short summary of generalized experience dated February of 1945, prepared by the head of the department on the use of the war experience of the operations department of the 47th staff of the Red Army (Alekseev, 1980, p. 45).

Scholars V. Golubovych and M. Lomov, in their research analyzing the organization and methods of work of the General Staff of the Red Army in 1939 – 1945, single out the study and generalization of the war experience, the dissemination of experience to the troops and the development of recommendations, instructions and manuals as one of the main of its activities. The authors also focused on the editorial and publishing activities of the General Staff of the Red Army for the dissemination of the combat experience based on reports and newsletters (Golubovich & Lomov, 1981, p. 13).

A well-known Soviet military historian A. Kharkov in his article “Historical Experience in the Development of Military Science” considers the activity of studying the war experience as a component of military scientific research (Har’kov, 1990, p. 30).

In the monograph “Scholars for the Front”, E. Hrakina, a scholar of the history department of the USSR Academy of Sciences, briefly mentioned the military command bodies studying the war experience in the context of studying the history of the Great Patriotic War (Grakina, 1989, p. 196).

The scientific article by S. Hladysh “Generalization and Use of the Combat Experience during the First Period of the Great Patriotic War” was very informative for specialists who study directly the problems of generalizing combat experience. In this article the author tells in detail about the methods of activity of the bodies on the study and generalization of the combat experience, in particular on the example of the Western Front (Gladyshev, 1987, pp. 18, 19).

At this time, the memoir literature about the events of World War II was supplemented by the second edition of S. Shtemenko "The General Staff during the War", in two volumes. In the second edition, the author examines the problems of the war more broadly, in particular, focuses on the establishment of the department for the use of the war experience in 1942, in the General Staff of the Red Army, and writes about one of the areas of its work in detail – the dissemination of the generalized combat experience to the troops based on the official publications of the General Staff of the Red Army (Shtemenko, 1981, p. 283).

At the second stage of historiography, against the background of glasnost and democratization of the society in the post-Soviet space, declassification of documents and materials of military units, formations and associations, including fronts and military districts, stored in the archives, began. Scientific works and memoirs of foreign authors, in particular, participants in the events of World War II, became more accessible. Pluralism in approaches to research and absence of the party control should be considered the main features of this stage.

During this period a significant achievement in the study of these issues was the article by M. Vasylyev "The Work of the General Staff for the Generalization of the War Experience in 1941 – 1945", published in 1994 in "The Military Thought" journal. In the article, the author analyzed the principles of the activities of the bodies on the study and use of the war experience, considered the content of the work of the General Staff of the Red Army for generalization of the combat experience and its dissemination among the troops in 1941 – 1945, reflecting it in the form of a table (Vasil'ev, 1994, pp. 69–73). In 2013 the scientific achievements of this scholar were supplemented by the article "When the Storm Thundered" posted on the website of one of the Russian electronic media. In this article, for the first time the author tried to describe briefly the three stages of creating a centralized system of generalization and use of the war experience in the Red Army (Vasil'ev, 2013).

The collective scientific work "General Staff of the Navy: History and Modernity. 1696 – 1997" became unique at that time. The authors of the research mentioned the work of the department for the study and generalization of the war experience in the structure of the General Staff of the Navy, created at the beginning of 1943 (Kuroedov, 1998, pp. 86, 97). On the other hand, V. Valkov, in his study on the activities of N. Kuznetsov, the People's Commissar of the Navy of the Soviet Union, mistakenly assumed that the objective of generalizing and disseminating the combat experience in fleets and flotillas during the Great Patriotic War was performed only by the department established at its beginning (Val'kov, 2013). This contradicts the assertion of the authors of the above mentioned monograph, who in their research referred to archival sources.

Another collective publication "The Great Patriotic War of 1941 – 1945. Military Historical Essays", was written by the scholars of the Russian Academy of Sciences (Institute of General History, Institute of Russian History, Institute of Economics), Military University of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation in 1998 – 1999. The authors of the publication in the 1st book "Severe Trials", referring to the German sources, claim that a special department for the study of foreign armies of the East was functioning in the General Staff of the Wehrmacht Ground Forces, which, based on data provided by the Finnish party in 1940, prepared a review "According to the Experience of the Soviet Finnish War" and sent it to the army up to the divisional level inclusively (Velikaya Otechestvennaya vojna, 1998, p. 48).

However, in the last, 4th book of the collective publication, the authors note that not a single military charter was revised in the Wehrmacht during World War II. They also note

that according to the materials of captured documents and the testimony of captured officers, it was possible to establish the facts of the publication by the German command of only individual memos and directives for the study and use of the combat experience (Velikaya Otechestvennaya vojna, 1999, p. 60). However, there are reasons to disagree to the above mentioned conclusions. The German command in advance sent to its units and subunits the instructions containing combat experience in difficult conditions, in particular in special terrain (mountains, steppe, forest, etc.). Moreover, the German commanders in a short time generalized the combat experience of the battles and operations carried out and brought it to the attention of the troops. At the meeting for the study of the war experience, which took place on May 9, 1943, a representative of the intelligence department of the Southern Front staff (from October 20, 1943 – the 4th Ukrainian Front) made a report on this using the example of Motorized Division 16 of the Wehrmacht (The Central archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, f. 64, d. 505, c. 2, pp. 273–310).

In 1999, after declassification of the materials related to the events of the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939 – 1940, in 2000 a collective scientific work was published, prepared by the employees of the Institute of Military History of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation and the Russian State Military Archive, “Secrets and Lessons of the Winter War. 1939 – 1940”, which contains archival documents and materials elucidating the events of this war and the actions of the Soviet leadership after its end, in particular, the suggestions of the People’s Commissar of Defense regarding an attempt to create on a temporary basis special commissions for generalization of the war experience and making appropriate changes and additions to the military regulations and manuals (Zolotarev, 2000, p. 447). Another scientific publication of a set of documents (archival materials) related to the development of recommendations for improving the Red Army based on the experience of the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939 – 1940 (hereinafter – the winter campaign) is the collection “Winter War: Work on Mistakes (April – May of 1940)” was compiled by researchers of the Russian State Military Archive and presented to scholars in 2004. This collection elucidates in detail the chronology of the temporarily created commissions and sub-commissions for the generalization of the war experience and the course of decision-making based on their work (“Zimnyaya vojna”: rabota nad oshibkami (aprel’–maj 1940 g.), 2004).

It should be noted that at the second stage, these topics were openly discussed at scientific conferences. Thus, N. Tarkhova, in her scientific research, examines the activities of specialized commissions and sub-commissions on the generalization of the experience of the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939 – 1940 in terms of introducing their results into the combat activities of the Red Army and updating the existing structure of the People’s Commissariat of Defense, General Staff and Red Army (Tarkhova, 2005, pp. 203, 204).

Here it should be noted that the above mentioned publications devoted to the events of the Soviet-Finnish war of 1939 – 1940 are not thorough scientific research works. However, they provide scholars and other specialists with access to declassified archival documents and materials collected in one publication for studying the problems of generalizing the experience of this war.

At the beginning of the 2000s, publications by foreign authors began to appear, based on researching the activities of bodies for the study and use the war experience during World War II, in particular in the Red Army. In 2009, the work of the leading American historian D. Glants “Risen from the Ashes. How the Red Army Turned into the Victory Army in 1941” was presented to a wide range of readers. The author of the work, referring to the scientific

Soviet and Russian publications, indicates that the study of the war experience was one of the most important functions of the General Staff of the Red Army during World War II. Separately, the author focused on functioning in the structure of the General Staff of the Red Army of the department (administration) on the use of the war experience and its interaction with the military history department (Glantz, 2009).

At that time, active dissertation research on this topic began. Thus, M. Ryazanov, in his dissertation research on the road troops of the 2nd Belorussian Front, notes that in order to study, generalize and disseminate the combat experience among the troops, separate posts and staff units on the study of the war experience were established in the logistics, fronts, armies and formations staffs. Directly at the logistics staff of the Red Army, there was a department for the study of the war experience, which, based on the materials of the generalized experience, issued a corresponding collection. The accumulated logistics experience was reflected in manuals and instructions (Ryazanov, 2000, p. 12). In another dissertation study, A. Tolmacheva, having analyzed the materials of the official publications of the General Staff of the Red Army, issued by the department (directorate) on the use of the war experience, claims that information on the combat and numerical strength, losses of the armed forces of the opposing sides in these publications is limited (Tolmacheva, 2006, p. 4).

The last decade is characterized by the emergence of new fundamental collective scientific works, monographs, scientific articles related to the activities of bodies on the study and use of the war experience during World War II. Special attention should be paid to Volume 11 of the 12-volume collective scientific work “The Great Patriotic War of 1941 – 1945”, prepared in the research center (fundamental military and historical problems) of the Military University of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, with the participation of the Research Institute (military history) of the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, other scientific historical institutions and the Central Archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation. This publication summarizes previous studies of the Soviet and Russian scholars on the functioning of the centralized system on the study and use of the war experience created in the Red Army and the Navy during the Great Patriotic War, as well as it presents new declassified archival sources (Velikaya Otechestvennaya vojna, 2015). At the same time, the study lacks a critical assessment of the activity of this system; in addition, it is limited to the period of the Great Patriotic War.

The authors of Volume 1 of the collective 15-volume scientific work “Great Victory”, prepared at Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University), believe that the management of military operations during World War II was unthinkable without creative scientific work on the preparation of reasoned decisions, the development of instructions, orders summarizing everything advanced in the war experience. According to them, such work was carried out by the department (directorate) on the use of the war experience of the General Staff of the Red Army, and in the staffs of the fronts (armies) – by the corresponding departments (divisions) (Velikaya Pobeda, 2015).

The monograph by S. Kropachev and E. Krynko, the scholars of the Institute of Socio-Economic and Humanitarian Research of the Southern Scientific Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences, who analyze the demographic losses of the Soviet population in 1937 – 1945, looks quite interesting. In their study, they touch upon the work of special research structures of the Red Army and the Navy, created in the General Staff of the Red Army, the staffs of the fronts and armies for the purpose of generalization of the war experience during World War II (Krynko & Kropachev, 2012, pp. 46, 47). In addition, a scholar E. Krynko in another scientific

work also recalls the work of the bodies on the study and use of the war experience in the Red Army and the Navy and refers at that to archival materials – official publications of the General Staff of the Red Army during World War II (Krinko, 2012, p. 249).

A thorough research describing the role of the Group of Officers of the General Staff of the Red Army in the study and generalization of the combat experience in the Red Army in 1941 – 1945 is the work of E. Korshunov, a scholar from the Research Institute (Military History) of the Military Academy of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. Based on archival documents, the author analyzed the work of these structures objectively, drawing attention to a low level of training of some officers who turned out not to be prone to analytical work at the fronts (in the armies) (Korshunov, 2013).

In another scientific work, the authors E. Korshunov and A. Lupasov focus on the fact that the activities of the bodies on the study of the combat experience in the Red Army were performed directly by the Head of the General Staff and at the same time the Deputy People's Commissar of Defense for the study and use of the war experience in the troops and staffs of the Red Army, Marshal Vasylevskiy O.M. (Korshunov & Rupasov, 2016, p. 269).

Modern Ukrainian scholars of the National Defence University of Ukraine named after Ivan Cherniakhovskiy V. Hrytsiuk, I. Yevsieiev, S. Sehed, B. Semon and A. Scriabin made a significant contribution to the research issues of the study and use of the combat experience during World War II. In particular, S. Sehed in his monograph "Creation and Development of the Ukrainian Military Press (the XXth – the beginning of the XXIst centuries)" clarified the issue of covering the combat experience in the course of researching the activities of the magazines of the UPA and other Ukrainian armed formations as the reflection of the essence of partisan war (Sehed, 2012, pp. 246–272).

V. Hrytsiuk and I. Yevsieiev, relying on the archival sources point out that during the war in the staffs of formations, armies and fronts, the General Staff of the Red Army and directorates of the People's Commissariat of Defense there were groups, divisions, departments and directorates for the study of the war experience, which prepared generalized materials on the combat experience and developed practical recommendations for the troops (Hrytsiuk & Yevsieiev, 2020, pp. 92–99; The Central archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, f. 4, d. 11, c. 76, pp. 233–239; The Central archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, f. 4, d. 11, c. 77, pp. 282–283; The Central archive of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, f. 236, d. 2673, c. 130, pp. 105–115). However, the author draws attention to the fact that this work had its own characteristics and difficulties. The completeness and level of events analysis in the literature, especially in the open literature, were limited by the wartime conditions sharply.

Special attention should be paid to the scientific work of researchers B. Semon and A. Scriabin, which contains a historical analysis of the activities of the Red Army bodies on the study of the combat experience during the Great Patriotic War. The authors note the close interaction and cooperation of the department on the use of the war experience, the military history department and the Group of officers of the General Staff of the Red Army (Semon & Skriabin, 2014, pp. 46–49).

The Conclusions. Thus, the study of the activities of the bodies on the use of the combat experience during World War II was reflected in special scientific works, which mainly elucidate the issue of generalization of the experience in the Red Army and in the Navy in the Soviet Union and the Wehrmacht. The researchers analyzed the structure, purpose, objectives, focus, principles of work and effectiveness of these bodies activities generally.

The first stage of historiography (the Soviet era) was characterized by the process of accumulation of sources, the primary processing of factual material, which resulted in scientific periodicals and monographs.

In modern historiography, the second stage in the study of the topic begins in the early 1990s: in the wake of publicity and democratization of society in the post-Soviet space, scholars were given access to previously classified archives, which contributed to the introduction of a number of new previously unknown sources. This led to a gradual liberation of historiography on this topic from the influence of ideological rhetoric and rigid party-political regulations.

In historiography it is possible to allocate four basic types of researches: source studies and memoirs; works of general content, which focus on the study of combat experience during World War II; analysis of the functioning of structures on the study and use of war experience; publication of archival materials that provide researchers with access to primary sources.

The scientific achievements of researchers proved the existence during World War II in the armed forces of the warring parties of effective centralized systems for the generalization of combat experience. In particular, it was found that an integral part of the functioning of these systems was the dissemination of generalized combat experience among the troops (forces) by means of special periodicals of military authorities (collections, bulletins, magazines, etc.). According to the authors of the study, the introduction of this form of generalization of combat experience in the Armed Forces of Ukraine will significantly contribute to measures to ensure national security and defense, repel and deter armed aggression in Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

Thus, the growing scientific significance of the problem of generalizing combat experience makes it necessary to conduct monographic and other military historiographic research works on the activities of the bodies on the study and use of the combat experience in wars and armed conflicts. Since they must ensure the evolution of domestic historical research on this issue to a new scientific and educational level.

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