New Documents from French and Norwegian Archives on Kazakh’s Participation to the World War II

Gulnara Mendikulova* - Anara Gabdullina**

It is well known that Kazakhs, as the Soviet citizens, fought against the Nazis on the fronts of the World War II, but the participation of Kazakhs in resistance movements in the territory of the occupied European states still receive their researchers. These are heroic pages of the modern history of Kazakhs, which are still closed for a wide range of Kazakhstanis, although the history of every Kazakh, every Kazakhstani participant in World War II is unique and dramatic.

In that case, searching in French and Norwegian archives are timely for Kazakhstani society up to now.

In Kazakh historiography, the study of the problem of the participation of Kazakhs in World War II in European countries leaves much to be desired. Undoubtedly, in the Soviet years, this problem was not included in the area of relevance. Moreover, it was marked as “forbidden”. All those who for various reasons were forced to leave the country, or lived outside the Soviet Union were labeled as “traitors and spies”. In the conditions of the command-bureaucratic system, the mere mention of “former citizens” became the reason for repression against political and cultural figures.

The problem of the participation of Kazakhs in World War II in European countries is complex, consisting of several separate issues, such as:

1) the participation of Kazakhs in the Great Patriotic War,
2) the participation of Kazakhs in the Turkestan Legion,
3) the participation of Kazakhs in the Resistance Movement and partisan groups,
4) as well as problems associated with repatriating prisoners of war to the Soviet Union, and others.

*  Prof. Dr., Satbayev University, Department of Social Studies, Almaty/THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, gmendikul@hotmail.com ORCID: 0000-0002-0922-0478
**  Candidate of Historical Sciences, Institute of History of the State, Astana/THE REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN, agastana77@gmail.com ORCID: 0000-0001-7854-8867
While the capital works were devoted to the question of the participation of Kazakhs and Kazakhstan in the Great Patriotic War in Soviet and Kazakh historiography, the situation for the remaining three is quite deplorable.

The existing status quo had explanations related to the ideological ban in the Soviet period, and the lack of access to archival documents, stored both in our country and abroad. Today, researchers of independent Kazakhstan have the opportunity to contribute to the coverage of these problems.

Kazakhstan’s historiography on military history and coverage of the participation of Kazakhs in World War II is presented by the authors: Kozybaev M.K., Abishev G.A., Belan P.S., N.E. Edygenov, Ismailov A.I., Aldazhumanov K.

The participation of Kazakh soldiers in World War II is studied in scientific works: Mendikulova G.M., Ayagan B.G., Sadykova B.I., Kara A., Kaken A., Bekenov S. and others.

The first scientific research in the Kazakh historiography devoted to the problems of the Kazakh diaspora, published in 1997, was a monograph by Mendikulova.

1 M.K. Kozybaev, Kazakhstan is the Arsenal of the Front, Alma-Ata 1970, p. 471.
G.M. “Historical destinies of the Kazakh diaspora. Origin and development”. In 2006, in a supplemented and revised edition of the Kazakh Diaspora: History and Modernity, a separate section is devoted to the participation of Kazakhs in the French Resistance Movement.

Particular attention should be paid to the scientific works of Sadykova B.I., a political scholar, the author of numerous scientific and journalistic articles, studies on the activities of Shokai M. and the history of the Turkestan Legion, the author of the script of the documentary film “Zar, or the Excommunicated”. In the work of Sadykova B.I. “The History of the Turkestan Legion in Documents” for the first time examines the activities of the Turkestan national liberation movement, organized by Mustafa Shokay in Europe, his tactics and strategy. At the same time, the author considers an important detail: the Turkestan national liberation movement had to act in an unusual situation, at the moment of confrontation between the two rival ideologies, fascism and communism, which led to a bloody conflict. In 2009, based on the analysis of Mustafa Shokai’s works written in different languages, a large number of materials from the archival centers of Europe, as well as the confrontation of different opinions on the issues under consideration, the monograph “Mustafa Shokai in Emigration” reveal the essence and nature of M. Shokai’s activity in Europe. The book examines the political decision of M. Shokai assist to Turkestan prisoners of war.

Kazakhstani historian, political scholar Ayagan B.G. in the book “The Red and Black (The Materials of the Hoover Archive)” reveals the data unknown earlier to the historical science, taken in the funds of the world-famous Hoover Institute (archive) of the USA. The book contains a wealth of historical material, including diaries, letters, notes of prisoners of war.

Professor of the Mimar Sinan University, Kara Abdulvahap wrote a book telling about the bitter fate of the former soldiers of the Turkestan Legion, an integral part of Hitler’s army. Like this book, a memo article entitled “I was in the Turkestan Legion” was published on the pages of internet publications. It tells about Akhmetbek Nurumov, who was captured exactly one month after the outbreak of the war, passed a camp for prisoners of war in Poland, the Turkestan Legion and Kolyma, convicted of treason to the motherland, who is still waiting to be justified.

The book of the famous Kazakh journalist Kaken A., based on sources, is devoted to the history of the Turkestan Legion. In 2007, under the editorship of Ayagan
B.G. was published a book-memories of Bekenov S., one of the prisoners of the fascist camps.

In 2014 the collection of materials of the round table “The Participation of Kazakhs in World War II in Western Europe” was published, which included articles by Kazakhstani historians (Mendikulova G.M., Ayagan B.G., Sadykova B.I., Gabdullina A.) dedicated to the little-known pages of the participation of Kazakhs in the World War II.\footnote{Compendium of Materials of the Round Table “Participation of Kazakhs in the World War II in Western Europe”, Kazakh University, Almaty 2014, p144.}

In 2015, a collective monograph in Kazakh and Russian “Honor and Duty (Participation of Kazakhstanis in the World War II and the Great Patriotic War in Europe)” was published to the 70th anniversary of Victory. In the book, three paragraphs are devoted to the fate of Soviet Prisoners of War (Mendikulova G.M.), The Participation of Kazakhstaniis in Resistance Units (Mendikulova G.M.) and the Turkestan Legion\footnote{Honor and duty (Participation of Kazakhstanis in the World War II and the Great Patriotic War in Europe), "Litera-M" LLP, Almaty 2015, p. 592.}(Ayagan B.G., Mendikulova G.M.).

It should be especially noted that it is impossible to write a true story on this issue without archival documents stored in the archives of European countries.

Therefore, Prof. Dr. Gulnara Mendikulova held a preliminary collection of archival documents in the National Archives of France (Archives nationals), the Archives of INALCO. The Bibliothèque Institute of National des Sciences and Civilizations Orientales (Archives Mustafa Chokay Bey) and the Museum of the National Movement of the Resistance of France (Musee de la Resistance Nationale) have established links and preliminary agreements with municipal archives in the south of France, Albi, Oude, Tarn-et-Garonne, Municipal Archives in Toulouse, Tarn, Albi, Aude, for assistance in obtaining these important documents, not only for Kazakhstan but for the entire Central Asian history.

In Belgium, Kazakh diplomats discovered burial sites of Kazakhs - members of the Resistance Movement. Most of the information about the Kazakhs who fought against fascism is kept in the archives of Belgium.

In the archives of Norway Prof. Doctor of History Gulnara Mendikulova also identified lists of Kazakhs and Kazakhstani prisoners of war kept in camps on the territory of this country, the same information is available in Sweden.
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The Kazakhs took part in the Resistance movement in Italy.

It is known that Kazakhs were kept in concentration and labor camps on the territory of Belgium and Holland. Of course, those materials about them are stored in the national archives of these countries.

In 2009 she conducted a preliminary searching of archival documents at:

- The French Archives Nationales,
- The INALCO archives, the Mustafa Chokay Bey archive at the Library of the Institute National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales,
- and The Musée de la Résistance Nationale.

A few years I try conduct complex and comparative-analytical research on the theme on participation of the Kazakhs (Soviet prisoners of war) to Resistance Movement Maqi during the Second World War.

Within the FMSH project in 2009 I collected the documentary materials in the Archive of Mustafa Chokai (famous and significant leader among Turkistanian political emigration in Western Europe) saved in the Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilizations (INALCO) in Paris. He inspected the Soviet POW camps, organized by Nazis in Poland and Germany. I found testimonies about Kazakh and Jewish victims as well as Soviet prisoners of war in concentration camps there.

Moreover, the lists of ethnic Kazakh, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Tajik prisoners of war also were found in INALCO, in the archive of Mustafa Chokay. There are thousands of names! These were Soviet soldiers and officers, mostly originated from Central Asia, who in October 1941 had already appeared in the German concentration camps.

If you look at the lists from the Mustafa Chokai files, you will see that most of them are people with secondary and higher education. Teachers, engineers, technicians, cooks, laborers, tractor drivers, combine operators, accountants, farmers, and others were among them. Farmers (dikhkane) have mostly been among other representatives from our Region.

In the south of France in the department of Gard and Toulouse region, the First Soviet Partisan Regiment was active, liberating the cities of Florent, Villefort, Ales, and Albi from the Nazis. Almost 300 Kazakhstanis fought in this regiment.
Former Red Army soldiers, such as: deputy regimental commander Abu Moldagaliev, company commander and later deputy battalion commander Uteuli Bisengaliev, S. Zhumashev (Atyrau), Kanysbaev, H. Kunaev (Saratovskaya Oblast), Western Kazakhstanis Zh. Katshikov, S. Karenov, H. Uteshev, B. Edrisov, Z. Amangaliev, Sh. Balykov, Semipalatinsk residents N. Il’yasov, M. Nugmanov, K. Khangereev, B. Seksenbaev from Taldy-Kurgan, and others, were among them.

On November 2015, Prof. Dr. Gulnara Mendikulova collected documents in Municipal Archives in Toulouse (Archives Departementales Haute-Garonne) and the Museum of Toulouse resistance (Musee departemental de la Resistance), Archives Departementales du Tarn, which is located in the town of Albi, Archives Nationales and Service Historique de la Defense, located in the suburbs of Paris. In these archives, I found interesting documents on Soviet prisoners of war in camps in Southern France.

For the first time documents, maps and photos concerning to Kazakhs and their participation to the Resistance Movement were discovered in five French archives.

According to archival documents, 53 Turkestanis, 98 Georgians and 30 Poles were sent from Carmaux to the French Maquis in the village of Jukeville in August 1944,
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where nineteen people were killed in a battle with the Nazis. In 1995, a memorial stele was erected in the village of Jukeville between the cities of Albi and Carmaux by the Embassy of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

One of the most important successes in conducting research on this issue, for the first-time discovered documents on Kazakh participation to the Resistance movement in the Southern France in French archives. New names of Kazakhs and Turkestanes, such as Ismailov, Karamergenov, Mukhamedzhanov, Abdullaev, who fought side by side with the French Maquis, were found in the collections of Archives Nationales.

In October 2009, correspondence, memoirs, documents relating to the founding of the first Soviet partisan regiment, in which Kazakhs fought side by side with Georgians during the difficult times of WWII were discovered at Archives Nationales in Paris. It became possible by a grant from Fondation Maison des Sciences de l'homme, which allowed me to conduct research there.

According to the memoirs Kadema Zhumaniyazova, in October 1944 the Kazakhs took part in the liberation of towns and villages in the south of France, such as Toulouse, Albi, Carmaux, Montauban, Carcassonne and others.
In November 2015, I collected documents in Municipal Archives in Toulouse (Archives Départementales Haute-Garonne) and the Museum of Toulouse resistance (Musée départemental de la Résistance), Archives Départementales du Tarn, which is located in the town of Albi, Archives Nationales and Service Historique de la Défense, located in the suburbs of Paris. In these archives I found interesting documents on Soviet prisoners of war in camps in Southern France.

These are the first findings in French archives in Kazakh historiography, and the work as part of a broader project that will represent a significant contribution to understandings of the international dimensions of Kazakh participation in World War II. Moreover, it will contribute significantly to public discourse in Kazakhstan about the nature of Kazakh involvement in the war.

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Separately marked by guerrilla groups French group of makizar “Stalingrad” as well group “Mongols” were separately allocated there. In both groups Kazakhs fought with Nazi there.

This map was found in November 2015 in the Archives of the Department of Tarn in Albi by Prof. Dr. Gulnara Mendikulova.
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From memories we knew that Turkestanis participated in several guerrilla groups, in particular, in the group “Stalingrad”, and our soldiers were called “Mongols”. A year after the release of Toulouse, Albi and Carmaux, they were still in the camps, where they lived in a special mode. If previously we had only memories of the participants of these events, in the French archive in Albi I found official documents confirming Kazakh participation in resistance movement. It is the whole correspondence of the police department about one unpleasant incident took place on 30th April 1945.

So, a few ex-liberators of the south of France went to a local cafe to note the May holidays, as they had relative freedom of movement. Some of the locals insulted them, calling the Mongols and saying that there is no place for them there. Scuffle, called the police, and all participants were replaced to the police office. Commandant of the camp, where heroes - liberators of the south of France were held Zunum Zhamankulov had to write explanatory and intercessory letter about what happened. The letter, in particular, he explained that the former Soviet military Turkestanis and all 250 people in the camp, liberated France, and they are kept still in the camps and attitude of the locals towards them are incorrect. Found the answer of Prefect of police of the city of Albi, after a long trial (until July 1945), which says that, yes, indeed, these people heroically helped us to liberate our homeland from the Nazis, and a year after these events, the locals insult them, forgetting about their heroism. Thanks to this conclusion of the Prefect of Police the participants of unattractive incident did not punish.

According to the German historian Rolf Keller, the Wehrmacht captured from 5.3 to 5.7 million Soviet soldiers. According to his calculations, “at least 2.6 million, and probably even 3.3 million, were killed in German captivity”14. The figure of 3.5 million dead prisoners of war leads Beata Ler-Metzger, director of the documentary film “Captivity.” Only from September 1941 to March-April 1942, 2 million prisoners of war were shot and starved to death in Nazi camps.

During the years of “Perestroika” Soviet prisoners of war were rehabilitated, but the attitude of compatriots to them remained ambiguous. Many continued to consider them as collaborators.

In 2015, within the framework of the “People in the stream of history” program, a research project “Participation of Kazakhs in the World War II in Western Europe”

was launched, designed for 3 years. In 2016, two foreign missions were organized: the first to France - the scientific adviser, doctor of historical sciences, Professor Mendikulova G.M., and the second performer of this project is the Candidate of Historical Sciences Gabdullina A. Zh. to Norway. The purpose of the scientific trips was the study of archives and the collection of materials about the Kazakhs who participated in the Resistance Movement and the Kazakh soldiers who were captured by the fascists in France and Norway.

This article is also focused on materials found in the National Archives of Norway in Oslo. As you know, Norway was occupied by the Nazis on April 9, 1940 and was liberated on May 8, 1945. During this time, one of the largest groups of the Nazi Air Force and Navy, which controlled the North Atlantic region, was based in Norway. From Norway, the invaders pumped out minerals, food for the military economy of Germany.

Moreover, it was found out that from 1941 to 1945 about 100,000 Soviet prisoners were sent to Norway to work for the Wehrmacht. Many of them were soldiers of the Red Army, about 9,000 were civilians, including 1,400 women and 400 children. The first Soviet prisoners of war began to arrive in August 1941. Many soldiers were captured in June 1941 on the territory of the USSR and sent to Poland and Germany, and then forwarded by cargo ships to Norway. The condition of the prisoners on arrival in Norway was terrible, as they suffered from hunger and lack of sanitation on the way.

Throughout Norway, Nazi occupiers built many camps for prisoners: more than 500 hundred points on the map of the country, an average of one for every 80 km. The construction of the camps was limited to the installation of fences and the fencing of the territory with barbed wire. Prisoners of war lived in burrows dug in the ground or, at best, in barracks. The Wehrmacht used Soviet prisoners of war for slave labor in the construction of military facilities, the Nordlandsbanen railway, in the mines where 75,000 Soviet prisoners of war were employed. More than 15,000 people died from hunger, disease and Nazi atrocities in the camps of prisoners of war in Norway. To date, only 2,700 names have been identified.

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16 The exhibition catalogue, Soviet POWs in Norway, Center of Falstad, Ekne 2010, 35 p.

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When I examined and studied documents in the National Archives of Norway, lists of former prisoners of war returning home from Norway after the war were discovered. The lists were compiled in 3 copies, they were accompanied by an act on sanitary treatment, signed by the Soviet and English side. Echelons consisted of 800 people and were sent from Norway to their homeland.

Among the above lists I found, and lists with the names of 340 Kazakh prisoners of war from the camps in Mu-i Rana, Buntamoeen, Bardufoss, Narvik, Baysfjord infirmary and others. When processing materials, I found out that the age of liberated prisoners of war varied from 25 to 44 years; military rank—from the rank-and-file to the junior lieutenant, the majority were ordinary soldiers and called to the front from all regions of Kazakhstan, many of them were taken by fascists in the first months of the Great Patriotic War.

The research method in this article is to compare the available lists from the Norwegian archives with the database “Memorial” and the database of soldiers killed and missing in action in the World War II, who come from the territory of Kazakhstan.

On the list of Soviet citizens who returning home from Mysen, Norway on June 18, 1945, was found our compatriot Bektanov Mazhit, sub-lieutenant, born February 29, 1914, by nationality Kazakh. Social status: married. Residence address: Kazakh SSR, Pavlodar, ul. Abay, 204. This information was confirmed on the website of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Kazakhstan, where there is a database for Kazakhstanis. According to the database: Bektanov Mazhit, he was born in 1914; date and place of enlistment: 1938, Pavlodar RVC, Kazakh SSR, Pavlodar region; rank: sub-lieutenant; the reason for retirement: captivity (released); date of disposal: 05/07/1941.

The question arises, why exactly his fate interests us. In the lists found there are many inaccuracies, such as mistakes, in spelling Kazakh names and designations, perhaps prisoners of war, suspecting what fate awaits them in the USSR, deliberately falsified their names or gave the address - the Kazakh SSR. In this case, Mazhit Bektanov could not be mistaken, and I was surprised that he gave the exact address. This indicates that he was an honest, open person and was waiting for an early return home to his family and relatives.

18 Riksarkivet, RA / S-1681 / D / Db / L0015
At the same time, the repatriation of Soviet prisoners of war from Norway took place in accordance with the “Administrative Instruction 101”, developed and put into effect on June 10, 1945 by representatives of the Allied forces and land forces of Norway. First of all, former prisoners of war were sent to their homeland. Two routes of repatriation were established in the USSR:

1. The Southern Route (the port of Narvik (Norway) - the port of Lulea (Sweden), the port of Trondheim (Norway) - the port of Sundsvall (Sweden), the port of Oslo (Norway) - the port of Gavle (Sweden) operated from 13 to 26 June 1945. Each day three lines were sent to a train of 800 people.

2. The “Northern Route” for the repatriation of former prisoners, which took place from the ports of Mysen, My, Bude and Tromsø in Northern Norway to the Soviet port of Murmansk.

In December 1945, the representatives of the Union authorities prepared a “Confidential Report”. According to this report, 84,351 Soviet citizens were repatriated from Norway. 18,852 people were taken out by the “Northern Route” and 65,499 by the “Southern Route”. By March 1, 1946 - the date of final repatriation from Norway to the USSR, 84,775 people had been repatriated, including 6,963 guest workers and 77,812 former prisoners of war. So, Bektanov Mazhit comes with many others to USSR, probably on the “Southern Route”.

According to the idea of GKO Resolution No. 6884с of November 4, 1944 “On the NKVD verification of all prisoners of war liberated by the Red and Allied armies for cooperation with the Germans”, he was to be sent with all other former prisoners of war for review to special reserve units of the military districts, and then to a special camp of NKVD.

The search continues, for it is necessary to determine the further fate of Bektanov’s released from captivity. The result of the search proved tragic, because according to the information of the National Security Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the Pavlodar region Bektanov Mazhit (1914-1950), he was...

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arrested by the UMGB of the Pavlodar region on January 24, 1950. On April 12, 1950, he was convicted by the Pavlodar Regional Court for article. 58-1b of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR. He was sentenced to 25 years in a labor camp (forced labor camp). Rehabilitated on December 22, 1989 by the Supreme Court of the Kazakh SSR, the basis - for lack of corpus delicti.

It turns out that a person who has gone through the horrors of fascist captivity was actually killed (this is indicated by the date of death) in his homeland. Even more frightening is that the family of the “enemy of the people” was also exiled to the camps with confiscation of property. Such is the tragedy of innocent people.

Conclusions: In order to establish the fate of 340 Kazakh soldiers, it is necessary to continue work on finding the registration cards of prisoners of war.

It is necessary to identify the names of the dead prisoners of war in Norway. We assume that the death toll was more than 15,000 people. Since there is no known number of dead POWs on the route from Germany to Norway. It is known that in Germany even a dead prisoner of war was given a personal number. Identify the soldiers-Kazakhs. For example, the database “Saxon materials” in Dresden since 2015 is not funded by the German government and does not issue certificates for the dead and missing citizens of the USSR.

Continue a comparative analysis of the lists of former prisoners of war of the National Archives of Norway, with available databases for supplementing information on Kazakh soldiers.

**Conclusion**

The World War II had brought the heaviest suffering and wounds to the Kazakh people. 1,300,000 Kazakhs went to the front. Within 6 years, more than 630,000 Kazakhs from Kazakhstan were killed.

However, the number of Khazaks living in other Soviet republics who were exiled to the front as workers or became prisoners of war cannot be estimated to this day.

So the historical truth is not yet restored. The systematic and complex (interdisciplinary) researches of such events as the participation of Kazakhs in World War II as prisoners of war of the Third Reich, their escape from concentration and labor camps, their heroic struggle against fascism with resistance movements and partisan’s groups in various countries of Western Europe will contribute to the restoration of history.
For this reason, we have collected historical and archival material from the archives of France and Norway. Based on these documents, we continue to research the participation of Kazakhs to the Resistance Movement in European countries.

In 2018, we plan to publish a collection of documents from foreign archives on these very important issues which are significant not only for Kazakhstan, post-Soviet society, the Turkic world, but for the entire global community, and whose consequences affect the social and the political situation in Eurasia.
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