

Научная статья / Scientific article

УДК

93/94+745.04+930.85+304.442+930.2+930.25+930.253+002.66+651.56+002.6.048.26+316.6+
111.84+111.85+159.923+159.928.234+304.444+364.1+364.24+364.252+371.487+371.69+608
.2+608.6+347.772(094.7) +643/645+649.1+64.033

doi 10.28995/2073-0101-2023-4-1238-1250

Gordina, E. D.

Nizhny Novgorod, Russian Federation

“... We’ll Make a New Toy for Soviet Kids”: On Soviet Toys of the 1940s: Archival Materials of
the Gorky Region

Abstract

The article addresses the problem of providing Soviet children with toys and toys production in the USSR in the 1940s. On the basis of modern historiographical material, situation in the “toy” industry of the 1940s is reflected. When presenting the material, a large number of interesting and valuable examples is given, as well as fragments from memoirs of the “children of war.” All these materials mention that toys of the difficult 1940s were mostly homemade. There was an acute shortage of factory-made toys and there were problems with their quality and high cost. Throughout the 1940s (and even in the wartime), Soviet leadership attempted repeatedly to solve these problems. Lack of toys for Soviet children was recognized by the authorities as a problem demanding urgent solution. Drawing on unique archival material of the Gorky region, which is being introduced into scientific use, the article narrates of the competition organized in 1947-48 by the Scientific Research Institute of Toys and aimed at development of new samples of toys and games, improvement of their quality, and launch of their mass production. According to the typology of toys cited in the competition regulations, there were 16 categories of toys for children of all ages, ranging from dolls and balls to a variety of construction kits, cardboard games, and educational materials. The main criteria were complete safety, possibility of mass and, preferably, inexpensive production from local materials, and compliance with educational tasks set by the state. Soviet citizens, enterprises and artels, children’s institutions were invited to participate in the competition; there were prizes amounting to 120,000 rubles or more. Given the realities of 1947, this seems an important marker of the state’s attention to organization of children’s leisure and education, which was deemed an integral component of combatting child homelessness and neglect. The article identifies main trends in solving the problem of toy shortage in the second half of the 1940s. It is to complete the picture of everyday life and consequences of the Great Patriotic War.

Keywords

Historical sources, archival documents, toys, USSR, children, Great Patriotic War of 1941–45, education.

Download the article: [gordina doi](#)

References

ABDULLINA, D. A. Mifologema “shchastlivoe sovetskoe detstvo” v detskom portrete 1930–1960-kh godov [The Mythologeme of “Happy Soviet Childhood” in a Child’s Portrait of the 1930s–60s. In Russ.]. IN: Vestnik Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta. Iskusstvovedenie, 2022, no. 2, pp. 591–611.

VAKHSHTAIN, V. K mikrosotsiologii igrushek: stsennari, afordans, transpozitsiya [On the microsociology of toys: Script, affordance, transposition. In Russ.]. IN: Logos, 2013, no. 2, pp. 3–37.

GAVRYSH, O. V. Detskaya igrovaya povsednevnost' v poslevoennyye gody (na materiale USSR) [Children’s play everyday life in the post-war years: Material of the Ukrainian SSR. In Russ.]. IN: Vestnik Baltiiskogo federal'nogo universiteta im. I. Kanta. Seriya: gumanitarnye i obshchestvennyye nauki, 2018, no. 2, pp. 87–92.

ZAMILOV, T. D. Rol' voennoi igrushki v voenno-patrioticheskom vospitanii v dorevolutsionnoi Rossii, v Sovetskom Soyuze i Rossiiskoi Federatsii [The role of military toys in military-patriotic education in pre-revolutionary Russia, in the Soviet Union, and the Russian Federation. In Russ.]. IN: Narodnoe obrazovanie, 2020, no. 4, pp. 139–144.

KUL'GUSKINA, L. V. Gosudarstvo i molodoe pokolenie v kontse 1920-kh ? 1930-e gody: opyt sozdaniya novoi mental'nosti. Avtoref. dis. kand. ist. nauk [The state and the younger generation in the late 1920s?30s: The experience of creating a new mentality. Cand. hist. sci. diss. abstract. In Russ.]. IN: Barnaul, 2005, 22 p.

MUKHINOVA, N. A. Dosug detei v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny (po materialam poiskovogo proekta “Fakel”, KGASU) [Leisure of children in the days of the Great Patriotic War: Materials of the search project “Fakel,” KSUAU). In Russ.]. IN: Gumanitarnye nauki v XXI veke: Nauchnyi internet-zhurnal, 2020, no. 14, pp. 72–77.

SYMONOVICH, Ch. E. K nachal'noi istorii rovesnikov voiny [To the initial history of the war
agemates. In Russ.]. IN: Teleskop: zhurnal sotsiologicheskikh i marketingovykh issledovaniy,
2013, no. 1, pp. 44–51.

TEPLOVA, E. Vizual'nye obrazy sovetskogo detstva [Visual Images of Soviet Childhood. In
Russ.]. IN: Etnodialogi, 2020, no. 3, pp. 142–156.

About the authors

Gordina Elena Dmitrievna, PhD in History, associate professor, R. E. Alekseeva Nizhny
Novgorod State Technical University, department of methodology, history, and philosophy of
science, head of the department, Russian Federation, Nizhny Novgorod, +7-910-388-18-27,
gordinelena@yandex.ru

Submitted 19.05.2023, published (for citation):

GORDINA, E. D. “...Sozdamim novuyu igrushku dlya sovetskoi detvory”: o sovetskikh
igrushkakh 1940-kh gg. Na arkhivnykh materialakh Gor'kovskoi oblasti [“... We’ll Make a New
Toy for Soviet Kids”: On Soviet Toys of the 1940s: Archival Materials of the Gorky Region. In
Russ.]. IN: Vestnik arhivista / Herald of an Archivist, 2023, no. 4, pp. 1238-1250. doi
10.28995/2073-0101-2023-4-1238-1250

You can read completely article in the russian historic-archival magazine “The Herald of an Archivist”. Read more about terms of subscription [here](#) .

Полностью материал публикуется в российском историко-архивоведческом журнале ВЕСТНИК АРХИВИСТА. Ознакомьтесь с условиями подписки [здесь](#) .