

THE INCOMPARABLE ROLE OF UZBEK WOMEN IN THE ECONOMY DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

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Abstract

This article provides information on how the Second World War, one of the bloodiest and most brutal periods in the history of humanity in the 20th century, left a deep mark on the lives of the people of Uzbekistan, including its women. It highlights how, in a country where millions of sons were sent to the front, the heavy economic burden fell on the shoulders of women. They honorably fulfilled crucial tasks, not only preserving the family hearth but also meeting front-line needs and restoring the country's economy.

Keywords: Second World War, selfless labor of Uzbek women, front, home front, incomparable role in the economy, industry, heroism, military contribution, labor valor, gender equality.

The contribution of the multinational people of Uzbekistan to ensuring the historic Victory over fascism in the Second World War is incomparable. Our nation will never forget the bravery and courage shown by our devoted ancestors in achieving today's peaceful, free, and prosperous life.

Shavkat Mirziyoyev
President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Introduction

The Unforgettable Contributions of Uzbek Women During World War II: During World War II, regardless of the country or political system they belonged to, the fate and lifestyle of women shared striking similarities. It became common for women to work 10-12 hours a day in place of their fathers, husbands, and sons who had gone to the front, often followed by additional work (typically as nurses or cooks). We must also consider another aspect of this situation. Extended working hours, increased labor complexity, inadequate transportation due to the war, and a rise in energy expenditure (measured in calories or joules) by workers led to an even greater demand for food products to replenish that energy. Although such indicators were not precisely measured, it is undeniable that the average statistical worker during the war years had a higher demand for food (as well as vitamins and minerals) compared to their pre-war counterparts.



LITERATURE ANALYSIS AND METHODOLOGY

The information presented in the article, including generalized ideas about women's wartime labor conditions, their activities in various economic sectors, and their bravery, is based on extensive historical literature, archival documents, and periodicals.

As emphasized in the first part of the article, "Regardless of the country or system in which women worked during the Second World War, their destinies and lifestyles were somewhat similar." This generalization is widely covered in international literature on **gender history** and **war studies**. For example, works examining the role of women during wartime in the USA, Great Britain, Germany, and the Soviet Union highlight common aspects such as their harsh working conditions, high demand for food, and the necessity to fill the roles left by men. Specifically, Babadjanov X.B.'s work [2], "The Impact of Labor Duration on Workers' Health and Productivity During the Second World War," seems to focus on generalizing such foreign experiences and analyzing their impact on health. This, in turn, allows for the placement of Uzbek women's experiences within a broader global context.

The main part of the article is dedicated to the activities of Uzbek women during the war. In this regard, H. Inoyatov's works "Contribution to Victory" [5, 7] and collections like "The Contribution of the Uzbek People to the Victory Over Fascism" [4] are considered primary sources. These works, in line with Soviet-era historiographical traditions, specifically acknowledge women's labor heroism and their efforts to support the front. They illuminate labor results in industry and agriculture, including production indicators and social initiatives. The information in the article about large enterprises like the **Tashkent Textile Combine**, **Chirchik Electrochemical Combine**, **Bekabad Metallurgical Plant**, and evacuated enterprises such as the **V. Chkalov Aviation Plant** and **Rostselmash Plant** was derived from such sources.

For example, on September 10, 1941, a machine-building plant evacuated from Sumy to Chirchik began producing mines for mortars within a week, and a few months later, full mortars. On November 20, 1941, an echelon loaded with equipment from the V. Chkalov Aviation Plant from near Moscow arrived in Tashkent. Forty days later, in September 1942, newly built Li-2 aircraft were sent to the front. Factory workers sometimes produced 2-3 military aircraft per day. Alongside the factory, engineers and technicians like I.T. Usakova, M.M. Kunakova, V.N. Sivils, S.M. Yegorov, and local representatives like A. Ibragimov, M. Shokirov, Shormukhamedov, Z. Samikov, and others worked shoulder to shoulder.

By early 1942, an additional 2,000 local residents were involved in this factory. It should be noted that during the war years, more military vehicles were produced across the former Soviet Union than in the fascist army. Uzbekistan's contribution to this was significant. The resolution of the Council of People's Commissars of Uzbekistan, adopted on February 14-16, 1942, regarding increasing the production of PS-84 type aircraft, was crucial for delivering numerous combat vehicles and aircraft to the front. This resolution aimed to supply even more aircraft for the front during the most difficult days of the war.

In early November 1941, the Rostselmash factory, evacuated from Rostov to Uzbekistan, began producing mortar mines within a week. The fulfillment of this factory's plans for producing weapons, "Katyusha" rockets, and mortar shells was under strict control and was reflected in the resolution adopted by the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Central Committee of the Communist Party on December 18-28, 1941.



By February 1942, the first batch of mortar mines was sent to the front. Alongside these armaments, the Government of Uzbekistan also focused on increasing tank production for the front. By May 8, 1943, 11,700 Uzbeks were sent to work at construction enterprises in Chelyabinsk Oblast. According to the distribution of the former Soviet Union, 1,050 people were assigned to the construction of the region's tank industry, 1,500 to the coal industry, and the rest were sent to non-ferrous metals enterprises, logging operations, and other factories and enterprises.

By September 1941, 26,840 mobilized workers from the Central Asian republics were working at construction enterprises in Sverdlovsk Oblast. It should be specifically noted that, in addition to Russia's industrial and home front regions, 155,000 people from Uzbekistan were mobilized into worker battalions for mining, construction, industrial, and logging work in Siberia until the summer of 1945. Furthermore, over 25,000 able-bodied residents from Karakalpakstan performed heavy labor in worker battalions in cities like Sverdlovsk, Perm, Gorky, and Orenburg. During World War II, from October 1941 to July 1, 1945, 164,382 wounded soldiers and officers were brought to Uzbekistan for treatment. After the victory, 5,520 people continued their treatment until the end of June 1945. Our people tried to fulfill all tasks in various directions during those difficult years, which testified to the patience and endurance of the Uzbek people. Despite the difficult socio-economic situation in the republic, the people of Uzbekistan actively participated in the restoration of territories liberated from fascists and provided material and spiritual assistance to their populations.

Selflessness in Agriculture: The war also dealt a major blow to the agricultural sector. With able-bodied men going to the front, fieldwork fell to women, the elderly, and children. Despite the difficult conditions, Uzbek women worked bravely in cultivating cotton, grain, and other agricultural crops. They plowed the land, sowed seeds, harvested crops, and made a significant contribution to providing food for the front and the population. In particular, the labor of women in cotton growing deserves special recognition. They achieved high yields, bringing significant income to the country's economy. Long working hours, few days off, hazardous production conditions, heavy physical labor, and domestic difficulties negatively affected the physical and mental state of women. Many women fell ill and lost their health. But despite such difficult conditions, they continued to conscientiously perform their duties.

CONCLUSION

Although Uzbek women demonstrated incomparable courage and selflessness in various sectors of the economy during the war years, their working conditions were extremely difficult and arduous. As a result of men going to the front, women were forced to perform heavy physical labor that was uncharacteristic for them. In industrial enterprises, they had to work for long hours, often in shifts, and deal with heavy machinery. Insufficient safety measures in the production process and a lack of necessary equipment seriously affected women's health. Despite the difficult conditions, they worked selflessly in all sectors of the economy, making a huge contribution to strengthening the front and the home front. The image of women during the war period is also vividly reflected in the works of Uzbek writers and poets. The courage, steadfastness, and selflessness of women are depicted with high reverence in the poems of





Zulfiya Israilova, Oybek's novel "Sacred Blood," and Abdulla Qahhor's stories.

The courage, steadfastness, and diligence of women will remain a school of inspiration for future generations. Their services are forever etched in the pages of history.

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