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**THE DOUBLE BURDEN PHENOMENON: THE CONTRIBUTION OF SOUTHERN
KAZAKHSTAN WOMEN TO VICTORY DURING THE WAR YEARS
(BASED ON ARCHIVE MATERIALS)**

Abstract

The article analyzes the social and labor role of women in South Kazakhstan during the Second World War (1941-1945). The study examined the “double burden” and revealed the consequences of women simultaneously carrying out industrial and domestic duties. Based on archival documents, it is proven that the role of women in society during the war years was of particular importance. In addition, the phenomenon of social mobility is considered. This phenomenon, which first emerged from the research of the Russian-American sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, provides a great opportunity to study the formation of the role of women in society during the war years. During the war years, women took on the work and duties of men who went to the front. As a result, their position in society increased, and a kind of vertical social mobility was formed. Through work in the rear, industrial activity, and participation in public organizations, women gained new status and prestige. At the same time, new opportunities for professional training opened up during the war years, and the dynamics of the social structure intensified. During the war years, women played an important role in the humanitarian and medical fields, so their work was of great importance not only in material terms, but also in moral terms.

Keywords: women's work, South Kazakhstan, World War II, Double burden, social mobility, home front.

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**THE DOUBLE BURDEN ФЕНОМЕНИ: СОҒЫС ЖЫЛДАРЫНДАҒЫ ОҢТҮСТІК
ҚАЗАҚСТАН ӘЙЕЛДЕРІНІҢ ЖЕҢІСТЕГІ ҮЛЕСІ
(АРХИВ МАТЕРИАЛДАРЫ НЕГІЗІНДЕ)**

Аңдатпа

Мақалада Екінші дүниежүзілік соғыс жылдарындағы (1941-1945) Оңтүстік Қазақстандағы әйелдердің әлеуметтік және еңбектегі рөлі талданады. Зерттеу барысында “Double burden” қосарланған еңбек жүктемесі қарастырылып әйелдердің өндірістік және тұрмыстық міндеттерді қатар алып жүруінің салдары анықталды. Архивтік құжаттар негізінде соғыс жылдарындағы әйелдердің қоғамдағы рөлі айрықша маңызға ие болғаны дәлелденіп отыр. Сонымен қатар әлеуметтік ұтқырлық құбылысы қарастырылады. Алғаш рет орыс-американдық әлеуметтанушы Питирим Сорокиннің зерттеулерінен туындаған бұл құбылыс соғыс жылдары әйелдердің қоғамдағы рөлінің қалыптасуын зерттеуге үлкен мүмкіндік береді. Соғыс жылдары фронтқа кеткен ерлердің жұмыстары мен міндеттерін әйел адамдар өз мойнына алды. Нәтижесінде олардың қоғамдағы орны жоғарлап, вертикалды әлеуметтік ұтқырлықтың бір түрі қалыптасты. Тылдағы еңбек, өндірістік қызмет және

қоғамдық ұйымдарға қатысу арқылы әйелдер жаңа мәртебе мен беделге ие болды. Сонымен қатар соғыс жылдары кәсіби даярлықтың жаңа мүмкіндіктері ашылып, әлеуметтік құрылымның динамикасы күшейді. Соғыс жылдары әйелдер гуманитарлық және медициналық салаларда маңызды рөл атқарды, сондықтан олардың еңбегі тек материалдық тұрғыдан емес, моральдық тұрғыдан да үлкен маңызға ие болды.

Кілт сөздер: әйел еңбегі, Оңтүстік Қазақстан, Екінші дүниежүзілік соғыс, Double burden, әлеуметтік ұтқырлық, тыл.

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ФЕНОМЕН THE DOUBLE BURDEN: ВКЛАД ЖЕНЩИН ЮЖНОГО КАЗАХСТАНА В ПОБЕДАХ В ГОДЫ ВОЙНЫ (ПО МАТЕРИАЛАМ АРХИВА)

Аннотация

В статье анализируется социально-трудовая роль женщин Южного Казахстана в годы Второй мировой войны (1941-1945). В исследовании рассматривается «двойное бремя» и раскрываются последствия одновременного выполнения женщинами производственных и домашних обязанностей. На основе архивных документов доказывается, что роль женщин в обществе в военные годы имела особое значение. Кроме того, рассматривается феномен социальной мобильности. Этот феномен, впервые возникший в исследованиях русско-американского социолога Питирима Сорокина, предоставляет прекрасную возможность для изучения становления роли женщин в обществе в военные годы. В военные годы женщины брали на себя работу и обязанности мужчин, ушедших на фронт. В результате их положение в обществе повысилось, и сформировалась своеобразная вертикальная социальная мобильность. Благодаря работе в тылу, промышленной деятельности и участию в общественных организациях женщины обрели новый статус и престиж. В то же время в военные годы открылись новые возможности для профессиональной подготовки, усилилась динамика социальной структуры. В годы войны женщины играли важную роль в гуманитарной и медицинской сферах, поэтому их труд имел огромное значение не только в материальном, но и в моральном плане.

Ключевые слова: женский труд, Южный Казахстан, Вторая мировая война, Double burden, социальная мобильность, тыл.

Introduction.

The history of war is often told through the lens of battles, political decisions and strategies. But the experiences of women are frequently overlooked. The World War II profoundly reshaped social and economic structures across the Soviet Union, including South Kazakhstan. Women faced “double burden” managing domestic responsibilities while simultaneously contributing wartime labor and production. Their efforts encompassed not only maintaining households in the absence of men but also participating in agriculture, industry, and other critical sectors supporting war effort. Archival sources provide vital evidence of women’s contributions and the challenges they endured.

Since the mid-20th century, one of the most important gender issues in society has been the double burden. It studies the simultaneous burden of women with professional and everyday family responsibilities. The term was first used by A. Hochschild, who described it as “a woman’s second job - the work spent on housework and child-rearing” [1, p. 43]. Feminist sociologists have argued that such a burden has negative consequences for women, in particular, on their health and psychological well-being [2, p. 58]. The double burden of the war years had a great impact on the psychological state of women. The complexity of the work and responsibility that was added to them requires in-depth analysis, according to archival data.

In research on women, it is better to pay attention to the changes in society that began to penetrate from the XIX-XX centuries. It is important to note the modernists, jadids in Central Asia. The jadids fought for equal rights for men and women in society, for equality. The jadidis have implemented reforms in the field of education and modernization processes in the field of education. Jadids paid special attention to the problem of women.

Ismail Gasprinsky is one of the founders of Jadidism and panturkism, and now it is important to mention his wife Zuhra Akchurina. In 1883, when the Terjiman newspaper began to publish in two languages, Russian and Tatar, Zuhra supported her husband. She translated newspaper publications into Tatar. When Gasprinsky was on trips, Zuhra was responsible for the work of the newspaper. She was the first journalist among Muslim women in Russia. In 1893, she opened her own school in Bakhchisarai. The school was for girls, it was in a program that taught in a new way. The school was run by Zuhra for about ten years. This means that new changes have begun to occur in society.

However, changes in society did not take place immediately. In the work of Mariana Kamp she wrote about the Hujum. It is assault or attack. And it was “the name that the Communist Party gave to its campaign, beginning in 1927, to change Uzbek women’s lives rapidly, to bring them into public life, paid work, education, and membership in the Party. The Hujum had a key symbol: unveiling. In 1927 and for some years afterward, the Communist Party called on Uzbek women to remove the paranji and chachvon, a combination head-and-body covering robe with horsehair face veil. Tragically, many women were murdered for unveiling. Fearing violence, thousands of women resumed wearing their paranjis and chachvons, abandoning them years later” [3, p. 11].

“All for the front, all for the victory” was the main dream of every Soviet citizen during the war years. And it was one of the most famous slogans in the Soviet Union during the war years. The slogan emphasized total mobilization, urging both soldiers and civilians to dedicate all resources, labor and energy to achieving victory over the enemy. So there was “if the front demands it, it will be fulfilled”. The level of patriotism among women in the republics of the Soviet Union was great [4, p. 25].

In the Soviet Union, posters and banners were a central tool of political communication and social mobilization. They allowed the state to convey ideological messages quickly to a broad audience, shaping public consciousness and promoting collective values such as patriotism and labor discipline. “Let's turn every Soviet factory into a fortress of socialist defense!” posters and banners like this with the slogan of the mass paramilitary campaign of Osoaviakhim could be found in the early 1930s on the territory of the largest enterprises. They were carried by Moscow workers at demonstrations near Red Square, this popular call was full of newspaper headlines, and speakers ended their speeches with it. Using the real facts of the worsening international situation, Soviet propaganda instilled the psychology of a “besieged fortress of socialism” opposing a hostile capitalist environment. The established title of “Fortress of Socialist Defense” was very honorable. The collectives of the enterprises fought for it, including through labor achievements. Among those awarded this title was the Moscow Electric Plant. In the early 1930s, unusual neon lamps appeared on the streets and squares of Soviet cities: a nickel-carved figure of Lenin was soldered into the bulb, symbolically illuminating the way to a future communist society [5, p. 11].

Materials and methods.

Most of the material is based on archival data, based on analytical research. The work of women in South Kazakhstan was analyzed using materials from the Turkestan Regional State Archive, Tolebi District State Archive and the Keles District State Archive. In addition, photographs were taken from The Central State Archive of Film, Photo Documents, and Sound Recording of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Saryagash District Museum of local lore, Turkestan region.

In writing this article, I used comparative historical methods, social scientific methods, and statistical methods, as well as biographical methods.

First, I use social scientific methods and statistical methods, because I collect, analyze, and interpret data in a meaningful way.

Second, I use comparative historical methods. Therefore, I consider it appropriate to use archival data, the works of other historians, biographies, memoirs, or diaries. Also I used quantitative data cause it is numbers-based, countable, measurable. It was important to collect data on women. And qualitative data was important to this article, cause it is interpretation-based and descriptive. I used biographical method, cause we also can call it “method of life stories” and it was established as one of the main research methods. I mentioned in the article that we used photography, which is also one of the research methods. Photographs are becoming an increasingly valuable tool in historical research, providing a unique glimpse into the past. As primary sources, they can serve as evidence of the social, cultural, political, and economic conditions of a particular time and place. Using photographs as a historical research method requires careful consideration of context, meaning, and interpretation.

Discussion.

Despite the state's mass mobilization of women and the fact that approximately one million Soviet women served at the front, official discourse focused solely on the labor contributions of women in the home front [9, p.73]. The memoirs of women front-line soldiers reflect the material and everyday factors of the conditions of front-line life (food, service conditions, sanitary and hygienic conditions) and the peculiarities of women's assimilation of the culture of military life, which were extremely complex. Women's perceptions of frontline reality can be seen in their descriptions of everyday military conditions. Analyzing the source material and interviews with female front-line soldiers, it becomes clear that adapting to military life was extremely difficult. The women's recollections reveal an indelible trauma that has not faded even many years after the end of the war [9, p. 75].

Women not only actively defended their interests, but also joined organizations to develop a program for the women's movement. Among female workers and peasants, women's organizations received active support, although not massive. The women's department itself, according to Carol Hayden, emerged as a result of constant pressure from a small group of women from the party environment. Despite the fact that the October Revolution for the first time took decisive steps to overcome discrimination against women, their inclusion in the revolutionary coalition was not easy and convenient. From the very beginning, the Bolsheviks viewed “feminism” - the idea of creating women's organizations that protect the interests of women - with distrust and hostility. For them, not only the “bourgeois feminism” of the privileged classes was unacceptable, but also the feminism of women from working-class neighborhoods [6, p. 50]. Alexandra Kollontai almost single-handedly began the struggle for a separate women's organization. Subsequently, other women joined her, including women's activists, women's workers, and household workers (women who worked to improve and transform everyday life). Not much is known about these groups, but reports of meetings in the 1920s on women's organizations indicate that most of the women in these groups were poorly educated, and many were illiterate. Peasant women (59%) participated mainly in local meetings organized by women's departments, with a smaller number of female workers (14%), employees (8%) and housewives (10.5%). Approximately one in three was illiterate. Many party members, including women, often treated members of the women's department with disdain, believing that they were “politically retarded” and “preoccupied with trifles”. One Communist derisively called them “the least skilled workers in the party apparatus” [6, p. 51].

Since the beginning of the war, significant loads have been given to many states within the USSR. In addition to heavy industry brought from the West, there was great unrest in the popular peasantry. Working hours have become longer and the provision of rest has decreased. [7, p.104]. It is clear that the heavy loads on the population during the war also had a great impact on their psychological state and health. From the side of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan, women were involved in agricultural training, the number of which in October 1941 exceeded 10,000 women. In July-October 1941, 40,000 women completed the training of tractor drivers, combine harvesters and assistants, and 3,000 women drivers [7, p. 105].

It was important to survive every day in the rear. Women and children had a great contribution to the victory, they took the place of men in the rear and in the factories. This situation was also recognized by Stalin. Home-fire was also the main responsibility of women [8, p. 24].



Figure 1. Volunteers of the People's Militia leaving for the front at the beginning of the war. September 1941.

The USSR's human losses in the war amounted to approximately 27 million people killed and prematurely died. One in six people in the country perished. The cost of the destroyed state property alone amounted to hundreds of billions of rubles. Compared to the rate of capital investment, an entire five-year period was wasted. The task was restoration. Industrial production in the year of victory failed to reach the 1940 level. Civilian production suffered particularly. Villagers lived for years without soap. The main restoration work took place during the Fourth Five-Year Plan, 1946–1950. The most difficult period was the beginning of the Five-Year Plan: conversion (transferring technologies from military to civilian goods) was required. Moreover, some of the factories evacuated to the Urals, Siberia, and Kazakhstan were returned to the center of the country, forcing the machines to be shut down and relocated. In 1946, industrial production not only failed to increase, but even declined. But production began to increase as early as 1947. The restoration of the national economy is considered essentially complete by the end of the Fourth Five-Year Plan, the regions most affected by the war had reached pre-war levels by 1953. Stalin set new goals: even more coal, more metal, more oil - just as in the 1930s [10, p. 11].



Figure 2. Pupil of the school of labour reserves working at a ball bearing plant. 1942.

Important role during the war. The role of women in World War II cannot be discredited by anyone, whether on the front lines or in the home front. This ranged from operating equipment to working in medicine, industry, and filling jobs that women abandoned when men went to the front. Despite women's enormous contribution to the war, only one country openly supported women's participation at the front - the Soviet Union. It became a pioneer for most countries in including women in the war, and this bore fruit when Soviet women played a vital role in the allied victory and the defense of the Eastern Front. At the same time, this was a significant victory for the female population over patriarchal notions of war, setting an example for the rest of the world to follow [11].

In Mark Harrison's book emphasizes that economic factors such as GDP, population, and territory were key to mobilization potential. He presents a quantitative and historical analysis of how the economy influenced resource mobilization, military strength, and postwar development. The key to victory in war lay not only in initial economic strength but also in the ability to mobilize human and material resources. Particular attention is paid to the quality of mobilization - the training of the workforce and the technological level of production. [12, p. 22-25].

In the preface and early monologue cycles, Alexievich emphasizes that women's memory was long silenced. After the war, women were encouraged to remain silent, for example, to "not frighten children". The author argues that women's testimony reveals hidden aspects of war. In numerous monologues dedicated to the early years of the war, women describe not strategic operations, but the physical and emotional experience of war. "A man, he could endure it. He's a man, after all. But how a woman could, I don't know. Now, whenever I think about it, I'm overcome with horror, but back then, I could do anything: sleep next to the dead man, shoot by myself, see the blood. I distinctly remember the smell of blood being especially strong in the snow... I'm talking about it, and I feel sick already... But back then, it was okay, I could do anything. I started telling my granddaughter, but my daughter-in-law scolded me: why should a girl know such things? This woman, she said, is growing up... mother is growing up... And I have no one to tell. That's how we protect them, and then we're surprised our children know so little about us..." (Tamara Mikhailovna Stepanova, sergeant, sniper) [13, p.2]. In this book, we can understand not only the events, but also the psychological consequences of the war, it is not just a collection of documentary evidence, but also a profound study of human memory and its place in history.

Filtzer emphasizes that immediately after the war, the working class found itself in dire straits. Despite official slogans of victory, the real situation of the working class was characterized by poverty, chronic fatigue, and extreme physical exhaustion. One of Filtzer's key conclusions is that

in the postwar years, the state returned to the rigid labor management model characteristic of the 1930s. [14, p. 21]. It's demonstrates that the Soviet government sought to restore industry not by improving working conditions, but by tightening discipline and mobilization methods. Thus, the Stalinist system was not destroyed by the war, on the contrary, it was confirmed as “effective” in terms of governing the state.

One of the Sorokin’s most important claims is that mobility increases during social crises [15, pp. 389-392]. This aligns historical evidence: WWI, the Great Patriotic war, revolutions, greatly expanded women’s access to new sectors of labor and public life. Although Sorokin did not explicitly address gender, his theoretical model helps explain us, why women historically experienced low vertical mobility, why crises temporarily increase opportunities for women. Applying Sorokin to gender studies demonstrates the adaptability and lasting relevance of his theory.



Figure 3. Taldy-Kurgan region. 1944. Tekeli mine. Women construction workers laying a narrow-gauge railway. [TsGA KFDZ RK. 2-37998]

Results.

While women had already assumed expanded roles in industry and agriculture, the 1942 directive formalized their involvement in military structures. Chimkent as a major center mobilized the largest number of women. Smaller districts such as Arys, Tulkubas and Sayram also participated in mobilization efforts, highlighting the comprehensive and nationwide nature of wartime labor redistribution.

Table 1.1 Based on Turkestan Regional State Archive [16, p.85]

District	Number of women mobilized
Chimkent	115 women
Arys district	10 women
Tulkubas district	15 women.
Sayram district	10 women

The mobilization of workforce during the World War II led to a substantial increase in the participation of women in various sectors , particularly agriculture and industry. In South Kazakhstan, archival records demonstrate that women assumed crucial roles in collective farms (kolkhozes), maintaining production under challenging wartime conditions. Recognition of their

labor, including state awards, reflects both the importance of their contributions and broader socio-political efforts to honor achievements.

Data were collected from documents and protocols from the Saryagash district of South Kazakhstan.

Table 1.2 Female recipients of the medal “For Valiant Labor in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945” [17, p. 1]

Worker name	Job position	Collective farm
Amanzholova Rapiya	Brigade Leader (Zvenevoi)	Kurama Kolkhoz
Alimbaeva Khadisha	Brigade Leader (Zvenevoi)	Lenin-Zhol Kolkhoz
Alimbaeva Sabahat	Tractor Operator	Lenin-Zhol Kolkhoz
Baitokova Safiya	Brigade Head	Socializm Kolkhoz
Baymatova Alima	Collective Farm worker	Zhanatalap Kolkhoz

Female leadership in collective farms ensured continuity of production during male labor shortages, highlighting the economic importance of women during the war.

The Order of the Badge of Honor was one of the Soviet Union’s significant civilian awards, granted and sustained excellence in labor. Its conferment upon a female brigade leader indicates the exceptional level of contribution. Both of them held positions as brigade leaders, suggesting that women were not merely participants but leaders responsible for organizing and supervising labor processes in their kolkhozes.

Table 1.3 Female recipients of the “The Order of the Badge of Honor” [18, p.6].

Worker name	Job position	Collective Farm
Kystaubayeva Zhaksula	Brigade Leader (Zvenovoi)	Stalin Kolkhoz
Taskhodzhaeva Nadya	Brigade Leader (Zvenovoi)	Kirov Kolkhoz

During the wartime agricultural production in the Soviet Union relied heavily on the labor of women. Shepherds and milkmaids were indispensable to food production. Their work ensured the steady supply of wool, meat and dairy products for military front.

Table 1.4 Female recipients of the medal “For Valiant Labor in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945” from Khodja-Tugai [19, p. 1].

Worker name	Job position	Workplace
Adilbekova Raikhan	Shepherd	Khodja-Tugai Karakul State Farm
Azhenova Uldun	Worker	Khodja-Tugai Karakul State Farm
Andamasova Khaltash	Milkmaid	Khodja-Tugai Karakul State Farm
Ashirova Kusnai	Shepherd	Khodja-Tugai Karakul State Farm
Bardybekova Zubira	Milkmaid	Khodja-Tugai Karakul State Farm
Zhamankulova Ulbolsyn	Milkmaid	Khodja-Tugai Karakul State Farm
Ibraimova Ainash	Milkmaid	Khodja-Tugai Karakul State Farm
Myrzabekova Aziza	Worker	Khodja-Tugai Karakul State Farm

During the study materials from the Saryagash district, I identified a record of a war veteran named Akima Akzholova who served as a nurse during the World War II. In the postwar years she moved to Almaty.



Figure 4. . Saryagash . The photograph depicts Akzholova Akima during her school years together with her parents brother and neighbors. [From the Saryagash District Museum of local lore, Turkestan region]



Figure 5. Akzholova Akima [From the Saryagash District Museum of local lore, Turkestan region]

Coal mining has historically been a high-risk industry with frequent incidents caused by falling materials, heavy machinery and manual labor operations. Female workers were increasingly employed in the Soviet coal industry during the 1940's, yet their occupational risks and experiences remain underexplored. The cases highlight the specific experiences of women in coal industry:

- female workers were exposed to physical dangers
- during the 1940's women had limited occupational protections, increasing stress and potential for long-term disability

- even experienced female workers, such as Gregunova A., were not immune to accidents, pointing to gaps in safety training and protective measures for women
- workplace injuries could limit women's ability to perform duties, affecting professional advancement and social status.

Table 1.5 Data were collected from Tole bi State Archive records [20, p.12] and accident reports of the Lengerugol Trust [21, p.19]

Worker name	Age	Job position	Work Experience	Incident description
Umarova Khalinat	28	Face miner (Post No.2)	Not specified	Injured during routine face mining operations
Posvetova Frosena	27	Coal Miner	Not specified	Injured by a large falling lump of coal
Gregunova Alexandra	39	Hoist Machine Operator	Since 1941	Hand injury sustained during hoist machine operation

In the Soviet coal industry, underground workers were often recognized for long-term service with one-time awards. These awards were not only a form of financial compensation but also served as a measure of acknowledgment of dedication and experience.

Table 1.6 Data were extracted from protocols and payroll records documenting [22, p.197], [23, p.246], [24, p.265], [25, p.283], [26, p.440], [27, p.439] one-time service awards for underground coal workers.

Worker Name	Year of Birth	Work Location	Length of Service
Gamina Maria Kuprilnova	1918	Section 4	1 year 10 months
Makhotina Nina Illarionovna	1926	Section 5	4 year 2 months
Sinyatkina Evdokia Andreevna	1916	Section 5	1 year 6 months
Bolotova Maria Andreevna	1928	Section 6	2 year 6 months
Kovalenko Ekaterina Denisovna	1926	Section 3	1 year
Matrosova Olga Petrovna	1916	Section 3	1 year

The records illustrate several key points:

- women working underground were formally acknowledged for their service, indicating their integral role in coal production
- award eligibility varied with service period ranging from under 2 years to over 4 years, short-time workers were also recognized, suggesting that any dedicated contribution was valued
- the awards were distributed across multiple sections, reflecting a structured approach to workforce management and equitable recognition.

Conclusion.

In conclusion, the archival materials examined in this study provide picture of the expanding roles and significant contributions of women in South Kazakhstan during the war years. The documented numbers of mobilized women demonstrate that the state systemically integrated women into both industrial and military structures to compensate for wartime labor shortages. Women's high-level state distinctions underscores the essential role of women in maintaining agricultural productivity, particularly in collective farms and state farms across the Saryagash and Keles districts.

The archival evidence confirms that women in South Kazakhstan were indispensable to the wartime labor force and played a vital role in sustaining industrial output, military support operations. Their contributions were not only practical but also nationally recognized through formal awards, demonstrating the broader Soviet effort to acknowledge and institutionalize women's labor achievements. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of gendered labor dynamics in wartime Soviet society and highlights the importance of regional archival sources in reconstructing this historical narrative.

The role of women during the war years is historically significant. The results of the study show that, in addition to fulfilling family responsibilities, women were actively involved in production, agriculture, and work at the front. This situation made them a clear example of the double burden phenomenon. Based on archival data, the work of women in South Kazakhstan during the war years was comprehensively analyzed. The experience of war gave women the opportunity to take on new social roles and responsibilities. The experience of women during the war years revealed the historical roots of gender inequality, the problem of valuing women's work, and the dependence of society on women during the war. Although women experienced physical and psychological difficulties, their role was a key component of the victory in the war.

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