

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRY (1941-1945)**Ismoilova Feruza Ibragimovna**

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Abstract:

This article examines the role of Uzbek women in industry during World War II. The Second World War was one of the most catastrophic historical events, leaving profound consequences on a global scale. It was precisely to prevent such devastating outcomes and other political conflicts that the United Nations was established. Humanity suffered immense losses due to this war, the horrors of which remain etched in the memories of nations to this day. These historical processes not only involved political confrontations and battles on the frontlines but also had a negative impact on the internal life of countries worldwide. Moreover, to some extent, this war has influenced the political conflicts occurring in various regions of the world today.

Keywords: Women, industrial enterprises, activity, agriculture, production, grain farming, evacuation, raw materials, blacksmiths, workshops.

Introduction

The study of literature on the history of the industrial sector in Uzbekistan during World War II and the development of historiography on this topic reveal that the history of Uzbekistan's industry during the war years has been one of the central subjects of researchers' attention.

During the war years, the speeches and articles of the republic's leaders, as well as party and local council officials, highlighted the nature and essence of the war. They also addressed issues such as mobilizing the people of Uzbekistan against fascism and strengthening the front through efforts on the home front.

Although no large industrial enterprises were built or put into operation in the Kashkadarya region during the war, and no enterprises were evacuated from western regions, local light industry sectors developed rapidly. Numerous workshops were constructed and launched. In the early stages of the war, significant attention was paid to increasing industrial production for the front in regional, city, and district centers. All necessary resources—workforce, fuel, and raw materials—were efficiently allocated to ensure enterprises operated at full capacity. Local industrial enterprises utilized internal capabilities to master the production of various new goods. The adoption of new sectors and the restructuring of economic plans to align with the needs of the front led to significant transformations in many industrial enterprises.

Despite the increasingly difficult circumstances—intensified enemy attacks and a sharp decline in the supply of equipment and materials—industry was redirected toward military production. Weapons, military gear, uniforms, footwear, and other industrial goods became as crucial as military hardware for the active army. These items played a vital role in enhancing the army's combat capability and strength.

In the Kashkadarya region, which had a poorly developed industrial base and virtually no heavy industry, significant attention was paid to adapting light and local industries to wartime demands. As in other parts of the country, the production of consumer goods—essentially peacetime products—sharply declined. Local industrial enterprises, including sewing, footwear, and other sectors, were repurposed for military production.

Pre-War Industrial Development

Even before the war, a powerful industrial base had been established in the eastern regions of the country, including the Central Asian republics. The Uzbek SSR developed key industries such as metalworking, machine building, chemicals, and textiles. By 1940, industrial output in the republic had increased 7.2 times compared to 1913, electricity production 150 times, oil extraction 11 times, and metalworking and machine building 63 times.

During the war, production in the republic's metalworking industry quadrupled, while machine-building output grew 11.4 times.

Challenges in Agricultural Production

With the outbreak of war, the material and technical base of agricultural production weakened significantly. Due to wartime realities, the number of available vehicles in Machine and Tractor Stations (MTS), collective farms, and state farms steadily declined. The delivery of tractors and other agricultural machinery was halted, and the supply of spare parts, fertilizers, and fuel was drastically reduced. As a result:

- Manual labor became excessively dominant.
- The use of draft animals (horses and oxen) increased.
- Fields were often plowed with cows, and simple tools like wooden plows (*omoch*) were widely used.

Industrial Output in Kashkadarya

In 1942, Kashkadarya had:

- 309 mills
- 408 oil presses
- 4 brick and tile factories

- 77 blacksmith workshops
- 46 workshops producing spare parts for transport

By 1943, the numbers changed slightly:

- 352 mills
- 408 oil presses
- 66 blacksmith workshops
- 36 spare parts workshops

However, working conditions in these enterprises did not improve significantly compared to 1942, a trend that persisted in subsequent years. Accelerating military production was hindered by shortages of raw materials, electricity, and skilled labor, leading to downtime and poor product quality.

Increased Efforts and Patriotic Initiatives

Despite these challenges, from 1943 onward, especially after the region gained more autonomy, some improvements were seen in light and local industries. Capital investment in local industry increased sharply, allowing Kashkadarya's industrial collectives to boost production.

Notable examples of wartime patriotism:

- The Bukhara Footwear Factory switched to military production and fulfilled its six-month plan by 115%.
- Women railway workers in Kogon—On July 10, 1941, 100 women in Kogon quickly mastered trades like mechanics, lathe operators, drillers, signal operators, and dispatchers, replacing men who had gone to the front.

In Bukhara's industrial enterprises, the number of workers grew as housewives joined the workforce. A large number of women were mobilized into industrial jobs in a short time.

Local industrial enterprises produced and sent to the front more than 300 types of goods, including metal products, spoons, utensils, and cast-iron items. In the first half of 1941, local enterprises in the Bukhara region manufactured goods worth 1,893,300 rubles. Just five months after the war began, production surged to 2,577,500 rubles.

Workers in local industries exceeded their production quotas:

- G'ozi Sobirov and the Ashurovs, workers at the Karmana Metal Products Plant, fulfilled their norms by 235%.
- Sharipova Laylo, a master seamstress at the Bukhara hat and headwear workshop, achieved 200% of her production target.

By 1943, local industries in Bukhara reached over 10 million rubles in output. In addition to military supplies, they provided 280,000 rubles' worth of metal products to Bukhara's urban enterprises. The Bicycle Plant (Velozavod) team supplied:

- 86,700 rubles' worth of metal parts to city factories in the first quarter of 1944.
- 302 types of tractor and machine spare parts to regional agricultural enterprises over five months in 1944.

Conclusion

From the very first days of the war, special attention was given to boosting the production capacity of local enterprises. Retooling industrial plants for wartime needs, supplying them with new equipment, and ensuring skilled labor became critical tasks. These efforts played a key role in securing victory.

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