The role of Kazakhstan women in the years of the Great Patriotic War
(based on materials of Central Kazakhstan)

The years 1941-1945 will live long in the memory of our people. The Great Patriotic War became the most tragic page in the history of the twentieth century. One of the most terrible in consequences and the most heroic in the feats and sacrifice of the Soviet people page of history. Women, along with men, children and old people, carried all the burdens of the Great War on their shoulders; they wrote many glorious pages in the chronicle of war. Women at the front were involved almost everywhere, they were doctors, drivers, pilots, snipers, signalwomen, scouts, reporters, gunners, tank crews, mechanics, served in the infantry. Women actively participated in the partisan movement. The article is devoted to the study of the role of women based on materials of Central Kazakhstan, fighting participants during the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945. Their multifaceted activities and contributions to the Victory during the Great Patriotic War. The article considers the individual Kazakh women's fates on the front roads of the war. Karaganda women during the Great Patriotic War showed themselves as spirit-resistant patriots, inspiring soldiers for feats in the name of the Motherland.

Keywords: Great Patriotic War, history of Kazakhstan, women, front, Central Kazakhstan, Karaganda girls, heroes, fighting feats.

The past days will not erase the glorious feats of the Soviet people from the face of the earth; the further history goes, the more significant become the events of those days. During the war, Kazakhstan sent 1,200 thousand people to the front line, including 82 thousand communists (2/3 of the pre-war numbers), 242 thousand Komsomol members (almost 70 %) and 5183 women and girls, as well as over 700 thousand in the labor army and special construction units. Is it a lot or a little? As a result of the census of 1939, 6.2 million people lived in Kazakhstan. Even taking into account the deployment in the republic of approximately 1.5 million evacuated residents of the front line and repressed peoples, the percentage of mobilization turned out to be very large [1; 450].

Kazakhstanis also participated in battles from the western border to the Pacific, where they had to destroy militaristic Japan. The number of people from Kazakhstan that took part in the war was 1,196,164, including in the labour army 700,000 Kazakhstanis, 4 cavalry regiments, 12 divisions and 50 different regiments. Thus, the human resources accounted for 60 % [2; 230–236].

During these difficult days, all the strength and power, men and women, regardless of age, nationality, non-party members and party members, Komsomol members, non-Komsomol members were all united to defend the Motherland[3; 5, 4; 71]. Here it’s necessary to note that the military service in the USSR was an honorable duty not only for men, but also for women. The duty of women to military service in the USSR was recorded in an article 13 of the «Law on Universal Military Obligation», adopted in September 1939 [5]. According to this article, the People's Commissariats of Defense and the Navy were given the right to take into the army and the fleet women who had medical, veterinary and special technical training, as well as to attract them to training sessions. It was specifically noted that during wartime, women who had such training could be drafted into the army and navy for auxiliary and special service. According to an article 31 of the same Law, women aged from 19 to 50 years taken on record were included in the second category reserve [6; 4].

Based on the resolutions of the State Defense Committee, which was established on June 30, 1941 [7; 59–77], mass mobilization of women was carried out on March 25, and April 13 and 23, 1942 in order to serve in air defense forces, communications, internal security, on military highways, in the Navy and the Air Force, and in military communications. Girls with good health, who had to be at least 18 years old, were subject to the mobilization. The process of mobilization was carried out under the control of the Central Committee of the All-Union Leninist Communist Youth Union and local Komsomol organizations. At the same time, everything was taken into account: education (preferably not less than 5 classes), membership in the Komsomol, health status, absence of children. A lot of the girls were volunteers. However, there were also cases of unwillingness to serve in the ranks of the Soviet army. Such girls were sent to the place of conscription.
The first mobilization in the army ranks was in 1941. There are no exact figures on the number of those called up; the archive contains the lists of draftees in the documents of the Regional Military Commissariat [8; 76–92]. In general, the mass mobilization of women in the ranks of the army was carried out from April 1942 to May 1942, at that time 300 thousand women were mobilized to the air defense forces, just in June-July 1942, 30 thousand women were sent to the rear of the front and fleet, and in October 1942, the State Defense Committee issued a decree on the mobilization of 25 thousand women in the air-naval fleet. During the war, 5 mobilizations were carried out among female Komsomol members [6; 3].

During the years of the Great Patriotic War, along with all the people, Soviet women both at the front and in the rear showed unprecedented heroism. At the front in different periods of the war fought from 800 thousand up to 1 million women, hundreds of thousands of them fought against the invaders in partisan formations, over 15 million women worked in the rear of the country, making the military-economic potential for victory. Just in Kazakhstan, among volunteers, who submitted applications for conscription, 40% of them were women [9; 3].

The contribution to the Victory, made by Kazakhstan women, among them by the women of Central Kazakhstan, is invaluable, they all stood up to defend the Motherland. The population of Central Kazakhstan was 442,501 people, of which in the Karaganda region on January 1, 1941 accounted for 323,001 people, in the Zhezkazgan region the number was 119,500 people. In general, in the Karaganda region, the number of mobilized to the front from June 22, 1941 to the end of 1945 accounted for 44,956 people [10; 35].

Unfortunately, according to the documents of the state archive of the Karaganda region, it is almost impossible to track the number of all our people, who were sent to the frontline and mobilized as volunteers, moreover, it is extremely difficult to track the number of women of Central Kazakhstan mobilized to the front. From the first months of the war, the number of soldiers mobilized to the front was concealed in documents of military office, therefore, it is quite difficult to trace these data on the materials of the regional archive. In these difficult days, women of all ages, professions, nationalities stood up to defend the Fatherland, all to whom the honor and independence of the Motherland was valuable. It is worth to say that according to V.S. Murmantsova, among 25 thousand volunteers’ applications, received in 1941 from residents of the Karaganda region of Kazakhstan with a request to send to the front, over 10 thousand applications came from women [9; 5].

Documents from the funds of the State Archive of the Karaganda region (SAKR) indicate that by the end of 1941 more than 25 thousand applications had been submitted to the military commissariats of the Karaganda Region, 10 thousand of which belonged to girls and women [11; 7]. In August 1941, the Lenin military office of the Karaganda region received the following applications «to voluntarily serve in the ranks of the Red Army and send to the front: middle initial composition of 6 people; junior initial composition of 9 people; ordinary composition of 320; not fit for military service of 146; female of 125 people» [12; 20].

The first military units started to form in the early years of the war. This was specific not only to Kazakhstan, such actions were carried out throughout the country. According to the orders of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) and the State Committee of Defense of the USSR, the ranks of the Red Army had to be urgently filled. People of the Karaganda region formed 387-th Perekop Infantry Division, 72-nd Krasnogradskaya Krasnoznamyonnaya Infantry Division, 310-th Novgorod Infantry Division. The 387-th Infantry Division was formed in Akmolinsk. It consisted of people of conscription age from the Karaganda, Akmola, and Kustanai regions. It fought on the Bryansk front, near Moscow, on the Stalingrad direction, participated in the storming of the Perekop shaft (for which it received the honorary title of Perekopskaya), freed Sevastopol, and took part in the capture of Bucharest [13; 66]. The 72-nd Krasnogradskaya Krasnoznamyonnaya Infantry Division was forming as the 29th Infantry Division from the mobilized residents of the Karaganda and Akmola regions in late 1941–1942 and fought in the 64th Army in defensive battles near Stalingrad, in the Battle of Kursk, in the battles for Kharkov, etc. In 1943 «Krasnogradskaya» division received its honorary name for liberation from the occupants the city of Krasnograd [14; 135]. In the summer of 1941 residents of the Karaganda, Akmola, Kustanai, Turgai and Zhezkazgan regions were conscripted to the 310-th the Novgorod Lenin’s Order Krasnoznamyonnaya Infantry Division. The division fought on the outskirts of Leningrad, in the battles near Novgorod received its honorary title «Novgorod», liberated Karelia, participated in the East Pomeranian and Berlin operations [15; 143, 144].

Karaganda people defended Moscow, Leningrad, Stalingrad, participated in the Battle of Kursk, liberated Ukraine, Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Czechoslovakia.
The heroism of Soviet women surprised not only their contemporaries, it still delights us. In fact, every third person who submitted an application to the frontline in our region were girls and women. Every fifth, who submitted an application to the front for the Lenin military office, were girls and women. In May 1942, 50 girls, graduates from one school in Karaganda fought on different fronts of the Great Patriotic War and this case is unique in the history of the region. Among them are the following volunteers: Rakhila Yeralina, Dameli Zhakeeva, Lyubov Vasina-Tsapлина, Ksenia Gorbunova, Raisa Kuzmenko-Kutishcheva, Taiisya Lytzar, Nadezhda Borisova-Bolshakova, Agrafena and Elena Anishchenko, Anna Kornienko, Evdokiya Sadmanova, Maria Ososkova, Zeyrova Osteyina, Elena Anastina, Anna Anishchenko, Maria Zueva, Valya Zyrenkova, Valya Sviridova, Anna Klientova, Maria Zhuravleva, Pelageya Gabich, Anastasiia Sgrabilova, Anna Golubeva, Lyubov Tsybina, Elena Yakhnova, Nina Ivleva and others. Their names can be found in the lists of the personnel of the Stalingrad, Kalinin, North-Western, Belorussian, Ukrainian fronts, some have ended their service on the liberated territory of Germany. After the war, many returned to Karaganda [16; 88–140].

The whole families went to the frontline. From the Anishchenko family, the three sisters from Karaganda at once went voluntarily to the front: Anishchenko Agrafena, Anishchenko Anna and Anishchenko Elena [17; 83].

At the same time, 30 volunteer girls from Balkhash went to the frontline. Not all of them returned from the fronts of World War II. In the Book of Memory of the Karaganda Region (according to data known until 1998) is given the death toll (17,679 people) on the fronts of World War II (without the former Zhezkazgan region), of which 16 are women [18–20].

As already was noted, it is difficult to systematically track the process of mobilization in the Karaganda region by months or years in the documents of the regional military office. The vast majority of statistical materials are encrypted with special codes, which makes it impossible to read them. However, the available archival documents allow us to continue to study the Great Patriotic War and the contribution of our countrymen, including women, to the Great Victory. Many of those who went to the front were not able to see this glorious Victory.

Women accounted for up to 80 percent of fighters in communications units. They worked as a telephonist, telegraph operators, radio operators, linear supervisors, delivered mail to the subunits, they did everything that had influence on the decision of large and small military operations.

Marshal of the Soviet Union, V.I. Chuykov, commander of the 62-nd army, who fought for Stalingrad, wrote about how faithfully the signalwomen carried out the order of the commander. The commanders were confident that under all conditions the connection would be provided. «When the artillery and mortars fired on this point, bombs fell from airplanes, enemies surrounded position, women still would not leave without an order, even if they are death threat» [21; 133].

During the war, intelligence played a huge role. The success of battles depended on how good was insight into the enemy, location of his fire system, the number of troops on the front line and in the rear, his intentions, action plans. All these data the military command could get through intelligence. Women in intelligence build up themselves physically, studied military arts, types of weapons and tactics of the enemy, mastered the art of radio communications, mastered public health, were ready for any ordeals. One of the few female intelligence officers during the war was Yeralina Rakhila from Central Kazakhstan [16; 12].

Thousands of Soviet women served in the Air Force. For example, according to V.S. Murmantsova in 1944 in the 13th Air Army of the Trans-Baikal Front there were 1,749 women, in the 10th Air Army of the Far Eastern Front over 3000, and as part of the 4th Air Army of the 2nd Belorussian Front, which included the 4th Guards women's aviation regiment - 4376 women, of which 237 are officers, 862 are sergeants. And it should be noted that for the first time in the history of the Soviet Air Force, when aviation regiments were created, consisting entirely of women: the 46th (formerly 588th) Guards Air Regiment of night bombers, the last fires inflicted on the enemy was near Berlin; The 125th (formerly 587th) Guards Aviation Regiment of daytime bombers, which fought from Stalingrad to East Prussia and the 588th Fighter Women’s Aviation Regiment of Air Defense. Like all the wars of the Air Force, the women of the aviation regiments fought bravely against the enemy. Among them were Karaganda women: a gunner-radio operator Dameli Zhakeeva who flew 360 aircraft, including: IL-2 - 275, PE-2 - 85 times, motorists, guards sergeant Anishchenko Agrafena and Gorbunova Kseniya, Anna Klientova (Balykina) was aircraft engineer, Lyubov Vasina-Tsapлина was a master of aviation weapons and Raisa Kuzmenko-Kutishcheva, who served in the 659th Fighter Regiment [16, 22; 12]
The most significant role in terms of quantity and contribution among other qualifications played female medical workers. During the years of the Great Patriotic War, the work of medical workers was especially significant in the USSR; there were about 40,000 women among those awarded with orders and medals. Out of the total number of doctors, of which there were about 700 thousand in the army, almost 300 thousand were women (42 %), and among surgeons the female proportion was 43.4 %. Women (paramedics, sisters, medical instructors) made up the majority, it was them who made up more than 80 %. Among the doctors and nurses were kazakh girls, Karaganda women our countrywomen, especially there were many females in the list of called up medical workers [9; 6; 7].

The Central Women's Sniper School prepared for the front 1061 snipers and 407 instructors of the sniper case. School graduates at the front killed 11,280 enemy officers and soldiers. There were snipers among the veterans of Karaganda, one of them was Maria Efimovna Shinkevich, a graduate of the Central Female School of Snipers [23; 166].

Among the girls and women of Central Kazakhstan, there are those, who during the Great Patriotic War mastered male professions with men, who fought in different parts, in different types of troops, and mastered military equipment in a short time, among them were pilots, tankmen, radio operators, scouts, and partisans.

Many participant women of the Great Patriotic War were not born in Central Kazakhstan, fate connected them with Kazakhstan in the post-war years. But our land has become their Fatherland, their home, and their fate is closely intertwined with the fate of our region. Among them: the Hero of the Soviet Union, Vera Khoruzhaya, who worked in the city of Balkhash [24; 115], the participants of the Resistance and partisan movements Elizaveta Gelfond, Vera Moskaleva, Galina Petrova, a scout woman Evdokia Zhirnyak, Nina Malanina, Maria Malysheva, Julia Karpachan; a translator Serafimna Ponomareva [12, 3], signalers Lyubov Nikerovala, Galina Egorovna, Valentina Tyrurina, Marina Reveguk, Nadezhda Chumak, Natalia Golub, Galina Peletskene; radio operators Margarita Kovalenko, Elena Bolotina; machine gunners Maria Belikova, Evdokia Belova; doctors Rakhima Kushkimbaeva, Nina Sorokin; nurses Valentina Alekseeva, Lyudmila Anto novna, Maria Gassan, Maria Gurinova, Alexandra Korovina, Nadezhda Smirnova, Sofia Iva cheva; aviation officers Elena Minava; a driver Anna Kashina, medical instructor Nina Shulgina; hospital attendant Olga Orlova; anti-aircraft gunners Maria Artemyeva, Valentina Danilko, Maria Potapova and others [15, 16, 22, 23].

Heroic feats of 1571 Kazakh women who fought during the Great Patriotic War in the difficult days for the country are well known. And many of them did not return from the front line [25; 70–72].

During the Great Patriotic War, Kazakh girls showed vivid examples of endurance and perseverance. On the front lines of the Great Patriotic War were famous tank crews, natives of Central Kazakhstan. Tank girls became living legends. These are female tankers Kulzhamil T kalkanbaeva and junior sergeant Zamal Bayt asova, scout Kulken Tokbergenova, radio operator and machine gunner Zhamila Baysenbaeva.

On August 22, 1944, an article about the tank crew of Kazakh girls from the Karaganda region for the first time appeared in the regional newspaper «Sovet i Karagandy». A fighter Topatay Zhunusov wrote about them with admiration in 1944 to the regional newspaper, his field post 28054 - O [26]. In the battles for the liberation of Soviet Lithuania distinguished herself a female tanker, junior sergeant Zamal Baytasova. She destroyed several earth-and-timber emplacements and bunkers of the fascists, participating in the breakthrough of the German defense when destroying the beautiful cities of Lithuania. A lot of fighting feats were to the girls' names, only thanks to the efforts of Kulzhamili Talkanbaeva in just one battle five enemy firing points were destroyed. A female tanker Kulken Tokbergenova showed heroism in battles, she was awarded three times for fulfilling the command orders. A machine gunner and radio operator Zhamila Baysenbaeva distinguished herself in the battle of one of the tank crews.

A scout-topographer, a native of Nurinsky district of Karaganda region Rakhila Yeralina. She studied at school No. 20 in Karaganda, and in May 1942 was sent to the front line at the age of 20 among volunteers. Rakhila Yeralina of those who were included in the 50 female volunteers, who wrote an application to the military commissariat. The military commissariat sent her to preparatory courses at the Saratov Aviation Intelligence School. At the short-term military training of intelligence officers they were taught fly on a plane and jump with a parachute. The girls learned to shoot important military objects of an enemy, to show films. After completing the courses, she found herself at the most difficult part of the war, Stalingrad. Rakhila as part of a crew of 3 people flew to the rear of the enemy and shot down enemy targets. Once their plane was shot down, but they managed to save films and found the partisans. In 1944, during the execution of the next combat mission, Rakhila was seriously wounded, and was treated at the hospital for six months, and returned to Karaganda. In 1949 she entered the Alma-Ata Medical Institute, worked for 27 years as the chief doctor of Karaganda. She was awarded the medal «Excellence in Health» for 30 years of work in health care [27].
A pilot, sniper and signaller, a native of Karaganda region Dameli Zhakeeva. Among the 50 volunteer girls was sent to the front line in 1942. Initially studied at the Volsk Aviation School in Saratov, the studies lasted 2 months instead of 9. There Damela mastered the mechanics qualification and learned to shoot. To rotate a machine gun at 360 degrees, you need to apply a force of 72 kg., she weighed only 40 kg, was the smallest, therefore she became the radio operator. She served in the air regiment during the war. From August 1942 to January 1944, she fought in the North Caucasus front. From 1944 she was on the Baltic, Leningrad and First Belorussian fronts. In 1943, on August 16, sergeant Zhakeeva was wounded in her right hand and lost one finger. After the hospital she was transferred to the 367th Aviation Regiment. She received a baptism by fire at Stalingrad, participated in the liberation of Siauliai, Kaunas and the capture of Berlin. The only Kazakh women who celebrated the Victory Day in Berlin. DameliZhakeyeva has the following awards: «For the liberation of Stalingrad», «For Military Merit», «Order of the Patriotic War of I degree» During post-war time she worked in Karaganda, had responsible positions [16, 17].

Military doctor of the 3rd category Gulimzhan Karsybekova. She early became an orphan, and was brought up by her uncle in the Karkaraly district of the Karaganda region. In 1942, she graduated from the Alma-Ata Medical Institute completing 2 years of accelerated program. Participated in breaking the blockade of Leningrad. She was as a medical doctor in Europe: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Germany. For the liberation of Novgorod, she was awarded the Order of Lenin and World War of II degree, more than 10 medals, including the medal «For Victory over Germany», the Emblem of the Honored worker of higher school of Kazakhstan. In 1979, she was recognized as an honorary citizen of the city of Karaganda [23, 122–124] for her unbearable contribution to the military-patriotic education of the younger generation, and for her active participation in public life [28; 12].

Military railwayman, junior lieutenant, a native of Osakarovsk district of Karaganda region Umit Tolkybekova. In 1940 she graduated from school number 1 in Osakarovka, and in 1941 voluntarily went to the front line. The military commissariat sent her to the railway transport. She served on the West-Eastern military railroad as an assistant to the fireman of the train. She was seriously wounded near Moscow and in 1942 returned to her homeland.

A military signalwoman Raushan Madieva. On August 1, 1942 she went to the front line, served as part of the 116th Infantry Regiment as a signalwoman. She took part in the liberation of Moscow, Leningrad. Victory Day celebrated in Poland. She was demobilized from the war in 1946, and worked at a mine's substation as a woman on duty [17; 90].

The military doctor, the senior lieutenant of the medical service Rakhima Koshkumbaeva was born in Orenburg. A 1942 graduate of Almaty Medical Institute. On June 17, 1943 she was enlisted in the ranks of the army. Initially, she was sent to the Moscow Medical Administration for a 3-month course of a young soldier, then she was sent to the surgical hospital of the First Voronezh Front, then to the evacuation hospital. There are wonderful memories in the woman's life. Despite the fact that there was the bloody war, she met her future husband in 1944, in Poland. From 1947 until retirement, she worked in the Ulyanovsk district of the Karaganda region at the Sverdlov State Farm in the local hospital as head doctor [24].

Maida Aymaganbetova worked as an employee of the newspaper «Sovettik Karagandy» before the war. Along with 50 girls, Karaganda went to the front line in 1942, and in 1943 she returned [17; 84, 85].

Nurse Gaziza Omarbayeva participated in many battles. In one of the battles in the Soldus area (Latvian SSR), while assisting the wounded man, he was shot by an enemy's bullet. For her exemplary performance of combat missions, she was awarded government awards [17; 240].

Machine gunner Aymereke Bekbolatovna Kubeeva was born on May 27, 1927 in the city of Uralsk, West Kazakhstan region. As a volunteer went to the Stalingrad front. In the army, she was a machine gunner of antiaircraft artillery of the 10th battery of the 1873th anti-aircraft artillery regiment. Along with the Hero of the Soviet Union, Alyia Moldagulova, near the city of Stalingrad, she was a scout of the reconnaissance company. After the third injury, he was sent to the 250th communications recovery train of the Red Army [23; 258, 259]. From June 1942 to February 1943 participated in the Battle of Stalingrad and the defense of the Caucasus, in the liberation of Kiev, Rostov-on-Don, Voronezh, Rynne, Shepetivka, East Prussia. She was released from active duty in 1945, and lived in the town of Priozersk, Karaganda region. She was awarded medals «For Courage», «For Military Merit», «For Victory over Germany», commemorative medals of the Armed Forces and Victory.

Hundreds of thousands of lines can be written about each war veteran woman that glorify their courage. Their contribution to the Great Victory was immense, and a generation of people, who did not know the war, bow their heads before their heroism [29].
Women of Central Kazakhstan, along with men, actively participated in the defense of the Motherland, fighting shoulder to shoulder with men. Despite their young age, girls impress with their bravery. We have to respect the names of women who participated in the Great Patriotic War, who by this very action had already shown great heroism.

The contribution of women from Central Kazakhstan will be an eternal example, evoking pride and admiration of present and future generations.

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Қазақстандық әйелдердің Үлы Отан қоғамы ықылдарындағы үлесі (Орталық Қазақстан материалдарының негізінде)
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Роль казахстанских женщин в годы Великой Отечественной войны (по материалам Центрального Казахстана)

Великая Отечественная война стала самой трагической страницей в истории XX в. — одна из самых страшных по последствиям и самых героических по подвигам и жертвенности советских людей страницы истории. Женщины вместе с мужчинами, детьми и стариками вынесли на своих плечах все тяготы войны, они вписали в ее летопись немало славных страниц. Женщины на фронте были задействованы практически везде, они были медиками, шоферами, летчицами, снайперами, связистками, разведчицами, репортерами, артиллеристами, танкистами, механиками, служали в пехоте, они активно участвовали в партизанском движении. Статья посвящена исследованию роли женщин-участниц боевых действий в годы Великой Отечественной войны 1941–1945 гг., выявлен их вклад в Победу. В статье рассматриваются отдельные жанры судьбы казахских женщин на фронтовых дорогах войны. Отмечено, что карагандинские женщины в годы Великой Отечественной войны показали себя как стойкие духом патриотки, вдохновляющие воинов на подвиги во имя Родины.

Ключевые слова: Великая Отечественная война, история Казахстана, женщины, фронт, Центральный Казахстан, карагандинские девушки, герои, боевые подвиги.

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