



Historiographical Problems of Kazakhstan's Home Front in the Scholarship about the Great Patriotic War

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Running title: **Historiographical Problems of Kazakhstan's Home Front**

Abstract

The study of the history of the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) is highly relevant to the contemporary world.- The Great Patriotic War, being a part of World War II, taught humankind the harsh lessons about how to resist the unleashing of a new global war. Implementation of these lessons depends on how they are generalized and how fully the priorities are set. The role of historiography in the investigation of lessons is paramount. This article presents the historiographical review of scholarship from the 1960-1980s devoted to problems of the Kazakhstan home front.

Practical applications

The practical relevance of the article is observed in the fact that conclusions and materials can be used when developing the planned topics “History of Kazakhstan during the Great Patriotic War”, in educational process when giving general and special courses in history and historiography of Kazakhstan, in practical activities (lecture and awareness-raising work and drawing up of state and regional programs).

Key words: war, home front, industry, front, the intellectuals, historiography, evacuation



Introduction

In connection with the collapse of the USSR, has become necessary to give attention to the historiographical problem of the contribution and the role of different nations that assisted in the victory of the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945). This is why the study of Kazakhstan as the home front of the Great Patriotic War is new and has not been an object of special historiographical consideration. The themes of the economic development of the home front in the years of war, of the social and political processes showing activities of workers, engineers, technicians, heads of local and central authorities for the placement of evacuated enterprises of the defense industry, and of the reconstruction of their material base need a deeper and comprehensive covering.

In the Soviet-period sources about the Great Patriotic War, we can observe an attempt to implement a social order, to fulfill a directive from the above. Therefore, publications about the war are full of displays of the advantages of socialism, glorification of heroic home front workers, and the high role of the party and the government in the unity of the people. Documents abound with figures and the overestimated levels of results of socialist competitions, which sometimes were taken from reviews, reports and orders of the General Headquarters of the Commander-in-chief.

Materials and methods

This study is based on the investigation of such fundamental studies, as the monographs of G. Abishev, M. Kozybayev, T. Balakayev, V. Basin, N. Edygenov and many others. Through close attention, my inquiry reveals the processes of accumulation of expertise on the history of formation and functioning of Kazakhstan's home front in manufacturing, agriculture, science and culture. Specifically, this investigation draws attention to the synthesis of historical experience in the solution of problems of personnel and social policy in the conditions of wartime. While tracking the development of Kazakhstan's historiography, it is also possible to see its weaknesses. These tendencies had an objective and subjective character caused by the existing historical conditions

Results and considerations

The study of history of the Great Patriotic War has an important scientific-theoretical, military-political, and practical value. A component of this problem is an understanding of historical

experience in creation of economic potential of a victory over fascism, of the roles and values of the Soviet hinterland, all its components in the conditions of modern war (1941-1945). The study of all these questions is possible upon the accumulation of the scientific material by previous generation of historians about the historical conditions and realities of that time.

Kazakhstan's home front as an object of historical inquiry is not new, however there is still no study that would undertake all fundamental problems. The existing historiographic discussions touched upon only particular aspects of this issue.

In the 1960-1980s, the research on the history of the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945) was characterized by the intensity and width of coverage of problems – from issues of studying of reasons, character, most important events of the Great Patriotic War to the transformation of the country into a united fighting camp. Numerous publications of the considered period focused on problems such as the course of military operations at the front and the occupied home front, the role of Communist party on the management of armed struggle of the people of the USSR against fascist aggressors, organization of war industry and transition of national economy to war footing. Among others were the issues of spiritual life of the country, role of science and Soviet culture.

As a component of broader Soviet historical science, the historiography of Kazakhstan reflected the same problems and issues on the role and place of the republic in the Great Patriotic War. Kazakhstan's historians were limited to studying the problems of individual participation of Kazakhstan citizens in the Great Patriotic War. However, the republic's economic contribution during the war played a large role in Kazakhstan's assistance. This assertion was put forward by the historians publishing in the 1960-1980s.

The analysis of these works validates the assessment offered by the academician M. Kozybayev regarding the issues of a periodization of history of the Great Patriotic War. According to it, the period of the 60-80s in development of the historiography of this problem refers to the second period – from the XX party congress till 1991.

The XX Communist Party of the Soviet Union gave a beginning to this period, which can be characterized by a certain dogmatism, expansion of resource base, expansion of opportunities of use of archival materials, as well as scopes of researches is characteristic. It is necessary to emphasize that all works were drafted in a strictly accepted



ideological form. However it didn't prevent historians to develop the uniform concept of history of the Great Patriotic War, objectively reflecting all its perspective.

Such solid works as ten-volume edition of "The History USSR", "General history", five-volume "History of communist party of the Soviet Union", six-volume "history of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union 1941-1945gg.", twelve-languid "History of World War II 1939-1945 were published at this particular time not incidentally.

The considerable part of historical literature reflects activity of the Soviet hinterland and its various regions, organizing ideological work of the party in the rare a labor feat of the people of the USSR, history of working class and peasantry of the Soviet intellectuals of military years.

In 1965, 8 books were published in Kazakhstan to mark the 20th anniversary of the victory in the Great Patriotic War. In addition, 24 brochures and over 200 scientific articles in the magazines and republican newspapers addressed Kazakhstan's contribution to an all-Soviet powerhouse of a victory [1].

The undoubted value of these publications is that they summarize the specific material revealing both the main regularities in the formation of the Soviet hinterland, and outline its development through the example of Kazakhstan. Authors of the majority of works show the role of the Communist party in the management of difficult process of transformation of the country into a united fighting camp and the creation of powerful military economy.

The monograph of G. Abishev "Kazakhstan in the Great Patriotic War (1941-1945)," written on the basis of the doctoral dissertation, became one of the first large works on the history of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic in the years of the war. Certainly, the research reflects the specifics of the larger paradigm – descriptiveness, reluctance to show the heroism of Kazakhstani people, glossing over or denial of their labor and fighting activeness. At the same time, this work actually opened up for Kazakhstan's scholars the possibility of comprehensive study of the republic's military economy [2].

Concurrently, the following reviews appeared: "History of Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic. Socialism era (1959, 1963, 1967)", "Sketches on the history of the Communist party of Kazakhstan", the Volume III of "Sketches of history of a national economy of Kazakhstan". In 1964, "The Communist Party of Kazakhstan in the period of the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945", a fundamental

work by M. K. Kozybayev was published. For the first time, this work highlighted successfully and comprehensively the creation and formation of the military economy of Kazakhstan, its main forms and methods of reorganization as well as the activities of people directed at the solution of wartime economic problems.

The researcher developed and introduced the concepts of "the shifting of the economy to a war mode" and "coherent military economy". The need to develop these terms was caused by "the inconsistency in historical and economic literature on the periodization of the development of economy of the USSR during the wartime" [3].

In this regard, M. Kozybayev considers that the creation of a coherent military economy is a broader comprehensive process, and the restructuring of the national economy is an integral part of it. He underlines that the "creation of the coherent military economy chronologically covered much more time than the shifting of the economy to a war mode. Conversion to a war mode was the first stage of a difficult process, while the subsequent ensuring of the full use of production potential was its final stage" [4].

Thanks to this methodology, the author of the monograph managed to cover almost all sides of the problem, and to show the process overall and as a combination of both practical and theoretical decisions and generalizations.

Another particularity of this period was the creation of scholarly inquiries on the history of the major industries, groups of workers and regions of the republic [5]. The specified works, also as well as others, introduce new archival material, offer deep analyses and pose different questions. What is notable here is the persuasiveness of data reflecting difficult developments of economy of the republic in military years.

V. Basin's book "The heavy industry of Kazakhstan in the Great Patriotic War" contains an analysis of the transformation of the industry of Kazakhstan strengthened by evacuated enterprises. It considers in detail the issues of creation of new industries and the problems of formation of the working class.

The author pays attention to the role of socialist competition in an attempt to increase production while simultaneously decreasing labor expenses. However, according to the academician M. Kozybayev, we should not be limited only by ascertaining the fact that "... socialist competition always revealed something new at this or that stage ...", because the materials of the book and other publications allowed to show the competition



development in detail, raising more difficult issues of the organization of work and production technology [6]. M. Kozybayev's appeal to this problem was not accidental and found reflection in his work "Socialist competition in the days of the Great Patriotic War in the Soviet historical literature" [7].

The considered period can be characterized by a limited number of works on the history of the collective-farm peasantry and the role of agriculture of Kazakhstan in wartime national economy. In comparison with published studies on the history of the industry and working class, there is a noticeable gap both in quantity and content. In the few works (articles, sections of separate monographs), the general issues of the state and development of agriculture of the republic are considered; separate chapters devoted to one or another area or activity of the Communist Party. As a rule, the coverage of these and other problems is characterized by a certain dogmatism as well as a small number of archival sources.

A noticeable change in the historiographic situation of the considered period occurred in the 1970s. According to available information, only in 1970 about 900 books, brochures, journal and newspaper articles were published on the history of Kazakhstan in the Great Patriotic War and the contribution of home front workers of the republic.

Among these works, the documentary collection in two volumes "Kazakhstan in the days of the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union (1941-1945)" should be mentioned. The considerable part of the material presented there is devoted to the issues of economic development of the republic during the war, and the contribution of workers and peasants to a general victory over the enemy [8].

It was stated above that in the first half of the 1960s there were works which started the scholarship on the history of the working class of Kazakhstan. Although not all issues were covered, they laid the foundation for the creation of the basic inquiry on the problem. The early 1970s are characterized by the increase in the studies on the development of the major industries of the republic in the years of the war.

Certain regions of the republic, branches of the industry, and some large enterprises [9] became objects of the inquiry. The use of archival materials of both the republican and all-USSR scale allowed to deepen the question of industrial development in Kazakhstan and the history of working class. It also expanded such an important aspect of the problem as personification, which certainly testified to the

high-quality change in the Kazakhstan historiography.

Expansion of the scope of inquiries from the history of industrial development to the display of the role of the women and youth in a national economy to food supply and domestic living conditions of society in the conditions of war promoted identification of unexplored issues and thus deepened the general understanding of the problem.

This period also marks the emergence of the inquiry on the development of agriculture in the years of war. In 1971, T. Balakayev's monograph "The collective-farm peasantry of Kazakhstan in the days of the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945" was published. The work is based on rich statistics, reports, and propaganda material of the wartime and allowed the author to recreate a picture of complex and multi-sided activity of the *aul* (Kazakh traditional settlements) and villages in the wartime. Drawing on archival materials, as well as the memoirs of workers in villages, the researcher succeeded in showing the economic relations between the industry and agriculture. The main emphasis was placed on the assessment of the role of the collective-farm peasantry of Kazakhstan within the organization of national economy-- the provision of the front with agricultural products. The monograph also focuses on the organization of political work and the role of the party [10].

An important component of the scholarship on the activity of the Soviet hinterland is an illumination of the role of the intellectuals. It should be noted that the all-Soviet scale research on this problem was introduced in 1960-1970s. In the first twenty post-war years, such studies were published as appropriate sections in the general works on the history of the Great Patriotic War devoted to development of science, literature, art.

In Kazakhstan, a similar increase of publications on history of science, culture, formation of the period of war is observed. In the 1960s, there was a number of the scholarly inquiries about the activity of scientific institutions of the republic at the initial stage of war, as well as the collaboration of the evacuated and local scientists in the organization of the mobilization of raw material resources of the republic, and their potential for social needs [11]. It should be noted that unlike on the all-Union level, in the Kazakhstan historiography of the considered period, one can observe a lag in monographic research; there is a lack of this type of scholarship on the development of science and the contribution of the republican figures to a nationwide victory.



During the same period, works devoted to the history of the higher education and system of secondary and professional training, reorganization of the work in the conditions of a war time, as well as forms and methods of patriotic education of younger generation were published [12].

Studies on the history of spiritual life and cultural development in the years of the war were a component of this problem. Such issues as reorganization of cultural and educational establishments, genres and subject of representatives of art and literature of the republic found the reflection in works. The history of interference and mutual enrichment of cultures of the nations and nationalities was an important aspect of this problem. As emphasized in the majority of studies, this became possible not only as a result of the evacuation activities, but also from understanding the need of a general victory over the enemy.

The brotherly help of the Kazakh people, the strengthening of the military and labor collaboration of the peoples became also object of research during the considered period. Such issues as the support of the particular liberated regions by people from Kazakhstan found the reflection in these studies [13]. The significant contribution to studying of this problem was made by T. Balakayev's monograph and K. Aldazhumanov "Workers of Kazakhstan at the front" (in Kazakh). Researches on the history of certain regions, areas, the cities of Kazakhstan and the local party organizations became a notable phenomenon in the historiographic situation of the 1960-1980s. Thanks to these works, multi-sided activity of all people, and their role in the united victory over fascism is shown in greater detail.

Conclusion

The brief review of 1960-1980s literature indicates a significant level of scientific research, the enrichment of available sources, the depth of analysis and generalizations in Kazakhstan's historiographic field of the time. At the same time, taking into account the general political and ideological situation, certain dogmatism in the presentation of the material prevails, and the silence surrounding separate episodes in the history of Kazakhstan as a home front in the years of war is noticeable. The defining parameters of the historiography in studying the role and place of the Kazakhstan had merely the *stating* character. The wartime spelled out the predominantly publicist genre.

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