

Daily Life of the Ishim Women in the Days of the Great Patriotic War of 1941–1945

Written by Mamontova, Marina A., Frolova, Alena A.

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Mamontova, Marina A.

F. M. Dostoevsky Omsk State University, Omsk, Russian Federation

Frolova, Alena A.

Omsk State Technical University, Omsk, Russian Federation

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Abstract

The article considers the social and cultural role of women under the rear living conditions in the days of Great Patriotic War on the example of Ishim and Ishim district of the Tyumen region. The study draws on archival materials of the Ishim Shoe Factory, Ishim Museum Complex A.P. Ershov, State Archive in Ishim, Ishim Medical College Museum, Larikha School Museum, which are being thus introduced into scientific use. Records keeping documents represent the formal perception of challenges in the way of life and contain quantitative data of the home front enterprises, while personal provenance sources provide a greater awareness of things at an individual level and draw a picture of women's everyday living in Ishim in the days of the Great Patriotic War, showing all the severity of the wartime. Historical and anthropological approach, focusing on the specificity of feminine writing, highlights such features of the feminine world perception as emotionalism and great detailing of "male business." The study shows the changing status of women with the outbreak of the war. Male professions, which were dangerous to human health and needed a greater amount of energy, entered the women's daily life. The memoirs of home front workers tell of the difficulties of everyday life and of ways to overcome the challenges; describe the specificities of living in densely populated accommodations and of nutrition in acute food shortage; showcase their active assistance to the army and evacuees; demonstrate revitalization of leisure activities and their confidence in victory. At the same time, women maintained their traditional social roles relating to house-keeping and child-rearing; care for family, loved ones, and other people; fighting numerous wartime diseases; supporting children evacuated from Leningrad. In the wartime, women had an important social function: they created a special spiritual atmosphere, helping to reconcile with the cruel military reality, to preserve the hope of peace. Thus imperative of the behavior of the majority of women was formed: "to work not with tears, but with song." The material of the article can be used in general research of the rear living conditions during the Great Patriotic War, in study of the Siberian region, as well as in preparation of popular science publications and educational material for students and schoolchildren.



Keywords

Historical sources, Great Patriotic War of 1941–45, everyday life history home front, Ishim, women, social gender roles.

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About the authors

Mamontova Marina Aleksandrovna, PhD in History, associate professor, F. M. Dostoevsky Omsk State University, department of Russian history and political science, head of the department, Omsk, Russian Federation, +7-3812-67-01-04, +7-904-826-76-23, mamontovama@omsu.ru

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Frolova Alena Alekseevna, Omsk State Technical University, department of history, philosophy, and social communications, graduate student, Omsk, Russian Federation, +7-982-934-69-21, alenaf93@mail.ru

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