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Displacement, Deviance and Civic Identity: Migrants into Leningrad at the End of the Second World War

The question *kto vy takie?* [so who are you then?] is a recurrent refrain in the reminiscences of Anatolii Petrov about his experiences as a member of the public at the 1946 Leningrad trade bazaar, which were published in the literary journal *Neva* in 1995. As he moves through the post-war crowd, observing the rest of the public at the fair, the nine year old Petrov cannot shake the question from his mind and hears it echoing, in German, in the sounds of the cries of birds flying above the brightly coloured pavilions: “Sind sie wer? Sind sie wer?¹ (*kto vy? kto vy?*)” [Petrov 1995: 220].

The question, which possibly reflects in part the author’s contemporary anxieties about post-Soviet national and local identities, is prompted, in Petrov’s article, by contemplations on the diversity of the Leningrad populace that he encounters in the wake of the nine hundred day blockade of the city. In an abortive attempt to answer the nagging issue of the communal identity of the crowd gathered at the bazaar, Petrov characterises it in the following way:

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¹ Sic.: Petrov gives the correct German word order in the title of his article, but reverses the order elsewhere.

And we, which is to say the public at the fair, were mainly poor, indigent, and hungry. Beggars sat on the pavements, pickpockets wove through the crowds. Against the motley masses, soldiers stood out to advantage, especially the ones wearing military decorations. The remarkably elegant ladies had on their heads [...] something that glowed, they seemed to emit a radiance, just as their companions did, their appearance recalling times past, times that had never in fact existed, maybe... Soviet aristocrats, dandies in white mufflers, leather gloves, and shoes polished to an unbearable shine [...] Yet the war so recently ended made itself felt everywhere — in the service tunics of demobilised soldiers with their darns covering bullet holes, in the scars and burn marks on their faces, in the crutches and wooden legs, the empty sleeves carefully tucked under the army belts... Stop! [Petrov 1995: 220]

The persistent uncertainty of the query ‘Who are you?’ punctuates Petrov’s encounters with a variety of characters in particular. These include a grey-haired and wrinkled old woman, in a tattered overcoat missing its right sleeve, who holds out her bare arm in the hope of alms; a handsome war invalid without both legs who moves around with the help of a cart on ball bearings and sings along to an accordion, getting ‘dead drunk’ (*vdrebezgi*) together with other invalids in the crowded taverns and on the streets; a grey, faceless mass of German prisoners of war who ‘were swarming about’ (*koposhilis*) in the nearby ruins, clearing up the wreckage of houses; and a peasant man, a former kulak, whose family had previously violently clashed with Petrov’s father during his participation in the campaign to collectivise the countryside. Now, following the death of his three sons at the front, this peasant with a ‘Pugachev’ beard sits drinking together with Petrov’s father, who himself has been recently demobilised from a penal battalion, where he ended up after his incarceration in the course of the mass arrests of the late 1930s.

For Petrov, therefore, the collective entity of his family and neighbours and the wider Leningrad crowd, brought together in shared social spaces around the fair, was experienced as a diverse and disorientating assortment of figures. His public incorporates a ravaged, female countenance, betokening the lasting legacy of the wartime siege of the city (which was a predominantly female experience of starvation and survival), and also embodiments of the ‘war come home’, in the form of both decorated soldiers and destitute war invalids.¹ His portrait is a confusing mixture of well-dressed regime elites and ragged beggars, waifs and petty thieves, of ambiguous

¹ As able bodied men were mobilised into the army, or evacuated with factories to the rear, and many of the remaining men died in the early days of the blockade, the siege of Leningrad has been characterised as a ‘woman’s experience’ [Simmons and Perlina 2002: 2]. Accounts by survivors of the siege have described how the debilitating physical effects of blockade caused young women to be mistaken for grandmothers [Ibid: 180]. The phrase ‘the war come home’ has previously been used in reference to the disabled veterans who were a lasting legacy of the First World War [Cohen 2001].

former ‘class enemies’ and pitiful prisoners of war and of the markedly peasant and rural, in the midst of the city. Together these various elements of the crowd provoke questions of social identity and life trajectory that Petrov cannot resolve.

Previous academic characterisations of the post-war Leningrad population offer, as I will demonstrate, a number of contradictory portraits of those who can be said to have constituted ‘Leningraders’ in the wake of the devastating 900-day starvation blockade. I will suggest that what has been missing from accounts so far is an ‘itinerant’ or ‘migrant’ perspective, even when the subjects of discussion are the displaced. Considering the post-siege history of the city as part of a broader, ‘perpetual whirl’ of migrations and wanderings, I discuss the way in which particular civic myths and identities were asserted through practices and discourses directed at newcomers and displaced groups.¹ In particular, I highlight how local myths of a unique community of Leningraders entailed the construction of migrants as potentially lice-ridden and hooligan elements, introducing disorder, dirt and deviance into a cultured and heroic cityscape.

In contrast to Anatoly Petrov’s depiction of a disparate post-blockade population, destabilising notions of civic identity, several recent scholarly accounts of the consequences of the siege have deployed the term ‘Leningraders’ as straightforward shorthand for a fairly cohesive community of blockade survivors, embedded in the culture and landscape of the city ([Kirschenbaum 2006]; [Simmons 2008]). Ordinary Leningraders in the post-war years, according to Lisa Kirschenbaum, for example, were long term residents who identified closely with well-known urban spaces and had stayed and struggled during the siege. After the war, their longstanding practices of imagining the city, in conjunction with the state’s efforts to impose meanings on the cityscape, facilitated the production of local wartime myths which meaningfully plotted the chaos and affliction of life in the blockaded city. These myths drew on the older Petersburg myth and its themes of apocalypse, spiritual purification and the triumph of civilisation over barbarism and shaped a common civic cultural identity which persisted into the post-Soviet era [Kirschenbaum 2006: 7–16].

Earlier work by Blair Ruble and by St Petersburg local historians, however, offers a divergent characterisation of a post-war Leningrader ([Ruble 1983]; [Ruble 1990]; [Vakser 1992]; cf. the remarks of [Panchenko 2000]). These commentators underscore the social

¹ The phrase ‘perpetual whirl’ is borrowed from Eugene Kulischer’s discussion of population movements in Europe in the first half of the twentieth century [Kulischer 1948: 8].

transformation and discontinuity which occurred as the population of the city fell in the course of the blockade from about three million to about six hundred thousand, on account of mobilisation, evacuation and starvation. Many of the lost inhabitants, they contend, never returned and the city was rebuilt and repopulated by an immediate influx of newcomers, often from rural areas, creating, by as early as autumn 1945, a 'city of migrants' [Ruble 1990: 51]. The lasting significance of the siege is to be found, in this version, in the erosion of Leningrad's links with its own past and irrevocable provincialisation. Its decline in status from capital city to ordinary provincial centre was cemented as the population of the city of Peter and Lenin was quickly reconstituted 'by new residents with few historic ties to either founding father', who threatened the city's unique way of life with oblivion [Ruble 1983: 303–304]. In the words of the St Petersburg historian, Aleksandr Panchenko, a large part of the population died in the blockade, 'and then [...] the village surged into the city any way it could. And [...] Piter stopped being Piter — I mean in terms of the people living there' [Panchenko 2000: 12].

There is a third narrative of events, however, which focuses on the successful return by inhabitants who had been transported out of the blockaded city. Elizabeth White has argued [White 2007] that not only did many evacuees manage to travel back to Leningrad but that, anyway, massive population gains and losses were nothing new for the city, which had recently experienced the Civil War and rapid industrialisation. Blair Ruble himself acknowledges that from the moment of its foundation the population of the city was mobile, changing and transient. The story of the unprecedented and permanent loss of native city-dwellers as a result of the siege, therefore, while not entirely unrelated to fact, according to White, is also itself an element of the 'rich mythology of the "Northern Capital" and its cultural memory' [White 2007: 1159].

Apocalypse and destruction have indeed always featured in Petersburg myths, alongside the triumph of culture over nature and barbarism. A compiler of the city's legends has noted in particular how the real tragic losses and destruction of the siege were reflected in certain elements of civic folklore that arose after the war, for example in stories manifesting continued anxiety about the loss of local artistic and architectural treasures, despite the fact that almost all of these were preserved or quickly reconstructed. One such tale proclaimed that one of the twenty nine lions, which for centuries had supported a chain fence on the banks of the Neva, had suddenly disappeared in the blockade and that it would be found one day in a southern Soviet republic [Sindalovsky 2005: 422–423].

Even when Leningrad has been portrayed as a city of migrants, therefore, conclusions about its history have tended to say more

about local myths than the experiences of its itinerant population. This brings to mind the assertion by the philosophers Deleuze and Guattari that ‘history is always written from the sedentary point of view [...] even when the topic is nomads. What is lacking is a Noma-dology’ [Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 25].

In order to make sense of the conflicting portraits of the post-war city, my work interrogates the construction of various norms and myths of place from the itinerant perspective that has been missing so far. I examine the intersection of the affirmation of civic identity with the widespread experience of displacement and continuous re-settlement in the city. In doing so, I draw on scholarship such as Liisa Malkki’s ‘ethnography of displacement’, which offers a conceptual framework for understanding human movement [Malkki 1992; 1995].

In her anthropological study of Hutu refugees in Tanzania, Malkki explores how refugees and ‘the placeless’ are perceived as transgressing against the stable borders, patterns and classifications of a society. They are regarded as aberrations of categories and boundaries — anomalous or ambiguous elements — and therefore treated as a disorderly pollutant by states which place a moral value on rootedness and a singular identity. Governmental and international agencies, as a result, have frequently sought to control human movement and impose a spatial order on uprooted populations, in conjunction with establishing other kinds of order, including medical, sanitary and punitive regimes [Malkki 1995: 4 and 112]. I argue here that the large displaced populations settling in Leningrad after the war formed just such an ambiguous group in the eyes of the local and national authorities and as such were pathologised as potential bearers of crime and disease. This pathologising of migrants formed a central element in the narratives asserting particular civic myths of belonging after the blockade.

In the first few years following the lifting of the siege in January 1944, the 600,000 blockade survivors remaining in Leningrad were joined annually by hundreds of thousands of incomers, including over 650,000 officially registered arrivals in 1945 alone [TsGA-SPb. F. 4965. Op. 8. D. 738. L. 5].¹ Trains arrived into the city packed with demobilised soldiers and war invalids, with re-evacuees returning

¹ Official Soviet population statistics in general have been shown to be very unreliable, on account of inaccurate recording and political repression [Kessler 2001: 495–501]. Demographic statistics pertaining to the losses of the blockade and the numbers repopulating Leningrad were particularly controversial and liable to inaccuracy, due to the chaotic and devastating nature of events of the time [Cherepnina 2001]. There is not space here to discuss methodological problems with population data for the city further but it should be noted that the figures mentioned above, taken from records held in the city’s state archive, should be treated as illustrative rather than exact.

from Siberia, with peasants and workers mobilised by the state from nearby provinces to replenish the labour force and with adolescents drafted into Leningrad's factory schools. In addition, the population was augmented by statistically invisible populations, such as the 'special contingents' (*spetskontingenty*) of unfree labourers. These were made up of prisoners, as well as repatriated citizens and former Soviet Prisoners of War who were not allowed to freely settle in their former place of residence and German POWs [Vakser 2005: 30–33]. Other incomers remained uncounted who had entered the city illegally, on their own initiative, outside of the official system of permits and registration of residence, travelling on the roofs and footboards of railway carriages, clinging onto goods wagons, or hiding in other people's berths and often finishing the journey on foot [Kutuzov 1988: 18].

Often, the experience of displacement did not end on arrival in Leningrad. A significant proportion of the city's housing had been destroyed or damaged by bombing, wooden pre-war homes had been broken up for firewood and many of the inhabitants remaining in the city, especially in the southern suburbs near the front line, had been resettled into the buildings that remained intact [Goure 1962: 174; Dzenishevich 1995: 56–7]. After the blockade, even those who had previously possessed housing in Leningrad, or had been mobilised into the city by the authorities, found it difficult to secure a permanent room for themselves that was fit for habitation. Incomers have recounted how they roamed the city in search of makeshift accommodation, staying in various hostels or with acquaintances. Even the allocation of a room did not guarantee an end to itinerancy. A war invalid wrote to the local newspaper *Leningradskaya pravda* towards the end of 1945 complaining about the '*beskonechnye pereseleniya*' (endless peregrinations) which his family had endured. Every time they moved into a room, it turned out to be in need of repair or had to be handed over to somebody else with a prior claim on it [*Leningradskaya Pravda*. 15 September 1945: 3].

During the most severe period of the blockade, when the population fell dramatically and well known architectural monuments were removed or covered up, the cityscape had been experienced as an emptied expanse. Survivors have also recalled how time and space in the city seemed to stretch out and all movement slow to a halt, as transport ceased to run and the starving and exhausted population walked everywhere, often under fire, taking hours to cross a street in their weakened state (Interview with Olga, [Loskutova 2006: 168–9, 176]. Some people, of course, did not make it to the end of their arduous journeys within the city and died in the street. In the post-blockade years of reconstruction and re-population, in contrast, the city once again became encountered as a landscape of crowded

spaces and diverse mobilities, of claustrophobic dwelling and ceaseless comings and goings.¹

This is encapsulated in the memoirs of V. G. Levina. She depicts the scenes in the single room in which she lived with her husband, Vladimir, and her mother-in-law, once their relatives began to arrive from the front and from evacuation towards summer 1945 and discovered they were without a flat of their own. Levina and her family squeezed ten extra people into their room in all, so that:

There were [...] thirteen of us, including three teenagers. There weren't enough places to sleep, of course. People slept on the cooker in the kitchen, on the desk, one of my nieces used a low couch that we used to push under the piano at night, one person doubled up in my mother-in-law's bed. Our elderly aunt slept on two armchairs pushed together, and in the morning we'd heave her out of the abyss that had opened up between them. My schoolgirl niece did her homework on a big firewood box in the hall. We lived like that for three years, then, eventually at the end of 1947 we doled out our guests to other relations and friends, because by then Vladimir had developed acute T.B. of the lungs [Levina 2007: 98].

Other in-migrants, without their own accommodation or amenable acquaintances, slept in the corridors of houses or in the city's train depots, park benches and other public places, where they joined a growing number of young waifs, left orphaned or homeless after the war. Makeshift, temporary arrangements often lasted for years. One returning demobilised soldier, for example, remained in the queue for housing as late as October 1947 and claimed he somehow passed the nights 'in cellars and staircases, under fences, on park benches, in public toilets' [TsGA-SPb. F. 7384. Op. 36. D. 214. L. 65].

Against this background, the authorities attempted to increase their control over the movements of people into and within the city. In addition to the usual restrictions imposed by the Soviet system of internal passports and residence permits, those wishing to enter Leningrad during the blockade and in the years immediately following the lifting of the siege had to apply for a special invitation from the city government or to arrive as part of an official mobilisation of labourers [Karpenko 2008: 88–9]. Trains entering the city were checked by the police in order to try to catch those without all the necessary documents and increased police raids were carried out in houses, hostels, market places and enterprises to round up so-called 'unauthorised outsiders' (*postoronnie litsa*), who had succeeded in arriving illegally [TsGA-SPb. F. 7384. Op. 36. D. 148]. Homeless children and war invalids were cleared from the city streets in mass operations and sent into institutions.

¹ The anthropologist James Clifford has written in a similar vein about human experience as being made up of 'complex histories of dwelling and travelling' [Clifford 1997: 2].

These practices, aimed at managing the mobility of the population, were closely linked with measures introduced to combat the perceived threats of disease and crime in the post-siege city. The extent to which rising crime and disease became increasingly threatening social problems in the city after the war is debatable.¹ The post-war cityscape, nevertheless, was marked by a breakdown in the sanitation infrastructure that caused rubbish and sewage to accumulate in the streets; it was also the site of cases of certain visible, public crimes, from speculation to armed robbery. The incoming and displaced population became a focus for anxieties about these forms of breakdowns in urban society.²

The annual reports of the Leningrad State Sanitary Inspectorate from 1945 to 1948 contained detailed sections on its activities to implement '*control of the mobile population*' [GARF. F. 9226. Op. 1. D. 685. L. 82; D. 728. L. 102; D. 799. L. 118; D. 897. L. 100]. These laid out how the inspectorate had ensured that all those arriving underwent compulsory observation and treatment at sanitary checkpoints or in polyclinics before they were settled in the city. During this sanitary processing migrants were inspected for signs of lice and disease, in particular typhus, went through obligatory washing and had their clothes and belongings disinfected, so as to render them 'harmless' (*bezopasnymi*) for the local population [Marzeev 1945: 37].

Officials also exhorted the city's police to strengthen the passport regime and to combat those leading a 'vagrant form of life' (*brodyachii*

¹ In Leningrad, as across the Soviet Union as a whole, in the immediate post-war years slightly higher levels of crime were recorded than in the war years. This low level increase, however, transpired within an overall downward trend in the crime rate between 1940 and 1954 (on rates in Leningrad see [TsGASp. F. 7384. Op. 36. D. 148. Ll. 1–5; Ll. 19–27; Ll. 35–42; Ll. 63–70; Ll. 82–90; Ll. 99–106; Ll. 132–136; D. 186. Ll. 1–7; D. 214. Ll. 31–44; Ll. 63–64; Ll. 108–112] and also [Govorov 2004]; on rates more generally across the Soviet Union, and the discrepancy between the actual levels of crime and the prominence of fears about crime in official rhetoric and popular impressions of the period see, for example, [Zubkova 1998: 39]). Occurrences of disease fluctuated but also did not reach the levels feared by the authorities. After the severe blockade year of 1942, for example, the rate of occurrence of cases of typhus fell, reaching just 9 cases per 10,000 of the population in 1946. In July 1947, in the midst of the famine, confirmed monthly cases did begin to increase rapidly but levels began to drop once more in December 1947, attaining the 1946 levels once more by February 1948. Even in 1947 the number of fatalities from the disease remained low (see [TsGASp. F. 7384. Op. 36. D. 214. Ll. 149–150]; also [Filtzer 2010: 158]). I explore this in more detail in [Peeling 2009]. Donald Filtzer argues that Soviet controls over people moving around the country ensured that epidemics rarely occurred during and after the German invasion [Filtzer 2010: 152]. The work of Paul Weindling, however, suggests that across Europe fears about typhus epidemics were exaggerated and served to legitimate governmental and international actions to isolate, contain and cleanse displaced and unwanted populations [Weindling 2000: 16]. Certainly the regime chose to focus its measures to combat disease and 'social disorder' not on improving living conditions in the city but on monitoring 'suspect' itinerant populations and, if deemed necessary, excising them from the city. Officials also translated fears about the spread of crime and disease into representations of incomers that brought into focus a more general moral panic about a population transformed by the war.

² The notion that migrants of all sorts represented particular lines of anxiety for traditional urban classes in late imperial Russia has been developed previously by James von Geldern [von Geldern 1996: 368].

obraz zhizni) as an anti-epidemic procedure. They coordinated their search for those without official residence permits with the hunt for people who were lice-ridden or carrying a disease. At the city's marketplaces, police were stationed at special sanitary posts, sometimes accompanied by medical personnel in mobile anti-epidemic brigades, in order to detain beggars and waifs and other such people deemed to be 'slovenly' (*neryashlivye*) or 'dangerous for the spread of typhus' (*opasnye po rasprostraneniyu parazitarnykh tifov*), who would then be sent for treatment at the sanitary check-points [TsGA-SPb. F. 7384. Op. 36. D. 254. L.13; L. 17; L. 21; L. 57; L. 101].

The authorities also identified those travelling to the city as potential sources of various forms of criminality. Articles published in the local press in these years, written by officials from law enforcement bodies, explicitly linked the nature of certain migrants to the city with criminal activities. The head of the local NKVD did assert in several articles that, in the main, 'the new arrivals become involved in the work process straight away and work conscientiously towards the reconstruction and further development of our industry, urban infrastructure, and culture' [*Leningradskaya Pravda*. 23 October 1945: 2]. He added, however, that among the large mass of the incoming population a certain number of 'unstable' (*neustoichivye*) and criminal elements had 'seeped through' (*prosochilis*) into Leningrad [Ibid]. These in-migrants, in the words of a later article in *Leningradskaya Pravda*, were people who 'shirk socially useful work in any way that they can, they form a breeding ground for anti-social behaviour and other types of criminal activity' [*Leningradskaya pravda* 27 July 1946: 3]. The NKVD chief proclaimed that the police would systematically cleanse the city of shady characters, such as those without passports and residence permits, who were not officially engaged in work, as well as thieves, hooligans, parasites and others 'for whom there is no place in Leningrad' [*Leningradskaya pravda*. 23 October 1945: 2].

In practice, passengers on trains into the city were regularly checked and 'filtered' by police and railway guards seeking to uncover criminal elements and a high percentage of arrests was recorded in police reports for a category of people labelled '*without fixed occupation and place of residence*' [TsGA-SPb. F. 7384. Op. 36. D. 214, *passim*].

These discourses and practices were in part a continuation of pre-war Soviet measures. During the 1930s, for example, local police forces used the passport system to 'quarantine' urban areas from a broad category of unwanted marginals termed 'socially harmful elements', who were believed to be the cause of crime and disorder [Hagenloh 1999: 287]. Leningrad itself had been the site of large-scale expulsions during 'passportisation' in 1935–6. The population control measures

in Soviet post-war cities were also a corollary of the refugee camps multiplying across Europe in the aftermath of war, which were designed to contain the movement and fix the location of the displaced in part as a measure against disorder, crime and disease in the emerging nations.

These practices also, though, had a distinct local dimension and formed part of the construction by the civic authorities and some residents of the norms and myths of a heroic, cultured and civilised community of Leningraders, overcoming the effects of war and the Blockade. The incoming population, in particular those who had never lived in the city before, featured in these constructions as a potential source of renewal of this community but also as potential pollutants of a distinct cityscape and local identity.

In the articles on efforts to combat crime in the city, the manifestations of crime, social disorder, and hooliganism borne by the 'dissolute' (*raspushchennye*) newcomers into Leningrad were counterposed to a unique cultured identity belonging to the city, which had been exhibited and cemented during the siege. These public commentaries asserted that Leningrad had always been a city of high culture and discipline and claimed that these special qualities of the city had manifested themselves particularly during the conditions of the German blockade, when, despite everything, *'there was exemplary order in Leningrad'* [*Leningradskaya pravda*. 10 January 1945: 3]. Here, especially, therefore, cases of hooliganism and mischief were intolerable.

Other articles appearing in the post-war Leningrad press suggested that people must earn their place as true members of the community of Leningraders in terms of their relationship to the cleanliness, tidiness and culture of the city's spaces.¹ The mobilisation of the starving population of the besieged city in a mass public spring cleaning campaign, which occurred in 1942, had quickly become one of the key themes in the mythic narrative of the blockade. The cleaning up of yards, streets and squares by an exhausted population under enemy fire, thus demonstrating a love of their native city *'that was stronger than cold, exhaustion, and hunger'*, recurred in both official and popular accounts of the resilience of civilised Leningraders in the face of barbarism [*Leningradskaya pravda*. 31 March 1944: 1; Kirschenbaum 2006].

After the war, in Leningrad, as in other cities, the authorities continued to compel the growing population to participate in mass

¹ A series of letters, for example, appeared in Leningradskaya Pravda from 3rd July 1946 to 17th July 1946 discussing the dirt, untidiness and uncultured external appearance which met people walking around the city. These letters frequently referred to the behaviour which was proper in those identifying themselves as Leningraders.

subbotniki and *voskresniki*¹ to clean up the city, despite the ineffectiveness of this measure in combating the long term accumulation of dirt, rubbish and sewage in public places [Filtzer 2006: 92]. The press depicted the inculcation of tidy and orderly habits in those newcomers who were permitted to settle in the city as necessary for their assimilation into the family of post-blockade Leningraders. In the face of the persistently unsanitary post-war environment, local newspapers reported concerns that the filthy streetscape was a sign that local habits of culture and cleanliness had been insufficiently cultivated among in-migrants.

To give one example, in September 1947 *Leningradskaya pravda* published a letter to the editor from a local resident, expressing concern about the lack of cleanliness and order on the city's streets. The author of the letter, one I. Pikin, protested that:

Leningrad has always been famous not just for the beauty of its architecture, but for exemplary order, high levels of discipline. In this respect Leningraders can serve as an example to the residents of many other cities.

*After the War, the population of Leningrad has been to a significant extent renewed. Many of the new arrivals have not yet acquired the skills necessary for inhabitants of a big city, have not yet nurtured a sense of discipline in themselves. They violate the rules of the road, they drop cigarette ends and scraps of paper and ice-cream wrappers. Yet a dropped paper is a sign of unculturedness and of your contempt for the city where you live [*Leningradskaya pravda*. 5 September 1947: 3].*

In this complaint, everyday encounters with piles of rubbish in the post-war urban environment were woven together with the fact of the mass replacement of the population and a mythologised Leningrad identity, in a narrative which associated newcomers to the city with the degradation of the spatial, normative and sanitary order.

Migrants to the city were ambivalent figures in post-siege Leningrad. They were represented in the official press both as necessary to the replenishment of the labour force and the reproduction of civic traditions and values but also as inherently threatening to these orders of place and identity. As such they were at the centre of the affirmation and demonstration of not just which people but also what behaviours belonged in the 'hero city' and 'family of Leningraders' emerging from the blockade. These discussions often played out in languages

¹ Voluntary drives to clean up streets and parks, etc., on days off.

of purity, cleanliness, dirt and criminality, and the displaced were frequently targeted in campaigns against deviant and unsanitary phenomena, which were regarded as out of place in cultured Leningrad. Adopting an 'itinerant perspective', and not taking the accusations about 'unculturedness' on trust, offers a way of understanding the interplay between post-war Leningrad as a 'city of migrants' and as 'the hero city of the blockade', rather than simply replicating local civic myths.

Abbreviations

GARF — Gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Rossiiskoi Federatsii (State Archive of the Russian Federation), Moscow.

TsGA-SPb — Tsentralnyi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv Sankt-Peterburga (State Archive, St Petersburg).

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