Leningrad 1941–42: Morality in a City under Siege. By Sergey Yarov. Trans. Arch Tait. Cambridge, Eng.: Polity, 2017. xiii, 409 pp. Notes. Index. $45.00, hard bound.
doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.343

Of the Siege, playwright Evgenii Shvarts—who evacuated the already-besieged city during the "winter of death" of 1941–42—asserts, "It was the time when the Leningraders's grief over-poured the limit known to humans," (Evgenii Shvarts, *Telefonnaia knizhka* [Moscow, 1997], 234). It is precisely the notion of the limit of grief that is studied in Yarov's work. *Morality in a City Under Siege* seems to proclaim an oxymoronic subject: what kind of morality can we speak of under the total hunger and deprivation that struck Soviet Leningrad in September 1941? A different kind of morality. That is the answer given in this meticulous, panoramic study by Sergey Yarov. A dedicated Siege scholar, Yarov had, before his death, perhaps read more narrative accounts of the Siege of Leningrad than anybody. Sadly, he passed away prematurely two years ago, right at the moment when his investment in the field was celebrated in Russia by the important "Enlightener" award.

The central claims of Yarov's study are that, though the Siege was a situation of total disaster with breakage of every aspect of civilization, society was not devoid of morality—or rather, multiple moralities—in spite of these dire circumstances. Multiple desperate attempts were made by the inhabitants of Leningrad to figure out what kind of morality could be preserved or reestablished to stall the momentum of what appeared to be total dehumanization. Tactfully, and yet remaining faithful to his evidence, Yarov describes the depth and pervasiveness of the decay in the tissue of human bonds: in various chapters of his study he asks, what happened in the Siege family? In the work place? What kind of influence did privilege—mainly, allegiance to the Communist Party—play here? How corrosive was this difference for morale in the city? We are still discovering to what extent Leningrad was a city of radically different Siege experiences, both for its privileged and non-privileged inhabitants.

Yarov dedicates separate chapters to the discursive instruments of self-awareness with which citizens held themselves accountable. First and foremost, he addresses the now-famous Siege diaries. These became, among the other functions, psychological laboratories of self-exploration. In light of its common subject, I think it would be beneficial for a reader of Yarov's book to study it alongside Alexis Peri's monograph *The War Within: Diaries from the Siege of Leningrad* (Cambridge, Mass., 2017). Peri studies specific qualities of moral reflection in diary writing at length, allowing readers to appreciate the form that emerged to permit a Leningrader to exercise her poignant self-analysis. Diarists entrusted thoughts about their own behavior and that of others to writing, questioning whether this behavior was moral, acceptable, and representable. Most often, as we see from these accounts, "moral" became as fundamental as being able to share food with another.

Total separation from the needs of the other was a path to "moral dystrophy," a peculiar, complex coinage for what many survivors saw as the final line (yet another limit) beyond which dehumanization seemed irrevocable. We find this coinage in many diaries, used with fear ("Am I a moral dystrophic already?") and even with contempt, as the tool of a newly constructed social self-affirmation ("Unlike N. I am not a moral dystrophic").

The complex social and political structure of this time and place foreclosed all previous moral and ethical logic. There exist several Siege texts that might have been especially useful to the topic under examination: the diaries of Liubov′ Shaporina and Sofia Ostrovskaia, as well as notes by Lydiia Ginzburg and L. Panteleev. In these texts the authors distinctly, if not obsessively, study the possibility of any

https://doi.org/10.1017/slr.2018.343 Published online by Cambridge University Press

ethical behavior in the Hell of biopolitics that was the Siege of Leningrad. One could imagine how analyses of these texts and their particular focus on the ethical could have structured additional exciting and disturbing "case studies," and might have supported with their shrewdness and gravitas the observations of the rest of the book.

What are the other possible next steps, what are the questions that Yarov leaves unanswered, and which invite further investigation? It seems important to ask how ethics during the Siege were in dialogue with the rhetorical ethical code of the official Soviet regime. One wonders to what extent the Communist Party's discourse had any validity for those suffering the Siege.

Another possible direction of analysis is that of comparative ethics: given how much research on ethics has occurred through Holocaust studies during the last decade, it seems logical to bring Yarov's inquiry into this comparative context. Theodor Adorno's embittered observation becomes relevant: "When even genocide becomes cultural property in committed literature, it becomes easier to continue complying with the culture that gave rise to the murder," (Adorno, *Notes to Literature*, vol. 2, New York, 1974, 88). A scholar of Siege self-analysis could ask, what kind of ethical culture was produced by the Siege? Possibly, building a comparative inquiry between various constructions of the self during the Siege and Holocaust would open cultural exploration to more radical conclusions about the nature of ethical choices during political disaster.

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Trotskii i tovarishchii: Levaia oppozitsiia i politicheskaia kul′tura RKP(b) 1923–1924. By Aleksandr Reznik. Epokha voin i revoliutsii, no. 10. St. Petersburg: Evropeiskii Universitet v Sankt-Peterburge, 2017. 382 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Chronology. Name Index. Illustrations. RUB 390, hard bound.

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Around 1988, in the fast-changing USSR, one of the signs of serious change was the appearance of officially-published editions of the works of Bolsheviks that had been banned up until then, including those of the demon-in-chief, Lev Trotskii. After initial enthusiasm driven by a naïve hope that they might contain an inspirational vision of a renewed Bolshevik socialism, most readers appeared to become rapidly disillusioned with the same old ideology, "theological" arguments comparable to angels on pinheads, and "langue du bois" wrapping arguments in heavy clichés. Not everyone was turned off, however, and a few devotees of Trotskii began to appear. Now, a generation later a few followers and some small groups interested in his ideas have promoted new studies like the one under review here. Aleksandr Reznik's superbly-researched account looks in greater detail and on a deeper archival base than any predecessor at the vital inner-party struggle of 1923–25 around the emerging left opposition.

Starting with a useful survey of literature, Reznik claims he is going to follow an anthropological methodology and produce a new interpretation of the episode. Does he succeed? First of all, a reader unaware of the anthropological claim would be unlikely to deduce it from simply reading the account. What Reznik seems to mean is that he has created some relatively "thick description" of the struggle and herein lies the value of his study. Reznik has made himself the master of central and provincial party archives to give an unprecedentedly multi-layer account of the

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