FOR FATHERLAND, FOR CULTURE: STATE, INTELLIGENTSIA AND EVACUATED CULTURE IN RUSSIA'S REGIONS, 1941-1945

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the evacuation of the Soviet Union’s elite cultural institutions and intelligentsia from Moscow and Leningrad to Russian and Central Asian regional centers during World War II. The evacuations and accompanying mobilization of culture shaped the Soviet regions into the postwar period while holding lasting consequences for the relationships between state and intelligentsia and for the intelligentsia as a group. I argue that the evacuation of culture came to play a key role in the waging of total war. Evacuated cultural institutions led massive mobilization campaigns that would have been difficult to substitute, dependent as they were on the participation of elite Soviet artists, actors and writers. Soviet culture and its most elite producers functioned as a privileged form of propaganda for the regime during the war, and the intelligentsia worked to extend this propaganda’s influence as far as possible. I evaluate how the evacuations shaped the relationship of regional Soviet communities to Soviet culture and analyze the adjustment that the sudden arrival of such prestigious representatives of the “center” required – during the war the clear-cut boundaries between center and periphery had suddenly become blurred. The wartime campaign to bring culture to the masses resulted in increased cultural expectations and further clarified hierarchies in the regions, where traces of the evacuations continued influencing regional cities and residents culturally and materially in the postwar period. Finally, the success of the evacuations and the ensuing mobilization effort required the intelligentsia’s active participation at a moment when the Soviet state could not enforce it; the Soviet intelligentsia rallied round the state during the war, but their participation was motivated by self-interest in a variety of forms as well as loyalty. Its willingness to assist the state gave it powerful leverage in extracting privileges and benefits from the state during and after the war. This research furthers our understanding of the importance of the Soviet home front in World War II and sheds new light on both the role of culture in large-scale mobilizations and the relationship of the intelligentsia to totalitarian regimes, particularly in moments of crisis.
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**Introduction**

In June 1941, with German forces moving rapidly towards Moscow and Leningrad, the Soviet government found its prior reliance on plans for offensive warfare to be obsolete. Instead, the government faced the pressing question of how to preserve as much of the country’s resources as possible for the war effort. This entailed taking immediate measures to preserve industrial factories, food stores, livestock, and even hard currency. It also meant human resources: workers and cadres for state infrastructure, who would enable the state to continue to function even from a new location if necessary. By 24 June 1941, a Council for Evacuation had been formed with a wide mandate to evacuate individuals and resources out of danger, from frontline zones to areas well out of the reach of German armies — the Urals, Siberia, and Central Asia. Under conditions of extreme shortages of transportation (the train system was already severely stressed from efforts to move soldiers up to the front), this entailed making firm decisions about what and who to prioritize evacuating. The evacuations of industry and livestock made obvious sense from a military perspective, since without them the Soviet state could not hope to maintain much of a war effort.¹ Yet some of the earliest evacuation decisions

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related to precious art and museum items. Early on in the war effort the Soviet government made a clear decision to expend significant resources on evacuating the most valuable of cumulative Russian-Soviet culture out of Moscow and Leningrad for the duration of the war. Culture by this definition included both objects of culture such as museum exponents and the people that composed, produced and performed culture. The decision to evacuate encompassed art museums, theatrical and musical ensembles (ranging from opera-ballet companies, symphonies and drama theaters to estrada companies and folk groups), film studios, and the creative unions: writers, artists, and composers. Writers alone numbered in the hundreds. In addition to the people and extensive museum collections, valuable musical instruments, musical and theatrical scores and scripts, theater props and costumes and film machinery all made their way onto the trains headed East, filling dozens of train wagons at a time when all available transport was of critical importance. Though initially only the top layer of cultural institutions was slated to evacuate, eventually most institutions that had time to evacuate and for which transportation could be found were included. The net result was an extraordinary diversion of resources to the preservation of culture at a moment when all resources were in extreme demand. When the trains arrived in regional centers, previously comparatively remote cities found themselves hosting Soviet culture and its production at levels they could never have imagined for up to four years. The war marked

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the first moment that large-scale Soviet cultural production took place for an extended period of time outside Moscow and Leningrad.

This dissertation examines the evacuation of culture and the activities of evacuated cultural institutions in the hinterland from June 1941 to 1945. Taking as my focus theatrical ensembles, the creative unions (especially the Union of Writers of the USSR), art museums, and film studios, evacuated from Moscow and Leningrad, I argue that the mobilization of culture and the intelligentsia became a key component of the Soviet effort at “total war” thanks in large part to the evacuations. This came about somewhat unexpectedly. I argue that the original evacuation of culture rested on the perception of culture as a form of state wealth worth preserving from the dangers of war. However, after the initial panic of 1941 had passed and the advance on Moscow stopped, both state and evacuated institutions had a chance to think things over. Beginning in early 1942, evacuated cultural institutions began to lead massive mobilization and morale campaigns that would have been very difficult to substitute, relying as they did on the Soviet Union’s most talented performers and producers. The state went further than ever in transforming culture itself into a form of propaganda and agitation for the regime, adopting aspects of both high and low culture performed by the most elite cultural figures the Soviet Union had to offer. These elites in turn redoubled their efforts to be accessible to audiences, and simultaneously employed the narrative of cultural provision to the masses to demonstrate its ideological superiority, particularly as compared to the Nazis. In a state of total war, maintaining morale on the home front carried deep significance, and here the evacuated intelligentsia played an outsized role. Had the bulk of Soviet culture remained in Moscow and Leningrad, it is difficult to imagine how such a
successful campaign could have been carried out. Such tactics meant the state had to employ the very best of Soviet culture and true cultural elites for the message to succeed. In turn, these were the collectives that had disproportionately been evacuated as the most “valuable.” Evacuated institutions also provided the stars, name recognition and status that later lent extra impact to their activities in recently liberated territories. Regional authorities, after coming to recognizing the benefits evacuated culture brought for the war effort, also sought to use evacuees to raise their city’s profile, telescoping their accumulation of cultural capital in the hope of improving their place in the Soviet Union’s geographic hierarchy, bringing regional centers tangibly closer to the ideals set forth by Moscow and Leningrad.

This made the war a complex and telling episode for the intelligentsia, particularly in its relations to the state. The state was unable to compel the intelligentsia’s compliance during the war as it had in the 1930s, given the newfound physical distance between central authorities and culture elites. More pressing demands upon the state’s attention during the war also meant that the war saw very few repressive episodes against cultural elites, in contrast to the Great Terror. However, my research has shown that considerable self-mobilization took place amongst both elite and even rank-and-file members of the intelligentsia, and also uncovered a surprising level of willingness to actively participate in the state’s plans. Much of the success of culture’s contribution to the war effort, I argue, stemmed from the active initiative demonstrated by the intelligentsia itself. A combination of a certain loyalty and desire to serve certainly contributed to its behavior, but expectations of material privilege and reward, social status and power also accompanied any more noble motivations. In any case, for the
result was much the same and it was the unforced participation that enhanced the state’s
gratitude for cultural elites’ activities and willingness to provide postwar rewards. I argue
that it is the war that highlights better than other decades culture’s unique place in the
Soviet Union, pointing to its place as a pillar of the Soviet project and identity in ways
that are less apparent in the 1930s. The strain placed on the Soviet system by the war and
the state’s urgent need for support and role models gave cultural elites specific, concrete
opportunities to use their skills in the state’s interest.

At the same time, in analyzing the evacuations of culture a unique opportunity
presents itself to understand center-periphery relations and the channels through which
power flowed in the Soviet Union. One of the most defining features of the Soviet Union
– government, culture, economy – was its extraordinary level of centralization, based in
Moscow. Much of what gave Moscow its special significance was the concentration of all
manifestations of Soviet power there. The evacuations resulted in the removal of a key
lever of Soviet power – culture – from Moscow and Leningrad to the regions, for what
initially looked like an indefinite period of time. Regional Russian cities took on a new
importance during the war economically and culturally, and they and their residents
sought to keep at least some of that importance after the war’s end.

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3 We do see cultural elites (albeit many of a younger generation) occupying a prominent
place in the politics of Khrushchev’s Thaw after Stalin’s death; see Priscilla Johnson
(Cambridge: MIT University Press, 1965). Vladislav Zubok, Zhivago’s Children; The
Last Russian Intelligentsia (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2009); L.
(Moscow: Zvenia, 1997); Liudmila Alekseeva, The Thaw Generation: Coming of Age in
the Post-Stalin Era (Boston: Little, Brown, 1990).
To date, no full-length English language study of Soviet culture and the intelligentsia at war exist, and many of the Russian studies are dated. The evacuations present the opportunity of both telling the little known story of Soviet culture at war, and of re-conceptualizing relationship between power and the intelligentsia at a moment of truth for both groups. At the same time, this topic simultaneously gives insight into the shifting wartime boundaries between center and periphery and the implications thereof for the Soviet system. Given the significance and importance of elite cultural institutions to the Soviet state and its project, their arrival in the regions was a particularly charged event in terms of power-relationships. Microcosms of Moscow had suddenly arrived in the regions, and needed to be incorporated into everyday power relationships there. As the intelligentsia attempted to establish working relationships with local authorities, both sides reported on their activities back to Moscow. This reveals much about the relationship between members of the intelligentsia and powerful political figures, if only at the local level.

It is true that some number of cultural elites were unable, uninvited or refused to evacuate in 1941, remaining in frontline cities or occupied territories, while many of those evacuated quickly returned to the frontlines in various capacities (in front brigades for troop entertainment or as war correspondents, for example). However, the state focused most of its resources and energy on the evacuated culture, since the bulk of the

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4 For Soviet and Russian studies, see V. M. Savel’ev, Sovetskaia Intelligentsia v Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voine (Mosow: Mysl, 1974); L. V. Maksakova, Kultura Sovetskoi Rossii v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny (Mosow: Nauka, 1977); M. P. Kim, Sovetskaia kul’tura v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny (Mosow: Nauka, 1976); A. V. Speranskii, V gornile ispytanie: Kultural Urala v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi voiny (Ekaterinburg, 1996). There is an interesting chapter on the war in D. L. Babichenko, Pisateli i tsenzory (Mosow: Molodaia gvardiia, 1994) which focuses primarily on the 1940s.
elite institutions evacuated. It is also the evacuations themselves that best clarify the complexities of the relationship between state and intelligentsia, highlighting not only self-mobilization, initiative and patriotism/loyalty but expectations of material benefits, privileges and power as well. It is safe to say that they constitute the main if not exclusive story of Soviet culture at war, and certainly the aspect that has the most to reveal about power, loyalty and mobilization.⁵ This aspect of the war extended both to the frontlines and home front, though the dissertation covers only activities in evacuation.

The focus on evacuated culture as a separate category rather than a potential comparison of the evacuation of culture and of industry is also dictated by the sources. Evacuated culture virtually never appears in the same documents or even the same delo as either evacuated industries or civilian evacuees, whether in Moscow or the regions.⁶ Even the Council for Evacuation fond has its own separate dela for culture. All of this gives researchers the impression that even at the time, cultural institutions and elites formed a sort of middle ground, where different channels, expectations and procedures governed the evacuation process. At the same time, a number of recent books and

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⁵ Cultural activity continued in Moscow, Leningrad and other frontline cities, and the remnants of the creative elite there did their best to serve besieged cities and troops alike. However, their numbers were simply insufficient. To attain cultural production at the level the Soviet Union desired, they had to rely heavily on evacuated collectives.

⁶ In Molotov, a city which received numerous cultural institutions, the extensive delo specifically devoted to materials on the evacuations of 1941 contains no information on either the Kirov or any other theater, the numerous writers evacuated to Molotov, or on the Russian museum. See GAPK 564 4 77. The occasional exception here is documents on the wives and families of cultural elites, particularly writers or artists, who to their great dismay sometimes found themselves evacuated with and treated the same as regular civilian evacuees, without the privileges their husbands’ or fathers’ status would have normally brought them.

This focus most obviously neglects educational institutions, as well as culture from other cities outside Moscow and Leningrad. However, I consider educational institutions to be in a separate category for two reasons. Practically speaking they fulfill different functions, though there is overlap with cultural production. The rational for evacuation the Academy of Sciences physics department during World War II is self-evident, dictated by the needs of technology. The absolute need for culture is less clear, more caught up in the ideology of the Soviet state and in the means it sought to influence people. Secondly, culture and academia are never grouped together in the same sources. So although comparatively little work has been done on Soviet education during the war,
I limit my focus to cultural elites. The focus on Moscow and Leningrad is governed by several factors. First and foremost, the combined speed of the German attack ensured that there was not nearly as large-scale an evacuation of culture from the Baltics or Ukraine, not to mention cities in Western Russia, because there was simply no time to prepare. Most evacuations from these areas occurred piecemeal, at the initiative of the people who worked there and local authorities. Secondly, the reality of Soviet centralization meant that most “valuable” cultural institutions were located predominantly in Moscow and Leningrad. Museums and performance ensembles in the western Russian provinces tended to be lower in the overall hierarchies and would not have received significant quantities of resources, while writers, actors, and musicians from these cities were much less likely to have obtained the sort of qualifications and professional recognition that would have got them access to evacuation according to one’s specialty. These individuals were far more likely to have been drafted into the armed forces, and their institutions liquidated during the war. Moscow and Leningrad institutions disproportionately benefitted from the resources and attention available for evacuated culture during the war, when compared with evacuated collectives from smaller cities. For all of these reasons, it is harder to generalize about their much more scattered experiences than those of Moscow and Leningrad institutions (evacuated or otherwise), as well as the cultural life that remained intact in cities not threatened by the Germans.

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8 The exception to this rule is Larry Holmes, who has worked extensively on pedagogical institutes in Moscow. See Larry Holmes, War, Evacuation and the Exercise of Power: The Center, Periphery, and Kirov’s Pedagogical Institute, 1941-1952 (Lexington Books, 2012).
I conducted research for this dissertation primarily in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Molotov, and Kazan. In the end, since evacuated institutions remained “Muscovite” or “Leningrad” much of the best material came from the central archives, particularly RGALI and GARF in Moscow where I made heavy use of the fonds of the Writers’ Union, the Committee for Artistic Affairs (KPDI), the Council for Evacuation and Profsoiuz Rabotnikov Iskusstv at GARF, and the Department for Agitation and Propaganda at RGASPI. These are all fonds with a heavily administrative bent, but many of them contain a good deal of personal correspondence between the organization and individual members. Though I had less luck with personal archives in Moscow, I did encounter a few diaries and unpublished memoirs relevant to my research. It is worth noting that even in the fond of the Council for Evacuation, large gaps remain in the 1941 documentation for organizing and implementing the evacuations of culture. Though published memoirs fill in some of these gaps, they often leave conflicting accounts and certainly have led to the proliferation of rumors that are difficult to disprove in the absence of archival documents. For example, apparently before orders for evacuation had even been issued, Party authorities in Leningrad had summoned the main museum and theater directors and told them to prepare for evacuation, but no records remain from this meeting. Something similar happened with the Writers’ Union, which according to multiple other documents and memoirs, supposedly prepared a “list” of the most valuable writers to evacuate. However, I have never been able to locate such list. This has led to something of an overreliance on “official” voices referring to groups rather than individuals.
In Leningrad I made extensive use of the fonds of the Kirov theater, the Leningrad TIUZ and a number of personal fonds at TsGALI, the Kirov party organization fond at TSGAIPD, and the archive of the head of the Leningrad KPDI at the Russian National Library. Unfortunately, regional archives proved rather sparse in information. In both Kazan and Molotov, evacuated institutions maintained their own records and took them away when returning home as well, leaving little behind. While their presence undoubtedly generated paperwork by local authorities and their interactions with local authorities appears to have been quite extensive, the paper trail left behind is quite sparse. Even the personal fonds used in Molotov were more collections of official documents rather than correspondence, memoirs or other such personal documents I have, as mentioned, tried to fill in some of these gaps using memoirs.

The dissertation’s four chapters cover the evacuation logic, rationale and process in 1941; the initial reaction and attitudes of the intelligentsia to evacuation; everyday life in evacuation, including interactions with regional authorities, audiences and local counterparts; and cultural production and consumption in evacuation. Chapter I covers the development of the evacuation process from June - October 1941. It traces the evacuations’ expansion from a comparatively small undertaking aimed at evacuating the “best” or most valuable of Soviet culture into evacuating as much as possible. It also highlights the initiative demonstrated by the intelligentsia themselves in organizing the evacuations. The chapter discusses the rationale for having a separate category for the evacuation of culture, distinct from both the evacuation of industry and of civilians. The actual evacuation process differed little from the evacuation of industry, and is characterized by the same “individualization” of power seen in other sectors. There is
comparatively little new here about the evacuations themselves except for the fact that so many resources were expended in a moment of severe crisis on culture, indicating the state’s conceptualization of culture as a key vital resource. The expenditure of resources, time and energy foreshadow the significant role culture had already begun and continued to play in wartime mobilization, both phenomena that become clearer in the later chapters. Also, I argue that the implementation of the evacuations and intelligentsia mobilization along the lines of the pre-established hierarchies of place and rank, suggesting cultural elites had in fact internalized them and were willing to propagate them.

The second chapter describes the reactions and attitudes of the intelligentsia first to the war, and then to the evacuations. In suddenly removing the intelligentsia from Moscow and Leningrad, evacuations separated cultural elites not only from direct oversight and control, but also from immediate access to power and from the material privileges and living conditions to which they had become accustomed. They also temporarily deprived cultural elites of the status that came with being a resident of Moscow and Leningrad. The intelligentsia was deeply concerned with the “right” way to behave during the war, and many individuals carefully weighed the prospect of obeying state orders to evacuate against their calculation of the most correct actions. Mobilization was not a new phenomenon for the intelligentsia, but the extent of self-mobilization that occurred in 1941 sets it apart from other periods in Soviet history. The war gave the intelligentsia a chance to mobilize around a cause that was concrete and accessible, that

they could believe was right (defeating fascism), and that promised from its earliest days unity and cohesion rather than the violent social upheaval of the 1930s. At the same time, the intelligentsia early on realized the war was a chance to definitively prove its dependability and usefulness to the state, on terms that were not repugnant to at least some large part of it. The confluence of state and intelligentsia interests facilitated the degree of self-mobilization that we see during the war.

This chapter also highlights the intensive organizational role played by the creative unions and cultural administrators in facilitating the mobilization of cultural elites, and their importance in facilitating the successful mobilization of cultural elites. The creative unions were comparatively new at the time the war broke out. They had been called into existence by a 1932 Central Committee resolution that banned all previously existing creative societies in favor of forming new umbrella organizations that would unify Soviet cultural producers and guide them in the creation of socialist art. 10 While the Writers’ Union was active from 1934, the other unions escaped close scrutiny until the mid to late 1930s. The unions had been given a powerful base from their inception, as they had always been intended to provide material support to their members, as well as performing extensive functions of political supervision and control. 11 However,

during the war their support became crucial in the most literal sense: few writers, composers or artists could work productively or even survive without it.\textsuperscript{12} At the same time, the disruption of the evacuations forced the unions to expand their reach well beyond Moscow and Leningrad and to take on a host of new responsibilities to its members. The organizational aspects of the union’s functions became key in facilitating cultural production, given the disruption the evacuations brought.

I argue that on the whole, as a group the intelligentsia remained loyal to the state. However, in return for its continued loyalty while residing outside of the two capitals, the intelligentsia made numerous demands on the state for privileges and certain forms of assistance, and the union administrations led the way in these demands. The evacuations created a newly powerful position for the creative unions, whose top members found themselves in the position of intermediaries between the demands and needs of cultural elites and the state thanks to the disruption of the other potential channels of communication and distribution. A writer or artist’s chances of attracting the direct attention of a Politburo member for assistance during the war by themselves were very slim. Since Union presidents answered for the mobilization and continued production of their members, the war placed newfound responsibility on the unions. They would be called to task if seen to fail in this responsibility.\textsuperscript{13}

Chapter III covers the experience of evacuated cultural institutions in the regions for the duration of the war, evaluating the experience also from the point of view of regional authorities and communities — and cultural elites’ local counterparts. My research argues that although cultural institutions were initially unwelcome and that local authorities attempted to redirect them elsewhere, evacuated culture gradually became a valued and valuable commodity to local authorities, who sought to maximize the use they might extract from it. The evacuations started off as a manifestation of a highly unequal power relationship in which power flowed more or less in one direction: from Moscow to the regions. Over the course of the war, this power dynamic equaled out to a certain degree, in part because of the power invested in regional cities as they played host to a variety of prominent evacuation institutions, cultural and otherwise.

In this chapter, the myriad hierarchies — geographical, political, social and cultural that shaped how the evacuations played out come to the fore in this chapter. I argue that while a social-geographic hierarchy had already pervaded the Soviet consciousness and practices connected to material and political privileges, the evacuation of culture reconfirmed and in some ways reinforced these hierarchies. This chapter also looks at the likewise hierarchical and highly unequal dynamic between evacuated cultural elites and their local counterparts, and the way in which the two groups found a common language. As for the regional cities and communities that hosted evacuated culture during the war, they also emerged from the war changed. After having hosted evacuated culture for several years and being the target of extensive campaigns to convince regional residents that they were better off for having Soviet culture, should be proud of it and consume it, regional communities had little desire to be once more relegated to their pre-war status of
cultural villages. The experience of evacuated culture increased demand for comparable cultural opportunities in regional centers, whose communities felt that they deserved the Soviet culture they had been sold during the war as a benefit of the Soviet system, separating the Soviets from the Nazis. Evacuations as a whole, therefore, gave an enormous boost to regional development in the postwar period. The cultural evacuations in particular, however, lent weight and reinforced the geographic hierarchies that had already begun to develop before the war. If so many workers and factories (and eventually, refugees) had been evacuated that perforce they had been distributed over a very wide area, the evacuation of culture was more clustered and concentrated, with evacuated culture bunching together in the more prestigious regional centers — the prestige of which was then reinforced by their presence. In addition to increased demand, the presence of evacuees also catalyzed local cultural growth, educating local talent and creating the infrastructure for cultural growth by creating official chapters of local unions.

The final chapter, on cultural consumption, examines the mechanisms by which culture was made to appeal and influence regional consumers in the hopes of raising morale and work productivity for the war effort. My research shows that the success of this campaign – which depended on the intelligentsia’s willingness campaign and effectiveness in putting their message across, and the audience’s willingness to buy the campaign’s message – was never a foregone conclusion. This occurred via a concerted campaign to “sell” Soviet culture to regional audiences conducted by both central and regional authorities, with the help of the creative intelligentsia. The campaign’s main selling points were quality, content and personalization of cultural experiences. The
chapter also discusses at length the intelligentsia’s rationale for participating actively and with initiative in such a campaign, and their contributions to the way it was conducted. Here, in addition to patriotism and or a desire to assist the war effort, cultural elites’ personal commitment to their particular art form played a large role, as did sympathy and a desire to assist other Soviet citizens affected by the war as best they might. This manifested itself particularly in military hospitals. The campaign’s second aspect, convincing people that providing culture to the masses was a virtue unique to the Soviet state and in stark contrast to Nazi Germany and that therefore they should appreciate evacuated culture, also succeeded. As I demonstrate, regional audiences after the war felt that they had the right to enjoy the cultural life they had been told was their heritage. These new pressures led to a burst of regional cultural development aimed at satisfying such demands.

The dissertation speaks to two broad historiographies: the literature on World War II and the historiography of the intelligentsia, with the attached considerations of the relationship between culture and state power (especially mobilization and propaganda). It also makes a contribution to our understanding of Soviet regional development, and offers insights into the historical problem of Soviet hierarchies, the social and cultural relationship between center and region, and Soviet levels of patriotism and loyalty.

World War II in the Soviet Union is still comparatively under-historicized, not yet a thoroughly analysed transformative moment in late Stalinism. This is particularly true of the role of the home front. Mobilization for “total war” required immense sacrifices from the entire Soviet population, often in extreme conditions involving malnourishment.
and work overtime, and yet the front depended on this mobilization.⁴ This made morale and loyalty, and correspondingly propaganda, agitation and willingness to be mobilized and buy into the state’s narrative of the war, a concern of the first importance for the Soviet state.⁵ Additionally, morale and the work effort rested not only on propaganda (in

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⁵ For an overview of recent work on morale, see Mark Edele, “What are We Fighting For? Loyalty in the Soviet War Effort, 1941-1945,” International Labor and Working Class History 84, 1 (2013). Edele supports the view articulated by Karel Berkhoff, amongst others, that both loyalty and open opposition were minority positions, with the majority of Soviet citizens focus on simply surviving. See Karel Berkhoff, Harvest of Despair: Life and Death under Nazi Occupied Ukraine (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 2004) also has chapters on morale and the general social reaction to the war, albeit in occupied territories. For military mobilization and morale especially amongst the armed forces, see Roger Reese, Why Stalin’s Soldiers Fought: The Red Army’s Military Effectiveness in World War II (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2011); David Glantz, Colossus Reborn: The Red Army at War, 1941-1943 (Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 2005); Catherine Merridale, Ivan’s War: Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945 (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006); Nikita Lomagin, “Soldiers at War: German Propaganda and Soviet Morale during the Battle of Leningrad, 1941-1944,” Carl Beck Papers: Russia and East European Studies 1306 (1998). A flock of new works on particular aspects of war effort such as women soldiers or partisans also address morale; refer to the Edele article above for titles. The literature on the homefront experience has been growing rapidly over the pasty 10 years. For morale, patriotism and loyalty on the home front during the war. See, however, Richard Brody, “Ideology and Political Mobilization: The Soviet Home Front during World War II,” Carl Beck Papers in Russian and East European Studies 11, 4 (1994); Gennadii Bordiugov, “The Popular Mood in the Unoccupied Soviet Union,” in The People’s War: Responses to World War II in the Soviet Union, ed. Robert Thurston (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2000); Oleg Budnitskii, “The Great Patriotic War and Soviet Society: Defeatism, 1941-1942,” Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 15, 4 (2014) as well as his and
all its forms) and mobilizational tactics, but also on relaxation and entertainment. This was in part a matter of necessity since the Soviet Union simply was not in a position to provide incentives or crutches to morale of other sorts, primarily material. Under these conditions, evacuated cultural institutions and their products provided the primary formats for these activities. Culture – and those people “doing” culture – found themselves at the center of the campaign for mobilization and morale. There have been some recent works on Soviet propaganda during the war and edited volumes on Russian culture, but not an in-depth analysis of the role of culture in the war and its relationship to propaganda. Similarly, there is no published comprehensive history of Soviet culture at war. Karel Berkhoff’s book on propaganda focuses on what might be termed “pure” propaganda, its subject matter and content. His study looks primarily at the media, particularly newspapers and some posters, rather than the propaganda conveyed through “high” or even “mass” culture. The dissertation exposes the scale, inner workings and

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techniques of the cultural side of the massive propaganda and mobilization effort that turned out to be a key component of Soviet success, mobilizing and motivating both those in the military and those working round the clock to support them in the factories and industries of the home front. It highlights the importance of ideology to the Soviet project and how it was reflected in culture. Evacuated cultural elites were crucial to this campaign, primarily in their assistance conceptualizing it, but also in the level of artistic quality they brought, their efforts to connect with viewers, and the sheer numbers of performers and producers (writers and composers) evacuated institutions supplied. In this way, the dissertation makes a contribution to our understanding of wartime mobilization both of the intelligentsia and of audiences, while simultaneously changing how we view culture’s role and the function of cultural producers in the Soviet Union by asserting their objective importance in a moment of crisis. The story of evacuated culture, since it involves so much movement between the centers and eastern peripheries, also gives us a chance to unite the wartime stories of both frontline cities and the home front. Though I assumed early in my project that evacuation was the exclusive narrative of culture during the war, research quickly showed that even in evacuation, cultural elites and institutions maintained close ties with Moscow and Leningrad and regularly dispatched brigades and individuals to the frontlines. Though the story of evacuations begins in 1941, for different institutions it draws to a close at different times. The story of evacuations is inextricably tied with that of the front. Moscow institutions for obvious reasons returned home much

earlier than those in Leningrad, but overall re-evacuation depended entirely on events at the front.

This dissertation pays less attention to the new themes and motifs of wartime culture, which have been documented by Richard Stites, Russian scholars and David Brandenberger. However, it is concerned with the relationship of wartime activities to Socialist Realism and to special position of cultural elites – especially writers – in Soviet society. Thomas Lahusen has shown how writers transforming real life into literature in a “montage of life” achieved deep resonance with their readers, maintaining active correspondence with them. The idea that Soviet culture should be based on “real material” and that cultural producers should be familiar with the material they wrote about had been an integral part of Soviet debates on culture since the 1920s. However, in reality by the mid-1930s the centrifugal forces of Moscow and Leningrad and the rapidly multiplying privileges designated for cultural elites meant that in fact, most cultural elites were highly isolated from the Soviet masses. It was entirely possible for a Soviet writer in the late 1930s to have little or no contact with the average Soviet worker.

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Soviet cultural may not have “reflected traditional mass tastes,” as Boris Groys has argued, but nor does that mean it was also “devoid of entertainment value.”\(^{21}\) Also, Soviet culture in its socialist realist incarnation has a well-established didactic element, my sources suggest that by the war, at least some Soviet citizens did in fact look to culture specifically for examples of how to understand the war and how to behave correctly.\(^{22}\) Culture suggested resolutions or behavioral models that audiences could then debate at their leisure. My dissertation also shows that cultural producers paid close attention to the reaction to their works during the war, and sought to ensure that they held appeal for potential consumers. Wartime culture may still have been formulated by elites, but this does not mean they did not take their audiences into account.

There are few notable works on Soviet theater in English, particularly on their function in Soviet society.\(^{23}\) Historians have devoted their attention disproportionately to print media, writers and to a lesser degree, musicians and film. And yet the performing arts clearly played an important role in the eyes of the Soviet state – playwrights were among the best paid and most privileged Soviet writers. Moreover, large theaters functioned as sites of concentration and exchange, bringing together writers, artists, musicians, actors and dancers to work on joint projects. Theaters were particularly active during the war, moving beyond their traditional formats and genres in order to reach


\(^{22}\) Groys, 9; Katerina Clark, *The Soviet Novel: History as Ritual* (1981), 16. In archival sources there are frequent expressions of thanks to writers and performers from workers for having “assisted us with these difficult and complicated tasks.” For one such example, see GARF f. 5508 op. 3 d. 53 l. 44, in a letter from workers of the Uralmashzavod to writer Tipot.

\(^{23}\) One exception to this is Christina Ezrahi’s *Swans of the Kremlin*, see next note.
viewers. The war is a particularly informative time period with which to begin to address this gap.

At the heart of my research is the story of the intelligentsia itself. Despite this comparatively small group’s outsize importance in Soviet history, there are fewer works on their role and function than one might expect, and almost none cover the war or even the entire span of the Stalin period. Rather, such works tend to limit their scope to either the 1920s and 1930s, or to the post-Stalin period. They also tend to fall into two categories: those works dedicated to the intelligentsia as a group (rarer) and those that focus on a particular branch of the arts, whose producers and performers were members of the intelligentsia. This dissertation forms a bridge between those works examining the function and evolution of culture and culture producers in the 1920s and 1930s, with

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those analyzing the importance of the post-Stalin intelligentsia and cultural production. However, the power dynamic between the creative intelligentsia and state did not remain static between the 1930s and 1950s. The crisis produced by the war and sudden intensified need for the intelligentsia’s enhanced participation in the Soviet project threw into relief many aspects of mobilization and the symbiotic relationship between the state and its cultural elite. The war also lays bare an aspect of the intelligentsia’s history that has so far received comparatively little attention: the economic aspect of the intelligentsia’s relationship to the state, which seems to have been neglected in favor of issues such as repression, censorship and control. This is more complex than simply dividing the intelligentsia into those who were “compromised” or indebted to the regime in some way. As the evacuations show, cultural producers were embedded within a system of privilege without which they would not have been able to work, and which extended beyond economic benefits to include social status. Though economic interests are generally perceived to be the opposite of ideology, in this case the two worked together within the Soviet system.

Moving beyond the story of culture at war, the literature on evacuations themselves is also comparatively sparse, especially in English, and yet the evacuations represented a major departure for the Soviet Union. For the first time, resettlement in the Soviet Union took place more or less voluntarily and was intended not as a punishment, but a reflection of elite status and perceived “value.” This in and of itself is a change worth examining. Moreover, all of the evacuations served as stimulants for regional development, with consequences lasting far beyond 1945. The levels of destruction in the western territories prevented all of the evacuatees and institutions from returning to their
original cities, particularly Leningrad which had to sharply restrict the number of returnees. A number therefore remained permanently in their new locations, which experienced rapid postwar development. Both in English and Russian, the few studies of the evacuations focus primarily on the institutional structures and logistics that nominally governed them, such as the Council for Evacuation and the wartime system of transportation. As such they are overwhelming Moscow-centric. There have also been a number of recent works on the experience of evacuation, but these focus on the experience of civilian evacuees, who received quite different treatment than the intelligentsia.

Since evacuated culture came to the regions as direct representatives of Moscow, with the power that entailed, their arrival upset local balances of power in a way that civilian evacuees did not. The disruption of center-periphery relations is not a theme that either the evacuation of industry nor of civilians highlights in quite the same manner. I seek in this dissertation to integrate the regional perspective and the evacuees’ impact in the regions into the larger narrative of the war and postwar growth. As I mentioned, the

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27 See Rebecca Manley, *To the Tashkent Station* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009); See as well the dissertations of Kristin Edwards and Natalie Belsky, note 6.
evacuees in combination with the demands of wartime proportion fell disproportionately on cities in the Russian and Central Asian East, since the German advance rendered other cities in danger. These two things led to exponential regional growth during the war in the most literal sense, with many cities doubling or even tripling their populations. However, growth occurred in less tangible ways as well. The evacuations redistributed cultural and scientific capital away from the centers and European part of Russia, from where it did not all manage to return and served as a key catalyst of regional development that accelerated in the postwar period. Wartime cultural activities set the stage for vastly increased cultural demands by regional communities and authorities in the postwar period, in acknowledgement of the fact that Soviet culture was a “good” that should not only be available to those living in Moscow and Leningrad. Here as well is a chance to contribute to the growing historiography of Soviet “space” and regimes of privilege in the Soviet Union.\(^{28}\) As my research makes clear, cultural capital, material privilege and geographic location closely intersected and reinforced each other. While the evacuations spread some of the cultural capital around the country, they did not fundamentally alter the patterns that had existed before the war.

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The idea that a state should expend the level of resources that the Soviets did on protecting culture at a moment of such intense crisis and before its immediate use to the war effort became clear seems unprecedented, as does the speed and pragmatism with which the evacuations were conducted. However, the idea of “culture at war” is not a phenomenon unique to the Soviet Union, and not all Soviet experiences are as exceptional as they appear at first glance. What distinguishes the Soviet experience from that of its allies is the fact that culture had long been intricately connected to ideology, propaganda and state power. Distinguishing the role of Soviet culture from German culture is its lack of concern with race, on the one hand, and also in the Soviet creation of something new; German cultural policies rested far more heavily on the prohibition of the undesirable material rather than the creation of a fundamentally new Nazi culture.

The use of culture during the war is part of the bigger phenomenon of total war in Europe in the twentieth century. During experience of World War I, most European powers became more sensitive to the question of morale both on the home front and amongst the armed forced. World War I also saw the first initiatives at employing cultural activities in an organized fashion to entertain the troops – albeit on a small scale. Recent publications have highlighted German cultural policies on the Eastern Front in World War I, which took on something of a “civilizing mission” nature. However, culture played a fundamentally different role in World War II, in large part due to changes in modern understanding of

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psychology and how to wage warfare. Many of the combatants had in fact clamped down on “entertainment” at the beginning of World War I. World War I also in many areas fit the model for a 19th century war, with military operations conducted against a civilian backdrop. However, by the 1940s Europe had witnessed the largescale “socialization” of violence, and the mass mobilization campaigns meant the boundaries between military and civilian had become blurred. Europe’s second encounter with “total war” saw all parties seek to mobilize all of their available resources for the war effort, paying significant attention to morale and culture’s potential impact thereon. Germany in particular sought to learn from its mistakes in World War I, and “high importance was attached to psychological warfare as an integral part of waging a modern war.”

Great Britain and the United States were no exceptions in this regard.

However, the United States limited its direct mobilization of culture to the

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30 Cambridge History of the Second World War.
34 I have left out of this comparison the role of culture in occupied countries and Germany’s allies, and for these purposes have treated France as an occupied country. However, work has certainly been done on the role of French intellectuals, artists and others during World War II. See Frederic Spotts, Shameful Peace: How French Artists and Intellectuals Survived the Nazi Occupation (New Haven: Yale University Press,
comparatively limited sphere of the United Services Organization, rather than engaging in an extensive cultural campaign at home. Founded in 1941, the USO sought to provide relaxation and entertainment to US troops abroad. Britain made more extensive use of its cultural manpower, attempting to create a clearly defined, unifying national identity and community by means of culture. Britain’s campaign depicted Germany as “an amoral industrial state run amok,” that did not value or nurture creativity or freedom of expression. In the West culture had long been viewed as a particular virtue, “the association of art and artmaking with creativity and freedom, and their status as emblems of anti-fascist values, had been endorsed as early as 1933.” Jörn Weingärtner writes of a general consensus


35 All major combatants made similar efforts to provide such opportunities to their troops. On the USO, see Lowell Matson, “Theatre for the Armed Forces in World War II,” Educational Theatre Journal 6, 1 (1954); Gary Bloomfield, Duty, Honor and Applause: America’s Entertainers in World War II (Guilford, CT: Lyon’s Press, 2004); on its British counterpart, ENSA, see Andy Merriman, Greasepaint and Cordite: The Story of ENSA and Concert Party Entertainment during the Second World War (London: Aurum Press, 2013); Surprisingly, this topic does not appear to have attracted significant scholarly interest and critical attention, either on the Allied or Axis sides. On the other side, Germany’s Truppenbetreuung was quite extensive at its peak. See Geerte Murmann, Komödianten für den Krieg: deutsches und alliiertes Fronttheater (Dusseldorf: Droste, 1992) and also Bogsulaw Drewniak, Das Theater im NS-Staat: Szenarum deutscher Zeitgeschichte, 1933-1945 (Düsseldor: Droste, 1985). Though the Soviet Union’s front brigade program got off to a comparatively slow start, given the chaos surrounding the invasion in 1941, it grew throughout the rest of the war. Most of the literature on this subject is in Russian, and consists of a variety of semi-primary source forms, rather than analytical secondary works.


37 Foss, 48.

38 Foss, 157.
in Britain across the political spectrum that “state intervention in the arts was thought to imply a high degree of control, to produce mediocre rather than avant-garde art and to be detrimental to creativity and spontaneity in general.”

The Soviet Union also depicted fascism as an anti-culture ideology, and during the war would make much propaganda of German destruction of cultural treasures, and deprivation of workers of culture. The Third Reich ascribed to culture as a universal value and mark of civilization, and it too and sought to present itself as the protector of European cultural heritage as defined by Nazi ideology.

Several other things separate the experiences of Britain and the United States from those of the Soviet Union and the Third Reich. One was the level of state involvement, sponsorship and control of cultural activities, the second is the omnipresence of ideology, and unique to the Soviet state is the exceptionally privileged and revered social and political status that cultural elites occupied by the war’s outbreak.

By 1938, Germany and the Soviet Union had long traditions of state funding of the arts, albeit in return for ideological assistance. In Britain, subsidies and public funding for the arts began on a large scale only during the war, as the

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39 Weingärtner, 161.
government sought to prop up morale. Ideology also played a much less crucial role in British and US cultural mobilization. Naturally Western countries had to create narratives of what they were fighting and sacrificing for, and both US and UK wartime cultural programs experienced various forms of censorship and control over performance content. But culture did not play such a direct role in its support of the state and upholding of state ideology, nor was culture imbued with ideological concerns in the same ways as in Germany and the Soviet Union.

For these reasons, it is perhaps Germany’s use and treatment of culture during World War II that draws the most obvious comparisons with the Soviet Union. Both laid claim to an outwardly expanding ideological system that at least nominally aimed at universality, in culture as well as everything else. As Igor Golomstock has noted, the first principle of totalitarianism is that “it proclaims its ideological doctrine as both uniquely true and universally obligatory.” Both states laid claim to cultural domination, and to be the protector of the world’s cultural heritage, and their totalitarianism also defined their relationship to the arts and cultural production. If the “Nazis bought the neohumanists’ argument that it

41 See Weingärtner, throughout.
was the duty of the state to support art….they insisted on a corollary: it was the
duty of art to uphold and immortalize state power.” With a monopoly over
artistic life, Golomstock continues, an official declared artistic style that serves
the needs of the state, and an apparatus for directing cultural life, each state had in
their hands “an effective weapon in ideological struggle.” In other words, the
role of culture went much deeper in the two totalitarian states than it did in
Western Europe or the United States.

Secondly, unlike Britain and the United States, German and Soviet
cultural policies often clashed directly on the same territories, making the
comparisons direct in the literal sense. Ukraine and Belarus in particular found
themselves the sites of first Soviet, then German, then Soviet again cultural
construction in the most direct sense of the word, though unfortunately occupied
territories are beyond the immediate scope of this dissertation. The war also
reached each country physically. Britain and the United States never found
themselves forced to confront the questions of what to do with their cultural
resources when they came under direct threat of total destruction, in the way that
both Germany and the Soviet Union did on their home fronts. Germany never
evacuated its cultural institutions, since it had first no need to evacuate them, and

45 Golomstock, 29. See Golomstock’s breakdown of how states achieved control over
cultural life.
46 For a fascinating look at German theatrical policies in occupied Poland, see Anselm
Heinrich, “Germanification, Cultural Mission, Holocaust: Theatre in Lodz during World
chap. 8, for his discussion of cultural life in Kiev during the war.
then later on nowhere to evacuate them to. But Germany did attempt to use
culture in service of the war effort, and this does make the story of culture on the
home front worth comparing.

Many of the same concerns spurred the Soviets and the Nazis to action
when it came to culture during the war: the need to protect and preserve cultural
life for appearance’s sake, the need for quality to bolster claims of cultural
leadership, and the desire to use culture for propaganda purposes. If the Soviet
Union immediately sought to press cultural elites into service for the war effort,
before the need for evacuation became clear, the Germans held off. For Germany,
most important was the opposite, to avoid total mobilization for as long as
possible, and preserve the façade of daily life. This included avoiding cutting back
on cultural life, and as a consequence initially exempting the majority of
Germany’s culture elite from military service.47 These exemptions on the basis of
“indispensability” indicate how seriously the Germans took the need to retain
cultural life during the war, and they bear similarities to the Soviet conception.
Simultaneously, demand for art and entertainment opportunities grew, as
alongside the increased opportunities for troop entertainment and new theaters
opening across the growing Reich territory, German citizens found themselves in
need of diversion from war and of something on which to spend their cash, as
material consumer goods dwindled.48 As documents have revealed the Nazis

47 Steinweis, 154.
48 Alan Steinweis, Art, Ideology, and Economics in Nazi Germany: The Reich Chambers
of Music, Theater and the Visual Arts (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press,
1993).
needed theater as much as film “to mollify the German population for the hardships they had to endure during an unwinnable war.”49 On historian of theater has noted that until the number of air raids increased in 1943, German theaters found themselves “increasing audiences, increasing subsidies, and increased political demands – which most of them were happy to comply with – after 1939.50 Although the theaters had been expected to become propaganda stages, this was less the case than one might have expected. Unlike the Soviet Union, German cultural venues do not appear to have experienced an immediate shift in the content of cultural opportunities. The dominant genres remained classics and perennially popular light entertainment, especially early in the war.51 Cultural content differed little from pre-1939, respecting the audiences’ desire for entertainment and the government’s belief the war would not last long.52 The Nazis had never had much luck defining a specific Nazi theatrical style, and their pronouncements in the realm of culture had tended to be negative rather than constructive. During the war, overall in German theaters political content was reduced, clearing the way for a focus on the classics.53

50 Anselm Heinrich, Entertainment, Propaganda and Education: Regional Theatre in Germany and Britain, 1918-1945, (University of Hertfordshire Press, 2007), 110.
51 Ibid., 204.
52 Steinweis, 163
With the newly expanded performance opportunities and reduced obligations for military service, German artists and performers found themselves assured of wartime income on levels they could not have dreamed of before the war. Indeed, performers whose talents would never have assured them of work before the war now raked in the cash, leading to complaints both from the armed services about quality, and from the cultural administrations themselves regarding professional overcrowding. Only in late 1944 did Germany decide to mobilize all artists and shut down most organized, professional cultural activities.

Like the Soviets, Nazis were also deeply concerned with the quality of cultural production during the war. But here their motives differ somewhat from the Soviets, who required an emphasis on quality in order to ensure continued consumption by audiences as well as to bolster their claims to be the repository of world cultural. The Nazis were concerned with germanification and demonstrating the strength and purity of German ideals and morals, as well as not wishing to disrupt daily life.

But perhaps most notable are two things. One, the Nazis seem to have struggled much more with cultural content than the Soviets did, perhaps as a reflection of the fact that they never managed to develop their own unique style or theory of culture, as the Soviets had early on with socialist realism. As Peter Kenez has noted, the Soviets lacked their own Goebbels, or a single powerful

54 Steinweis, 151.
55 Steinweis, 168.
56 On germanification see Anselm Heinrich, “Germanification, Cultural Mission, Holocaust.”
individual deeply interested in propaganda methods themselves and how to act on peoples’ minds. However, the Soviets were highly organized and as the wartime experience of culture shows, invested time and effort in finding ways to reach as many people as possible. Both authorities and intelligentsia paid attention to audience reactions and spent time considering what sort of content should go into wartime culture with the specific aim of encouraging people to consume it.

Secondly, the Third Reich does not appear to achieved the level of mobilization of its intelligentsia to serve the war effort as successfully as the Soviets did. Many of those in the elite echelons of Soviet culture were also Party members. However, despite their enhanced social and material status and the increase in various forms of honors and awards, very few elite performers in Germany belonged officially to the Nazi Party though there were many collaborators and those who eagerly sought to make concessions to the regime to retain their careers. The raises the question at least of whether or not the Soviet Union had not proved better at mobilizing its intelligentsia for its cause, as compared to the Nazis.

At any rate, the entire episode confirms the idea that cultural superiority was a powerful, motivating notion well beyond Soviet and German boundaries. Culture could serve to draw together national communities around a particular value; likewise, the narrative of culture’s destruction proved instrumental in

57 Peter Kenez, Propaganda State, 4.
demonization of other countries. Perhaps the one strand uniting the story of cultural activities of all major combatants is the recognition of culture’s importance as an institution of education and propaganda, and its potential relationship to morale. The intensity of this importance was something particular to World War II. During World War I, the mobilization of cultural resources cannot have been said to be total, and this limited mobilization of culture remained even more modest in its direct application to the support of home front or military efforts. Indeed, it is not even clear that these were goals in 1914. However, in 1941 this was a goal, and in comparison with all the other belligerents the Soviet Union made the most significant progress towards achieving it.
Chapter I
Evacuation Effort: July-October 1941

On July 1st, 1941, a special train departed from Leningrad’s Oktiabrskii station at sunrise. It consisted of 22 freight cars (including one armored), one car full of soldiers for security, and on either end flat cars equipped with anti-aircraft batteries and machine guns. An advance locomotive traveled ahead, clearing the tracks. Upon departure, no one knew the train’s destination. At each junction, railroad attendants received a telegram informing them of the following junction to which they should dispatch the train. This was the first train carrying the Hermitage museum’s most valuable items and a handful of accompanying museum workers into evacuation. The boxes, packed by Hermitage employees and volunteer art students in round-the-clock efforts and transported by Red Army sailors, contained half a million priceless items such as paintings by Rembrandt, Titian, Ruben and Raphael; Scythian gold, Lomonosov porcelain, Greek vases and other priceless items. Iosif Orbeli, the museum’s director, stood on the platform and cried.

As the speedy departure of the Hermitage items suggests, the evacuation of culture started out as a measure to preserve the most valuable of Soviet culture from damage (in a war expected to rely heavily on air raids) and to deprive the Germans of any potential resources. For wartime purposes, cultural institutions and the intelligentsia were not lumped together with the evacuation of industry and government or the evacuation of civilians, but treated separately as a limited resource and pillar of Soviet identity whose

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59 Sergei Varshavskii and Boris Rest, Podvig Ermitazha (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1985), 37.
60 Varshavskii and Rest, 39.
61 Lynn H. Nicholas, Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe’s Treasures in the Third Reich and Second World War (New York: Knopf, 1995), 238.
preservation and therefore evacuation mattered to the maintenance of the Soviet system. The evacuation of industry was in many ways a success story, as Mark Harrison has written: the “Kremlin’s first clear-sighted response to the economic emergency…provided the essential context for the economy wide mobilization of war production.”

During the war, two features of the Soviet system worked to the state’s advantage: the economy’s centralized nature, which allowed decisions to be taken without dispute, and the mass mobilization that enabled the decisions to be carried out even in a moment of chaos. Much the same can be said of the evacuation of culture.

Prior to the outbreak of war, no plans existed for evacuation as they were contrary to the Soviet Union’s military doctrine of an offensive war. Indeed, as late as a few weeks before the war broke out, Stalin openly rejected a plan for the partial evacuation of Moscow in case of war. That being said, in some ways the logical groundwork for the evacuations was already in place. When they became necessary, evacuations proceeded along the lines of preexisting cultural hierarchies. People and things higher on the hierarchies got out first, and generally enjoyed better conditions. The Soviet system had been establishing ranking systems and hierarchies throughout the 1920s and 1930s, classifying all its citizens by potential value (and potential danger) to

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the state.66 These determinations existed well before the outbreak of war, reflected in place of residence, job titles, salaries, titles, awards or medals, which the state handed out with far greater frequency beginning in 1936.67 The centralized nature of the system contributed to the ease with which these determinations were made, and helped insulate them from serious contestation. Evacuations began at the top of the hierarchy and worked downwards until time or transportation ran out.

As with industry, leading intelligentsia figures were in many ways responsible for the implementation of the evacuations, mobilizing and organizing many aspects the evacuations themselves and turning to the state for its approval of their plans and to receive the resources necessary to implement said plans. Top cultural administrators and the creative unions rather than the Council for Evacuations or state officials played key roles in making sure evacuations took place in the appropriate time frame and that all designated to evacuate in fact got out. Rather than the official state apparatus, evacuations succeeded in large part due to the efforts of individuals highly motivated on a variety of levels to see this work through, though of course they relied on the resources the state was willing to provide them. This in turn points to the fact that in the state’s moment of crisis, the intelligentsia rallied round the state and proved itself to be a reliable demographic (though their motivations here were not always selfless). Without the work

66 For example, see Sheila Fitzpatrick’s article on the Bolshevik need to “reinvent” and “assign” class identities. “The Bolshevik Invention of Class,” in Fitzpatrick Tear off the Masks! Identity and Imposture in 20th Century Russia (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005). For a separate example, see David Shearer, “Elements Near and Alien.” Both deal with Soviet methods of organizing and classifying their citizens. 67 Andrei Artizov and Oleg Naumov, Vlast’ i khudozhestvennaia intelligentsia, 1917-1953: Dokumenty (Moscow: Demokratiia, 2002), 692. Appendix II consists of a list of all honors, awards and medals presented to members of the creative intelligentsia from 1932 on. The highest honor, “People’s Artist of the Soviet Union,” was created in 1936.
and coordination of these *intelligenty*, Soviet culture would most likely have been significantly more damaged than it eventually emerged. In doing their best to implement the evacuations, the intelligentsia itself mobilized along the lines of the pre-established hierarchies of place and rank, without challenging them. This suggests cultural elites had in fact internalized them.

The Soviet war effort had four types of evacuees: industry, culture, state/party apparatus and civilian. The evacuation of culture differed little from that of industry aside from the absence of purely instrumental reasons driving its evacuation. If the point with industry was to get out as much as possible (to transfer as much industry as possible to a safe locale from whence it could continue working), the point with the culture and the intelligentsia was originally to get out the “best”, though this concept eventually expanded to include entire groups of cultural elites. But perhaps one of the most striking things about the evacuation of culture is that while it differs little from that of industry, both these evacuations differ significantly from that of civilians (women and children, etc). In other words, the Soviet state placed culture on the same level as key war industries producing things like bullets and tanks. It treating Soviet culture as a deeply valued and crucial resource, part of the essence of the state that they could not afford to have destroyed. The state’s willingness in a moment of severe crisis to devote significant resources to preserving and protecting culture and its producers points to the importance it attributed to Soviet culture as a key pillar of the state and Soviet identity. This foreshadows the importance of culture to the Soviet cause, which became a prominent theme in wartime propaganda and self-presentation immediately after the war began, while continuing and increasing in evacuation. This willingness is all the more striking
in that the investment of resources was made before the intelligentsia had had a full chance to demonstrate its usefulness in wartime, though it does foreshadow the important role it came to play in the future.

Given the political system in place in the Soviet Union, it is a given that the state was the actor setting goals and priorities for the entire country, and making decisions designed to facilitate the achievement of these goals. The evacuation of industry was driven by rationality, if we take the Soviet state’s goal to be to eventually repel the German invasion. Continued – increased, even – industrial output was obviously necessary to sustain hope of a Soviet victory. For this to occur, industry had to remain both in Soviet hands and undisturbed or damaged by air raids, shelling or other military intervention. Given the Germans’ massive inroads into Soviet territory in the first weeks of the war, evacuating industry made eminent sense, which in no way detracts from the unprecedented nature of the undertaking. Nor does it reflect upon the evacuations’ efficiency.

At first glance, the evacuation of cultural elites does not appear to be driven by instrumental or practical reasons, nor did it serve an obvious purpose the way industry did: one does not instantly associate a need for continued opera performances with total war. However, this perspective underestimates the importance that the creative intelligentsia and culture had taken on in the Soviet Union by the time the war broke out.

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If part of the state’s aim in evacuations was to preserve all resources that could aid in winning the war effort as well as maintain morale in both the armed forces and the civilian population, then the intelligentsia was a critical resource and the state recognized this. The Soviet “cult of culture” and the elevation of cultural elites to the top of the social hierarchy as figures to be emulated and their intertwine with the upper echelons of Soviet political power may not have been inherent to early Soviet Marxism, but it gained rapid momentum in the 1930s. The intelligentsia’s transition to a prominent and publicized player “alongside explorers, airplane pilots and government leaders” in the Soviet “public drama,” in Jeffrey Brook’s words, meant that by 1941 the state could not afford to not have its support in the war. Additionally, the intelligentsia’s status in the Soviet hierarchy meant that the capture or destruction of major performance companies or well-known individuals would give the Germans trophies with outsized propaganda significance.

This chapter will argue that the evacuations confirm that by 1941 Soviet culture and its producers and performers occupied a highly privileged place in the Soviet project with cultural elites at the top of the Soviet social hierarchy, a position from which they did not descend after the war. I will also argue that intelligentsia self-mobilization played an important role in the evacuations, and that one of the most striking features of its self-mobilization was the way it occurred along state-established lines, indicating by the beginning of the war that a solidification of hierarchies after the rapid overthrow of the

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69 For the evolution of this cult, see Katerina Clark, *Moscow, The Fourth Rome*.  
1930s had begun and that the intelligentsia itself had either internalized these new hierarchies or saw little to gain in challenging them.

**State and Party Leadership? The Council for Evacuation**

Evacuations may have begun late. But unlike other aspects of the military effort, in chaos or collapsing in the early months of the war, evacuations were highly rationalized. The Council for Evacuation was formed only on 24 June 1941 by decision of the Central Committee. The Council was intended to provide a fast, efficient structure able to bypass normal bureaucratic red tape and coordinate the activities of various government branches.71 Once formed, the Council’s 80-85 members had to develop all plans themselves, in the absence of prior planning. The Council’s formal tasks including establishing “evacuation priorities and timetables; the determination of areas of relocation; the allocation of means of transportation; and the preservation of goods and the care of the evacuees en route to their destination in the Soviet rear.”

Within the Council three groups were formed: one for the evacuation of industry, one to manage the evacuation of the general population, and one to coordinate transportation issues. The Council had no separate group for culture, nor do documents on culture do not appear in the same places as either industry or the general population.73 The Council had inspectors it sent out to monitor and coordinate the evacuation process,

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73 This is true both at the central and regional level. Instead, the head of the KPDI appears to have facilitated all communication on the evacuation of culture with the head of the Council for Evacuation, Shvernik. Most documents are between these two figures.
settling disputes that arose – its decrees were mandatory, as were those of the State Committee for Defense, another committee designed to coordinate military efforts by circumventing complicated Soviet bureaucratic procedures. In order for individuals or organizations to evacuate officially, they had to have the sanction of the Council for Evacuation in the form of an official certificate ordering their evacuation and stating their destination. Without such a document, no one was entitled to transportation, to resettlement in a particular area, or to protection for their apartments and preservation of the right to return to the apartment.

The state clearly had every intention of maintaining control over the process of evacuation. Indeed, it was no stranger to mass population transfers, given its experience with the deportations both of the 1930s and the 1940s. But given its limited numbers of officials and the very short time frame, even Soviet sources acknowledge the Council frequently operated through local soviet and party organs that had experience mobilizing the local population. Even the Council members themselves acknowledged the degree to which they depended for cooperation on the directors of the institutions being evacuated. A former member of the Council, L. I. Pogrebnoi, notes that

“Colleagues from the people’s commissariats and directors of the institutions helped the plenipotentiaries of the Council for Evacuation by forming special commissions of highly qualified specialists who developed concrete plans for the evacuations…of individual scientific, cultural-enlightenment, party and state institutions. . . workers from the Council. . . constantly were in contact with the Councils of People’s Commissars of the Union republics and the territory and

75 _Istoriia SSSR_, 87 and Lieberman, 69.
province executive committees, agreeing the possibilities of accommodating enterprises. ”

Important defense plants in particular had a leeway in determining their own evacuation destinations. This pattern repeated itself with preeminent cultural figures and institutions. The more important or famous an individual or collective was, the more influence they were likely to wield in influencing the evacuation process – for example, by commanding a desirable evacuation location.

The evacuation of industry unquestionably facilitated the continued war effort and is therefore frequently depicted as a success. However, it could easily be argued that the evacuations succeeded in spite of everything else. Particularly on the western front lines, disorganization, lack of information, and transportation jams marred the evacuations and led to all manner of problems. Factories were dismantled, packed up and dispatched without anyone taking note of where the cargo was headed; valuable machinery was sent off in open-topped wagons with no protection from the elements, smaller parts were unlabeled and misplaced. Livestock were evacuated without enough feed or water, leading them to die en mass by the end of 1941.

The initial Soviet war effort in 1941 was characterized by a long series of mistakes and uninformed or poor decisions on the part of Soviet leadership, despite the desperate, last-ditch fighting that also occurred. It remains something of a puzzle how a system notorious for its inefficiency (present both in the 1930s, in the postwar period and

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77 See William Moskoff, Bread of Affliction, 25; Alexander Werth, Russia at War. Harrison still attributes defense industry to saving USSR.
even throughout the first six months of the war) managed to successfully conduct the evacuations of industry and culture.\textsuperscript{78} Soviet sources typically attribute success to the Council for Evacuation and Party leadership. Officially, the \textit{Istoriia SSSR} writes that “the Council for Evacuation developed the order and priority for relocating people and material valuables \textit{[material’nye tsennosti]}, planned the composition and departure of trains, and points of arrival in the Eastern regions.”\textsuperscript{79} Western historians, on the other hand, usually emphasize the ways in which individuals outside the party-state apparatus worked around the bureaucracy rather than through it. Mark Harrison has described the evacuations as “an act of inspired improvisation” depending on individual leaders such as Kaganovich and Shvernik, while arguing that the acts of these individuals “would have been useless if they had not been joined by a common current of mobilization from below...People did things first without waiting for instructions from the Kremlin.”\textsuperscript{80}

Sanford Lieberman has pointed out that part of the problem facing the USSR in implementing evacuations was to circumvent its massive, clunky bureaucracy to facilitate “rapid, all-out, effective action.” This involved creating a special wartime administration that circumvents the “traditionally rigid and time consuming aspects of bureaucratic procedure…” and allowed for flexibility — something the Soviets had done at other

\textsuperscript{78} In part, this lack of efficiency and feeling of chaos was the result of the Soviet state’s push to industrialize and modernize the country as much as possible in the space of only 10 years. See for example Alec Nove, \textit{Economic History of the USSR} (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969), chaps. 7-9.
\textsuperscript{79} \textit{Istoriia SSSR} (Mosow: Nauka, 1973), 87.
moments of crisis, such as during the Civil war. During World War II, this administration took on the form of the GKO and Lieberman also remarks on the “personalization of power,” with individuals given “carte blanche authority to fulfill a specific assignment.” Potemkin also notes this “principle of personal responsibility. Decisiveness and initiative were valued in directors,” 81 in implementing the evacuations.

John Barber has noted that evacuation required “foresight and willpower,” and that despite lack of an overall plan, the evacuation machinery was set up very quickly, unlike other aspects of the war effort. 82 He attributes any success the evacuations had to “initiative from below.” 83 In the evacuation of culture as well, individual figured acted first and obtained sanction for their actions later. The success of the evacuation of culture rested on the personal initiative of a variety of cultural figures upon whose shoulders the burden for evacuation was placed. Evacuations were achieved not by relying on the party and state organs officials responsible for the war effort, but rather because these figures played a supporting role in the evacuations, while most of the organizational work was done by those with vested interests in Soviet culture working around or in conjunction with the Council for Evacuation. The personal initiative they demonstrated in August and October 1941 had less to do with fear of immediate repercussions rather than a combination of personal and or corporate incentives to follow through with the tasks.

That evacuations took place on large scale at all raises the question of the rationale behind them. As scholars such as Rebecca Manley and M. N. Potemkina have

81 Potemkina, 39.
83 John Barber, Soviet Home Front, 128.
pointed out, “saving lives” as such was not an operative category of Soviet evacuation. Potemkina describes the goals of evacuation during World War II as first the “providing of hinterland economy with working force; second, saving people’s lives.”\footnote{Potemkina, 22.} Since World War I the workforce and “morale” had been regarded as a resource crucial to winning any war; whoever controlled them would have an enormous advantage.\footnote{Manley, 20.} Planning for evacuation sought to both avoid generalized mass evacuations (believing them bad for both morale and for production), controlling movement to concentrate on protecting those who could shore up the needs of the state. Given the shortages of transportation – train wagons and rail space needed to deliver troops and supplies to the frontlines as quickly as possible – not everyone could have been evacuated even had the state wished to. As a result, some lives were prioritized over others. People were evacuated in accordance to their potential uses to the state during wartime, civilians only insofar as they contributed to the Soviet war effort.\footnote{Rebecca Manley, 	extit{To the Tashkent Station} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 33.} Though there was some effort directed at clearing cities of people who would not be of direct use so as to relieve the cities of the burden of feeding them\footnote{Potemkina, 23.}, on the whole evacuation privileged “valuable workers”.

**Culture as a Category**

Despite the monumental, unprecedented nature of the Soviet evacuation of industry, as discussed earlier rational calculations and immediate need dictated the evacuation of factories and agriculture. Had the Germans managed to entirely destroy the weapons and armaments industries, the Soviet military effort would have collapsed. As it
was, by fall 1941 more than 300 armaments industries remained on occupied territories, and industrial output had fallen significantly.\(^{88}\) Where exactly the original initiative came from to evacuate workers of art and culture is less clear, and the logic remains implicit. Most documents refer to “valuable” (tsennye) individuals or collectives, but even here what this means is debatable. Museum items, things with objective “material value” in the same way that gold and precious stones had, constituted something of an exception. The reason for preserving these items were obvious (especially considering the profit the Soviet government had made from art sales in the 1920s).\(^{89}\) One of the very first orders of the Council for Evacuation mandated the evacuation of “all precious metals, precious stones, the Diamond fond of the USSR and the valuables of the Kremlin armory.”\(^{90}\) This approach puts cultural valuables on the same level as currency reserves (which also evacuated early in the war).

Nonetheless the move proved timely, as advancing German forces either shipped anything of value that they could find back to Germany, or destroyed what they could not take. Prime examples of this are Leningrad’s palace museums. Despite the best efforts of the mostly female museum workers to pack up, evacuate, or bury and hide items of value, when the Germans occupied the area they wrought extensive damage on the buildings and their contents.\(^{91}\) Film studios, whose mechanical equipment and skilled technicians

\(^{88}\) Nove, 271; Barber, *Soviet Home Front*, 127.


\(^{91}\) For an account of the evacuation and fate of the Palace museums, see Lynn H. Nicholas, *Rape of Europa: The Fate of Europe’s Treasures in the Third Reich and Second World War* (New York: Knopf, 1995).
were easily transferable to the military effort and sometimes produced things (such as special film paper) in demand by the military, also held some “material” and practical value. Likewise, preparations for their evacuation began early on in the war.92

As for the rest, the actual decision to evacuate rested on the view of these institutions and people as “artistically valuable,” necessary to preserve the status quo of Soviet cultural achievements that in turn formed the basis of assertions of international Soviet cultural superiority. As such, cultural producers and institutions occupied a rather ambiguous place in the hierarchy of Soviet evacuees. Rebecca Manley describes categories of evacuees in the following manner: first came “skilled workers whose use in the country’s interior was not in doubt; second were political and administrative cadres who would be needed to reinforce Soviet power in the rear and to aid in the restoration of Soviet power once abandoned territories had been reclaimed; everyone else was not guaranteed.93 Writers, actors, dancers, and composers do not at first glance fit neatly into either of these categories and are not referred to specifically in any of them. Nevertheless, they certainly did not constitute part of the “everyone else” who were not guaranteed, as the state expended exceptional levels of resources on the evacuation of cultural producers. They could, however, fall into both, particularly the second category of cadres needed to reinforce Soviet power in the rear. The creative figures evacuated were in all fields the most highly qualified and talented, in possession of “skills” the Soviet state

92 A letter from the KPDK to Glotov at Lenfilm indicates preparations for evacuation had begun already in July, though they did not take place until late August; Mosfilm began evacuating in September, ahead of the general October crush. See TsGALI f. 257 op. 30 d. 1.
93 Rebecca Manley, To the Tashkent Station: Evacuation and Survival in the Soviet Union at War (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009), 18.
might wish to put to use, though their use in the interior was contingent on a number of factors and became fully apparent only with time. Soviet culture had the potential to play a major role in political agitation (by continuing to produce Soviet culture infused with war-appropriate political messages) meaning that as long as cultural producers remained loyal, they could help shore up Soviet power in the interior.

Here it is also worth mentioning the Soviet emphasis on training, “upbringing” and especially in theatre and dance, intergenerational cultural transmission. In 1944, when the question arose of whether or not to restore the palace museums, Aleksei Shchusev argued that if the work was not done then, by “we who know and remember these palaces in all their glory as they were, then the next generation will never be able to reconstruct them.” Shchusev’s state captures the sentiment that the elimination of a key group of Soviet performers and cultural elites could have set Soviet culture back decades, forcing it to start from scratch again rather than continuing to improve upon the existing base. Evidence of such sentiment can be found in the occasional term “golden fond” of Russian culture, for example when an article in Moskovskii Bolshevik referred to the capital theaters as the “golden fond of our theatrical art.” Since the Revolution of 1917, “culture” had been regarded as part of the nationalized wealth that was to be redistributed and made available to and popular amongst the people. The best manifestations of Soviet and European culture in Soviet possession represented an inherent form of wealth

95 “Moskovskie teatry na periferii,” Moskovskii Bolshevik (5 March 1942), 4. The term occasionally appears elsewhere. My understanding
96 See Semenova, *Selling Russia’s Treasures*, 15; on Soviet “popularization” of high culture, see Christina Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin*, chap. 1.
to the state, an achievement that it was worth not allowing to be destroyed; cultural achievements had by the 1940s become a significant realm of international competition and prestige for the Soviet Union.\textsuperscript{97} Additionally, cultural elites were an expensive investment for the state. A letter from the Presidium of the Writers’ Union to Shvernik at the Commission for Draft Postponements in 1942 refers to a small number of “qualified masters of the artistic word, on whose upbringing and nourishment the state has expended significant effort and expense.”\textsuperscript{98}

**Evacuation Conditions**

Mass evacuations of performing arts collectives, film studios and cultural workers such as writers, artists and composers do not appear to have been considered seriously until they became a military necessity, due to the rapidly approaching frontline. The Soviet government was quite concerned in the war’s early months with the state of morale in the major cities. There was fear that the sudden mass evacuation of the country’s top cultural institutions could negatively impact morale and the public mood, as Molotov wrote to Shvernik in July 1941 to reject the evacuation of theaters.\textsuperscript{99} On the contrary, immediately after the war directors of most cultural organizations declared their institutions to be on a “war footing”; all employees had to remain at their place of work round the clock.\textsuperscript{100}

\textsuperscript{97} See discussions in Katerina Clark, *Moscow, The Fourth Rome*, 9; Christina Ezrahi, *Swans of the Kremlin: Ballet and Power in Russia*.

\textsuperscript{98} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 5971. 69. Letter from Presidium to Kommissiu po predostavleniu otsrochek po prizvyu v RKKA, 24.IV.1942.

\textsuperscript{99} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300, l. 1. Letter from Shvernik to Molotov, with handwritten comments by Molotov, July 1941.

As a result of this initial hesitance and the general course of the war, two waves of cultural evacuations gradually took shape. July and August saw the evacuations of museum valuables, Lenfilm and the major Leningrad performing arts collectives, right up until the Germans encircled the city. In October at the very last minute as the Germans descended towards the capital, a chaotic second wave of evacuations occurred of Moscow cultural institutions and the creative unions that exited Moscow along with the government and party authorities, numerous ministries and foreign embassies. In both waves, plans were last-minute, made in a matter of days, or even hours. Evacuating institutions in both cities received no more than three days’ advance notice, giving the people affiliated with them very little time to arrange their affairs or pack (luggage was usually limited to less than 50kg, and sometimes as little as 20kg for those evacuating by plane from Leningrad). In Leningrad, on 25 August 1941 the directors of the city’s top four theaters were summoned to the ispolkom at 1am and informed they would be urgently evacuated. The Kirov theater was ordered to leave in three days.\footnote{Karskaia, 54. The “top four theaters” refers to the Kirov (now Mariinsky), the Malyi Opernyi (nowadays Mikhailovsky), the Bolshoi Dramaticeskii and the Pushkinskii theaters.} Theater workers were also responsible for packing up as much of the theater’s costumes, scenery, props, and lighting as possible in that time.

The government laid the official and formal responsibility for implementing the evacuation orders and ensuring an organization and all its necessary members left when they were supposed to on directors and top administrative personnel of cultural institutions, much as with industries. In a 1941 instruction to Lenfilm, the Ministry for Cinematographic Affairs informs its director Ivan Glotov that “implementation of

\footnote{Karskaia, 54. The “top four theaters” refers to the Kirov (now Mariinsky), the Malyi Opernyi (nowadays Mikhailovsky), the Bolshoi Dramaticeskii and the Pushkinskii theaters.}
evacuation of workers…is laid personally on the director of the evacuating institution;” and that directors must likewise conduct the disassembly and packing up of machinery in the time frames set by the KPDK. The Committee for Artistic Affairs checked evacuations after the fact and failure (perceive or actual) to complete these functions was regarded as a major dereliction of duty. In some cases, after these checks failure or lack of success could result in losing one’s position; the war was considered a good test of administrative worker’s viability. In the chaos of October 1941, co-founder of the Writers’ Union and its general secretary since 1939 Aleksander Fadeev was accused of fleeing Moscow without completing the evacuation of the 500 writers the government earmarked for evacuation and abandoning some of them to their fate. These rumors, in combination with disappearing from his place of work for seven days and concealing his location in a state of drunkenness after returning from a trip to the front in September, proved to be so detrimental that Fadeev had to write a letter of defense to the Department of Agitation and Propaganda denying these rumors and explicitly laying out his fulfillment of state orders. The pressure of such rumors was so intense that Fadeev requested to be relieved of his duties with the Writers’ Union and sent to the front.

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102 TsGALI f. 257 op. 20 d. 1 l. 1 and 13, instruction from KPDK and KPDI to Glotov, 16 July 1941
103 RGALI f. 962 op. 10 d. 51 l. 31; dokladnaia zapiska by L. Shapovalov, zam. Pred. KPDI, to Uprav Kadrov TsK VKP, 8 May 1942.
104 For the September incident, see T. M. Goriaeva, My—predchuvstvovali polykhan’e: Soiuz sovetskikh pisatelei v gody Velikoi Otechestvenoi voiny, 1941-1945 (Moscow: Rosspen, 2015), 198-208, “Dokumenty A. A. Fadeeva.”
105 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 69, ll. 29-30, letter from Fadeev to Stalin, Shcherbakov and Andreev, 13 December 1941. On Fadeev’s request to be sent to front, see also RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 68 l. 190.
Evacuation required official permission and documentation to have any hope of procuring transportation or provisioning for the journey. The absence of evacuation documentation also meant that local authorities could refuse to accept them; they were obligated to accept only those who arrived with the proper paperwork. Here the heads of the creative unions and Mikhail Khrapchenko, the chairman of the Committee for Artistic Affairs (here after referred to as the KPDI), played significant roles. The Committee for Artistic Affairs was the state organ created in 1935 by decision of the Politburo to handle the administration of “all forms of art, with theaters, film studios, musical and artistic painting, sculpture institutions reporting to it.”

Before its existence such questions had been handled by the People’s Commissariat for Enlightenment (Narkompros), with a special section of the Central Committee reserved for the affairs of the “academic theaters.”

Khrapchenko, Party member since 1928 and formerly a literary scholar at the Communist Academy and the Institute for Red Professors, had acted as the Committee’s chairman since 1939. Khrapchenko selected the evacuation destinations for performing arts collectives. He would then send the head of the Council for Evacuation Shvernik a letter requesting the Council confirm the destinations, require local authorities to accept and the organizations in the stated city, and require the Transportation department to provide wagons. Theoretically Khrapchenko was supposed to have agreed on the arrival of cultural institutions with local authorities before they arrived, and the Council’s

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108 GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 343. lI. 25-27, letters from Khrapchenko to Shvernik, 20 August 1941.
approval was nominally contingent on Khrapchenko having done this.\textsuperscript{109} Next, cultural organizations created lists of officially evacuating workers. Those workers who made it onto the official list who received certificates from the local Council for Evacuation stating that the person named was evacuating to a stated city, and listing any accompanying dependents. Without this official permission, evacuations were both exceptionally difficult logistically and could be potentially viewed as desertion.

In Moscow, of course, evacuations were prompted by the advance of German forces towards the city, and took place during the height of the “Moscow panic” when it seemed as though the city might be abandoned. Most evacuations were both ordered and took place from 14-16 October. As authorities had feared, the specter of the government, cultural institutions, and top directors fleeing the city proved to be deeply demoralizing.\textsuperscript{110} All summer long rumors had flown around Moscow that the major theaters would be evacuated; these were mostly likely given extra weight by the decision to evacuate elderly performers to save them the rigors of air raids and drills.\textsuperscript{111} Even so, few people expected mass evacuations or wanted to leave Moscow, especially for any

\textsuperscript{109} See GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 343, l. 21-30, correspondence between Shvernik and Khrapchenko, Shvernik and various local authorities.


\textsuperscript{111} Maia Plisetskaiia, I, Maya Plisetskaya (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 54. Maia’s aunt, who worked for the Bolshoi, was so sure based on “inside information” the theater would evacuate to Sverdlovsk she managed to get her family there in September 1941. Indeed, an early plan to evacuate the theater to Sverdlovsk had existed, but never materialized.
length of time. If Leningrad evacuees had received a few days to pack up, when the
government issued orders to evacuate Moscow theaters, the creative unions, Mosfilm and
Sovinformbiuro, prospective evacuees had as little as a few hours to throw a few
belongings together before their train technically departed. Ilya Ehrenburg recalls simply
being summoned by telephone and informed he would evacuate the next day; at 11:00 pm
on 13 October the film studios in Moscow received instructions to report at the train
station the next morning at 6:00 am. The evacuation of the Bolshoi theater was
apparently conducted in the space of a few hours. Artists were informed on 14 October
that they would be leaving the same day with no more than one dependent and hand
luggage. Another train left on 17 October. Altogether, 650 artists were supposed to leave.

Chaos and panic pervaded Moscow in early October. “Now everyone is thinking
about one thing. When will the flight from Moscow begin. Almost everyone is
convinced, that Moscow won’t hold out,” writer Aleksandr Afinogenov wrote in his diary
on 12 October. For many evacuees, the scenes at the train stations left a particular
impact. Afinogenov wrote on 15 October, “At the station something indescribable is
happening. Thousands of people with bags are storming the trains. Bellowing.”
Afinogenov was killed by shrapnel from an air raid that night as he waited with the

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112 K. I. Bukov, Moskva Voennaia: 1941-1945: Memuary i dokumenty (Mosow: Obedinenia Mosgorarkhiv, 1995), 154. The given citation is from an excerpt of Sergei Eisenstein's memoirs
113 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 867 l. 5. Letter to Mikoian from soloists of Bolshoi theater.
116 Ibid., 246. 15 October 1941.
Central Committee, with the members of which he was supposed to evacuate, outside its building. Eisenstein recalls that Kazan station was “like a dream…all shades of human emotion. Sorrow. Decisiveness. Nerves and tears…”\(^{117}\) Ilya Ehrenburg, evacuating at the same time, wrote that “At Kazan station God only knows what was happening…”\(^{118}\)

Writer Arkadii Perventsev had put off evacuating on 13 October, having obtained permission from the Writers’ Union to leave three days later and the reassurance of Fadeev and Afinogenov that he was on a “special list of writers, who will be removed at any moment and who won’t be permitted to remain for the enemy to destroy.”\(^{119}\) He was not the only writer that held this conviction; it was a widespread rumor. However, in the general confusion by October 16 orders had already been given to remain writers for “everyone to leave as best they can” and Fadeev as well as many others had been ordered to evacuate with the government; no authority figures remained to answer the telephones either at the newspapers or the Central Committee. As Perventsev remarked, “only important figures ran off.” He and his wife, after weighing the pros and cons of evacuating, decided to leave for Gorkii in their own car, driven by their chauffeur. On their way out of the city their car was mobbed by a crowd of workers who had been trying to hitchhike out of the city after their factory directors had simply disappeared (along with all the factory’s available cash). They let the Perventsevs go only after he proved he was a writer. Luckily for him, one of the workers was familiar with his work, and after presenting his passport, evacuation order, and proof he was free from military


\(^{119}\) Arkadii Perventsev, “Moskva opalennaia,” *Dnevnik voiny*. 

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service the crowd decided to let them pass. However, the experience shook them up enough that a few miles later they changed their minds and simply returned to Moscow.

A state order to evacuate was indubitably a mark of privilege, a sign of an individual’s comparatively higher “value” in the eyes of the state. Regardless of this, evacuations conditions were close to unbearable for everyone. The train stations were so crowded with Muscovites desperate to leave (either officially or unofficially) that some people who arrived to evacuate simply could not make their way to their train. Kornei Chukovskii, arriving at the station on 15 October and on a list of writers supposed to evacuate “with the government,” estimates that there were no less than 15 thousand people milling about; “it was impossible to either get out to the Central Committee building [where he had been told to report] but also to make it to my wagon.” Without the help of fellow writer Nikolai Virta, he writes, he would never had made it on to the train at all. Virta placed a medal on his chest, marched up to the station director and announced he was accompanying a member of the government whose name he did not have the right to pronounce (indicating Chukovskii as this person) and required to be let through the government entrance. “With astonishment I saw all doors being opened in front of me and my porters,” Chukovskii wrote. An evacuee from the Bolshoi recalls that “at the station there was pandemonium. Still, 900 artists squashed into the wagon.” The crush was such that for those in poor health or with elderly, infirm relatives, making it onto the trains was impossible. Ekaterina Orleneva, a soloist with the Bolshoi, had been horribly wounded in her eye by shrapnel in September 1941 while performing at the front

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121 Ibid., 186.
122 A. Rybin, Riadom so Stalinym v Bol’shom (Moscow: Gudok), 28.
and was unable to walk. She too was supposed to evacuate. Although Khrapchenko did his best to get her an individual cabin given her medical needs, upon arriving at the station on a stretcher there was simply no way her husband could get onto the train itself, with all the crowds. They remained in Moscow. Things were little better for those who made it onto the trains.

Evacuations took place primarily via train, placing the transportation system under severe strain, a situation further complicated by air raids as the trains stopped each time and passengers ran out into the fields to avoid being targeted. Departures were often delayed by hours, if not days, and even once a train left its point of origin the frequent air raids and diversion of rails to trains traveling westward with fresh troops (forcing all eastward bound trains to stand idle) meant that journeys took several times the amount of time as normal. Trains that stood in place for 5-10 days at a time, covering only 30-80 km a day, while an absence of medical assistance, groceries, heat and boiled water were common complaints for all evacuees regardless of status in 1941. Very few people managed to obtain places in normal passenger cars. Far more evacuees traveled in unheated freight cars and in Moscow, in October 1941 even streetcars were used to move people out of the city.

In Moscow by the end of October the wave of evacuation of cultural institutions had receded. Whoever had not left by that point simply stayed, as the panic subsided and it became clear Moscow would not be abandoned to the Germans. Indeed, even those who evacuated began trying to return to Moscow almost immediately. In Leningrad, the

\[123\] IRI RAN Nauchnyi Akhiv 2 VIII 2 9a, l. 2, interview with Ekaterina Stepanovna Orleneva.

\[124\] Potemkina, 38.
Germans captured the last railroad out of the city on August 30, rendering further large-scale evacuations impossible.[125] Gradual evacuations of cultural figures from Leningrad continued to the extent that people could be got out. Writers Evgenii Shvartz, Anna Akhmatova and composer Shostakovich all left Leningrad by plane after the blockade was in place. Theaters continued to evacuate during fall 1941 as their presence gradually in Leningrad gradually became pointless: in addition to constant interruption of their performances by air raids, there was not enough electricity and heat for the buildings, in addition to increasing malnourishment and illness of both artists and audience members. After the theater stopped working in November 1941, the Leningrad Theater of Comedy and the Leningrad TIUZ were both evacuated by plane. By spring 1942, only one theater (a theater of musical comedy) remained open in Leningrad.126 But on the whole, evacuations of culture and industry wound down by the end of 1941, and the Council for Evacuation was liquidated in late December 1941. 1942 saw primarily redistribution of unsuccessfully evacuated theaters (particularly Ukrainian theaters) that had been unable to reassemble their companies and begin work as an ensemble or still lacked an appropriate base for production such as a stage, as well as re-evacuation of institutions from Rostov and Saratov oblasts and Krasnodar and Ordzhonikidze krai in the face of the 1942 offensive by the Wehrmacht.

Plans and Their Evolution: Intelligentsia Involvement

If there was no initial plan to evacuate cultural elites other than the elderly who struggled with the rigors of frontline city life, financial restrictions, decreased audiences

[125] Sergei Varshavskii, Ordeal of the Hermitage, 87.
[126] Otdel Rukopisei NLR 1117 1660, 10. Letter from Zagurskii to Khrapchenko, spring 1942.
at cultural events (a perceived lack of use for culture), the ever increasing danger from air raids and strains on resources eventually prompted evacuation plans to take shape. As with industry, evacuations were in part a way of redistributing resources to where they might be more useful during the war effort, when it looked as if their use in Moscow and Leningrad was doubtful or threatened. The final and decisive impetus to evacuate Soviet culture seems to have come later in the summer and fall when the Soviet Union’s top cultural elites came under direct physical threat from the German advance. Planning for evacuations went through several phases, reflecting the shifting logic behind it.

The Soviet economy underwent significant reorganization in summer 1941, with as much funding and human resources as possible reordered to the immediate needs of war. The Soviet Union went from spending approximately 17% of its national income on the military in 1940 to 61% by 1942, a percentage higher than anywhere except in Germany.\(^\text{127}\) That money had to come from somewhere, and it came from every non-military sector. These rearrangements had dramatic implications for cultural institutions, all of which depended on state allowances. The state budget for culture was radically curtailed; most regional drama theaters lost their state subsidies, while those to the main central theaters were sharply reduced. In Sverdlovsk, the federal allotment for culture was cut by half.\(^\text{128}\) In summer of 1941, most theaters could not make up for the federal cuts by tickets sales or other means. Along with the German occupation of western territories, such financial setbacks led to a major restructuring of the theatrical net. Many smaller regional theaters closed: of the 881 theaters in the USSR at the start of the war, 560

\(^{127}\) Mark Harrison, *Accounting For War*, 126.

remained in operation in May 1942. Additional pressure to close regional theaters came from the draft, as many non- or low qualified workers in cultural institutions were called up for military service. The draft hit regional performers and aspiring writers and artists particularly hard, as they were younger and tended to lack the high formal qualifications in the arts that would have gained them an exemption. Many ensembles simply no longer had the personnel to perform.

Typical in this regard was the dramatic theater of Tobol’sk, a comparatively small but historically significant Siberian city (population under 40 thousand at the start of the war) in between Sverdlovsk and Omsk. In the first days of the war, 38 of its members left for the front, five of them voluntarily. The remaining eight actors found they could not carry the repertoire, and the collective was unformed. An evacuated Ukrainian troupe took over the theater building and played throughout the war, incorporating 5 of the remaining Tobol’sk actors into their collective. Upon the Ukrainians’ departure in 1943, it took the Tobol’sk group another 1.5 years to replenish its numbers back to the point where it could perform. Such stories repeated themselves all over the Soviet Union.

Finally, some theaters in both Moscow and Petersburg were damaged in air raids, preventing them from being used according to purpose and leaving their collectives without a performance space. Perhaps most famously, in late July 1941 a bomb scored a direct hit on the Vakhtangov theater in Moscow, killing several actors, including those who happened to have been on fire watch that night. At the same time, large theater

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129 RGALI f. 962 op. 10 d. 51 l. 31. Dokladnaia zapiska of Shapovalov to Uprav. kadrov.
130 Adrianova, T. O., “Tobol’skii dramaticheskii teatr v gody VOV” In Sotsium, Ku’ltural, Nравственnost’, Dosug: Materialy mezhdunarodnyoi konферентsii 15 aprelia 2010, l. 86,
131 IRI RAN 2 VIII 5 l, l. 9. Interview with writer Lev Rubenstein, 1943.
buildings needed to be heated and required electricity, all of which strained city resources, particularly in the fall of 1941 in Leningrad. Past a certain point, in other words, cultural institutions became burdens rather than assets to their cities, and as such it made sense to reorganize in such a way to maximize the efficiency of human resources.

Finally, some evidence suggests that there was a drop in theater attendance in summer 1941. Memoirs frequently contradict this, recalling full houses. However, the KPDI charted a sharp fall in income (presumably from ticket sales), paralleled by a fall in the number of overall viewers.\textsuperscript{132} Particularly at a time when all extra resources (including workers) were needed for the military effort, a decrease in audience numbers raised the question of whether or not all the theaters were indeed necessary and constituted artistically valuable institutions. Pointing out that the existence of 19 city-level theaters in Moscow did “not arise from the actual demands of artistic service of the population and Red Army,” in August 1941 Khrapchenko suggested to Zemliachka a plan to combine several of these theaters so that only 12 remained. This in turn would free up 200 “creative workers”, some of whom could be sent to other theaters but many of whom could be assigned to other, presumably “non-creative” work.\textsuperscript{133}

All evacuations required state approval, though the initiative to prepare planning for them could come from city authorities and the highest level cultural elites themselves. P. K. Baltun, director of the Russian Museum, recalls that on the second day of the war, …in the morning the head of the Leningrad Department of Culture (aka representative of the KPDI) Boris Ivanovich Zagurskii, director of the State Hermitage Iosif Abgarovich Orbeli and I went to the Smolnyi. Here it was suggested to us to, before the

\textsuperscript{132} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300 l. 36. Letter from Khrapchenko to Shcherbakov, 15 July 1941.  
\textsuperscript{133} GARF f. 5446 op. 25 d. 3430 l. 176-177. Report from Khrapchenko to Shcherbakov and Zemliachke, 6 August 1941.
announcement of evacuations, that we take measures for ensuring the preservation of the museums’ valuables, which served as the basis for…preparing the designated for evacuation items for removal.\textsuperscript{134}

By the time the official order arrived (just a few days later), preparations were well underway. The first trains from both the Hermitage and Russian Museum managed to depart on 1 July 1941 after round-the-clock packing and assistance from students, local artists and the military in transporting items to the trains.\textsuperscript{135}

Something similar occurred with theaters. Mikhail Khrapchenko, head of the Committee for Artistic Affairs, took the initiative to find a way to protect the Soviet Union’s top theaters, and contacted the Politburo directly on this account. He had written to Molotov proposing to evacuate Moscow’s main theaters as early as mid-July 1941. Molotov rejected his overall plan, though he granted permission to evacuate the oldest “masters of art,” since getting to air raid shelters was difficult for them.\textsuperscript{136} Despite this initial rejection, he apparently continued making such plans throughout the summer of 1941, and they went through several iterations, evolving significantly in the first few months of the war from the original suggestions.

Originally, Khrapchenko’s plans for evacuating Moscow theaters envisioned, with a few exceptions, the evacuation not of entire collectives but of the most distinguished artists from each major theater to a handful of cities in the Urals, Siberia and Central Asia where they would be relatively evenly distributed. For example, in July 1941 he suggested evacuating 130 of the Bolshoi’s best artists, Stalin prize winners and peoples’

\textsuperscript{135} Hunt, \textit{Rape of Europa}, 237; Baltun, \textit{Russkii Muzei}, 37.
\textsuperscript{136} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300 l. 1, letter from Molotov to Shvernik, 28 July 1941
artists, to Sverdlovsk where they could join in the work of the local opera theater, engage in concert work or teaching. The rest of the Bolshoi workers Khrapchenko recommended giving vacation.\textsuperscript{137} Another draft from Khrapchenko to Shvernik suggests that out of theaters not specifically named, 126 of their best actors and directors be distributed amongst oblast centers Stalingrad, Gorkii, Kirov, Molotov, Sverdlovsk, Cheliabinsk and Chkalov to join in the work of local theaters.\textsuperscript{138} In a draft submitted to Gavrilov, Khrapchenko imagines what appears to be a fairly equitable division of the country’s top writers amongst Russia’s large cities, with writers Trenev, Tolstoi and Gladkov in Omsk, and Marshak, Chukovskii and Kataev in Novosibirsk.\textsuperscript{139} This offers a stark contrast to the reality of evacuations, with all prominent writers not working for Sovinformbiuro concentrated in large groups in Chistopol, Sverdlovsk or Tashkent. This plan also envisions a much more cooperative approach to the evacuations, predicated upon an integration of evacuated culture with local cultural institutions in a variety of regional cities. The reality proved to be much more hierarchical and far more of an imposition of evacuated culture onto the local. Local culture was simply removed to smaller cities to make way for evacuated culture from Moscow and St. Petersburg that clustered in a handful of major regional centers.

Plans to evacuate Soviet museums had existed since at least the late 1930s, in the sense that museum collections had been organized and ranked so that in case of

\textsuperscript{137} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300 l. 32, undated/signed from Khrapchenko to Soviet po evakuatsii
\textsuperscript{138} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300 l. 7, 17 July letter from Khrapchenko to Shvernik
\textsuperscript{139} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300 l. 23
emergency they could be efficiently removed.\textsuperscript{140} Though no prearranged plans existed for theaters and other institutions, all Soviet cultural institutions were already ranked and arranged in a specific hierarchy determined by their titles and the administration they were responsible to. This simplified the establishment of evacuation priorities. At the top of the pyramid were the “academic” institutions of “all-union” significance, managed directly by the KPDI. These were first in line for evacuation. Next came collectives or institutions of republic level significance; then of city level, at least for Moscow and Leningrad, the theaters belonging to Mosgorispolkom and its Leningrad counterpart. These second two categories seem to have been referred to as “theaters of the first and second categories” (rather than the “highest”).\textsuperscript{141} Not only did institutions already have a rank, but in many ways so did their employees. This was reflected in their job title, which in turn determined potential administrative or formal duties and their standard norm of performances. For performers of all sorts (singers, musicians, actors) four categories existed, established by the KPDI - highest, first, second and third.\textsuperscript{142} Though cultural elites would soon be exempted from the draft, those with the lower qualifications were in 1941 at risk for being drafted. For individuals outside a formal institution such as writers

\textsuperscript{140} The idea of a plan for the protection of cultural valuables – as the common heritage of all mankind, including universities, concert halls, and theaters – had been popularized by N. K. Roerich, a Russian émigré, in the 1920s and 1930s.

\textsuperscript{141} See, for example, directive on provisioning for cultural elites that refers to these categories, RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 1018 l. 9.

\textsuperscript{142} On categories and their respective performance norms, see GAPK 1022 11, l. 5. The original 1941 KPDI order is reprinted in Molotov in conjunction with the local opera theater’s being transferred into the first category. For musicians the categories are worded slightly differently: concert masters and first violins, concertmaster - 2nd violin and contrabass, and everyone else.
or artists, membership in the creative union or possession of an award or title (as well as name recognition) became key in determining hierarchies.

In short, when the need to preserve Soviet culture became apparent, cultural administrators and elites had a good idea of where to begin when establishing evacuation priorities. First in line for evacuation came the academic theaters of “all-union” significance. Though Moscow had nine of these (out of the total number of 18)\textsuperscript{143}, out of these the four state academic theaters received preferential treatment. In Khrapchenko’s original plan from July 1941, Moscow’s MXAT, the Malyi, the Bolshoi and the Vakhtangov theaters were earmarked to depart first in line.\textsuperscript{144} Other theaters belonging to the city administration (Mosgorispolkom rather than the KPDI) whose existence was “not dictated by the real needs of cultural service of the population and Red Army”\textsuperscript{145} such as the Moscow Drama Theater, Sovremennyi, Bauman and Ermolovoi were to be disbanded as not “constituting major artistic value.”\textsuperscript{146} A handful of others (Mossovet, Revolution, Operetta, Satire) were to have their staffs cut and be given vacation or assigned to perform for the troops.\textsuperscript{147} From the theaters marked for liquidation, Khrapchenko suggested sending the best actors from each to work in other theaters while the rest could

\textsuperscript{143} The KPDI refers to 18 total theaters of all-union significance in March 1943; see letter from Khrapchenko to Mikoian, RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1128 l. 121.
\textsuperscript{144} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300, l. 32. The title “state academic title” had existed since 1919, when in order to remain open a group of former imperial theaters and some former private theaters (like MKHAT) received the title and with it, acquired official and subsidized status that enabled their further operation. See Christina Ezrahi, \textit{Swans of the Kremlin}, 22.
\textsuperscript{145} RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 75 l. 65. Letter from Khrapchenko to Shvernik, 6 August 1941.
\textsuperscript{146} RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 75 l. 65. Letter from Khrapchenko to Shvernik, 6 August 1941.
\textsuperscript{147} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300, l. 36.
be reassigned to industry, agriculture or sent to courses to become nurses.\textsuperscript{148} The Ermolov theater’s collective took matters into their own hands. Having secured themselves an invitation for guestroles in Makhachkala, it petitioned the KPDI not to liquidate it but allow it to depart for Dagestan. It returned to Moscow in 1942 and went on to become a popular theater of the 1950s and 1960s. The remaining theaters of “low value,” the Bauman, Sovremennyi and Moscow Drama theaters, found themselves combined with the Lensovet, Mossovet and Lenkom theaters. The combinations most likely made some employees redundant, though names are not given.

A similar pattern emerged in Leningrad. The Kirov theater departed first, followed shortly thereafter by the Malyi Opera, Pushkin, and Bolshoi Dramaticheskii theaters. The blockade closed shortly after the four main theaters departed, sharply curtailing evacuation possibilities; only a few more collectives and a trickle of individual writers, composers and others made it out on airplanes later that fall.

By the time the evacuations actually commenced, however, their scope had widened significantly. Evacuations eventually came to include most Moscow and Leningrad theaters and even circuses. In the end, over 100 theaters were evacuated from the Soviet Union’s Western regions,\textsuperscript{149} along with 22 of the RSFSR’s art museums and thousands of writers, artists, composers and other performers.

In the months between August and October, the KPDI’s focus shifted from evacuating the top performers from several institutions to evacuating entire performing arts companies as “creative units.” Part of their value, in this understanding, lay in the

\textsuperscript{148} GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 300, l. 35; RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 844, prikaz KPDI.
\textsuperscript{149} RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1037 l. 137. Report on work of KPDI from 1942.
way the entire organism worked together. This meant evacuating at least enough members of any given theater to preserve the established relationships, manner of work and a normal repertoire and marks something quite different than the original plan to send the best performers and masters to join in the work of regional theaters. I suspect in part this was due to recognition of a broadened concept of what might be at use in the kind of war that was emerging; the more cultural elites the Soviet Union could muster to work on their side, the better.

As the situation at the front worsened and particularly during the months leading up to the Moscow panic, no one wished to draw the line at a limit of cultural institutions to evacuate — particularly not the cultural administrators doing most of the planning, petitioning and obtaining of permissions, who were in the end sensitive to the potential value of institutions falling under their scope and had relationships with the people working in them. Likewise, no visible effort was made by any official organization to explain to those not evacuated that there was a continued and important role for them in their city. Rather, the attitude seems to have been that the more elite people and institutions would leave first, while the others had to wait their turn (which potentially never came). This held particularly true for the creative unions, whose members numbered far more than could be evacuated at once and therefore had to leave in different waves.

The partial evacuation of union members’ children and elderly “masters of art” began in July 1941. The Unions and the committee themselves taking very active roles in organizing these evacuations, including in determining locations and obtaining transportation. The Writers’ Union was particularly active in this regard. In late July
1941, the director of Litfond contacted the head of the Tatar Republics’ Writers’ Union, who agreed to give evacuated children of Moscow writers the Tatar writers’ dachas in Bersut, close to Chistopol.150 Young children were accompanied by their mothers, and by late August 1941, the families of Pasternak, Fedin, Aseev and Leonov (as well as many others) had all taken up residence in Chistopol. As a result, when mass evacuations of writers began in the fall, many of them traveled to their families in Chistopol and a significant writers’ colony formed there.

As a whole, the creative unions did not evacuate until October. They occupied a different niche not directly under the supervision of the Committee for Artistic Affairs. While references to the unions and to particular individuals appear in the KPDI documents, the presidiums of the creative unions acted as the main organizers of evacuations themselves. At the very least, these people determined the lists of people to evacuate and were responsible for ensuring they made it out. For example, Fadeev received an order from the Council for Evacuation, Aleksandrov, Mikoian and Kosygin to remove writers who “held some literary value,” at his own personal responsibility. Fadeev was entrusted with determining who these writers might be; he then, with A. M. Egolin151 compiled a list of 120 writers. No one seems to have issued more exact guidelines as to how many people exactly should depart the city, leaving Fadeev and Egolin a fair amount of discretion.152 Since the Moscow branch of the Writers’ Union

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150 Mukhanov, 179-180.
151 Egolin in 1941 was head of the Russian literature department at MGU and deputy head of the Literature division of the Department for Propaganda and Agitation; promoted to head of the print division in 1942.
152 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 69, l. 29. Letter from Fadeev to Stalin, Andreev and Shcherbakov, December 1941.
alone had over 800 members at the moment the war began (although several hundred were already on the fronts in October 1941), a list of 120 was bound to cause dissatisfaction amongst writers.  

Fadeev or other officials gave writers a choice of evacuating to Tashkent or Kazan. Although like the KPDI the Writers’ Union obtained official sanctions from the Council for Evacuation, each leader of a departing writers’ train bore with him a letter from the Writers’ Union requesting assistance from officials at each evacuation point. Fadeev also in certain cases wrote directly to the central authorities of a destination oblast or republic, requesting assistance and support for evacuating writers. In October 1941, Fadeev wrote directly to First Secretary of the Kazakh Communist Party Iusupov, informing him of the “all-union recognition” of many arriving writers and their position in the “best cadres of our artistic literature.” In light of these facts Fadeev requested that Iusupov “render assistance to these writers, to distribute them, find them housing and create conditions for literary and social political work.” Various members of the Writers’ Union also played a role in requesting transportation and supplies for their evacuees, as opposed to the KPDI.

Of this 800 we should remember that a handful of older writers had already evacuated earlier in the summer with their families, and a number of prominent writers immediately joined the various military newspapers and Sovinformbiuro; they would not have been evacuated by the Writers’ Union. Some sources also claim that of the 800 members, 250 went to the front. See V. M. Savelev, Sovetskaia intelligentsia v Velikaia otechestvennaia voina (Mosow: Mysl’, 1974), 155.

See for example RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 572 l. 37 for one example of such a document, dated 1.XII.1941. RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 565, l. 6. Letter from Fadeev to Iusupov, carried by train leader Kirpotin, 13.X.1941. See for example correspondence between Fadeev or Apletin and Tkach at the Department of Railways; RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 565, l. 16 and 169.
Evacuations in Practice: Hierarchies and Self-Mobilization in Selection and Destination

Although the KPDI had been supposed to obtain the permission of local authorities before assigning a cultural institution a particular evacuation destination, Khrapchenko frequently failed to do this. As a result, when cultural organizations appearing in regional centers, they were unexpected, unprepared for, and unwanted. In some cases, the KPDI’s preliminary telegrams announcing the institutions’ arrival simply did not arrive on time. The Leningrad Theater of Comedy had been evacuated to Magnitogorsk by plane, but upon arriving local authorities had never received the KPDI’s telegram.\(^{157}\) However, this still suggests that in fact there had been no process of true negotiation on arrivals between the KPDI and regional authorities, but rather that the KPDI had decided unilaterally and expected to be accommodated. Cultural institutions and elites were evacuating at the same time as enormous waves of evacuees as individuals as well as groups arriving with factories, government agencies and even collective farms. As theaters and performing arts collectives arrived in regional centers, overwhelmed local authorities almost universally refused to accept them and attempted to redirect them elsewhere, whether to smaller cities in the region or to different regions entirely.

Secretaries of local Party organizations telegraphed and complained to the Council for Evacuation insisting on a lack of space of their city as well as an absence of official certificate of the Council for Evacuation. On these grounds they asked the cultural institutions be redirected. For example, when Leningrad’s Bolshoi theater and

\(^{157}\) Karskaia, 193.
Kapella arrived in Kirov, the Kirov oblispolkom telegraphed Shvernik at the Council for Evacuation stating that the two had “arrived without permission of the Evacuation council. With great difficulty we are settling the theater, the Kapella we request be redirected to a different city.”\(^{158}\) Chkalov likewise complained in a telegram that Leningrad had sent the Malyi opera theater without the government’s permission despite the “total impossibility of productive work…and the impossibility of providing more than one thousand people [sic] with housing.”\(^{159}\) Chkalov requested the theater be sent to a bigger city. After receiving yet a telegram from 23 August 1941 from Molotov requesting the “re-addressing” of the Kirov theater since it was “impossible to use the theater in Molotov,” the Moscow recipient noted in telegram’s margins a command to “ascertain why Khrapchenko is sending people without agreement of the local organs.”\(^{160}\)

Moscow theaters appear to have met with smoother welcomes in October. Preliminary correspondence seems to have gone through and none of the theaters were initially refused, and some cities even managed to prepare something resembling a welcome for them, such as the Vakhtangov theater in Omsk.\(^{161}\) However, similar problems plagued museums and the Writers’ Union. The Russian Museum, re-evacuated in September from Nizhny Novgorod to Molotov, also met with a round initial refusal from P. Goriunov, chairman of the oblispolkom, to accept the museum’s contents. His refusal also based itself on the absence of the Council for Evacuation’s official

\(^{158}\) GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 343, l. 20. Telegram from Kirov oblispolkom to Evakosvet, 29 August 1941.

\(^{159}\) GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 343, l. 23, telegram from Chkalov oblevakosovet to Shvernik

\(^{160}\) GARF f. 6822 op. 1 d. 343, l. 22. Telegram from Goriunov in Molotov to Shvernik, comments by Kuzmin.

\(^{161}\) Mark Mudrik, Teatral’nye Povesti (Omsk: 2000), 93.
sanction. According to writer Lev Rubenstein, upon its arrival in Kazan, the vice-chairman of the Tatar Sovnarkom informed the Writers’ Union that the Tatar government had decided the best place for them would be a collective farm by the name of Aziak-kul. Writer Ksenia L’vova arrived with a group of writers to Tashkent were after a grueling 22 day journey, “No one from the Union of Uzbek writers came to meet us…after six hours [of sitting in the train wagons], Efros informed us that the Tashkent Writers’ Union was not accepting us and was sending us further to Andizhan.”

Even with the new focus on evacuating entire collectives, at top institutions and amongst creative unions there were simply too many people to be evacuated given transportation limits. In 1941 Irina Morozova was a cellist in the orchestra of the Bolshoi theater. She recalls of the theater’s evacuation that when the orchestra learned of the order to evacuate it was clear that “it was not possible to take the entire company, someone would have to remain without a job or salary.” As we saw earlier with Aleksandr Fadeev, the director of a given institution or head of a creative union frequently created these lists. Iosif Orbeli, director of the Hermitage, “personally selected 16 scientific workers from amongst those, who did not have families” to accompany the Hermitage cargo into evacuation, to facilitate the workers’ departure and extended absence. Summoning each in turn to his office, Orbeli asked each worker if they

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162 Baltun, 43.
163 IRI RAN f. 2 razdel VII op. 5 d. 1, l. 17. Interview with Lev Rubenstein, 1943. Other sources do not refer to this.
164 T. M. Goriaeva, My—predchuvstvovali….133.
165 RGALI f. 1337 op. 5 d. 28 l. 30. Memuary, Irina MORozova.
166 E.M. Iakovleva, Ermitazh: Khronika voennykh let, 1941-1945 (St. Petersburg: Izdatel’stvo gos. Ermitazha, 2005), 14. Orbeli also composed the second list of evacuating employees later in July; see Iakovleva, 26.
“agreed to leave Leningrad for a short time to accompany important items into evacuation and remain with them a month or two, until the end of the war.”\textsuperscript{167} Lenfilm also received orders to evacuate in August 1941 to Almaty in Kazakhstan. The company’s director, Ivan Glotov, was assigned personal responsibility for implementing the evacuations, as was the case with all evacuating institutions.\textsuperscript{168} In a 19 August 1941 letter to Glotov, the director of the Committee for Cinematographic Affairs Bolshakov informs him that Glotov’s suggested list of 630 workers was far too high and was under no circumstances to exceed 500 people; in Bolshakov’s words, “evacuation pertains to only the most valuable creative and technical cares and the basic qualified workers of the workshops indispensible for the quick relaunching of and smooth work in their new location.”\textsuperscript{169} In another letter to the Kiev film studio, Bolshakov cautions its director to take only the most valuable equipment, while “the number of workers and members of their families should be minimal, but facilitate the studio’s work in its new conditions.”\textsuperscript{170} Bolshoi cellist Irina Morozova was initially refused a place in the evacuating group and received one only when someone else was unable to depart. Indeed, only around 600 people from the Bolshoi left in October 1941, while around 1000 remained behind.\textsuperscript{171} The potential to “sign up” for an train much as Marina Tsvetaeva and Lev Timofeev did indicates the interest of Union officials in evacuating as many people as possible.

\textsuperscript{167} Varshavskii and Rest, 38.
\textsuperscript{168} TsGALI f. 257 op. 30 d. 1, l. 11.
\textsuperscript{169} TSGALI f. 257 op. 20 d. 1 l. 15, Bolshakov to Glotov, 19 August 1941.
\textsuperscript{170} Fomin, \textit{Kino na Voine}, doc. 39, p. 102.
\textsuperscript{171} These numbers include administrative and other personnel, as well as performers. No full lists could be found in the Bolshoi’s file. For estimates of numbers, see A. Rybin, \textit{Riadom so Stalinym v Bolshom} (Moscow: Gudok), 29. For similar numbers, see RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 387 l. 2. Letter from Bolshoi artists to Mikoian, 1941.
However, the letters to Glotov demonstrate that even directors of prestigious cultural institutions did not have unlimited ability to evacuate everyone they wished.

Up until October 1941, evacuation of writers was in the hands of Litfond and the Writers’ Union. Marina Tsvetaeva’s son, Georgii Efron (who evacuated to Elabuga with his mother in August 1941) recounts in detail the confusion surrounding the evacuation procedures in late July 1941: “Mother asked the director of Litfond about the train…her case will be reviewed by the Union of Writers…every case is reviewed individually.”

Tsvetaeva’s case was refused the first time. In July, nominally only women with children under three years of age were eligible for evacuation through Litfond. However, she persisted in her attempts; as Efron recount their time at the Litfond several days later, “Litfond – is a solid carousel of unrealized departures, canceled plans, orders from the Central Committee, talks with Panferov, Aseev and Fedin…it seems a new group of writers is being formed, for whom an evacuation destination is being searched out.”

When it came to preeminent figures, authorities occasionally took matters into their own hands; writers such as Pasternak, Fedin and Akhmatova as well as Shostakovich were finally ordered to evacuate in October 1941, regardless of their personal wishes.

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172 Georgii Efron, *Dneviki* (Moscow: Vagrius, 2007), 101. Entry of 21 July, 1941. In part Tsvetaeva’s repeated attempts at evacuation were to get her 16 yr old son away from Moscow and the prospect of any kind of military service.
173 See memoirs of Tamara Ivanova, wife of Vsevelod Ivanov, in G. Mukhanov, *Chistopol’skie stranitsy* (Kazan: Tat. Knizh. Izd-vo, 1987), 180. Ivanova was one of the main organizers of the evacuation of the Writers’ Union children. Children over three were included in the Union’s kindergarten, which evacuated as a group with a handful of older teenagers and a few mothers to keep order. Similar rules applied elsewhere, for example the kindergarten of the Hermitage. See *Ermitazh: Khronika voennykh let*.
174 Ibid., 102. 26 July, 1941.
Writers, artists and composers had to be official or candidate members of their creative union in order to evacuate. Beyond that, name recognition or popular works also contributed to their status. Additionally, rumor certainly had it that the government also prioritized the evacuation of those members of the intelligentsia whose loyalty to the Soviet regime was suspect and who might have lent the Nazis any support. Lev Timofeev, literary scholar and philologist, remarks in his 1941 diary that in Kiev, writers who had remained were “burning that which they not long ago swore by in the new papers…the Writers’ Union had first evacuated those writers, whom they suspected might behave in a similar manner.” It is impossible to determine whether or not this is true, though it is the case that the Writers’ Union evacuated a number of writers with troubled relationships to the regime, such as Anna Akhmatova.

By December 1941, with the evacuations more or less completed, a new geography of culture emerged. Marina Potemkina points out that the Urals were not originally intended to be a first-tier destination for evacuees; this changed with the extent of the German advance into European Russia, when first-line destinations had to abandoned in favor of those further east. It is clear that from the very beginning top cultural institutions were, perhaps unsurprisingly, earmarked for the Soviet Union’s major cities, regional centers of industry and transportation: Kuibyshev, Kazan, Sverdlovsk, Molotov, Novosibirsk and Omsk, as well as some of Central Asia’s capital cities. As with industry, a key criterion was the preexisting presence of a “base” from

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176 Timofeev, no. 6
177 Potemkina, 22. Originally she points out Gorkii, Penza, Kirov, Kuibyshev, Saratov regions and the Mordovan, Chuvash, Urdmurt, Tatar and Bashkir republics were first in line to receive evacuees.
which evacuated cultural institutions could begin working again as quickly as possible. Authorities tried to send large collectives to cities where there would be an appropriate building from which they could work. For large opera and ballet companies, not to mention the film industry, this was not always simple, and this was part of the reason so many film studios were evacuated to Central Asia. Many of the republics already had at least a fledgling film industry, and the evacuees could set up shop using local equipment and technicians.

Before the war, the chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars of the Kazakh SSR, Udasynov, had requested Bolshakov’s help in developing a film industry in Kazakhstan if an opportunity arose. In the late 1930s it was the only Soviet republic that did not have its own film company, which the Kazakhs felt to be an embarrassment. When it came time to evacuate the film studios, as Bolshakov relates,

> All people’s commissariats and central administrations were requested to develop without delay plans for the evacuation of the enterprises and institutions administered by them located in the immediate battle area… In short order we developed a plan for the evacuation of cinema enterprises that happened to be in the zone of military action at the beginning of the war.¹⁷⁸

Bolshakov sent his representative K. A. Polonskii to Kazakhstan to negotiate for the film studio’s provisions with Udasynov and the Kazakh government: Polonskii “sufficiently in detail expounded on the entire plan and succession of the film studio’s evacuation, the studio’s minimal needs in relation to production room and housing.”¹⁷⁹ It fell to M.V. Tikhonov to travel from Novosibirsk to Tashkent, Samarkand and Ashkhabad (all cities with their own fledgling film industries – i.e., an appropriate base from which to restart

¹⁷⁸ Fomin, doc. 29, p. 90.
¹⁷⁹ Fomin, doc. 135, p. 249.
work) to obtain similar orders from local authorities for work and living spaces of other film studios. After the film industry had made its own arrangements, the central authorities simply had to confirm Bolshakov’s plan and allocate them the appropriate number of train wagons.

Directors of cultural organizations did not have ultimate control over the exact destination to which their institution was sent. Evacuating museums boarded trains without knowing their final destination (in a secret envelope opened only after the train was already en route). However, they certainly had a fair amount of influence when arriving in the regions, where they appeared as the representatives of the “center,” with the weight of central power behind them. Often times the exact buildings to be handed over had not been clearly agreed upon and frequently local authorities tried to pass evacuated institutions further down the line, to regional towns. These disagreements were usually settled in the evacuees’ favor, generally after direct intervention by Moscow, perhaps even in the form of a visit by a Moscow official. For example, in fall 1941 a special representative of the Committee for Artistic Affairs spent several months traveling around Siberia and Central Asia to inspect the conditions of evacuated theaters. In Novosibirsk in particular, the inspector accomplished a “major reorganization of the oblast’s theaters...the obkom accepted all of our suggestions.” No further elaboration is given on the methods for convincing the local obkom.

The more elite institutions and their members also enjoyed a greater degree of mobility and flexibility once actually in the regions. As a rule of thumb, evacuees were

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180 Baltun, 38.
not able to simply move freely around the Russian hinterland. Officially even to obtain access to transportation one needed an order from the Council for Evacuation, and for those without in-demand skills, obtaining a living permit in a desirable area (first and foremost a city) was virtually impossible. Members of the intelligentsia, however, had much greater ease in traveling inside the country. Major cultural organizations such as theaters or even newspapers as well as the creative unions could issue documentation providing individuals with “komandirovki” for personal or business reasons.

**Conclusion**

The evacuation process for cultural institutions and its results lead to several conclusions. First, the way the evacuations were implemented suggest that the key to the process was not the Council for Evacuation. Officially, the Soviet narrative of evacuation lauded the Party’s control and supervision of the process. To acknowledge the softening of political centralization and that initiative did not flow from the top down would have jeopardized the state’s appropriation of victory for itself. As the victory became a vital source of legitimation in Soviet memory after the war, this narrative remained embedded. Archival sources, however, demonstrate the centrality of the plans and initiative of the KPDI and creative unions, directors of individual cultural institutions and local authorities. These were the players that broached the possibility of evacuating and determined the logistics of each evacuation, from who would evacuate to their destination. The Council for Evacuation confirmed the plans that the other organizations submitted, placing significant resources at their disposal at a time of extraordinary crisis in the USSR, in an important demonstration of privilege and support for the intelligentsia.
On the whole intelligentsia authorities expended serious efforts in putting evacuations into practice.\textsuperscript{182} Of course, this was not an exercise devoid of self-interest. Although cultural elites were following the government’s lead, they had significant overlap with the interest of their own safety and continued work in their own specialty. For administrators at a higher level, preserving the scale of Soviet cultural endeavors meant in turn preserving their sphere of influence and power, and their position in the allocation system. The evacuation of culture also confirms the narratives of individualization of power that allowed the Soviet bureaucracy’s inefficiencies to be worked around, much as happened in industry.

Second, and very telling, the intelligentsia’s response confirms that its members had more or less internalized the hierarchies along which the evacuation of culture was conducted. Evacuation, as I have mentioned, was a mark of privilege and was perceived as such by the general population. Everyone understood that the Vakhtangov was theater evacuated because the government felt it was worthwhile to save it and its actors. While individual cultural elites may have felt resentment if their institution did not make it out, as a whole there does not appear to have been major unrest or dissatisfaction at say, the best theaters, performance collectives and museum collections being evacuated first. No one seems to have seriously disputed the hierarchies themselves. Nor was there any organized effort to ameliorate these hierarchies, no campaign to mobilize those not evacuated and convince them of the importance of their continued presence in Moscow or Leningrad. This may have been administrative oversight in a moment of

\textsuperscript{182} For cases of “treachery,” see report on work of KPDI for 1941, RGALI f. 962 op. 10 d. 51 l. 29.
overwhelming crisis, but it also suggests that no one saw a need to defend the hierarchies. The fact that in the end enough cultural institutions were evacuated may have helped prevent this from becoming a highly divisive issue.

The effort to save Soviet culture by evacuating those who produced, performed and embodied it as well as the country’s museum collections reflected the state view of Soviet culture as a critical source of Soviet identity and achievement, the destruction (or defection) of which would have enormous impact on morale and deprive the state of an important resource. The enormous financial and material resources placed at the dispense of the creative unions and KPDI to evacuate testify to this. The evacuations reflected and reinforced the Soviet hierarchies already in place, both at a general social level and within the intelligentsia itself. Writers, actors, musicians and museum workers undoubtedly got highly preferential treatment compared to all other Soviet citizens except state or Party functionaries. They not only received official opportunities to evacuate ahead of most other citizens, they were assigned to the “best” evacuation destinations, major regional centers with transportation and communication connections, opportunities for work, and comparatively good provisioning. Though it was unintentional, the new, unequally distributed geography of Soviet culture that emerged would also contribute to reinforcing the growing hierarchy of Soviet regional cities.
Chapter II
Intelligentsia and Evacuation: Reactions, Refusals, and Resignation

On 28 November 1941, Aleksandr Fadeev received a telegram from David Ortenberg, editor of Krasnaia Zvezda. Ortenberg wrote to inform him that “Mikhail Golodnyi, a writer on staff of the military newspaper Krasnaia Zvezda, voluntarily departed, without having requested permission, in connection with which we have excluded him from the list of our workers.”¹⁸³ In October 15 1941, Vasilii Sakhnovskii, theater director and head of the artistic section at MXAT, experienced a serious attack of angina and took to his bed, under the observation of a Kremlin doctor. On 4 November 1941 he was arrested out of his sickbed for failing to have evacuated with MXAT “as if I remained behind for work when the Germans occupied Moscow,” tried and convicted for anti-Soviet agitation and exiled to Kazakhstan.¹⁸⁴ Finally, as evacuated writer Ksenia L’vova tartly observed in a letter to Vladimir Stavskii, editor of Novyi Mir,

If it had been known what awaited us in Tashkent, that high-minded attitude with which our departure from Moscow was explained would have disappeared: to preserve writers and use them in the hinterland instead of subjecting them to the dangerous of frontline Moscow.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸³ T. M. Goriaeva, My—predchuvstvovali..., 141. Document 104, telegram from Ortenberg to Fadeev, 28 November 1941. Golodnyi later on managed to secure work as a war correspondent and was later awarded medals for his military service.
¹⁸⁴ See V. V. Ivanov, Mnemozina: Dokumenty i fakty iz istorii otechestvennogo teatra vyp. 4 (Moscow: Indrik, 2009), 412. Letter from Sakhnovskii to Nemirovich-Danchenko, 9.IX.1942. Sakhnovskii was eventually released, his case was overturned, and he returned to work in Moscow in 1943 as artistic director of the Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater Studio.
¹⁸⁵ My—predchuvstvovali..., 133. Letter from Ksenia L’vova to Stavskii, 19 November 1941.
These three different stories illustrate the myriad choices and repercussions that members of the intelligentsia confronted in connection with evacuation. Mikhail Golodnyi was punished for evacuating early without permission; Vasilii Sakhnovskii was arrested and tried for having failed to evacuate; and Ksenia L’vova evacuated, but was so disillusioned by conditions in evacuation that she began trying to secure recall to Moscow almost immediately. No one wished to go into evacuation outside of immediate threat by the Germans. Evacuations, as we saw in Chapter I, were chaotic events that took place in very short timeframes and with little available information to those involved. And yet as this chapter will make clear, many cultural elites regarded evacuation as something akin to a choice or an available option rather than an obligation imposed by the state. The state, in its turn, punished very few people for disobeying orders to evacuate, though no one could have known this beforehand. A sizable number of those ordered to depart with their institution failed to do so. The choice was unenviable: evacuation promised to be filled with uncertainty and material hardships, but carried the assurance of physical safety from the German advance and the possibility to continue working in one’s institution. At some level all calculations regarding evacuations were therefore calculations about the likelihood of Moscow or Leningrad falling to the Germans, or the Soviet ability to withstand the attack, and the potential personal repercussions. Factors such as the presence of dependents, the need to earn a salary, personal levels of courage and patriotism could influence people in either direction.

The impact of the evacuations themselves on cultural production and the intelligentsia were significant. They brought about the sudden, forced decentralization that removed the creative elite from centers associated with cultural capital, prestige and
material privilege, but also from the direct oversight of the most powerful Soviet authorities. By their nature, they also raised the question of the sustainability of Soviet power. Evacuations and the geographical re-organization they entailed forced members of the intelligentsia to confront questions of mobilization, loyalty and privileges in a way the initial war months had not. Hierarchies of privilege amongst the evacuated intelligentsia during the war gave rise to conflict and feelings of resentment, with writers in particular appearing to have felt that the burden of war should be shared equally among writers. On the other hand, evacuation was a luxury that not everyone received. Not all members of the intelligentsia received orders or permission to evacuate, as there was not enough space. Like many average Soviet citizens in Moscow 1941, those left behind to watch their colleagues evacuate viewed this as being abandoned to their fate under the Germans.

What emerges from examining the multifold reactions of cultural producers to the evacuations is their concern with the “right” way to behave during the war. Did “correct” behavior indeed mean evacuating when one received state orders to do so, or did it instead oblige creative elites to remain behind in solidarity with the populations of Moscow, Kiev and Leningrad despite government directives, or did it mean volunteering to serve at the front? Was evacuating a form of cowardice, or simply loyally fulfilling the state’s orders? Different individuals found different answers to these dilemmas, but almost everyone retained deeply ambiguous feelings towards the evacuations. As 1941 progressed and it became clear that the bulk of the qualified intelligentsia would remain in evacuation for some period of time, the state had to persuade its intelligentsia that work in evacuation was indeed work “on a war footing” and still a worthwhile
contribution to the war effort. These tasks fell to the KPDI, creative unions and directors of individual theaters.

The war also saw a rush by the intelligentsia to protect (or obtain further) personal, institutional and corporate privileges. The evacuations posed a potential initial threat to these benefits, in that material privileges had been for decades associated with residence in either Moscow or Leningrad and close physical proximity to Soviet power. The sudden forced de-centralization of most of the Soviet cultural apparatus called into question the continued provision of these privileges, how they were (and would continue to be) distributed and to whom on what grounds, and how they might best be protected.

Despite the potential wrenches the evacuations threw into mobilization, in the end they did not derail the intelligentsia’s service to the war effort. The state got what it needed, as by and large the intelligentsia remained loyal. There was no mass ideological defection and many cultural producers worked energetically for the war effort, regardless of their inner feelings about the Soviet state or its ideology. The intelligentsia, on the other hand, used the war and evacuation experience to decisively prove to the state its dependability and integral position as a pillar upholding the Soviet state.

I also show that evacuations increased the importance of the creative unions’ responsibilities and powers. While the unions had always performed services for their members, never before had so many individuals been dependent on them at one time for virtually every service imaginable: rations, housing, evacuation and then recall orders to and from the capitals, assistance in finding work. The burden of mobilizing the evacuated intelligentsia and facilitating their work in evacuation fell to the creative unions, KPDI and administrations of individual theaters/museums, who likewise had the right to
distribute the various “carrots” the state made available to the intelligentsia as material incentive. The creative unions (staffed by figures whose loyalty was in no doubt) coordinated and managed cultural production during the war and worked to channel it in the directions desired by the state, given the geographic decentralization resulting from evacuations and the subsequent disruption of established lines of communication.\footnote{For further information on the creative unions, see John and Carol Garrard, \textit{Inside the Soviet Writers’ Union} (New York: Free Press, 1990); A. I. Shchiglik, \textit{Tvorcheskie Soiuzy v SSSR} (Mosow: Iurid. Lit-ra, 1970); Dietrich Beyrau, “Der organisierte Autor: Institutionen, Kontrolle, Fürsorge,” in \textit{Kultur im Stalinismus: Sowjetische Kultur und Kunst der 1930er bis 1950er Jahre}, ed. Gabriel Gorzka (Temmen: 1994); for a more in-depth description of the literary politics behind the formation of the Writers’ Union, see A. Kemp-Welch, \textit{Stalin and the Literary Intelligentsia 1928-1939} (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1991). On the Composers’ Union, see Kiril Tomoff, \textit{Creative Union: The Professional Organization of Soviet Composers, 1939-1953} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).}

Evacuations also cut members of the intelligentsia off from any other other potential channels of obtaining benefits outside the unions. What could before the war perhaps have been accomplished via outside personal connections or a face-to-face encounter with a bureaucrat now had to go through the union, acting as a sort of clearing house. This meant that official membership in the unions took on even more meaning than in the prewar period. Non-members of the creative unions had little hope of being exempted from the draft or even being mobilized along one’s specialty, for example in a military newspaper, to say nothing of rations.

**June 1941: Mobilization**

Mobilization of the intelligentsia began well before the evacuations. By 1941, the intelligentsia included some of the Soviet Union’s most respected, visible and vocal citizens, and the state could not afford to have them not participate in the war effort. But
to put culture onto a “war footing” required the cooperation and participation of the Soviet intelligentsia on a mass scale. Plausibly, cultural elites might have been reluctant to rally around the state in its moment of crisis 1941. In the aftermath of the Purges, restrictive practices, implementation of ideological control and the campaigns against formalism in all areas of the arts, plenty of writers, artists and musicians had their own grievances against the Soviet state. One list counts 65 writers imprisoned in the Gulag during the war years, predominantly from Moscow and Leningrad. By 1941, the entire Soviet elite had just witnessed more than a decade of dramatic evolution of the intelligentsia’s role, turnover in top personnel and ideological conflict. The creative intelligentsia that had emerged by the late 1930s differed significantly even from that of the early 1930s, to say nothing of the 1920s. Hierarchies had been repeatedly overturned, leaving in their wake a very different cultural landscape than that of a decade prior.

As it turns out, however, the state had little to worry about in the early months of the war. While the meaning of the rush of volunteers to the Red Army can be debated,

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189 Many of these writers had been imprisoned in the late 1930s; others, having been arrested in the 1930s and liberated, were rearrested and imprisoned during the war. At least one, a member of the Writers’ Union since 1934, was sent to a camp after having spent three years in a Finnish POW camp. See T. M. Goriaeva, Мы—предчувстовали..., vol. II, appendix 4: 591-619.
190 For a debate over the meaning of voluntarism, see Roger Reese, Why Stalin’s Soldiers Fought, (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2011), chaps. 5-6. “Reese argues that simply the act of volunteering did not necessarily mean these volunteers were inspired by the state, or that their patriotism corresponded to the totality of the Soviet population, geographic territory, or state; to volunteers themselves, it could very well have been
many members of the intelligentsia sought to bring their talents to bear in service of the war effort, and turned for guidance in this work to their respective unions or prominent cultural elites. Confusion over how to best be useful, lack of firm directives from the unions and necessary time for generating war-appropriate culture hindered their efforts more than apparent lack of willingness. For many cultural producers, the immediate question was whether to enlist for work directly related to the war such as a nursing course or people’s militia, or to seek to make their cultural activities directly relevant to the war effort.

The Sunday afternoon announcement many performers were either in rehearsal or preparing to go onstage when they heard about it. Sergei Lemeshev, soloist at the Bolshoi, was preparing for the premiere of Romeo and Juliette in which he was to sing Romeo for the first time. As he recalled, “Do I need to say how difficult it was to go on stage, how much force was needed, to stop thinking for a minute about reality and feel oneself a Shakespearean hero?” Irina Morozova, cellist with the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, was in rehearsals when the war was announced. “It’s impossible to say what worry seized everyone and how great the wave of patriotic feelings was! It seemed that limited to “local” patriotism and love of one’s city or region. This is not to say that the intelligentsia was devoid of “local patriotism” or loyalty to/love for a specific city or area, but these manifestations of devotion tended to appear somewhat later in the war; for example, in Inber’s or Bergolts’ refusal to evacuate Leningrad. For an overview on recent work on the question of loyalty, see Mark Edele, “What are We Fighting For? Loyalty in the Soviet War Effort, 1941-1945,” International Labor and Working Class History 84 (2013); Oleg Budnitskii, “The Great Patriotic War and Soviet Society,” Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 15, 4 (2014). See also the useful introduction to Oleg Budnitskii and Galina Zelenina’s “Svershilos’, prishli nemtsy! Ideinyi kollaborasionism v SSSR v period Otechestvenoi Voiny (Mosow: Rosspen, 2012).

everyone was ready to go defend the motherland.”192 In the first rush of excitement, even Morozova (in her 40s) declared to the conductor that she too was ready to go to the front; he told her to stay put, since she had children.193 Actress Galina Konovalova of the Vakhtangov theater, who in June 1941 had recently had her first child, recalls that “I did not envy one role, one premier more than I envied at that moment my girlfriends, marching around the …[Komsomol] raikom [to volunteer].”194 Ballerina Nonna Kuznetsova, soloist at the Bolshoi Theater since 1931, wanted to volunteer for general social work at soon as the war broke out; she was prevented from doing so by a concussion that kept her in the hospital until October. Upon release she immediately signed up to be sent to the frontlines as a nurse.195 While most of these examples come from the diaries of women, memoirs by men indicate that they regularly went to the local draft offices to register and volunteer their services.

Many of the Moscow and Leningrad writers, composers, musicians and other performers who were called up or attempted to enlist in 1941 were rejected — either for health reasons or because the army would not yet take highly qualified specialists.196 As Boris Khaikin, then director of the Malyi Opera Theater in Leningrad recalls of those

193 Ibid, 25.
195 IRI RAN 2 VIII 2a, memoirs of ballerina Nonna Vladimirovna Kuznetsova, 1942, 1. However, the Army reassigned her to a front brigade rather than employ her as a nurse, of which they already had enough.
196 In early 1942, a decision was taken to defer calling up members of cultural organizations and the composers’, artists’ and architects’ unions; the writers’ union immediately requested the same privilege for their own members. See RGALI 631 15 597, 69.
who went in groups to volunteer “Many were delicately told ‘It’s not your turn yet.’”\textsuperscript{197} Thwarted from enlisting in the Red Army, these young men often turned their attention to other opportunities such as militias.\textsuperscript{198} Evgenii Shvarts recalls how on 3 July 1941 he heard Stalin’s speech appealing to “brothers and sisters” to form people’s militias – and everyone, including himself, went off to enroll (he enrolled through the local Writers’ Union). He soon received an order to appear in person and off he hurried, “the ghosts of young people, killed every day, haunted my conscience. One thing alone worried me – that a new life lay ahead, that I couldn’t imagine.”\textsuperscript{199} Organizations like theaters and the Writers’ Union formed their own opolchenie (militia) brigades. Unfortunately, since these battalions were virtually untrained and unarmed, they suffered enormous casualties.\textsuperscript{200} Shvarts describes the Leningrad writers’ battalions in the following manner: “First one squadron would wind up directly in the path of the Germans, untrained, without weapons, then another would go for training and wind up right in the heat of the fight. And no one flinches.”\textsuperscript{201} Similar stories occurred outside Moscow, where the writer and theater battalions frequently found surrounded by the Wehrmacht, with only a few

\textsuperscript{197} Boris Khaikin, \textit{Besedy o dirizherskom remesle} (Mosow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1984), 191.
\textsuperscript{198} As for provincial and national (non-Slavic) cultural producers, their ranks appear to have been decimated by the first few rounds of the draft in 1941. Substantially fewer regional actors, writers, and performers had the necessary credentials and qualifications to be spared call up, nor did the intervention of their local institutions necessary carry as much weight as that of an institution like the Kirov or Bolshoi, who compiled their own lists of indispensable cadres to receive exemptions.
\textsuperscript{199} Evgenii Shvarts, \textit{Zhivu bespokoi…iz dnevnikovikh zapisei}, (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel, 1990), 651. As a matter of fact, the local obkom rejected Shvarts’ application to join the militia and sent him to work in the radio committee, preparing scripts for wartime broadcasts.
\textsuperscript{200} IRI RAN, f. 2 radel VII op. 5, d. 1 l. 7. Interview with Lev Rubenstein, 1943.
\textsuperscript{201} Shvarts, 652.
managing to escape. These militias included inexperienced, aspiring writers and students of the Literary Institute as well as members of the Writers’ Union. Vasilii Grossman haunted the Main Political Department of the Red Army until coming to the attention of David Ortenberg, who personally requested Grossman be assigned as a correspondent to *Krasnaia Zvezda.*

Marietta Shaginian wrote in her diary in July 1941 that on 24 June she had applied to join the Party; and mentions her concerns over how to “combine public duties with my work. The war immediately reordered all centers of gravity, demanding of us new work, quick production times, political sensitivity.” Her entry reflects the sense many other cultural producers shared, that wartime cultural work would have new and different requirements. Writers’ situation differed from performers in that there was an obvious immediate outlet for their skills in wartime: as war correspondents. Writer Lev Rubenstein explained in a 1943 interview that as writers had experience as correspondents in recent campaigns in Finland, Mongolia and recently incorporated western Ukraine and Belarus, they initially tried to repeat those roles: “when I met people in Moscow in the early war days and asked, ‘what should we do now?’ they replied, ‘well now, we’ll join the military press.’ It wasn’t something new.” Here as well events took an unforeseen turn. From the earliest days of the war writers flocked in such droves to join army newspapers that “they [military press administration] stopped speaking to

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202 See Rubenstein interview, Nauchnyi Archiv RAN f. 2 razdel VII op. 5 d. 1 l. 6; Boris Runin, “Pisatel’skaia rota,” in *Zapiski sluchainogo utselevshego* (Moscow: Vozvrashchenie, 2010).


204 Marietta Shaginian, *Dnevnik,* 3 July 1941.

205 IRI RAN 2 VIII 5, interview with writer Lev Rubenstein, 2.
us…writers turned out to be not needed, as they already were fully staffed.”

Even figures like Fadeev soon lost any ability to funnel writers into army press as a way of protecting them.

Writers wishing to be useful to the war effort and simultaneously earn a living at a time when opportunities for publishing had been sharply reduced looked to the Writers’ Union for direction, which was not always forthcoming in the early months of the war. In his diary entries from June 1941, writer Aleksandr Gladkov recounts his days of simply wandering around Moscow, dropping in on acquaintances to chat and people-watching, unsure of what to write. Lev Rubenstein complained in 1943 that the Moscow Writers’ Union was “by nature organized in a scattered manner. People sit at home, even outside Moscow, and see each other very rarely.” Writers initially began writing based on their prior experiences of war (primarily with the Finns or in Central Asia) but these rarely led to any success, as such experience proved to be inappropriate for the current war. “It should be said,” Rubenstein remarks of summer 1941 in his interview, “that the leadership of the Writers’ Union clearly did not know what was needed and did not give any specific instructions.” By this, Rubenstein seems to have meant suggestions as to genre and style, intended audience and use, and content matter. Eventually, aside from newspaper writing, the “narrative wartime novella” came to dominate as the wartime form of literary activity, though playwrights were also hard at work. According to

206 Ibid., 2.
207 See RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 605, l.66. Letter from Fadeev to Nikitich, October 1942.
209 IRI RAN 2 VII 5, 1. Interview with Lev Rubenstein, 1943.
Rubenshtein, “…the political departments requested this genre, and moreover they wanted a certain level of quality, they wanted things that would instill patriotism…”

This state of affairs amongst writers led to an anonymous letter in October 1941 to Pravda, forwarded in turn to the head of Agitprop Shcherbakov. The author explains that many writers, unable to find work through the Writers’ Union, unable to find work with the army newspapers and rejected from people’s militias because of their health, are on the “verge of hunger.” He requests that authorities “discuss the possibility of wider attraction of writers to army press…Being at the front, being of immediate to the affair of defense – this is the dream of every Soviet writer, those left behind look with envy at those at the front.” As late as December 1941, writers Valentin Kataev and Burskii wrote to the Central Committee to complain that the “Writers’ Union as a fighting creative organizing strength in reality does not exist. The strengths and potential of the writers’ organization have not been placed at the service of defense.” Some of these complaints undoubtedly reflected dissatisfaction with one’s personal lot or political maneuverings. Fadeev himself noted that in “15 years of work amongst writers has created for me a number of literary opponents.” However, it seems reasonable to conclude that for the first few months of the war the Writers’ Union was at something of a loss as to how to direct its members.

210 IRI RAN 2 VII 5, 10.
211 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 68 l. 144-145. Anonymous letter to Pravda, 9 October 1941.
212 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 68 l. 182. Letter from Valentin Kataev and Burskii to Central Committee, December 1941.
213 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 69 l. 30. Letter from Aleksandr Fadeev to Andreev and Shcherbakov, 13 December 1941.
Other forms of “defense” work abounded in 1941, participation in which was frequently mandatory. All major buildings including theaters, museums and universities had to form anti-fire brigades, in which a building’s workers stood guard during night air raids to extinguish fires. No one was exempt from this work. Shostakovich worked in such a brigade until required to evacuate in fall 1941. The beginning of the war was accompanied by the transformation of many major buildings (including theaters, concert halls and museums) into “military facilities” subject to military-style discipline and a new set of tasks including camouflage. As one student of the Leningrad conservatory recalls, for the first two months of the war students and professors had been divided into special brigades – medical, chemical, fire, and “revolutionary order.”

Loyalty to one’s own institution and particular art form came into play here, particularly in the case of museum workers whose foremost concerns in the early days of the war were ensuring the museum holdings did not suffer damage. Cultural elites could frequently be found digging anti-tank trenches around both Moscow and Leningrad.

Other members of the intelligentsia turned to more familiar methods of supporting the troops. Patronage work over military divisions had been a Soviet tradition since the Civil War and had continued throughout the 1930s and 1940s on a comparatively casual level. Indeed, ballerina Suzanna Zviagina had just returned to Moscow from Mongolia on 21 June, where a group from the Bolshoi had been entertaining Soviet troops posted there

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to fight the Japanese.\textsuperscript{217} However, as soon as the war broke out, major theaters significantly stepped up this sort of work. The Kirov theater immediately organized a special patronage committee with some of their most prominent members, responsible for determining defense repertoire and organizing brigades;\textsuperscript{218} the theater managed to give 585 patronage concerts in summer 1941 alone, before evacuating.\textsuperscript{219}

Wartime cultural content posed a different challenge. It needed to be patriotic and uphold state aims, but it was not immediately clear what themes and motifs would best serve these objectives. It took some time to determine what to begin producing wartime cultural works, what sort of content and format there would be demand for, the sort of quality involved. Quality in this context referred to the dilemma between producing topical, “of the moment” small works but rapidly and in large quantity, versus sacrificing speed to produce large-scale works of lasting importance and value. Cultural producers could be found on both sides of this dilemma. As late as November 1941, a comrade Lev in Leningrad could be found suggesting that Leningrad theaters focus on creating “of the moment” plays: “they do not have to be brilliant or for the ages, even for a year, but just for 2-3 months as this could play an enormous mobilizational and organizational role.”\textsuperscript{220} Lev Rubenstein, on the other hand recalls that amidst writers there were those who began writing “shortly and shoddily (\textit{khalturno}), thinking that this was necessary during war. There could even be found enthusiasts who claimed that during the war there was no

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{217} Zviagina, 38. \\
\textsuperscript{218} \textit{Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo}, 28 June 1941, prikaz Radina, 2. \\
\textsuperscript{219} TsGALI 337 1 282, otchet o rabote Kirovskogo teatra, 2. \\
\textsuperscript{220} Otdel rukopisei NLR 1117 1 154, 11. Protocol sobranii aktiva rabotnikov Leningraskikh teatrakh ob itogakh raboty I planakh na budushchee. 24 November 1941.
\end{flushleft}
need to think about quality.” His version reflects a more derisive attitude towards the abandonment of quality in favor of quick production of agitational material. Writer Aleksandr Gladkov seems to share similar sentiments as late as 1943 with a derogatory remark about “potboilers” and writers who “have forgotten how to work” in their hurry to publish, suggesting that the debate was not resolved quickly. In short, placing culture on a “wartime footing” did not mean that Soviet culture no longer had rules; rather, the intelligentsia had to figure out what the new rules were and how to produce culture of reasonable quality that conformed to them. In the war’s early days, the creative unions and administrations of various administrations were at almost as much of a loss as to how to accomplish this as their rank and file members.

Despite this confusion, the Committee for Artistic Affairs had not failed to define culture’s primary task early on in the war, albeit in terms frustratingly vague for cultural producers looking to them for guidance. The KPDI, staffed by reliable functionaries whose loyalty had never been in doubt (any more than the loyalty of say, the Ministry for Education) sprang into action in late June and began issuing instructions. The initial instruction from the KPDI informed the intelligentsia that

…the main and most important task of all creative workers, all enterprises and institutions of Soviet art – is to give all strength to the defense of the motherland, help the mobilization of the entire people for the patriotic war against German fascism, facilitate the increasing of productive work, strengthen discipline and organization of the country’s population.

221 IRI RAN 2 VIII 5 1, 9. Interview with Rubenstein.
223 “Direktivnoe pis’mo KPDI respublikanskim upravleniiam, kraevym i oblastnym otdelam po delam iskusstv o perestroiki rabote v period OTechestvennoi voiny,” (no date: July 1941) Muzy v Shineliakh: Sovetskaia intelligentsia v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny: Dokumenty, teksty, vospominaniiia (Mosow: ROSSPEN, 2006), 3.
Such instructions could have been expected, as they resembled those issued to other sectors as well. Deciding how to implement them proved more difficult. The KPDI’s more concrete instructions recommended that theaters shorten the time required to stage new productions, remove plays not corresponding to “current demands,” and exhorted composers to produce more marches, etc. The most obvious demand was for the production of new Soviet cultural works, with appropriate content that corresponded to the needs of wartime. However, the nature of current demands was not always immediately transparent and in any case, was subject to such rapid change given the fluctuating situation at the front that by the time a new play or even sketch was finished and reached a potential publisher for review, its subject matter no longer necessarily corresponded to contemporary needs. As writer Klara Kloss, evacuated to Molotov oblast complained in August 1942, no editor wanted to publish anything that could have been written “before the war.”\footnote{RGALI 631 15 7, letter from Klara Kloss to Writers’ Union, 1942, 58.} The evacuations exacerbated this problem by disrupting established channels of communication and the simple fact that manuscripts had to travel much further from their author to publisher, both now scattered across the country instead of concentrated in Moscow or Leningrad. Poet Mikhail Isaakovskii and Vladimir Bill-Belotserkovskii wrote a letter of complaint to Aleksandr Fadeev in August 1942, lamenting that “oftentimes some or another very actual work arrives…already out of date.”\footnote{RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 649 l. 34. Letter from Isaakovskii and Bill-Belotserkovskii, August 1942.} In turn, this made it very difficult for writers to get paid for their work.

In an effort to provide some assistance, the KPDI released lists of wartime-appropriate plays as examples for performing arts collectives. The list was divided into
the categories of “historical”, “describing October,” and “contemporary.” Into the “approved” category fell such works as Fieldmarshal Kutuzov, Professor Mamlok, Polkovets Suvorov.\textsuperscript{226} In Suvorov and Kutuzov, the state sought to play to ideas about Russia’s great (and victorious) military past, while the 1938 film Professor Mamlock dealt with Nazi persecution of the Jews, something officially long illegal in Russia. In March 1942, The historical-patriotic theme found itself rehabilitated, and early on before new pieces could be composed to deal with current events, plays of a historical nature played an especially important role.\textsuperscript{227}

\textbf{(Dis)Loyalty}

As shown above, at the outbreak of World War II the Soviet intelligentsia proved willing as a group to use the tools and techniques of their particular specialty to assist the war effort, and they looked for guidance in this work to their respective organizations and administrations. There is little to no indication amongst cultural producers of mass unwillingness to create or perform culture useful to wartime, regardless of their personal attitudes towards it. But to what do we attribute the impulse to mobilize in 1941? To ideological conviction, patriotism, or something else? And what do we make of cases like those of Golodnyi and Sakhnovskii? Instances of openly disloyal behavior by members of the intelligentsia rarely appear in sources, both contemporary and memoirs published after the collapse of the Soviet Union. On the other hand, expressions of panic or fear,

\textsuperscript{226} RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 696, 5. “Spravka o perestroika teatrov na voennyi lad,” Falkovskii, no date.
fatalism, defeatism in 1941 were more common, if also often indirect.\textsuperscript{228} None of these phenomena were necessarily reflective of outright support for the Germans.

When episodes of undesirable behavior in 1941 do appear in sources, they usually take one of two forms. The first, as with Golodnyi, was trying to evacuate before it was permitted to do so, in the hopes of avoiding the draft or the hardships of frontline cities. Both state and other members of the intelligentsia regarded this derisively as “running away” with an eye towards “sitting out” the war somewhere comfortable. The second form, as Sakhnovskii was accused of, was not evacuating at all and deliberating remaining to wait for the Germans. Sergei Lemeshev, a tenor at the Bolshoi, recalled overhearing a pianist trying to convince three singers to travel to Manikhino (to the northwest of Moscow) where the Bolshoi theater had a group of dachas, in the knowledge that they would be in German occupied territory.\textsuperscript{229} It turns out that 13 Bolshoi artists (including those Lemeshev named) did indeed find themselves in Manikhino when the Germans occupied it; sensing that returning from occupied territory might mean exile to Siberia and with the reassurances of another artist who was of German descent (according to his passport), they remained in occupied territories and later retreated with the Germans.\textsuperscript{230} After surviving by performing for the Wehrmacht, bass Ivan Zhadan emigrated to America. Osval’d Glazunov of the Vakhtangov theater returned to his native

\textsuperscript{228} Pianist Genrikh Neigauz and ballet teacher Ekaterina Geidenreikh seem to have been arrested primarily for their defeatist statements along with their German last names.
\textsuperscript{229} A. Rybin, \textit{Riadom so Stalinym v Bolshom teatre: Zapiski voennogo komandanta} (Mosow: Gudok), 30. For an interesting discussion of collaboration by the creative intelligentsia, see Igor’ Ermolov, \textit{Tri goda bez Stalina: Okkupatsia: Sovetskie grazhdane mezhdu natsistami i bolshevikami, 1941-1944} (Mosow: Tsentrpoligraf, 2010).
Riga under German where he performed in Riga’s theaters. Vsevolod Bliumental-Tamarin, an old anti-Soviet who had supported the Whites during the Civil War and who had counted on his German ancestry to protect him from the Nazis, actively worked for the German radio, evidently calling upon listeners not to defend Stalin’s system.\textsuperscript{231} Iurii Elagin, a former musician for the Vakhtangov theater, also eventually emigrated to the United States via displaced persons camps after the war. Whether or not these individuals deliberately traveled to their dachas to wait for the Germans cannot be verified, though the KPDI referred to Zhadan and Glazunov by name as traitors in a 1942 report\textsuperscript{232} In their defense, escaping to the dacha even in a westerly direction for fear of air raids in 1941 (expected to take place primarily in urban areas) was not uncommon. Zhadan’s eldest son was in the Red Army; Lemeshev could have in retrospect extrapolated the group’s desire to wait for the Germans. On the other hand, it is entirely possible that they deliberately waited for the Germans at their dacha in the hopes of better treatment. However, members of the Russian-Soviet cultural elite ready to actively collaborate with the Nazis seem to have been a comparatively small group (I cannot speak for the Ukrainian or Baltic elites, where reactions may have been far more mixed due to national grievances).

\textsuperscript{231} Demidova, “Auf Russisch…”, Bliumental-Tamarin died in May 1945; officially from suicide, it has been alleged that he was murdered by his wife’s nephew, a spy sent by the Soviets who appeared first as a refugee and then mysteriously disappeared immediately after his uncle’s death. See Arkadii Vaksberg, \textit{Liubov’ i kovarstvo: Teatral’nyi detektiv} (2007) for full version of this theory. Glazunov was captured by the Soviets when they retoo Latvia and was seated to 8 years in the camps; he died there in 1948.

\textsuperscript{232} RGALI f. 962 op. 10 d. 51 l. 29 Report from L. Shapovalov to Department of Cadres, 8 May 1942.
Ideological conviction undoubtedly influenced some members of the intelligentsia on both sides of the spectrum, as did sympathy for fellow Soviet citizens. The desire to help soldiers in particular, seeing the impact art or culture might have on them, frequently figures in the memoirs and documents of female dancers and singers. But as a group, the intelligentsia did not offer its mobilization for free. Rather, it made extensive demands on the state in exchange for its loyal support. The scale of these demands, as I will address shortly, suggests that as a group pure or noble feelings cannot begin to cover the extent of mobilization. The combination of privilege, gratitude for privilege and a desire to keep working in one’s specialty figure in too prominent a fashion to ignore them.

**Attitudes Towards Evacuation: The Departure Dilemma**

In October of 1941, as the Lensovet theater prepared to evacuate Moscow, actor Kudashev approached one of the administrators and asked him whether or not he should leave, fearing losing contact with his son at the front. In response, the administrator informed him: “If you are a Soviet actor and a true citizen, then you must act in accordance with the order of our government. You are being evacuated with the goal of preserving you as a creative unit, and as for the remaining order-disobeyers, we’ll speak to them.”

Kudashev was far from alone in his dilemma. Even when in possession of an evacuation order, many cultural elites were unsure of how to proceed, and debated

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233 Nauchnyi arkhiv IRI RAN 2 VIII 7, l. 6. Interview with GABT soloist Evgeniia Vasilievskaya, 20 February 1945. A similar incident was recorded in the 1942 memoirs of Nonna Kuznetsova. Both women had clear patriotic leanings, Kuznetsova had tried to enlist in summer 1941, though neither appear to have been party members. However, Oleg Budnitskii has pointed out the complexities of anti-Soviet moods and loyalty during the war, noting that even many well-placed party members in occupied territories collaborated with the Germans while many of those who hated the Bolsheviks remained loyal. See Budnitskii, “Svershilos’? Prishli nemtsy?”, 16.

234 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 1041 l. 213.
whether or not to actually depart. Kudashev is unusual not in his emotions, but rather in that instead of keeping his debate internal or amongst close friends or family, he turned for advice to a theater administrator. These debates were deeply personal and occurred amongst all strata of the intelligentsia without regard to status, gender or other obvious criteria. An individual’s calculus of the risks and gains was influenced by a variety of factors including one’s position in the cultural hierarchy, family situation and his or her faith in the Soviet ability to defend Moscow. Secondly, the administrator’s response illustrates very well the way the state wished the evacuations to proceed, which is something along the lines of what might be called an “organized retreat.” Despite having made a public show of defiance through 1941 and condemned all manifestations of “panicking,” when the state at the last minute ordered cultural institutions to evacuate it expected unquestioning compliance that the “right” thing to do had changed.

At the heart of the debate over evacuation was an individual’s calculation of the comparative risks of remaining in Moscow and those of entering evacuation, which could also seem very considerable. The evacuations were unique in their decentralization of Soviet culture life. Before the revolution, as many scholars have noted, the Russian Empire enjoyed a decentralized cultural life; the capital of Imperial Culture in St. Petersburg and in Moscow were complemented by vibrant cultural scenes in Kiev, Odessa, Tbilisi, and Kharkov, to name only a few. But by the 1930s, Moscow had become firmly established as the Soviet Union’s major cultural center, with Leningrad coming a rather distant second. Early in the 1930s the country made a deliberate decision

to “rebuild” Moscow and make it not only the Soviet capital but a model socialist city.\textsuperscript{236} As such, it would receive the lion’s share of the limited resources available in the Soviet Union for its reconstruction. Moscow’s draw as a cultural force strengthened in the 1930s with the formation of the creative unions and cultural bureaucracies in Moscow. From then on, the “edicts, journals and critics that set the tone” of Soviet culture emanated almost entirely from Moscow, a phenomenon replicated throughout the war — Moscow institutions continued to call the cultural shots, regardless of their physical location in evacuation.\textsuperscript{237} The very founding statute of the Writers’ Union makes clear the power and resources it had at its disposal, immediately establishing its members as the beneficiaries of very favored treatment: the Union could “own property and establish institutions to provide services to its members, including housing, clubs, retreats and restaurants.”\textsuperscript{238} The creative unions became the main purveyors both of material benefits and of “qualifications” to their members, “overseeing conditions that maintained members as an elite group,” as one historian has characterized the Composer’s Union. It was with the creation of the unions that their members began receiving better material rewards for their professional activities than the rest of society, particularly as entry into the union became more difficult towards the late 1930s.\textsuperscript{239} Of course, given the scarcities


\textsuperscript{237} Clark, \textit{The Fourth Rome}, 15.

\textsuperscript{238} John and Carol Garrard, \textit{Inside the Soviet Writers’ Union} (New York: Macmillan, 1990), 32.

\textsuperscript{239} Vera Tolz, “Cultural bosses as patrons and clients,” \textit{Contemporary European History} 11, 1 (2002): 92
the Soviet Union faced, hierarchies of access still emerged within the unions themselves; to be a Writers’ Union member in Rostov was not the same as to be one in Moscow.  

A certain level of economic and other material privilege for the most elite members of the literary, academic and cultural establishments had always been a fixture of the Soviet provisioning system. In the 1920s, a commission existed for the improvement of living standards of academics, while in 1931 the upper echelons of the creative elite were added to the group. The commission sought to create “working conditions” for these individuals. In 1932, individuals on the “special provisioning” lists of this commission and other official organizations received norms “close to those of central Party and Soviet institutions.” Osokina makes the important distinction that while inclusion in such lists had initially been based on individual names and their reputations, by the early 1930s this had shifted to the position one occupied: winners of competitions, honored workers of art, etc. In 1937, the Academy of Sciences and creative unions took over the commission’s functions, and it was liquidated. In the mid-1930s the levels of such privileges took on new scope. Starting from 1936, Stalin identified the intelligentsia as a key building block in Soviet society. He was able to do this after the affirmative action programs of the 1920s and early 1930s succeeded in forging a new, “Soviet” non-antagonistic intelligentsia, or one regarded as “svoi.” As

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242 Osokina, 105.

243 Osokina, 193.

Erik van Ree has argued, the creation of a new intelligentsia was a one-time event. Once Stalin felt he had a “politically reliable new intelligentsia,” he was content to let things rest.245 The new perks afforded the intelligentsia were facilitated by direct contact with power figures and the patronage systems that evolved around them.246 As Nadezhda Mandelstam remarked, by 1937 “writers had…become a privileged caste.”247 Iurii Elagin remarks that in the early 1930s, “no one could have even guessed that…by the mid-1930s, artists, musicians and singers would occupy such an unheard of privileged position in Soviet society,” incomparable to anywhere else in modern history.248 Elagin also attributes much of these privilege to the attention from top Party members.

As Moscow became more established as a cultural center, the centrifugal forces it exerted on the country’s artistic talent grew stronger, such that most of the talent in the Soviet Union moved to Moscow at the least opportunity, with some exceptions in the “high arts” such as ballet and music in Leningrad. Moscow sucked up the most promising regional talent early on, in a process that Mayhill Fowler has described as “provincializing” the provinces as they drained of much of the top talent and gradually

248 Iurii Elagin, Ukroshchenie iskusstv (New York: Izd-vo imeni Chekhova, 1952). Elagin had been dispatched to Krasnodar in 1940 after having completed his education at the Moscow conservatory. The outbreak of war caught him there. After the Germans occupied Krasnodar in 1942, Elagin found himself first in a German camp (where he played violin to survive) and later in a displaced persons camp. He eventually emigrated to America.
became fixated on ethno-national issues.  In turn, to be in Moscow came to imply levels of exceptional talent and achievement as the myth surrounding Moscow solidified. In part, this was because things could be achieved in Moscow or Leningrad that could not be elsewhere: experimentation, opportunities for patronage (and protection if things went wrong). As Clark has noted, Moscow had an “absolute majority on commissions and publication outlets and the most privileged housing and living conditions.”  Elagin even wrote that “class discrimination did not exist for the best Moscow theaters,” meaning that such institutions could benefit from the “former people”, while “class enemies” could find shelter in these theaters. Moscow became synonymous with where Soviet culture was; to be outside of Moscow (particularly in a Russian regional city) came to imply one had not fully “made” it yet. Likewise, many smaller Russian cities did not have an appropriate base for extensive cultural work. They lacked the newspapers and journals to employ large numbers of writers, may not have had a theatrical stage or enough viewers to support a theater collective’s work. To live outside Moscow or Leningrad raised the specter of being unable to find work according to one’s specialty, and having to seek some other form of employment. This in turn was directly at odds with many cultural producers’ sense of self. Few if any willingly acquiesced to such transfers.

Moscow’s centralizing tendencies were conscious and deliberate, if regarded as the continuation of earlier tendencies. Khrapchenko remarks in a letter to Shcherbakov

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249 Mayhill Fowler, “Mikhail Bulgakov, Mykola Kulish, and Soviet Theater: How Internal Transnationalism Remade Center and Periphery,” Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History 16, 2 (2015): In addition to the “pull” factors Fowler notes such “push” factors as unrest and violence in the southwestern territories in the 1920s, leading to an exodus of talent.  
251 Elagin, 44.
that the imperial theaters had always practiced “attract[ing]…the most talented artists from peripheral theaters. This is also important for the further development of the most gifted artists of the country.”

Khrapchenko conveyed these sentiments in a letter that sought to force the freeing up of regional artistic cadres for transfer to “theaters of all-union significance,” currently being hindered by local authorities unwilling to see talent desert their cities. In other words, similar to the deliberate decision to concentrate its economic and material resources on Moscow, the Soviet government was also not against concentrating its cultural resources there. Authorities projected that one day there should be enough culture and talent to go around; but until then, Moscow and Leningrad should still receive the best available.

By 1941, then, a significant part of cultural producers’ identity stemmed from the nature of their work, and their residence in Moscow or Leningrad. In his 1943 interview, when asked to name the scariest moment of the war, Lev Rubenstein selects 14 October 1941: “when I had to leave my home, den where I was used to working, my library and sitting place and depart into the unknown without having any guarantees how things would end. That was very difficult.” Rubenstein was not alone in his fear of the unknown, outside Moscow (a feeling not lost upon regional residents when evacuees arrived in their cities). Aleksandr Afinogenov while waiting to evacuate wrote in his diary, “Everything is left behind, abandoned. What there will be ahead – no one knows. It is necessary to leave…I’m traveling into the unknown – I’ll wait, to see what happens

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252 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 216, l. 69. Letter from Khrapchenko to Shcherbakov, forwarded to Aleksandrov, 1943.
253 Rubenstein, Nauchnyi Archiv IRI RAN, f. 2 razdel VII op. 5 d. 1 l. 20.
further.” Writing in Moscow, literary theorist and professor Lev Timofeev’s diary reflects his general suspicion of the evacuations and the difficulties they would entail. On 13 October, he wrote “And now, apparently, I either have to risk my head and remain here [in Moscow], or be subject to all the hardships of evacuation.” In his reference to “risking his head,” Timofeev appears to have been convinced that the intelligentsia would represent a particular target for the Nazis. He continues, “…I think that this evacuation, conducted with our usual inefficiency, will go very difficultly for its participants.”

Departure for an indeterminate period from Moscow and Leningrad was not to be undertaken lightly. Those whose qualifications might not guarantee them return to either of the two capitals after the war or whose names were not prominent enough to assure them of attracting patronage outside of face-to-face interactions found the prospect particularly threatening.

At a meaning of Leningrad theater workers in November 1941, one comrade Lev rose to condemn the appearance of evacuation fever…when instead of concentrating on work at the front, actors…discuss the need to ‘preserve a valuable collective.’…these moods do not help things at the front, do not facilitate concentrating all our resources of Leningrad art for the liberating war. Any eagerness to evacuate before the option had been officially offered was considered a form of cowardice, whether motivated by desire to escape the draft, “panicking” and fleeing in the face of the Germans or as Lev remarked, the belief of some “actors…[that]

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254 T. M. Goriaeva, My—predchuvstvovali, 246.
256 Timofeev, 156.
257 Otdel rukopisei NLR, f. 1117 op. 1 d. 154 l.4. Protokol sobrania aktiva rabotnikov Leningradskikh teatr…24 November 1941.
they could be useful in a different place besides Leningrad.”\textsuperscript{258} Lev goes on to comment that even if these moods are natural, “they should be chalked up to our negative sides.”\textsuperscript{259} Individuals, as we see here, were not supposed to raise the prospect of their own evacuations, but rather continue serving audiences until officially ordered to stop doing so. The Soviet state, according to this logic, had the sole prerogative to initiate evacuations and dispose of its cadres as it saw fit - not so differently from other cadres or human resources during the war. However, the state was not the only actor that frowned on eagerness to evacuate. Individuals also used the words “ran away” (shezhal) to refer to their colleagues who sought to evacuate early.

In addition to the perception of cowardice, in June 1940 absenteeism from one’s place of work, being late or unauthorized changing of jobs had been made a criminal offense.\textsuperscript{260} These rules applied to workers in cultural institutions as well as factories, and cultural administrators were willing prosecute such cases, handing them over for trial rather than dealing with them internally.\textsuperscript{261} Evacuating early without permission and the ensuing absence from one’s place of work could therefore also be interpreted as desertion, as cultural producers were well aware. An anonymous author writing to Pravda in October 1941 complains that while the Writers’ Union did not have the resources to

\textsuperscript{258} Otdel rukopisei NLR f. 1117 op. 1 d. 154 l. 4. Protokol sobraniia aktiva rabotnikov Leningradskikh teatrov…24 November 1941.
\textsuperscript{259} Ibid., 4.
\textsuperscript{261} See TSGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 271 l. 85. Prikaz of 23 April 1943 and TSGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 246 l. 290. Prikaz 165, 6 December 1942. Both orders involved Kirov theater orchestra members who were late to work by more than 50 minutes, “without respectable reasons.” Radin ordered their cases handed over to the people’s courts in Molotov for adjudication.
provide all writers in Moscow with work, it also refused everyone permission to leave the city; those who leave without permission “are deemed deserters, facing political death” as well as potential exclusion from the Union, which in turn entailed something close to professional death.  

The Kirov theater saw several such cases in the summer of the 1941. In 1942, already in evacuation, the theater party cell took up discussion of the case of one P. S. Efimov, opera soloist, who claimed in summer 1941 to have permission for vacation. Upon receiving a worrisome telegram from his wife, he departed urgently for Rostov and by the time he returned, the main train from the theater was departing the same day. Efimov attached himself to the second Kirov train, but it never departed; after living in the train for several days he returned to the city and found himself concert work through the conservatory. In early 1942 he found his way into evacuation in Molotov and rejoined the theater. Comrade Viner remarked during the discussion that his behavior “aroused a great storm of indignation, both amongst party members and non-party members.” Nelepp, a prominent opera singer, declared that the “vibrations in the theater were enormous, Efimov was called a deserter.” In a letter from Leningrad about the remaining theater members to the head of the Party organization in Molotov, the author speaks with irritation of having to “search for comrade Efimov alone for two months, you see he, if you please, saw fit to live in the train and not announce his presence in Leningrad to his own party organization.” Efimov was apparently not alone in his

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262 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 68 l. 145. Anonymous letter to Pravda, October 1941.  
263 TSGAI PD 2245 1 7 84, 45. Protocol zasedania, no date, probably summer 1942.  
264 Ibid., 45.  
265 TSGAI PD 2245 1 7 89, 18. Letter to B. M. Freidkov, signature unreadable, on work of party organization in Leningrad, 20 February 1942.
actions; it took the letter’s author several months to gather the remaining fragments of the party organization in Leningrad. Efimov’s colleagues seem to have been convinced that he departed not out of worry for his wife, but because he was afraid of being drafted and panicked. In his defense, Efimov insisted that if he had wanted to desert he would not have returned at all to the city. Despite the heated debate, managed to get off with a reprimand in his personal file.\(^{266}\) By 1943, however, Efimov was already distinguishing himself as a participant in performance brigades to mines and factory towns around Molotov oblast.\(^{267}\) As with Golodnyi, his less than auspicious behavior at the beginning of the war did not prevent him from later redeeming himself. The one generally tolerated exception to this rule of waiting to evacuate with a group was mothers taking their small children or other dependent relatives into evacuation during the summer of 1941.

The refusal to evacuate at all also contradicted norms of expected behavior and carried its own set of repercussions, depending on the refusal’s perceived motivation. As we saw with Kudashev, a directive to evacuate was the same as any other order from the state. Refusing a direct order to evacuate in the absence of compelling reasons (and occasionally even with these) constituted potentially not only disobedience but also disloyalty. As discussed earlier in the cases of Zhadan, Sakhnovskii and others, “waiting for the Germans” was a common accusation in 1941, both from one’s evacuating peers or a party-state official. Such accusations led to arrest and imprisonment for some cultural producers, especially those with obviously non-Russian names.\(^{268}\)

\(^{266}\) TSGAIPD 2245 1 7 84, 46.
\(^{267}\) TSGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 360 l. 55-57, otzyvy on brigade, and TSGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 271 l. 1, prikaz 5 January 1943.
\(^{268}\) See, for example, the cases of Neigauz, MKHAT director Sakhnovskii, and art scholar Gabrichevskii; at least the first two were accused of failing to evacuate in order to wait
Theater directors had to report to the KPDI with explanations of why people slated for evacuation had failed to leave, giving some insight into the reasons people stayed behind.269 If one failed to evacuate with the original train, there were occasionally opportunities to join one’s organization later on. However, in Leningrad opportunities for evacuation were severely restricted by fall 1941, as Efimov’s case illustrates: the second train he joined never departed. In Moscow once the imminent danger of German occupation passed, few members of the intelligentsia cared to leave Moscow, while those who had evacuated began trying to return almost immediately. In the end, failing to evacuate with the original train frequently meant not evacuating at all. As we shall see, the most commonly cited reasons were personal and practical: illness or injury, unwillingness to abandon dependents, and inability to organize one’s affairs or make it to the train station on time.270 This did not prevent others from treating such refusals with deep suspicion. The NKVD apparently requested the names of those who “deliberately refused to evacuate” from cultural institutions271

The aforementioned excuses for not evacuating give a sense of the individual dilemmas posed by the evacuations. Dependents were a particular problem. Many artists had more than the one allotted dependent, usually not only children but an elderly parent for the Germans. It is unclear how, out of the hundreds of their colleagues that failed to evacuate, these were selected for arrest. However, those with Germanic-sounding names came in for very close scrutiny of their behavior and comments; see Neigauz and Geidenreich, both accused of being German supporters.

269 RGAL 962 3 990 for examples of lists sent with explanations of why people failed to depart. If failure to evacuate was attributed to the fault of the director and a lack of organization or appropriate resolve on his part (to say nothing of “panicking”) this could result in his losing his job.

270 For refusal to evac due to health reasons, see RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 990.

271 Mnemozina, 373.
and or siblings who required their support. Some elite cultural producers managed to secure more than this. When husband and wife worked in the same place, assigning evacuation slots became even more complicated. The story of Bolshoi ballet dancer Evgeniia Vasilievskaiia is typical in this regard, as Vasilievskaiia recounted in an interview in 1945. Each evacuating member of the theater was officially only allowed one dependent. However, as she and her husband both worked that the theater, she was listed as his dependent, meaning they had no right to bring anyone else along. Vasilievskaiia refused to leave behind her elderly mother, her sister who was ill and her sister’s child; her husband in turn refused to leave without her, and so they all stayed.273 In Leningrad, dancer V. Kaminskaia had recently had a new baby who was in poor health. “Our departure was a huge blow to her – she could not go with us: the long, difficult journey could have killed the infant. She cried as she said goodbye to us,” describes Kirov ballerina Tatiana Vecheslova.274 In these cases, both Vasilievskaiia and Kaminskaia appear to have wished to evacuate with their organization, but viewed themselves as prevented from doing so.

Significant numbers at the Bolshoi theater (including senior artists) did not evacuate. In their November 1941 explanation to Mikoian of why they had not left, prominent artists explained in a group letter that the

...urgency, and likewise the impossibility for one reason or another of leaving Moscow at all, how for example should female performers leave their husbands who work in defense, large numbers of dependents, illnesses of workers or their

272 In January 1942, for example, the Composers’ Union petitioned Zemliachka and Solodovnikov at the KPDI to evacuate 6 members of Shostakovich’s family, including his parents-in-law, sister-in-law and her husband. See RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1010 l. 43. Letter from Composers’ Union to Zemliachka and Solodovnikov, 10 January 1943.
273 IRI RAN, 2 VIII 2 6, 1. Interview with Evgeniia Vasilievskaiia, 1945.
274 Tatiana Vecheslova, La – balerina, 139.
relatives – all these conditions prevented the majority of theater workers from leaving Moscow.\textsuperscript{275}

Here, the letter writers clearly expect Mikoian to accept their reasons for not evacuating as justifiable. The artists who authored it sought permission to first remain in Moscow without repercussion for themselves (such as being forced to join the theater in Kuibyshev) and secondly to reopen the Bolshoi theater in contradiction of earlier orders on the complete liquidation of its activities in Moscow.

Finally, refusal to evacuate (in most cases Moscow rather than St. Petersburg) could come from the perception that despite government orders, departing as the Germans advanced was a cowardly move. Many members of the intelligentsia struggled with the feeling of “running away.”\textsuperscript{276} As the guard of the Bolshoi theater recalled, tenor Sergei Lemeshev arrived to evacuate but could not make it onto a train; after waiting for a while, exclaimed: “‘To hell with it. Moscow should be defended here, not in Kuibyshev.’ And he got into the car and went home. The next day he went to a draft point in Mar’ina roshcha, where he performed a concert for draftees.”\textsuperscript{277} Lemeshev himself remembers this particular episode with some variation in his memoirs; he recalls oversleeping the departure.\textsuperscript{278} However, the implied attitude in Rybin’s remembrances — approving of Lemeshev’s decision not to “run,” as it were — eventually became quite widespread. This shift in attitude coincides with the overcoming of the “Moscow panic”

\textsuperscript{275} RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 867 l. 5. Letter to Mikoian, 13 November 1941, from Stepanova, Politkovskii, Smoltsov, Burlak, Malyshev.
\textsuperscript{276} The debate over whether or not evacuation was a somehow morally acceptable act was not limited to members of the intelligentsia. For a discussion of the ambiguities of Soviet feelings towards evacuation, see for example Rebecca Manley, \textit{To the Tashkent Station}, A. Rybin, “Desant v Kuibysheve,” \textit{Riadom so Stalinym v Bolshom Teatre} (Moscow: Gudok), 29.
\textsuperscript{277} See S. A. Lemeshev, \textit{Put’ k iskusstvu}, 260.
and the growing confidence that Moscow would not fall to the Germans. It happened very quickly, to the chagrin of those who left from the 13-15th, and provided a useful narrative device for those who failed to evacuate in a timely fashion to recast themselves as the most loyal Soviet citizens, reliable in a moment of crisis.

Almost as soon as the Moscow panic had passed, remaining performers played to the notion of serving the people in wartime Moscow, remaining with them in solidarity and fulfilling a public need in trying to secure resources for themselves. For example, officially the Bolshoi theater in Moscow no longer existed after the evacuation. This should have left most remaining artists unemployed, as many of them feared it would. Irina Morozova, upon hearing that the Bolshoi would evacuate but could not take everyone, wrote that “someone would have to remain without a salary or a job...I was in despair over how to support my family.”279 As Vasilievskaiia recalled, upon asking a member of the mestkom what she should do now he replied “I don’t know. You’re an artist of the Bolshoi theater, but the Bolshoi theater no longer exists.”280 Vasilievskaiia also comments that “at the time we were horribly hungry…I was left without any money.”281 Both of them believed their chances of finding new work in their specialties in wartime Moscow to be very low, increasing their distress.

In November, some of the Bolshoi theater artists remaining in Moscow decided to attempt to reopen the theater. “The Party organization reacted to this [suggestion] very poorly…considering it practically counterrevolutionary,”282 Vasilievskaiia remembers.

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279 RGALI f. 1337 op. 5 d. 28 l. 30. Memuary, Irina Morozova.
280 IRI RAN 2 VIII 2 6 l. 1. Interview with Evgeniiia Vasilievskaiia, 20 February 1945.
281 IRI RAN 2 VIII 2 6 l. 1. Interview with Evgeniiia Vasilievskaiia, 20 February 1945.
282 IRI RAN 2 VIII 2 6 l. 1. Interview with Evgeniiia Vasilievskaiia, 20 February 1945.
Naturally, official permission was needed to reopen the theater. Hoping to secure the backing of Mikoian, a group of artists who failed to evacuate wrote a petition, in which they described the theater’s evacuation in a less than flattering manner:

the departure of the direction and part of the workers of the theaters (around 500 people – the entire direction, all administrators, and a minority of creative workers) was conducted in a panicked manner in the course of three hours, moreover the theater’s inventory…was left by the direction on the platform of the station without any oversight…

The description clearly aims to portray the behavior those who evacuated as less than laudable and to shift the support of the central authorities to those actors remaining in Moscow. The language also implies that much of the theater’s actual creative talent remained in the city while the bureaucrats had evacuated, which was an exaggeration of the truth. These actors eventually did gain the desired permission, after it became clear the immediate danger to Moscow was over. They opened their season on 19 November with a mixed concert including arias and songs from operas by Tchaikovsky, Glinka, Puccini, orchestral music by Beethoven, and more. On 22 November the “branch,” as it became known, performed Evgenii Onegin. Tensions with the administration and performers in Kuibyshev began almost immediately, each side struggling to represent the “real” theater and its wartime narrative. When artists eligible to evacuate refused to do so, their evacuated colleagues viewed this as a betrayal of the collective for own personal gain, and as an act that called into question the correctness of their evacuation. Besides social condemnation, such behavior frequently led to a variety of administrative measures

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283 Ibid., 2.
284 See description of opening concerts in A. Rybin, Riadom so Stalinym v Bolshom (Mosow: Gudok), 33-34.
by theater administrations. These ranged from appeals to the KPDI to force the errant colleagues to rejoin the evacuated collective, to attempting to fire said employees. The state, however, seemed unwilling to pursue all cases of non-evacuation as serious offenses, even when directors requested that they do so.

The uncertainty surrounding destination and work opportunities played into another common motivation for not wanting to evacuate: fear of being stranded outside of Moscow and Leningrad and apprehension at what awaited in provincial cities, places many members of the intelligentsia tended to view with deep suspicion as “uncultured,” uncivilized backwaters. Boris Riabin, at the time a young writer from Sverdlovsk, recalls from the appearance of the evacuated writers, “one could draw the conclusion that…Sverdlovsk…seemed to them horribly far away and cold, an out-of-the-way backwoods.”285 While few memoirs or letters mention this directly in 1941-1942, such sentiments appear in the contemporary poems written by evacuees. Irina Morozova wrote the following poem describing her first impressions of Kuibyshev (Samara), entitled “Samara-Gorodok.” Sadly in translation the rhyming rhythm does not remain.

The city is in horrible disrepair/ absolutely the fifth century/ all housing is a ruin/ how does anyone live in them?
You can’t stroll daydreaming/suddenly in an open window/ onto passersby pour out/ both slops and …
Old houses aren’t to be found/there’s no trace of culture/ along the long long streets/ there is trash, slush and water
People here are like in a zoo/ spite, fury and greed/ and just to get on the trolley / may tear your throat out.286

Morozova was not alone in her initial assessment of regional life, even though many people at least officially expressed at least a sort of gratitude to the cities that hosted

286 RGALI f. 1337 op. 5 d. 28, l. 52. Memoirs of Irina Morozova.
them. Morozova at least wrote her poem for private consumption, with no intention of
publishing it. Poet Nikolai Aseev and Marietta Shaginian both came under fire during the
war for their writings, coming into direct conflict with the Department for Agitation and
Propaganda for depicting life on the home front as it actually appeared, or as Georgii
Aleksandrov at the Department for Agitation and Propaganda declared of Shaginian,
“slanderously depicting the Soviet Urals.” Nikolai Aseev’s collection of poems Gody
Groma, written in Chistopol, was blocked by censors on similar grounds. Given his
description of Chistopol (also losing its rhyme in translation), one can hardly be
surprised:

What wounds/ what mud/ and dirt/ and rags/ and darkness/ and horror!/ The
remnants of some dilapidated tribes/ wandering about the docks and train
stations. Later in the war, articulations of these feelings do appear, particularly as questions
of re-evacuation loomed. Fear of not being able to return often led cultural elites to
express their feelings towards the provinces more openly. A longtime member of the
Moscow Operetta Theater, Nikolai Bravin, wrote to the theater’s director Aleksandrov in
March 1942 to convey such a concern. Bravin had heard a rumor that the Sverdlovsk
Operetta would be transferred to Moscow, while the Moscow operetta would remain in
Siberia. Such rumors left Bravin “very disturbed. In all my love and respect for you
[Aleksandrov], the question worries me extremely and is decisive for my future fate.”

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287 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 271 l. 31. Report to Scherbakov from Aleksandrov and
Fedoseev, 12.IX.1944.
288 Nikolai Aseev, “Gorodok na Kame,” 1942, Izbrannoe (Moscow: Khudozh. Lit, 1979),
25.
Bravin refused to join the theater in Siberia unless Aleksandrov personally guarantee his return to Moscow at the war’s end, in which case Bravin remained “at your [Aleksandrov’s] service.” Bravin elaborates that he has lived his whole life in Moscow, “dedicating my whole life and all my strength to the struggle the pure, expressive art of operetta.” The possibility of waging this struggle in small-town Siberia does not appear to have occurred to Bravin.

The Leningrad Malyi Opernyi theater, as Leningrad’s second best opera theater, also found itself deeply demoralized by rumors that it would not return to Leningrad at the end of the war. Several artists had recently traveled through Leningrad and Moscow on their way back from a front brigade. In each city, they had heard that according to one Danilov, an official of the Leningrad KPDI, “our theater will supposedly be unformed or moved to one of the peripheral Asian (!) cities.” Honored Artist tenor Boris Geft reported that Danilov “openly recommended he leave the [Malyi] theater and find work in Moscow”, to avoid the Malyi’s supposed fate. Khaikin, the theater’s director, found that no one believed his verbal negation of these rumors, and found himself forced to request Khrapchenko intervene to “protect the theater from the diversion” of the person spreading rumors. “You can imagine the condition of moral depression the collective has fallen into upon receiving such saddening news,” Khaikin wrote to Khrapchenko.

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289 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 28. Letter from Bravin to Aleksandrov, march 1942.
290 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 28. Letter from Bravin to Aleksandrov, march 1942
291 RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 582, l. 3. Letter from Khaikin to Khrapchenko, November 1943.
292 RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 582, l. 3. Letter from Khaikin to Khrapchenko, November 1943.
293 RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 582, l. 3. Letter from Khaikin to Khrapchenko, November 1943.
condition of “moral depression” Khaikin refers to may also have been related to the exceptionally poor living conditions in which most members of the Malyi collective lived in evacuation. “Those with families,” Boris Zagurskii wrote in a report on his 1943 trip to Chkalovsk to inspect the theater, “are literally starving.” Zagurskii continues that “people are living on the remembrances of what they were before coming to Chkalov…choir artist Nikitashin showed me carefully proved pictures to underscore that he was not always such a ragamuffin....” On the whole, these reactions (as well as the incessant petitions to return from evacuation beginning in 1942) depict an intelligentsia whose members defined themselves in many ways as residents of Moscow and Leningrad. In turn, this suggests the intelligentsia was not entirely willing to submit itself to state direction if this meant residing in the provinces and would seek means to escape this.

The experience of the Writers’ Union confirms this reluctance to reside outside major cities. Large contingents of writers formed in Sverdlovsk and Kazan, both major regional centers with extensive transportation connections. More writers arrived in Sverdlovsk than could be reasonably accommodated, severely straining the housing resources. And yet, none of the writers proved willing on a voluntary basis to depart for a smaller city in the region. As Fadeev lamented in a 1942 speech at a meeting of the Writers’ Union Presidium, “As much as the Cheliabinsk organizations request that we send them writers, no one goes. We still have not been able to form a brigade that

294 Otdel Rukopisei NLR f. 1117 op. 1 d. 210 l. 2. Boris Zagurskii, report on results of inspection of Malyi opera theater in Chkalovsk, April 1943.
295 Otdel Rukopisei NLR f. 1117 op. 1 d. 210 l. 3. Boris Zagurskii, report on results of inspection of Malyi opera theater in Chkalovsk, April 1943.
includes truly qualified writers. This shows that we underestimate the enormous meaning of this work.”

Cheliabinsk was a smaller city in the Urals that experienced phenomenal growth due to an influx of evacuees during the war; however, writers regarded it as lower on the geographical hierarchy of destinations and would not willingly travel there.

**Non-Evacuation, Material Advantage and Internal Tensions**

The official narrative of the evacuated intelligentsia during the war is one of unity and cohesion. Writing to Moscow from Molotov, the Kirov theater consistently refers to its collective’s cohesiveness (*splochennost’*) in contrast to prewar times; they were not the only ones to employ such terminology. The frequency with which this term appears in a variety of documents and the pleasure and surprise with which authors comment on it suggest that many evacuated collectives did experience a sort of pulling together, at least compared to the late 1930s. However, when one or several people refused to evacuate while the rest followed orders, sharp tensions emerged within collectives. These increased with any perception that the people remaining behind had somehow benefitted materially from their refusal to evacuate, and were securing advantage or privileges for themselves in Moscow while their colleagues worked overtime in difficult circumstances in the provinces, picking up the slack for their colleagues who had not evacuated. Administrators frequently took measures to try and force their evacuation, but cultural elites in Moscow or Leningrad often managed to secure some institutional or political support of their own. They then used this to counter the ever-more-strident demands from the evacuees that they join them in the hinterland.

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296 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 621, l. 29.

297 See for example TSGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 218, l. 5; TSGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 17, l. 6.
The state evinced little desire to take action in such disputes during the war, especially as its own needs became divided: without wishing to immediately recall all evacuated institutions, it sought to satisfy the demand for cultural opportunities that increased dramatically after November 1941 in Moscow, and beginning in spring 1942 in Leningrad. As Olga Bokshanskaia wrote to Nemirovich-Danchenko in January 1942 from Saratov, “The demand for theater right now in Moscow is enormous, the audience is Muscovite, but an entirely new one – huge numbers of soldiers.”  

The Moscow Operetta Theater provides a case in point. The Operetta theater originally departed for Novosibirsk, but eventually found itself in the small Siberian town of Prokopevsk, having been refused residence in the preferable regional center since Leningrad’s Philharmonic and Pushkin theater had already occupied the main theater buildings. Arriving on 4 November, they opened their season in Prokopevsk on the 6th. When it was evacuating, singers Iaron, Anikeev, Kachalov and Gedroits were brought by car with their things to the train platform on 15 October 1941, a privilege not everyone enjoyed. However, at the last minute two trains had to be combined and Khrapchenko ordered everyone assigned to wagon 408 to get into wagon 406, where the

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298 Ol’ga Bokshanskaia Pis’ma O. S. Bokshanskoi V. I. Nemirovichu-Danchenko, 1922-1942 (Moscow: Moskovskii khudozhestvennyi teatr, 2005), 426.
299 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 982 l. 71. Telegram from theater director to Khrapchenko, no date.
300 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 6. akt, from Aleksandrov to Khrapchenko or Shapovalov, o povedenii artistov Mos Teatra operetty Iarona, Anikeeva, Kachalova I Gedroits v period evakuatsii teatra Iz Moskvy v Novosib oblat na osnovnii postanovleniia evaksoveta ot 13.x.1941 no. 2425
Bolshoi theater had already occupied many of the cabins. The aforementioned performers refused to travel in such crowded conditions and removed their baggage from the carts.\footnote{RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 6. akt, from Aleksandrov to Khrapchenko or Shapovalov, o povedenii artistov Mos Teatra operetty Iarona, Anikeeva, Kachalova I Gedroits v period evakuatsii teatra Iz Moskvy v Novosib oblat na osnovnii postanovleniia evaksoveta ot 13.x.1941 no. 2425.}

Iaron and company managed to get as far as Kazan the next day on a different train, but did not travel any further despite pressure. In the meantime, on 8 November 1941 the theater dispatched the troupe manager Stepanov from Propkopevsk to Kazan to fetch the errant actors, while the secretary of the Novosibirsk obkom simultaneously telegraphed the Tatar obkom to request its assistance in pressuring Anikeev and Kachalov, both party members. Even these measures met with no success. The Tatar obkom summoned them both and

\[\ldots\text{suggested [to Anikeev and Kachalov] in accordance with party discipline that they depart for Prokopevsk. They entered into recognizance with the obkom to without question fulfill the direction of the Novosibirsk obkom and depart for Kuzbass as soon as their children recovered from measles.}\]

However, at the same time Iaron informed Stepanov in personal conversation that “in such conditions (cold) he cannot travel in a freight car and he needs facilities. Secondly, he considers that it is pointless to travel so far, one needs to stay closer to Moscow.”\footnote{Ibid., 6.}

Needless to say, none of these artists ever made it to Siberia. Thus began a series of reports from the theater to the KPDI in the attempt to force the performers to rejoin it. As Aleksandrov plaintively wrote to Khrapchenko,

\[\text{At the same time as the theater was working intensively from 6 November…serving the mining regions of the Kuzbass, Iaron, Anikeev, Kachalov and Gedroits…began}\]

\footnote{RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 9. Dokladnaia zapiska by Stepanov, no date.}
giving concert presentations in Kazan, earning up to 4000 rubles a month, in other words four times what they would have received in theater wages.\textsuperscript{304}

Their absence forced their colleagues to “perform daily, even in case of illness,” since there were no doubles for the roles and “canceling a performance would require the theater to request subsidies… which it has already refused.”\textsuperscript{305} In January 1942 the foursome popped up in Moscow. The theater did not cease their attempts to reclaim their employees. “It’s difficult,” Aleksandrov wrote to Khrapchenko, “to explain to the collective why an actor who was late to work by 21 minutes faces trial, while those who refuse for 2 months to work in Siberia go unpunished.”\textsuperscript{306}

At least part of the secret of the Moscow foursome’s success was that they found themselves a supporter in the figure of Pronin, the head of the Moscow ispolkom. Pronin wrote to member of the deputy chair of Sovnarkom Zemliachka in February 1942 to explain that it made no sense to send the actors to Prokopevsk since the troupe had already been working since November 1941 and

\ldots the makeup of the troupe entirely ensures full-fledged performances of the current repertoire. It would be more correct to use the remaining actors of operetta here in Moscow\ldots Soviet operetta is very popular in Moscow and amongst Red Army divisions.\textsuperscript{307}

The combination of open personal gain (higher salaries) and privilege of being in Moscow and refusal to suffer the same hardships as the rest of the troupe, referred to as

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{304} RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 6. Akt from Aleksandrov…
\item \textsuperscript{305} RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 8. Akt from Aleksandrov…
\item \textsuperscript{306} RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 30. Letter from Aleksandrov to Khrapchenko, 9 January 1942.
\item \textsuperscript{307} GARF f. 5446 op. 43 d. 1071 l. 15. Letter from Pronin to Zemliachke, 1 February 1942.
\end{itemize}
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“apparent…desertion” by the theater’s director and “sitting out the war in a major city” sufficiently angered the remainder of the theater’s members enough that the party-Komsomol organization announced its intention of expelling Kachalov and Anikeev from the party and trying them for deserting their institution. At the same time, Aleksandrov requested Khrapchenko “inform the governing Moscow organizations of the actual work of the collective, which is by no means ‘on vacation’ but working without folding its hands, serving people, doing not a little for the front.” Adding to the evacuees’ insult, Iaron, Anikeev, Kachalov and Gedroits received permission to open a “branch” of the Moscow Theater of Operetta in early 1942, while the main theater group was not recalled until October 1943.

Another similar incident concerns the Malyi theater, evacuated to Cheliabinsk in October 1941. A number of artists failed to evacuate with the bulk of the theater. In February 1942, the theater’s director Sudakov issued an order firing 15 of them, declaring that “A significant group of artists did not fulfill the government’s orders to evacuate. The theater’s direction and KPDI took all measures to impel their departure, without results.” Sudakov goes on to characterize the actors’ absence from the theater as “without sanction and permission of the direction, but rather…their personal choice,” which gave the theater the right to fire them. The list included several honored and

308 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 937 l. 2. Letter from Aleksandrov to Khrapchenko, February 1942.
309 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 937 l. 4. Protocol of party organization, 28 November 1941.
310 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l. 2. Report from director and khud-ruk of the Moscow Theater of Operetta Aleksandrov, to KPDI Falkovskii, 21 February 1942.
311 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1103 l. 92. Prikaz 35 po Malomu Teatr, 19 february 1942, signed by Sudakov.
312 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1103 l. 92. Prikaz 35 po Malomu Teatr, 19 february 1942, signed by Sudakov.
people’s artists, who promptly turned to Zemliachka for help in getting the order reconsidered. Actors Rybnikov and Volkov claimed that at the time of evacuation their reasons for not leaving had been recognized as acceptable by the theater’s administration.\footnote{RGALI 962 3 1103, 92-95. prikaz 35 po Malomu Teatru, 19 february 1942, signed by Sudakov and letter to Zemliachka on 19 March 1942.} One actress, V. V. Makarova, claimed that she had been unable to leave behind her mother, child and aunt, all of whom were ill and dependent on her and requested vacation without pay until the theater returned. Solonin of the Malyi theater local committee insisted that Makarova had had the choice of leaving in a later train and had simply preferred to stay in Moscow. “If Makarova does not wish to take part in the theater’s life and prefers to remain in Moscow and wait for the theater’s return, the theater has the right to refuse such a worker,” the Malyi local committee concluded.\footnote{RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 216 l. 30. vypiski from mestkom Maly theater, 9.IV.1942 on Makarova.}

Eventually, Makarova seems to eventually have joined the Malyi’s front theater until the end of the war, as did several of her fired colleagues, though she did not return to the theater at the war’s end. Unlike the Operetta, the absentee Malyi workers never obtained permission to open a branch in Moscow, though they petitioned the Central Committee to allow them to do so, in conjunction with their colleagues remaining in Moscow from Mossovet theater.\footnote{RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 1018 l. 18. Letter to TsK, no date.} The Malyi was, on the other hand, one of the few (along with the Vakhtangov theater) theaters to form a permanent front theater.\footnote{On the front branch, see RGALI f. 962 op. 5 d. 651 l. 18. Prikaz 226 po Malomu teatru, 9 September 1943.} According to a list of all former members of the Malyi collective, of the 15 artists Sudakov originally wished to
fire seven of the nine men continued to work with the theater after the war, while only two of the six women did.\textsuperscript{317}

At the Bolshoi theater, this divide blossomed into a full-on break between evacuees and Moscow workers. The evacuated theater in Kuibyshev allegedly suffered from morale issues, poor administration and a general lack of inspiration, while reports indicate that workers in Moscow appear to have worked with great inspiration and enthusiasm.\textsuperscript{318} Upon hearing of the reopening in Moscow, the Bolshoi’s top brass lost no time in summoning the remaining performers to Kuibyshev in terse terms. As the artists remaining in Moscow complained, every day they were “sending out threatening notes suggesting we explain our reason for not leaving, and warning that ‘refusal to depart Moscow will be seen as refusal to work in the theater with all the following consequences.’”\textsuperscript{319}

In a November letter to Mikoian, a group of artists who remained in Moscow complains that when they began to lobby to restart work in Moscow, the administration in Kuibyshev “in threatening tones suggested that leading artists depart for Kuibyshev and all the rest decided to fire until recalled by the direction.”\textsuperscript{320} When the Kuibyshev administration of the Bolshoi heard that in Moscow its employees were performing in their theater and giving concerts for Red Army divisions and at the front, it demanded that they immediately send sheet music, costumes, and technical employees to

\begin{itemize}
\item[317] For list, see \url{http://www.maly.ru/pages?name=truppa_new}. Accessed 13 October 2016.
\item[318] RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 216 l. 52. Report to Scherbakov from Bolshoi opera soloist, signature unreadable.
\item[319] RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 867 l. 5.
\item[320] RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 867 l. 2. Letter to Mikoian from leading Bolshoi artists in Moscow.
\end{itemize}
Kuibyshev, which threatened to impede further theatrical activity in Moscow. For example, the Bolshoi’s ballet shoe maker refused to leave Moscow due to his family and age. Though he offered to make the shoes in Moscow and send them to Kuibyshev, the evacuated administration was “threatening him through the theater’s lawyer with exile from Moscow through the Revolutionary tribunal.”

Actors in Moscow correctly interpreted this as a deliberate attempt by the evacuated administration to shut down their activities. In arguing their case, they referred to the public demand for their work, the enjoyment audiences received and the impact their symbolic presence had on the city’s morale. In November 1941 a group of leading artists wrote to Mikoian that

…The exceptional necessity of the continuation of our all-union theater’s activities found clear proof in our first big concert of 19 November, when the audience, who filled the hall to the bursting point (many soldiers and young people), greeted the actors with fiery ovations not only as masters of art but as brave citizens and not paying any attention to air raids, as if nothing happened continued to watch the concert with great attention.

The performers sought to portray their behavior not only as the more noble but as the more necessary, despite their defiance of government orders. The letter writers describe the evacuation as “panicked” and unorganized, leading to the abandonment of valuable musical instruments at the train station. They also claimed that at the train platform were a variety of boxes and cases marked “Bolshoi theater,” left opened and torn. “It turns out,” the letter continues in an accusatory tone, that in the boxes “together with the

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321 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 867 l. 2. Letter to Mikoian from leading Bolshoi artists in Moscow
322 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 867 l. 2. Letter to Mikoian from Stepanova, Politkovskii, Burlak, Malyshev and Smoltsov, November 1941.
Theater’s property were the goods and valuables of those leaving, that they removed at the last minute before the train left, leaving behind the theater’s property.” 323 The letter writers demonstrate a clear understanding of the sorts of themes that might win them sympathy from Mikoian. The letter concludes by declaring that “It appears that artists of the Bolshoi theater are not needed in Kuibyshev for work, but…in order to avoid an awkward situation as a result of theater’s reopening in Moscow. But the Bolshoi is needed now specifically by Moscow and her defenders at the front.” 324

Such “dual centers of power” could lead to major conflict over resources and control of the narrative of the war – who had behaved best, where was the “real” theater. In Leningrad similar questions occasionally arose of where the “real” theater was located. A small group of workers remained behind (partly to guard the building) at the Kirov theater in Leningrad, but unlike the Bolshoi here the evacuated administration tolerated no controversy where the “real” theater was. Boris Freidkov, bass and secretary of the Kirov theater party organization announced to all workers at a general party meeting in February 1943 that the Leningrad organizations’ opinion on the matter was that “the Leningrad theater im. Kirova at the present moment, in correspondence with the decision of the governing organizations, is located in Molotov. All the quality comes from here. Not everyone left; that remains their business.” 325 Likewise, in a letter to the Molotov party organization, Freidkov informed them that the attitude of evacuated workers

323 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 867 l. 2. Letter to Mikoian from Stepanova, Politkovskii, Burlak, Malyshev and Smoltsov, November 1941.
324 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 867 l. 3. Letter to Mikoian from Stepanova, Politkovskii, Burlak, Malyshev and Smoltsov, November 1941.
325 TSGAIPD 2245 1 8 97, 17. Speech of Freidkov to party organization, 25 February 1943.
towards their colleagues who had remained in Leningrad was “sharply negative, which received its immediate expression in a number of speeches at the general meeting of a number of workers.”\textsuperscript{326} The feelings were apparently reciprocated by those remaining in Leningrad. In an unsigned, undated (likely mid-1942) letter to the Leningrad organization from the evacuated theater, the author comments that earlier letters from the remaining Leningrad workers had been “more than dry.” The unsatisfactory tone had caused the evacuated Kirov administration to complain to the appropriate Leningrad raikom. Moreover, some late-arriving comrades from Leningrad recounted the “not entirely healthy and correct judgements on our forced departure from Leningrad.”\textsuperscript{327} Although the nature of the incorrect judgment or cause for dryness is not articulated, we can surmise that it had to do implied accusations of cowardice or desertion. These issues foreshadowed significant sources of conflict at the war’s end.

As theaters began to re-evacuate to their original cities, their interests clashed directly with their “branches.” Boris Khaikin joined the Kirov theater as main conductor in January 1944, after being transferred from the Malyi opera in Chkalovsk to replace the Kirov’s Arii Pazovskii, who in turn had been summoned to the Bolshoi. After reevacuating, in July 1944 Khaikin wrote to Khrapchenko claiming that that if in Molotov the collective had worked well, then in Leningrad he has encountered “do-nothings and saboteurs” amongst the theater administration.\textsuperscript{328} Of the reevacuation itself, Khaikin wrote, “the [arriving] collective of the theater was not met by a single theater worker who had spent the blockade in Leningrad, not evacuating in time. Not a single

\textsuperscript{326} TSGAIPD 2245 1 6 78, 135. Letter from Freidkov to Molotov party organizations.
\textsuperscript{327} TSGAIPD 2245 1 7 89, 110.
\textsuperscript{328} RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 582 l. 10. Letter from Khaikin to Khrapchenko, 9 July 1944.
one!” Khaikin continues that the theater’s wall newspaper in discussing the opening of the new season did not make one reference to the returning artists “as if the seasons will be opened on the strengths of those same “blockade” workers – about us and our arrival not a word!” only the expense of those who had evacuated, something they could do successfully only by commandeering the narrative of the war in support of their activities. These conflicts occasionally manifested themselves openly: when choirmaster Stepanov returned from Molotov, he found “working in the capacity of choirmaster with a small choir group one Sobolev.” When Stepanov suggested to Sobolev that he hand over the work to him, “Sobolev announced, that he does not answer to Stepanov as he himself is the main choirmaster!” Such conflicts were fraught with potential repercussions. The KPDI found itself dissatisfied enough with main conductor of the Bolshoi theater during the war, Samuil Samosud, that they demoted him in 1943 and transferred him to the combined Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko musical theater. As rational in his letter to Stalin and Molotov, Khrapchenko referred to Samosud’s “inability to cope with his responsibilities,” including the fact that the “current repertoire of the branch of the Bolshoi theater is at a low artistic level and does not meet strict standards. Amongst its performers can be observed a relaxing of creative discipline and moods of complacency and self-satisfaction.”

329 RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 582 l. 10. Letter from Khaikin to Khrapchenko, 9 July 1944.
330 RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 582 l. 10. Letter from Khaikin to Khrapchenko, 9 July 1944.
331 RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 582 l. 11. Letter from Khaikin to Khrapchenko, 9 July 1944.
The stories of those who refused to evacuate and sought to continue their work in Moscow or Leningrad overlap with another group of people: those not invited to evacuate. As discussed earlier, many collectives were too large to evacuate in their entirety, so some of them had to remain behind. Cellist Irina Morozova was not originally included amongst those evacuating with the Bolshoi theater since there was not enough space. The orchestra took primarily Jews, according to Morozova (who claims that 75% of the orchestra was made up of Jews) “and remained, or more accurately, were tossed to the mercy of fate, Russians.” The bitterness of Morozova’s comment stemmed from the fact that remaining behind when the Bolshoi evacuated would have left her without work and accordingly, without a salary, at a time when the chances of finding work in one’s specialty seemed close to none. For writers the situation was even more difficult. The general disruption caused as publishing houses and some newspapers and journals also evacuated at the last minute to unknown destinations resulted in a loss of contact with writers and as such the loss of opportunities to publish one’s work and receive honorariums, not to mention the disruption of work with newspapers and publishing houses, upon which many writers depended for steady income.

The KPDI and creative unions made little effort to appease those not taken into evacuation, depicting their continued presence in Moscow and Leningrad as equally valuable and necessary for a city’s morale or service of frontline troops, for example. People were left behind without any justification or consolation, which many of them found quite traumatic and enhanced the impression of a panicked “flight” of elites from Moscow. Actress Olga Bokshanskaia of MXAT wrote in a letter to Vladimir

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333 RGAL f. 1337 op. 5 d. 28 l. 30. Irina Morozova, “Vospominaniia.”
Nemirovich-Danchenko that “Rumors crept around that the administration (rukovodstvo) had fled, abandoning the theater to the will of fate.”\(^{334}\) Some of the theater members had had great difficulty getting out of the city as a result, and when they finally arrived in Saratov “they got us quite worked up with their story of Kalishian’s `flight.’”\(^{335}\) As ballerina Vasilievskaia, unable to leave due to her dependents, remembers: “It was very painful for me to be left without the Bolshoi theater, especially since I knew: not only were artists’ wives and sisters leaving, but also their housekeepers…I exited the theater and cried. I had been there since the age of nine.”\(^{336}\) While this resentment can be found everywhere, it is perhaps most noticeable amongst writers since their numbers were so great. In an unsigned letter to Kosygin from 19.X.1941, a group of writers expressed the following complaint:

The government suggested to the Writers’ Union evacuation to Kazan and the evacuation of all writers. In three parties about 500 people departed. After this, the comrades organizing the evacuation panicked and ran, leaving many writers to the will of fate. Now having carefully checked the lists we have established that about 450-500 people remain (with family members). Of these, 150 are members of the writers’ unions… After the disappearance from Moscow of the administration of the Writers’ Union such writers like Novikov-Priboi, Shaginian, Perventsev, Mstislavskii, Prishvin, Liashko, Effros, Glebov, Kubikov, Arbuzov, Chizhevskii, Dobrzhinskii and others remained in the city. Some managed to leave. The vast majority of the rest remained…We ask the SNK SSSR to give us the possibility of leaving together in an train to Kazan…”\(^{337}\)

\(^{334}\) Olga Bokshanskaya, *Pis’ma O. S. Bokhanskoi V. I. Nemirovichu-Danchenko, 1922-1942* (Moscow: Moskovskii khudozhestvennyi teatr, 2005), 423.

\(^{335}\) Bokshanskaya, 423.

\(^{336}\) Gorinov, “Dokumental’nyi ocherk M. M. Gorinova ‘Kontsert v osazhdennoi Moskve,'” *Moskva Prifrontovaia* (Moscow: Mosgorarkhiv, 2001), 366. In her reference to “housekeepers,” Vasilieva repeats a common impression that the “higher ups” of the cultural elite managed to illegitimately claim extra space on evacuation trains for a whole variety of “extras.” For example, Tamara Ivanova complained that Agnia Barto got an entire wagon for her extended family, furniture, books and valuables while she was trying to obtain wagons to evacuate writers’ children through Litfond. See RGALI f. 3270 op. 1 d. 26 l. 12. N. Sokolova, “Dva goda v Chistopole.”

\(^{337}\) RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 565, 158. Anonymous letter to Kosygin, 19.10.1941.
The idea that the government ordered the evacuation of “all” writers (which in Moscow alone would have run upwards of 800 people) seems to have been no more than a rumor — but a widespread one amongst writers, appearing in multiple diaries and memoirs.  

Such resentment continued to simmer after writers made it into evacuation.  

Ksenia L’vova wrote to Vladimir Stavskii, member of the Presidium of the Writers’ Union from Tashkent in November 1941 that “I was included in Moscow in the first Tashkent list, but then I was thrown out and I arrived with the last, abandoned by the administration [of the Writers’ Union] ‘remnants’ of people.” Other sources indicate that such “reforming” of lists of evacuees took place regularly. Lev Timofeev after much trepidation decided to put his family’s name down on a Writers’ Union train leaving for Tashkent. In his diary entry of 13 October 1941, he recounts how that same evening, he heard from friends that “out of all those signed up were selected 80 people, who have already paid and will leave at 6am tomorrow…just another illustration of how our society is not, of course, one of class, but is still caste-based [liternoe].”  

Valerii Kirpotin wrote to the Shcherbakov at the Department for Agitation and Propaganda in a report on the Writers’ Union that “The evacuation of the Union aroused in many a feeling of

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338 See for example, Arkadii Perventsev, “Moskva Opalennaia,” Lev Timofeev, “Dnevnik voennykh let,” Znamia 6 (2002), entry of 13 October 1941; IRI RAN f. 2 razdel VII op. 5 d. 1 l. 15. Interview with Lev Rubenshtein, 1943.  
339 T. M. Goriaeva, My predchuvstvovali..., 134. Letter from Ksenia L’vova to V. P. Stavskii, 19 November 1941, Document 96.  
dissatisfaction, especially amongst those who left after the Presidium or who remained in Moscow. In very sharp tones people spoke about Fadeev, Kirpotin, Khvalebnova.\textsuperscript{341}

The prewar Soviet intelligentsia was accustomed on a daily basis to various forms of social striation and openly recognized such divisions amongst its members. Timofeev, for example, remarked casually upon entering the Writers’ Union building on 13 October that “I met a group of worried third-tier writers.”\textsuperscript{342} Olga Bokshankaia’s letters to Nemirovich-Danchenko regularly to refer to “leading artists,” including the division of departing trains into a first group of “all the leading artists.”\textsuperscript{343} However, the war threw these hierarchies into sharp relief and made them acutely felt on a regular basis. The perception that the privileged group of cultural elites who were responsible for taking care of others abandoned their duties and led to save themselves led to significant resentment, as appeared elsewhere in factories. The resentment appears to have been directed almost exclusively at other members of the intelligentsia and cultural administrators rather than the Soviet state. Instead, as we have seen, those left behind – either voluntarily or perforce – turned to state figures to intercede on their behalf and mediate between them and the evacuees. Frequently they experienced at least some success in doing so, as we saw with the Bolshoi theater, to the frustration of the evacuees.

**Dissatisfaction and Attempts to Return**

“The Kama is about to freeze…and we will be completely cut off from everything for five-six months. And then under any conditions we will have to stay here, as if in a

\textsuperscript{341} *My predchuvstvovali*…, 206. Report from V. Ia. Kirpotin to A. S. Shcherbakov, 10 February 1942. Fadeev was the Chairman of the Writers’ Union at the time, Khvalebnova was the secretary of the Party organization and Kirpotin was the vice-chairman.


\textsuperscript{343} Bokshanskaia, 423.
trap for which there is no exit.” So wrote poet Mikhail Isaakovskii to Samuel Marshak on 27 October 1941, in an attempt to procure assistance in departing from Chistopol. His letter and the date it was written point to the next set of problems with evacuations. Even those cultural elites who left for evacuation had little desire to remain there, and began trying to return home almost immediately after the Moscow panic passed. Virtually as soon as the German offensive was stopped outside Moscow, the Writers’ Union and KPDI were inundated with requests and petitions from individual writers, actors and entire theatrical collectives to return to Moscow immediately. As one translator wrote to a colleague from evacuation in Sverdlovsk, “comrades live on conversations about Moscow and wait for the tiniest opportunity to strengthen ties with their usual journals, almanacs and publishers…the most important thing: to return to Moscow!” Return to Moscow was managed by permit, obtainable only from the Mossovet; these were rarely forthcoming as authorities wished to control the city population, keeping it to a comparative minimum until the German threat to Moscow was truly gone. 

The levels of dissatisfaction in evacuation amongst cultural producers had the potential to derail the initial mobilization to support the war effort visible amongst cultural producers in the first months of the war. Evacuations intensified preexisting hierarchies and raised the stakes for one’s position in them. The question of how to portion out corporate privileges occurred not only at the federal level (the decision to invest in preserving some cultural collectives over others, for example), but within institutions as well. If the battle to preserve general corporate privileges took place via a

344 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 566, l. 20. Letter from Isakovskii to Marshak, 27.10.41.
345 RGALI 631 6 642, letter from Ezra Feldstein 3 July 1942,.
346 Reevacuation to Moscow began in earnest in summer and fall of 1941.
comparatively impersonal dialogue, the inner-institutional (or inner-union) struggles took on deeply personal overtones. In evacuation, when everyone lived on the edge of hunger, relatively small differentiations took on larger significance.

The continuation of these differentiations during the war was in the hands of members of the intelligentsia themselves. The KPDI and creative unions controlled the distribution of food, housing, residence permits in desirable cities, and jobs in one specialty. Before the war, in Moscow and Leningrad other channels of patronage existed allowing one to try and circumvent the creative unions if necessary. Prominent figures all had their own preferred patrons, while less prominent figures could try to arrange their affairs via face-to-face meetings with a variety of potential benefactors. As Vladimir Bakhmetev wrote to Fadeev from Kazan in 1942, “Truth be told, it’s common that in Moscow small or even middle writers organize their affairs by means of personal interaction.”347 During the war, it proved very difficult to attract outside attention to one’s cause via letters, though people tried. This meant if an individual’s Union failed to respond to their appeals, they had few other options. Local authorities tended not to prove the kinds of benefactors for evacuated writers and actors that a whole range of their Moscow counterparts were. All of the above meant that an evacuee’s personal and professional connections and consequently, their ability to secure intervention on their behalf, took on the utmost importance.

The creative unions had already performed many of these functions before the war, but during the war the functions took on heightened significance, as the pressure for these services grew. All of a sudden, at one time virtually the entire intelligentsia found itself

347 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 604 l. 24. Letter from Bakhmetev to Fadeev, undated, 1942.
dependent on the creative unions to completely reorganize all aspects of their material life, as well as creative work, in conditions of straitened resources. The unions found themselves nearly overwhelmed by the demands of the evacuees. For example, from early 1942 Narkomtorg issued a variety of orders improving the rations of members of the intelligentsia. The Writers’ Union was responsible for creating the list of 135 writers who would receive extra rations, while an earlier order mandated that to receive increased rations writers, composers and artists had to be members of their respective unions.\(^\text{348}\) This in turn gave official full membership in the Union new significance, as well as creating waves of resentment amongst many writers who felt they also should receive such privileges. As Petr Skosyrev wrote to one writer, “The distribution of rations was conducted personally by A. Fadeev…The main thing was to make sure all valuable writers received them. It didn’t work succeed. Many people are offended.”\(^\text{349}\)

These distinctions hit large performance collectives as well: top artists received priority in housing and better rations, on top of their higher salaries. In Omsk, a city where the housing had little in the way of amenities, only “distinguished [imenitye] Vakhtangovites” received well-appointed apartments.\(^\text{350}\) The rest had to settle for rooms in other people’s apartments. Irina Morozova comments that while in the beginning of evacuation you could find all members of the Bolshoi collective at the market selling their belongings, later on “all the big-names got settled and at the market you could only

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\(^\text{348}\) GARF f. 5446 op. 44a d. 4179 l. 32. Some writers would have received the extra rations by virtue of falling into another category such as winners of Stalin prizes or membership in the Academy of Sciences. However, the 135 spots were apparently left to the Writers’ Union’s discretion. For the 1942 order, see RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 1018 l. 9. Prikaz Narkomtorga no. 170, July 1942. For more on this, see chapter III.

\(^\text{349}\) RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 643 l. 32. Letter from Petr Skosyrev to V. M. Gusev, no date.

see us, the lower races of the theater, orchestra, choir and extras.\textsuperscript{351} In her copious correspondence with Nemirovich-Danchenko Bokshanskaia wrote in May 1942 of the Malyi theater in Cheliabinsk that

> Within the theater is strict division: the “titled” receive a certain level in the cafeteria and in rations, regular personnel and actors – another. Here [at MXAT in Saratov] only laureates and People’s Artists of the USSR are singled out, they’re attached to the Obkom cooperative.\textsuperscript{352}

Writers, not evacuated with an institution, relied on honorariums from publishing, contracts, and newspaper work to survive and unless a Union member directed an order or contract their way, more prominent writers had easier times attracting these than minor writers. Some categories of writers were significantly worse off than others. In particular, translators and folklorists and children’s writers struggled more than prose, poetry and playwrights. Their talents were less obviously in demand during the war years and they experienced great difficulty in obtaining work.\textsuperscript{353}

Writers and artists living outside the big writers’ colonies struggled the most, particularly those in smaller towns that had little to no infrastructure to offer writers employment and were isolated from the writers’ administrative apparatus. By December 1941, three main writers’ colonies had formed through the Soviet Union. One was in Tashkent, one in Sverdlovsk (with significant groups of writers in Molotov/Molotov as well) and one was located in Chistopol and to a lesser degree, Kazan. Even writers within these colonies struggled to obtain work. The chaos of evacuations greatly complicated the

\textsuperscript{351} RGALI f. 1337 op. 5 d. 28 l. 36. Irina Morozova, “Memuary.”
\textsuperscript{352} Bokshanskaia,
\textsuperscript{353} On problems with translators, see for example TSGA IPD RT f. 1211 op. 1 d. 10 l. 7, transcript of meeting of party cell of Tatar Writers’ Union, March 1943; on folklorists, see RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 602 l. 1, d. 603 l. 1, and RGALI f. 631 op. 6 d. 642 l. 8.
process of getting a piece to the correct editor, having it published and receiving payment for it. The regions had little to offer in the way of opportunities for steady publishing and newspaper work; most of their newspapers were comparatively small even wartime paper restrictions struck them. Of Kazan, Lev Rubenshtein remarked that “there was no base for writers’ work: a small publishing house, an insignificant printing house. The one newspaper *Krasnaia Tatariia* could not print all writers every day.”  

Similarly an undated informational letter on the work of the small group of writers in Elabuga reports that “There is no basis for literary work in Elabuga. The local two-sheet newspaper comes out twice a week, with almost no space for literary material.”

But the colonies benefitted from several organizational advantages. First, their critical mass and the presence of famous names in these locations meant both central and local authorities paid more attention to these groups than others and were willing to devote more resources to them. Tashkent had Aleksei Tolstoi and Anna Akhmatova, amongst others; Chistopol hosted Boris Pasternak, Konstantin Fedin, Konstantin Trenev and Leonid Leonov; Sverdlovsk, Agnia Barto, Fedor Gladkov, Anna Karavaeva, Marietta Shaginian. When such individuals made requests, they were reasonably assured of a fair hearing. In Chistopol, the Council for Evacuees headed by Trenev managed to organize a cafeteria for writers, obtain land for gardens, organize storing of firewood – all non-trivial questions in conditions of evacuation. Chistopol writers had a separate commission for organizing mass cultural work and representatives in charge of liaising

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354 IRI RAN f. 2 op. VII d. 5 l. 18. Interview with Lev Rubenshtein, 1943.
355 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 602 l. 4. “Informatsiia” on work of Elabuga writers.
356 Mukhanov, 7.
with each major publisher, informbiuro, radio and film committees.\textsuperscript{357} In Sverdlovsk, which had similar levels of organization, Karavaeva was able to prevent the military organizations from resettling writers outside the city and she and Gladkov lobbied for the evacuation of a major literary journal (Znamia) to the city.\textsuperscript{358} The ability to simply maintain contact with important figures in the literary world played a role in one’s quality of life during the war years. For smaller writers in Chistopol, access to Trenev and Fedin in Chistopol, for example, meant the possibility of securing their intervention, establishing contact with Fadeev and the central administration of the Union — since the Presidium would not ignore Trenev and Fedin the way they might a writer with less clout.

Honorarium levels proved to be source of frustration. Before the war, payment schedules for literary work had varied from region to region (with those in Moscow, Leningrad and regional centers being significantly higher than everywhere else). During the war for the first time prominent writers were scattered outside major cities, and found they found much to object to in the lower payments. In Molotov, the local publishing house had established honorariums “two times less than those acceptable in Moscow, Leningrad, republic centers…At the moment the Molotov writers’ organization consists mainly of writers from Moscow, Leningrad, Ukraine.”\textsuperscript{359} Because of the weight of the evacuees’ names, local chapters of the writers’ union had leverage to appeal to raise them. In a 1942 letter to the secretary of the Writers’ Union, the Molotov branch requests that since their organization consists primarily of writers from Leningrad, Moscow and

\textsuperscript{357} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 566, 17.
\textsuperscript{358} Riabinin, Zhivushee I Ushedshee; on publication of Znamia, see RGALI 631 15 572, l. 64; 631 15 565, l. 201
\textsuperscript{359} RGALI f. 631 op. 5 d. 642 l. 60. Letter from Boris Mikhailov to secretary of Writers’ Union, 1942.
Ukraine, “the establishment for Molotovgiz the same payments, which exist in Moscow and other centers.” Mikhailov assures the Writers’ Union that this is not a question of raising payment norms for writers’ work, “but simply extending to Molotovgiz general honorarium rates in light of the presence in Molotov of major writing strength.”

The most desired privilege within control of the unions or KPDI was recall to Moscow (and later, Leningrad). Requests for such recalls began, as noted, almost immediately in late 1941. Recalls were a deficit good – they existed in limited quantities with no relationship to demand, which meant that not everyone could receive one. Writers were particularly ardent in their petitioning for recall, perhaps because individual recalls seemed more feasible than one for a theater collective of hundreds of people. Initially, hoping to secure recall writers emphasized their desire to be of service in Moscow. As writer Lysogorskii wrote to Fadeev from Tashkent, “My position in Tashkent is becoming absolutely unbearable. I am doomed to criminal inactivity and cannot be of any use here…in Moscow I want to be useful not only as a writer, but also in the Comintern, in radio and other organizations...

Kirill Levin in Tashkent wrote to Skosyrev at the Writers’ Union in May 1942 explaining the importance of finishing his new novella on Brusilov’s successful campaign in 1916. Levin claimed the novella was “exactly what is needed and Krasnaia nov’ has already requested it for publication.” However, Levin found himself unable to complete his work, lacking the necessary materials that remained in Moscow, and therefore found himself compelled to request recall from the Writers’ Union. “It is

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360 RGALI f. 631 op. 5 d. 642 l. 60. Letter from Boris Mikhailov to secretary of Writers’ Union, 1942.
361 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 505 l. 15. Letter from Lysogorskii to Fadeev, 5.IX.1942.
unbearable to me that this important and needed work…will not be realized. Its appearance – right now – would be very timely.”

However, Levin preceded his letter to Skosyrev with one to Aleksandrov, in which he expresses a burning desire to write a novel about Moscow at war, depicting “Stalin on Red Square, the fighting parade of soldiers and workers, the powerful force of our Moscow.” While he already began work, he understood that “It is impossible for me to write far from Moscow…I need material, the people of Moscow and its regions, to see the location of recent battles, speak with Moscow partisans, with living witnesses.”

The impassioned descriptions of Moscow at war are likely calculated to appeal to Aleksandrov, while the historical-patriotic theme of the Brusilov campaign was in line with the desires of the Writers’ Union at the time. Taken together, both Lysogorskii and Levin’s letters suggest that their overarching priority was simply to return to Moscow, and gauged their approach to what they thought would be most successful in securing their ends.

Writer and translator from English of novels such as Jack London and Orson Welles Semen Zaimovskii found himself in evacuation in a village in Molotov oblast. In 1943 he wrote to the Writers’ Union requesting recall for himself, his wife, daughter and granddaughter from the “hole” in which they currently lived.

Right now the law of life and condition of preservation of our country – is the maximal use of the strengths of every able-bodied person. From that perspective – my presence here is futile and harmful to the state. My qualifications, knowledge, abilities and experience are being wasted.

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362 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 505 l. 7. Letter from Levin to Skosyrev, 18 May 1942.
363 RGALI RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 505 l. 8. Letter from Levin to Aleksandrov, 23 March 1942.
364 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 505 l. 8. Letter from Levin to Aleksandrov, 23 March 1942.
365 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 643 l. 74. Letter from Zaimovskii to Skosyrev, 25 March 1943.
Zaimovskii’s letter reflects the implicit feelings of many evacuated writers, many of whom appear convinced that working in any other field that literature would be a waste of their skills. Few if any of them appear to have been willing to acquiesce to the idea of semi-permanently engaging in manual labor or agricultural work in support of the war effort.

Especially as time wore on and attempted recalls based on “service” generally failed, writers began to advance the idea of recall on the principles of need and fairness or deservingness. Underlying this notion was the understanding that the more elite writers were better able to fend for themselves and therefore did not deserve special intervention from authorities. “Need” generally covered cases of extreme hunger, poverty and serious illness, an inability to support oneself or family in evacuation. While more ambiguous, “fairness” seems to have referred to the idea of equally distributing available work opportunities and other resources, without weighting their distribution towards those who already had more. Deservingness was measured in terms of one’s (attempted) contribution to Soviet literature, qualifications, and to the war effort specifically. Supplicants always listed their completed works (recent and former) as well as any awards received in their petitions for support. Evacuation meant privation for everyone, but hit some harder than others; the idea that the “neediest” writers should be allowed to return first preoccupied many petitioners for recall, rather than those higher up with monetary reserves and able to attract via their name writing contracts and honorariums, who could afford to provide for themselves in evacuation. Petitioners assumed that the
prominent cultural elites were receiving recall not on the strength of their current work, but on the basis of personal relationships and name recognition.

The petitioners for fairness and in support of need had valid points. In a 1942 letter to Fadeev, Stalin prize winner Mikhail Isaakovskii complained that “publishers are very inattentive to writers outside Moscow and to sent-in works…writers are receiving orders…the publishers give them [orders] to those who are at hand, easier and more convenient for publishers.” Isaakovskii replicated the dialogue of “fairness” in his letters. He asks for the Union’s help in securing work for several writers who have no “means for existence,” complaining that “opportunities [for real work] exist…Detgiz just sent out a large advance to Zina Aleksandrovna, though she doesn’t especially need it.” Nor did writers hesitate to state that abandoning them in the provinces meant deliberately depriving them of a means of existence, hoping to burden the reader with a sense of guilt that might induce them to procure the desired recall. This letter to Fadeev from Ksenia L’vova in Tashkent is a fairly typical of example:

I don’t know how I, a writer who has always given all her strength to the most burning current theme, have earned such a disdainful and soulless attitude from the union…the other 5-6 writers, whom you at the same time informed by telegram that it was impossible to return to Moscow…have already been in Moscow for some time…my creative and physical fate is in your hands, Aleksandr Aleksandrovich. Leaving me in Tashkent, you consign me to death.

The question was raised formally at least in passing at a Moscow meeting of the Presidium of the Writers’ Union in May 1942. Referring to Uzbekistan, Isaiah Lezhnev

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366 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 604, l. 140. Letter from Isaakovskii to Fadeev, 26.IX.1942.
367 ibid.
368 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 762, l. 10. Letter from Ksenia L’vova to Fadeev, 23 October 1942.
remarked that though re-evacuation had begun, “The strongest creative people are leaving, that is, those same people who could stand up for themselves there. Remaining are the weaker, more helpless ones, people who should be cared for in the first place.”

Beginning in the spring of 1942, individual writers began trickling back to Moscow. The logic behind who managed to return first is unclear, though the Presidium managed to return first. Contrary to widespread assumption by writers, Fadeev did not have the personal right to recall anyone, as the Moscow authorities strictly controlled entry into the city. An unsigned letter to Bakhmetev from a member of the Writers’ Union Presidium comments that “My recall without the sanction of Mossovet is worthless.” Fadeev was forced in each case to “petition in front of the higher authorities. I’ve already done this so often that I have lost any influence,” as he remarked in August of 1942. As stated in a February 1942 letter to Bakhmetev, “there is an order to only recall those [writers] who are truly indispensable for the work of Informbiuro, radio and central newspapers.” Some writers managed in late 1941-very early 1942 to return on their own, but they found obtaining registration (propiska) to be exceptionally difficult. By contrast, in 1942 it appears to have been relatively simple for the Writers’ Union to arrange for transfer to permanent work in large regional

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369 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 621, l. 27. Stenogramma zasedanii presidium SSP, 13 May 1942.
370 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 603 l. 5. Unsigned letter to Bakhmetev, 19.II.1942.
371 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 605 l. 120, letter from Fadeev to Sokolov-Mikitov, 4.VIII.1942.
372 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 603, l. 5.
373 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 603, l. 5, unsigned letter to Bakhmetev (mostly likely from Fadeev, maybe Skosyrin)
newspapers, simply not the two capitals; but few evacuated writers wished to avail themselves of this option.\footnote{\textsuperscript{374}}

The phenomenon of gradual return to Moscow prompted those remaining in the provinces to take failure in obtaining a recall very personally. They interpreted being “left” in the provinces (not being among the first to receive recall) to imply lesser use and lesser talent, justifying their deliberate abandonment (as they assumed) by the state and the cultural administrations. Writers proved ready to dispute this, employing the language of “deserving” with a healthy dose of “fairness” to convince authorities they had the right to recall. Therefore, in a 1943 letter to Fadeev on behalf of a group of writers, Isaakovskii explained that some in the group “have no means of existence…it is necessary to recall them to Moscow…we have determined those needing recall most.”\footnote{\textsuperscript{375}}

Writer Bonch-Bruevich in June 1942 wrote to Skosyrev, secretary of the Writers’ Union that

…more than 90 evacuated here by order of the Union have already left from Kazan to Moscow with their wives, mothers-in-law, children, nephews and other relatives; the entire apparatus down to even the bread distributor has left – and all by the limit of the Presidium of the Writers’ Union, and yet for me, in light of illness…a literator with experience of 49 years, suddenly there’s no more room! Aren’t you ashamed of yourselves, comrades?\footnote{\textsuperscript{376}}

A similar letter from Leningrad writers Arskii and Tsinovskii to Skosyrev in April 1943 demands to know “why you have not seen fit to include us and our families in the

\footnotetext{\textsuperscript{374}} See for example RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 505 l. 222. Letter from Skosyrev to Erberg in Tashkent, 20.VI.1942.
\footnotetext{\textsuperscript{375}} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 604, l. 140. Letter from Isaakovskii to Fadeev, 26.IX.1942.
\footnotetext{\textsuperscript{376}} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 606 l. 15. Letter from Bonch-Bruevich to Skosyrev, 1 June 1942.
Ksenia L’vova continued her letter to Fadeev stating that she “requests and demands recall to Moscow. To give me the task about Uzbekistan would doom me to death. I don’t know how I…have earned such a disdainful and heartless attitude from the Union.”

Writer Styrskaia in Chistopol, who wanted a business trip to Moscow wrote to Fadeev that “it is very difficult and offensive to me…that any writer can recall [to Moscow] his wife, mother, family member when he needs to, but I, a writer, cannot even come for 2-3 weeks when my condition, my illness, my life demand it!”

Theaters, particularly from Moscow, also sought recall. They generally petitioned the KPDI in the language of burning desire to be of use in the capital. A typical 1943 letter to Khrapchenko from the Mossovet Theater in Almaty, written by a number of the theater’s prominent artists, writes the following:

…we consider that only in Moscow, in our own theater, with new creative energy (pod’em)…can we widely develop our possibilities…Only in Moscow…will we be able to give our valiant soldiers cultured rest and inspire them to new glories. We want creative upsurge, we want to live and work with those who are making history, we want a tight tie with the front, to breathe the severe and courageous atmosphere of front positions…we consider our further presence in Almaty to be inexpedient and request our rapid recall to Moscow.
Mobilizing the Intelligentsia: The Importance of Organization

The primary problem with the intelligentsia in evacuation, then, became the need to ensure that its morale remained high and that “mobilization” continued. The KPDI and Leningrad organizations have virtually no complaints about the wartime work of the creative intelligentsia before evacuation, nor for those individuals or collectives that remained in Moscow and Leningrad. On the contrary, their reports frequently note how they worked with great “creative upsurge” and more success than might have been expected, in Leningrad’s case. In a 1943 letter to Shcherbakov, an opera soloist writes that the Bolshoi’s branch in Moscow organized its work “with enthusiasm and creative upsurge unheard of in the theater’s history. Not one person from the peoples’ artists to the couriers stood to the side of this developing work…everyone eagerly took part in this work.”  

Nor does there seem to have been major concern with the work of front correspondents or front brigades. In a spring 1942 letter, the Leningrad head of the local KPDI Zagurskii wrote to Khrapchenko that all artists remaining in the city “are participating in concerts, are refusing to leave Leningrad and without them we wouldn’t know what to do – they bring a lot of use.”

Evacuated culture, though, faced not only formidable practical obstacles in continuing their work, but also potentially waning initiative on behalf of the intelligentsia. Central authorities had to take steps to ensure this did not evolve into a major problem. To do this, they relied heavily on the creative unions and institutional

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381 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 216, l. 51. Letter to Shcherbakov, 24.IV.1943, by opera soloist and party member (signature unreadable).
382 Otdel rukopisei NLR f. 1117 op.1 d. 1660, l. 11. Letter from Zagurskii to Khrapchenko, sping 1942.
directors, as well as individual prominent figures in the intelligentsia, all of whose importance increased significantly in evacuation thanks to their ability to act as patrons, procuring a variety of privileges for others. The state needed such individuals to ensure efficient and appropriate cultural production; lower-placed members of the intelligentsia relied on them for assistance in arranging virtually all of their daily affairs in evacuation. Hence the earlier cited letters by Isaakovskii and Bill-Belotserkovskii on behalf of their less fortunate colleagues, or the intervention of Anna Karavaeva on behalf of Sverdlovsk writers. After evacuating Moscow on foot in 1941, unable to make it onto a writers’ train, writer Natalia Venkstern found herself in in Chkalovsk in conditions of “desperate poverty. I have neither shoes, nor a dress, nor an overcoat.” \[383\] After turning to the Writers’ Union and receiving no response, in 1942 she wrote directly to Ilya Ehrenburg and requested his assistance.

The Writers’ Union took the most obvious steps towards ameliorating the deteriorating morale of evacuated writers by creating a “Pressbiuro,” headed up by Fadeev, Gladkov, Leites, O. Leonidov and I. Utkin. It came into existing in mid-1942, with a stated purpose of “activating the creativity of evacuated writers and facilitating the movement of their work into print.” \[384\] Theoretically, writers could send all their new works to one address (the Pressbiuro), whose workers would then deliver them to potential publishers. When it worked, this was a far simpler option than writers attempting to contact dozens of (partially evacuated) journals, newspapers and publishing houses themselves. It accomplished two things: it ensured writers got their work into

\[383\] RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 605 l. 220. Undated letter from Venkstern to Ehrenburg, 1942.
\[384\] RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 603, l. 10. Letter from Dubinskii to Viacheslavov, 19.VII.1942.
print, which for them meant highly needed honorariums. It also secured for the state a steady stream of material for the nation’s newspapers and journals; propaganda has to be produced. For example, in late 1941 Fadeev wrote to all the major writers’ colonies to inform them of the need for “big sketches” for newspapers and the Red Cross on such themes as “donors of the Red Cross,” “military hospitals,” “tales of the wounded about their nurses,” etc.\(^{385}\) He further requested that each group inform the central Writers’ Union which themes they might take upon themselves. Fadeev also led an initiative in conjunction with the air force to develop “a cycle of artistic sketches on the best people of Aeroflot…”, to which he also summoned all available writers.\(^{386}\) In other words, part of the unions’ jobs were to help create opportunities to employ their members that would also benefit the war effort, and then attract people to them to make sure the work was performed.

While the Pressbiuro did not have the authority to force publication of a given item in any journal (it could only recommend them), the official weight of the Writers’ Union could help to secure prompt response from the potential publisher. Writers during the war constantly complained that publishers held their manuscripts indefinitely without response or paying from them. While under consideration at one place a manuscript could not be sent anywhere else, and by the time an editor returned a piece, it was “outdated” and no one else wished to accept it.\(^{387}\) The Pressbiuro sought to overcome the major

\(^{385}\) RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 565, l. 9. Letter from Fadeev to Moscow, Sverdlovsk and CHistopol branches of WU, 9.XII.1941.

\(^{386}\) RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 565, l. 10; undated letter from Bakhmetev to Moscow Biuro of SSP (most likely late 1941-early 1942).

\(^{387}\) RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 604, l. 140, letter from Isaakovskii to Fadeev, 26.IX.1942; RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 759, l. 58. Correspondence between Klara Kloss and Writers’ Union.
disruptions to literary production posed by the forced decentralization of the country’s literary talents.

To begin, the Pressbiuro began systematically establishing contact with all its writers, starting with the trivial sounding task of simply searching out their addresses and sending correspondence that invariably inquired after a writer’s health and material living conditions. Such correspondence encouraged writers to keep writing and requested that they send all current completed materials to the Pressbiuro. A typical letter reads much like this 1942 letter to Vikentii Veresaev

…your voice – the voice of one of the oldest writers – should sound loudly throughout the country in the days of the great struggle of our people with the German invaders. Up until now, V. V., you have not appeared in print. But you have something to say and could say it forcefully and inspirationally. Perhaps something is hindering your work? Or perhaps you are ill? Inform us immediately.\(^\text{388}\)

In July 1942 the Pressbiuro wrote to Boris Pasternak in Chistopol with concern that “his voice had not recently been heard…” since October 1941 when some of his poems had been read over the radio.

Most probably, you have many more poems, constituting a ready response of your reason and heart to the events of the patriotic war. We request you send them to the Pressbiuro…It seems to us, that especially now in the difficult days the country is living through, she needs your voice. We would be happy if you would systematically send us everything you have written.\(^\text{389}\)

In many cases, the Pressbiuro did not hesitate to suggest to writers themes they might focus on, that would be of particular interest. Typically, Fadeev suggested that a writer might compose something on the life and work of evacuated factories; the lives of Chistopol’s workers and intelligentsia; or health permitting, the work of kolkhozes.

\(^{388}\) RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 759, l. 62. Letter from Pressbiuro to Veresaev, no date.

\(^{389}\) RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 760, 15. Letter from Pressbiuro to Pasternak, 13.VII.1942.
Pressbiuro letter to Mikhail Zoshchenko reiterates the interest in new articles on life in the hinterland.

It is desirable, that your voice be heard by the entire country…It hardly needs to be said what resonance amongst the people your appearance in the pages of the central press or on the radio or on in the literary journals…Hardly anyone is writing about the hinterland, about the enormous work which is going on there…We would like for you to be active as a writer.  

Despite the constant urging and requests by the Pressbiuro for works on the Soviet wartime interior, few writers demonstrated any real interest in developing works depicting the home front. Projects involving the front were much more popular and indeed the Writers’ Union frequently received requests to be sent to the front to gather material. The appeal to Zoshchenko’s ego and patriotic duty by hinting at the impact his work would have was also standard for Pressbiuro letters, particularly to established writers.

An important function of the Pressbiuro was to reassure writers that they were still part of the wider Soviet network of cultural producers and not “torn away” from the family of Soviet writers or in other words, to address writers’ morale directly. It was easier for those who were well fed, well paid and had comparatively comfortable living arrangements to demonstrate extra initiative and maintain a positive attitude than their less well-situated colleagues. As one writer wrote in a report from the Urals, “more so than in other professions, writers work with what they feel, write what they experience…specifically in literary work, the condition of one’s soul immediately

390 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 759, l. 30. Pressbiuro letter to Zoshchenko, 1942.
391 for examples of some of these letters, see RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 605, ll. 119, 222.
reflects on production.” For one’s “soul” might easily be substituted “body” - the author’s point being that it was difficult to write when underfed and living in miserly conditions. Judging by the incessant pleas to the Writers’ Union for material assistance, improved living conditions or simply return to Moscow (and the jump in living standards it was perceived to entail), the author of this report was far from being alone in his assessment.

Geographical hierarchies mattered in such reassurances. Even union members who wound up in distant towns alone or in smaller regional centers in the shadow of the major evacuation destinations tended to feel themselves much worse off than their counterparts in bigger cities and had more difficulty moving their work into print (and getting paid for it). While many prominent writers were evacuated to Tashkent, a second group wound up in Samarkand, at the time the nation’s second largest city. They consistently felt ignored by the Writers’ Union in Tashkent, complaining that Litfond in particular regarded “writers who didn’t remain in Tashkent as second-class people.” The central Writers’ Union took this seriously, requesting that Valentin Kataev conduct an investigation into such allegations while on a business trip to Uzbekistan. While much union activity centered on mobilizing the intelligentsia themselves, union administrators and individual members of the creative elite also acted as intermediaries between evacuees and both central and local officials. Particularly with local officials, the

392 RGALI 631 6 670, l. 72. “Some remarks on the development of literary life in the Urals,” 24.II. 1943, author unclear (Boris Bashov?).
393 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 604 l. 164. Instruction from Skosyrev to Valentin Kataev, undated, probably 1942.
394 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 604 l. 164. Letter from Skosyrev to Valentin Kataev, undated, probably 1942.
unions interceded more than once to coach them on their role in facilitating the intelligentsia’s work.

In these interventions, the unions linked morale and successful creative work with both material well-being and a more intangible sense of being needed and appreciated (which should be reflected in the living standards available to them). For example, in 1943 the Writers’ Union secretary Skosyrev wrote to Iusupov explaining how important it is that “writers do not feel their isolation from the colossal events that the country is experiencing. It is important, that each writer continues also in separation from their own home and usual working situation to feel himself at a battle station.” It is difficult to say how much the Pressbiuro facilitated the work of evacuated writers. But writers seem to have appreciated any indication of renewed attention to them on part of the union, and the administration believed this aspect of its work to be important. Many writers, especially those outside the major colonies, felt themselves to be abandoned in evacuation, and could not understand the refusal of Union figures to assist them – they viewed the failure to help as a personal choice, rather than an inability to procure the necessary resources to help them. The Pressbiuro’s invitation to relate their troubles seems to have at least assuaged these feelings. Evacuated writers had a much greater burden of self-mobilization; unlike theaters and museums, local authorities did not have a clear idea on how to engage them, especially in very small and remote areas. The Pressbiuro took up some of this slack, providing direction to isolated writers and local authorities alike.

395 RGALI 631 15 597, l. 82. Letter from Skosyrev to Usman Iusupov, 25.III.1942.
Central authorities spared little expense in designating functionaries (mostly men, at that) to travel across the Soviet Union inspecting and “organizing” the affairs of evacuated performance collectives. That they were willing to invest these sorts of resources in restarting cultural production at a moment when the war was going so badly suggests how much the Soviet state valued these resources and counted on their support. In 1941, such functionaries played a major role in establishing evacuated theaters in certain cities when theaters encountered resistance from local authorities. Later on, in 1942-43, these trips often carried an agitational nature. Functionaries – often cultural elites in their own right – would arrive, evaluate the work of a given collective, and hold meetings where they exhorted performers to work harder. Directors of theaters maintained close correspondence with central authorities, who could offer powerful incentives in the form of material improvements, prizes and awards and so on. Members of local party organizations sat in on the party meetings of theatrical collectives, and directors of major theaters interacted frequently with the heads of local government and party organizations.\footnote{396 See for example, RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 484 l. 1, letter from Radin to Khrapchenko April 1942; TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 8 d. 97 l. 21, “ob itogakh XI plenuma Molotovskogo obkoma”.
} Despite their initial resistance to the arrival of evacuated collectives, local authorities appear to have quickly appreciated the potential value of artists, film studios, museums and theatrical/musical collectives for propaganda and mobilizational purposes, and tried to put them to work without delay. In Molotov, the work of the Kirov theater was discussed at meetings of the local Agitprop department and included in plans for agitational activities, as were the Russian Museum and the
Leningrad TIUZ in Berezniki.\textsuperscript{397} Writers, more dispersed and with less obvious visual benefits, provided a sticking point. Occasionally they were simply ignored by local authorities until the intervention of prominent figures. In November 1941, Aleksandr Fadeev traveled to Chistopol and met with party and government organizations, which “helped them to better understand their role in the mobilization of writers.”\textsuperscript{398}

Central authorities also made considerable use of party chapters and directors of individual institutions for mobilizational purposes, and held them responsible not only for the quality of an institution’s work but for their morale. Moscow took these problems seriously enough that when they received word of internal strife or discontent in a theater, they sent out inspectors or would summon the sparring parties to Moscow to settle the matter. In 1943, when a conflict between the Leningrad TIUZ’s director Abolimov and artistic director and theater’s founder, order-bearer Briantsev threatened to disrupt the theater’s work, local authorities were so concerned that the secretary of the Berezniki gorkom wrote to Solodovnikov at the central KPDI. Explaining that the two could not work together since Briantsev as the theater’s founder could not stand Abolimov exercising administrative rights and Abolimov never took Briantsev’s opinion into consideration,

…their non-normal relationship reflects on the mood of the theater’s collective…we cannot not reckon with Briantsev since he is an honored figure in the field of art…[the gorkom] feels it would be correct to give administration of the theater to Briantsev, and transfer Abolimov to a different place.\textsuperscript{399}

\textsuperscript{397} See for example PermGANI f. 105 op. 8 d. 326 l. 28.
\textsuperscript{398} G. S. Mukhanov, \textit{Chistopol’skie stranitsy} (Kazan: Tatar Izd-vo, 1987), 7.
\textsuperscript{399} RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 1096 l. 110. Letter to Solodovnikov from Trudov, sec. of Berezniki GK VKP po kadram, 31 July 1943.
While the correspondence ends here, Briantsev remained with the theater until well after the war, so eventually the two parties reached a compromise, most likely with Moscow’s assistance. In another case, the Leningrad head of the local KPDI Boris Zagurskii was sent to Chkalov (Orenburg) in 1943 to inspect the condition of the Malyi theater. They proved to be poor in almost all regards. Zagurskii did not hesitate to assign blame, noting that the director “did not establish the necessary normal mutual relationships with the party and soviet leadership of the region and occasionally behaved in a provocatively arrogant manner.” He complains that the theater’s administration has shown little to no interest in conditions of the “little people.” “the direction of the theater has not shown the necessary care for this question…the director was only in the dormitory one day before [Zagurskii] arrived.”

Conclusion

The evacuations highlight the fact that intelligentsia’s contribution to the war was never a foregone conclusion. Plenty of potential existed for the intelligentsia to falter in its support for the state, whether from apathy, active political or ideological dissidence, or the sheer chaos engendered by the war and evacuations themselves. And yet, on the whole the opposite happened. The intelligentsia as a whole proved to be reliably engaged in supporting the war effort with their work. The state appears to have been grateful for this support and proved willing to both acknowledge it during the war, and reward the intelligentsia materially both during and after the war. As scholars such as Kiril Tomoff and Vera Tolz have pointed out, it was after the war that the creative unions solidified

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400 Otdel rukopisei NLR f. 1117 op. 1 d. 210 l. 4.
401 Otdel rukopisei NLR 1117 1 20, l. 2. Report on the results of the inspection of the Malyi opernyi theater in Chkalovsk, April 1943.
their control over the arts, comparative independence in artistic affairs and elite material privileges. I argue this came about due to the unions’ role in facilitating Soviet culture’s contribution to the war effort, and the state’s decision to acknowledge this effort. The postwar Soviet regime sought reliable partners in rebuilding, whom they might accommodate and compromise with instead of repress, in exchange for their support. In Vera Dunham’s eyes, the regime selected the new Soviet middle-class as the most appropriate demographic for this bargain, having already benefited from the Stalinist project in the 1930s. Dunham notes that the regime behaved punitively towards peasants and the creative intelligentsia. She is partly right, but the larger story shows that the creative intelligentsia was equally likely to be a partner in this deal, as Sheila Fitzpatrick has argued.\footnote{Sheila Fitzpatrick, \textit{The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 9. Fitzpatrick argues that in any case the new middle class was too closely intertwined with the Soviet government to be considered to have truly struck a “deal” with them.} It is difficult to talk of a true deal between partners, as the state overwhelmingly held all the cards in its hands. But during the war years, in genuine need of effect support from the intelligentsia and with plenty of urgent matters to deal with, the state appears to have withheld itself from broad punitive actions against the intelligentsia, and kept force to an implied threat. While it had little room for true negotiation in the normal sense of the word, the intelligentsia proved adept at packaging its requests in ways that maximally benefitted its position in return for its active wartime support.

The intelligentsia’s motivations for this mobilization are harder and perhaps impossible to pinpoint, exactly. Clearly they involved some a mix of feelings of including a very strong desire to retain one’s profession, position in the Soviet social-cultural
hierarchy, and the privileges associated with being both a member of the intelligentsia and a resident of Moscow or Leningrad. The intelligentsia as a group sensed early in the war that it offered the opportunity to change the criteria defining its relationship to the state, in David Shearer’s words. The intelligentsia used its wartime service to consolidate its position, definitively proving its worth as loyal, dependable pillar of the state. Many individual calculations regarding evacuation revolved around weighing what appeared to be the “best” behavior and its risks and consequences. As we saw with several theaters, those whose calculations – often for very personal and pragmatic reasons – brought them into conflict with state evacuation orders wasted no time in representing their behavior to the state as courageous and their services as of the utmost necessity in Moscow, and even in Leningrad. Less well-known figures in the intelligentsia viewed evidence of their loyalty and service to the war as something that might well obtain them in a better position.

Evacuations put a wrench in the original flow of the intelligentsia’s efforts, both logistically and psychologically. It turns out that the intelligentsia’s willingness to “serve” the state when forced to reside outside of Moscow and Leningrad was less certain. By November 1941, the continued success of the intelligentsia’s wartime endeavors was not guaranteed. Cultural elites as well as regular citizens succumbed to the mood of the “Moscow panic,” try as they might to withstand it. Plenty of opportunities existed for demoralization, disorganization, and disloyalty to have weakened or even derailed the intelligentsia’s contribution to the war effort. The physical transition that evacuations entailed, from working in the capitals to regional centers was fraught with

403 Shearer, Policing Stalin’s Socialism, 339.
logistical difficulties that required an intensive administrative and mobilization effort to overcome these. The sudden, unexpected and undesired geographic decentralization of Soviet cultural elites, severing them from the cultural capital, prestige and material privileges to which they had become accustomed and which in part it seems their loyalty was based, threatened to derail the upsurge of patriotic activity. Cultural elites were not alone in making their conflicted attitudes towards evacuating; scholars have shown that similar dilemmas as to the benefits and costs of leaving Moscow and Petersburg plagued many potential evacuees.\textsuperscript{404} However, given the primacy of affiliation with one of these two cities for one’s place in the cultural hierarchy, the stakes for members of the intelligentsia were probably higher than for the average worker.

Even those who departed for evacuation knowing that they were fulfilling the state’s directives found themselves demoralized by the uncertainty and frequently unwelcoming reception they received in the provinces, the poor living and working conditions they discovered there, and their perceived demotion in the hierarchy of Soviet space. These feelings particularly affected those beneath the most elite rungs of creative elite, who were afraid of losing their place in the creative hierarchy and its concomitant privileges by forfeiting their residence in Moscow and Leningrad. In such conditions, the efforts expended by the creative unions and theatrical/museum administrations to mobilize their members and ensure continued high quality work in support of the war effort took on special significance as without them, the likelihood of a much less concerted support from the intelligentsia was a real possibility. Supporting the state by working intensively in evacuation, outside Moscow and Leningrad, was something that had to be sold to the

\textsuperscript{404} See Rebecca Manley, \textit{To the Tashkent Station}. 
intelligentsia — and it proved to be a tough sell, overcome by efforts to appeal’s to the intelligentsia’s patriotic feelings; efforts to convince them the state remembered and cared for them; and the extension of as many material privileges as possible to evacuated intelligentsia. These efforts — as well as the implicit promise of return to privileged life in Moscow and Leningrad — eventually paid off in the form of extensive agitational and propaganda work by creative elites in evacuation, in particular the composition and publication, and performance of works appropriate to wartime, as well as the re-packaging of Soviet and Russian classics for wartime purposes.

In evacuation, the importance of being either affiliated with an important institution or having access/pull with a prominent person took on new levels of importance, in addition to geographical hierarchies. Generally speaking, those with important institutions managed to obtain better conditions. However, even within a given institution, hierarchies became much more significant. Writers in particular used the language of “fairness” or “need” to try and evade the hierarchies, but few managed this with any success. The reality of limited resources meant that even direct appeals to theater directors or top administrators were not always enough to secure one’s end. If one could not obtain the necessary intervention from one’s “own” people, there was always the option of involving powerful “outside” people, or those who were outside the immediate hierarchy of administration. Perhaps the most obvious example are appeals to Stalin. Direct appeals to him from the intelligentsia seem to have been relatively rare, but existed during the war. Others might try to secure the intervention of various Party bureaucrats, as did the errant members of the Moscow Operetta Theater.
This means that both leading administrators and distinguished members of intelligentsia themselves took on special significance during the war years as distributors of limited privilege, particularly as networks of mutual assistance that had been in place before the war were destroyed; evacuees depended heavily on these connections for survival. Vera Tolz has argued that it was in the late 1940s and 1950s that the creative unions attained “their broadest powers…’cultural bosses’ acquired unprecedented financial and professional power vis-à-vis the rank-and-file members of the creative professions…”405 Tolz points out that it was inequality in material benefits rather than repression that became the main source of grievance by artists and argues that the real difference between the 1930s and the 1940s was the level of access artists had to party bureaucrats. However, appeals such as these can be seen during the war as well, and evidence suggests that evacuees (particularly those of a certain level) had extensive access to party functionaries. If the unions attained their broadest powers only in the late 1940s and 1950s, the groundwork for this was laid during the war. It may be true, as Tolz argues, that it was only after the war that union officials, in securing highly privileged positions for themselves, managed to stop constantly appealing to Party figures. This would imply that the postwar period was the most favorable moment for cultural elites to emerge as patrons in their own right. But during the war we clearly see these figures acting as patrons, doling out the available goods to their members often with great discretion.

Stalin’s comment thanking the intelligentsia seems on the surface rather surprising. After all, at first glance the contribution of the creative elite (as opposed to the academic-scientific) seems rather negligible, for example when compared to the efforts of evacuated industry. However, Soviet authorities took it quite seriously, and particularly when placed in the context of what could have happened, it comes clear that in the end the mobilization of the intelligentsia was a success story for the Soviet state. While not necessarily entirely motivated by pure patriotism and loyalty to the Soviet state, nevertheless approximately the same result was achieved. As it happens, evacuations turned out to be a success story for the intelligentsia as well. The Soviet authorities in the postwar period proved ready and willing to acknowledge the efforts the intelligentsia had made, and those of creative bureaucrats and administrators in particular, a group that saw their material privileges expand dramatically in the 1950s. The rest of the intelligentsia settled into a relatively comfortable “deal” with the Soviet state in which their nominal support translated into corporate material privilege.

The wartime cultural campaign was expansive in a literal sense. Involving more geographic spaces than it had before, it could accommodate more than one narrative. As the creative unions and theater administrations sought over and over to convince their members, the state considered work in evacuation to be the equivalent of that at the front. (The fact they had to repeat this so frequently suggests the skepticism with which the message was received.) However, after the war control over the image of the “best” behavior became quite contentious. Accusations of “waiting for the Germans” drifted into the background as the Red Army advanced across Europe, and insinuations of cowardice or “sitting out the war” became more common. Many of the evacuation issues cultural
elites grappled with in 1941 sat on the back burner, unresolved, for the war’s duration and came to the foreground again only after the war’s end.
Chapter III
Upending Local Hierarchies: Everyday Life and Power Dynamics in the Provinces

In her memoirs, leading Kirov ballerina Tatiana Vecheslova recalls of the evacuations that “It seemed to us, that the arrival of such a collective would arouse joy in the city, but during the war much had changed.”\textsuperscript{406} Instead of the rapturous welcome Vecheslova and her colleagues might have imagined, “the city received the theater not particularly hospitably.”\textsuperscript{407} Indeed, Molotov city authorities initially refused to accept the theater at all, refusing to allow the company to disembark from the train for several days. Stories such as these played themselves out across the Soviet Union in 1941. The sudden deposit of thousands of cultural elites into regional cities poorly equipped to feed, house and employ them and resentment of the evacuees’ privileges and ability to secure Moscow’s intervention alongside the intelligentsia’s apprehensions towards regional cities meant that initial relationships between the intelligentsia and regional authorities and communities were fraught with tension, if not openly hostile. Far from being a privilege that regional cities vied for, hosting evacuated institutions proved at first to be deeply controversial both amongst regional authorities and local communities, an unwanted burden that could not be refused, at Moscow’s direct insistence. The initial conflict over where evacuated collectives would remain and its resolution via Moscow’s intervention on behalf of the evacuees foreshadows one of the main strands of life for the next several years: the convergence and reorganization of political, social and cultural hierarchies caused by the deposit Moscow and Leningrad institutions into regional cities.

\textsuperscript{406} Tatiana Vecheslova, \textit{Ia – balerina} (Mosow: Iskusstvo, 1964), 142.
\textsuperscript{407} Ibid., 142.
The geographic, political and social hierarchies underlying the Soviet system dictated that power, material privilege, and social/cultural capital were concentrated primarily in Moscow and Leningrad, and primarily in the hands of the “new elite,” of which the creative intelligentsia formed an integral part. Moscow from very early on was the arbiter of the hierarchies; it determined and distributed political power, material privileges, social recognition. Other cities’ places in the hierarchy meant a given city’s position in regard to Moscow. Inescapably, regional cities and their inhabitants occupied a distinctly lower position in the overall arrangement, with less material privilege, less cultural capital, less political power, less ability (though by no means no ability) to insist on their own priorities since all petitions went through Moscow. In evacuation, spatial and some political and cultural hierarchies were turned on their head and directly superimposed on each other. Instead of residence in Moscow and Leningrad, cultural elites found during the war that their privileged status as “valuables” worth of preservation now demanded their removal to the provinces, where they directly confronted the regional hierarchies that grown up everywhere.

The story of these clashing social, cultural and spatial hierarchies is defined in many ways by questions of resources – city of residence, housing, workspace, employment in one’s specialty, rationing. Since one’s place in the hierarchy determined control over the the exceptionally scarce resources at stake in fall 1941, hierarchies immediately began trying to reassert themselves, attempting to establish a new “status quo.” This brought all sorts of questions into play: how would the power and privilege hierarchies shake out? Which group would be able to secure its own ends? Who would “administer” evacuated culture, local organizations? Given the complexities of
geographic and social hierarchies, it was not immediately clear who would outrank whom – the local authorities, or evacuated cultural elites in possession of enormous cultural capital (translating, in the Soviet context, into social prestige) and with access to political power in Moscow. Naturally, evacuated cultural elites did not wield direct political power on their own, in the form say of taking major decisions about the future of their institutions, much less for anyone else. Theirs was not a direct form of power. Nor do I mean to argue that regional authorities had no power. As scholars have shown, they could and did advance their own interests and could play authority figures off each other. But the intelligentsia could and did engage Moscow to intervene on behalf of and enforce its interests, which gave it a unique position in its new cities and guaranteed it audiences with regional authorities who might have ignored it otherwise.

The superimposition of these hierarchies resulted in a triangular power dynamic between Moscow, important cultural institutions and regional authorities. If in fall of 1941, this assumed the form of cultural institutions relying on Moscow to enforce the desires of the cultural institution, later on the dynamic equalized to a certain degree, with Moscow’s attention directed elsewhere. Cultural institutions and regional authorities learned to ally themselves together against Moscow to obtain what they wanted. Regional authorities accommodated Moscow and its representatives in the most

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408 See for example James Harris, *The Great Urals: Regionalism and the Evolution of the Soviet System* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999). Harris depicts a power struggle between Ukraine and the Urals for investment coming from Moscow, beginning even before 1917. Ironically (though Harris does not discuss the war in depth) by this argument, the Urals won significantly during the war.

409 An alliance of Moscow and regional authorities against a cultural institution appears to have been rare, though cases exist where Moscow simply failed to turn their attention to arbitrating between the evacuees and regional authorities, in which case local authorities prevailed.
important instances. However, at moments when the stakes were lower (for example when dealing with a Belarusian theater or less important Moscow group), they did not hesitate to pursue their own interests.

Moments of cooperation occurred when both evacuated intelligentsia and local authorities began to realize how they might best use the other to further their own interests. Regional authorities who had felt overwhelmed by evacuees at first by early 1942 quickly figured out the benefits elite evacuated cultural institutions might bring them. First and foremost came assistance for the war with agitation and mobilization; the evacuations provided regional authorities with far more human resources than they could have otherwise hoped for. But the evacuees offered an opportunity to catalyze local cultural development and levels of kul’turnost, a longstanding obsession in the Soviet Union and something that local authorities eagerly latched on to in an attempt to “improve” their city’s standing in the Soviet Union’s geographical hierarchy. Finally, cultural production in the regions offered a chance publicize and write into the Soviet wartime narrative regional achievements and contributions. In some places, by 1943-44 evacuated cultural institutions managed to become valued commodities that local authorities did not wish to let leave. For its part, the intelligentsia realized it could use its regional activities as leverage to raise its standing in the eyes of Moscow. Its willingness to cooperate with the regions, assist them in mobilization and cultural development, and incorporate regional stories into their art served to further the Soviet narrative of an all-encompassing war effort, with front and hinterland united with one goal.

Evacuees also disrupted local social hierarchies, proving that the “creative intelligentsia” was not at all a monolithic group. Almost without contest or exception, the
evacuees found their needs placed solidly above those of their local intelligentsia counterparts. Local cultural institutions’ conditions and position often dramatically deteriorated with the arrival of the evacuees.\textsuperscript{410} However, that being said, their arrival often gave the youngest and most talented of the local creative intelligentsia a chance to join the evacuated institutions; they had an opportunity to move up during the war. The hierarchies were therefore not immutable, they were open to talent and qualification (if dependent on personal initiative from evacuees to foster these). By furnishing the entire (not only Moscow and Leningrad) intelligentsia with ample opportunity for it to demonstrate its loyalty and support, the war offered a chance to expand material privileges and prestige to a much greater number of individuals and collectives than previously.

Finally, while the evacuations offered regional centers a chance to raise their profile in relationship both to Moscow (becoming “nearer” via their growing \textit{kul’turnost}) and smaller regional towns (becoming “better” thanks to the same), making such centers more “cultured” and improving their infrastructure, they reinforced the preexisting geographic hierarchies rather than creating new ones. In 1941, it was in the most materially privileged, better developed and socially and politically “safer” cities that the evacuated intelligentsia managed to secure residence. Once ensconced, cultural institutions in turn served as magnets, attracting to themselves (and their new city) a variety of unattached cultural elites. Though far more decentralized than the prewar distribution of Soviet culture, the resulting concentration of evacuated institutions

\textsuperscript{410} Though many of the same collectives displaced by evacuees would have found themselves negatively impacted by the budget cuts for the arts in time. These cuts affected all of the arts, but regional culture most of all.
initially reaffirmed and later reinforced and perpetuated the prewar hierarchies by raising levels of culture in their temporary locations. They did so not simply by being present, but by their work efforts directed specifically at improving local cultural infrastructure and cultural levels. Both central and local authorities in turn sought to maximize this effect. Cultural capital was accepted rather uncritically as a “good” that raised one’s place in the Soviet social hierarchy and geographic hierarchy for cities. The presence of significant cultural capital also usually signified material privilege. It was a predictable group of cities that reaped most benefits from the evacuation of culture.

**Initial Reaction: Refusal, Acceptance and Geographic Hierarchies**

By late summer 1941, many of Russia’s major developed regional capitals were already under threat from the Germans, defeating the original evacuation plans that had relied heavily on cities such as Vologda, Iaroslavl, Penza, Tambov, Nizhny Novgorod, and Stalingrad. Many of these cities soon found themselves either on the front lines or close enough to them to be the targets of frequent air raids. Instead, cities such as Sverdlovsk, Kuibyshev, Molotov, Novosibirsk, Kazan and Tashkent bore the brunt of receiving all evacuees – government and Party branches, cultural institutions and factories as well as the hundreds of thousands of effectively refugees fleeing from occupied territories. As discussed in the previous chapter, evacuating institutions rarely met with warm welcomes in the regional cities serving as the transportation hubs through which all arrivals passed. Local authorities initially balked and frequently employed

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every excuse possible to attempt to re-rout them to smaller towns and agricultural
districts further out. Unlike the average evacuee (who had little recourse when denied
residence in a city), the evacuated intelligentsia deployed its connections with Moscow
and its social and cultural capital to remain in what it perceived as the most desirable
cities. The number of “desirable” evacuation destinations in the eyes of the intelligentsia
unthreatened by the German advance in late 1941 and 1942 was comparatively finite. The
intelligentsia’s clout with Moscow and ability to insist on desirable locations resulted in
the clustering of evacuated culture in the most privileged and important regional centers
as they were perceived to exist in 1941. The intelligentsia’s concentrated presence in a
small handful of cities reinforced preexisting geographical hierarchies, visible in the
perceived distance culturally between a certain city and Moscow or Leningrad, and the
opportunities (material, professional and cultural) available there.

A preexisting hierarchy of desirability of evacuation destinations clearly emerges
from both evacuees’ efforts to remain in particular locales and the tones in which they
discuss their locations. In fall 1941 everyone sought to reach the “best” destination,

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412 On experiences of ordinary evacuees, see Rebecca Manley, *Tashkent Station*;
Evacuation of Industry and Population in 1941,” in *Beyond the Limits: The Concept of
Space in Russian History and Culture*, ed. Jeremy Smith (Helsinki: 1999), 241-258. For a
look at the experience of academics, see Larry Holmes, *War, Evacuation and the
Exercise of Power: Center, Periphery and Kirov’s Pedagogical Institute, 1941-1952*
(Lanham: Lexington Books, 2012). Most regional authorities attempted to resettle
evacuees (especially those without obvious industrial workskills or attached to a factory)
in rural areas, much to the evacuees’ dismay.

413 By preexisting, I mean that the hierarchy of desirability did not take shape after the
evacuees arrived in the regions. Rather, the bare outlines of this hierarchy emerged in
summer and fall 1941, before the vast majority of evacuees had ever laid eyes on the
cities in question. Nor does it appear to have changed substantively after they arrived in
the regions.
Despite the fact that most evacuees had very little idea what the city was actually like. Naturally, subjective factors played a role here. Rebecca Manley’s study of general evacuees considered the presence of friends or relatives in a given area to have significantly influenced a locale’s desirability, followed by cities generally speaking and places perceived to have good food supplies. Hence, according to her argument, the popularity of Tashkent, a city associated in the popular consciousness with abundant food and in particular, bread.\textsuperscript{414} Certainly, the criteria of “city” mattered a great deal to the intelligentsia as well; writers and artists with no institutional basis tying them to a city in particular feared being sent to the “village.” The diary of Marina Tsvetaeva’s son, Georgii Efron, vividly demonstrate such feelings upon arriving in Elabuga: “The city resembles more a lousy village,” he commented.\textsuperscript{415} Writing in his diary one week later in late August, he comments “What a monstrosity provincial towns are! The streets are monstrous, houses monstrous, people are even worse…”\textsuperscript{416} Efron was far from alone in his sentiments.

For cultural elites, the bigger a city was the better. Even small differences in actual size and amenities could have outsized impacts on cultural elites’ imaginations. The desire to move to Chistopol as opposed to Elabuga consumed Efron and Tsvetaeva’s lives that summer, though one could argue that comparatively little separated the two towns in the way of development. As Tsvetaeva herself commented to Lidiia

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[414]{Manley, 140-141.}
\footnotetext[415]{Efron, 515.}
\footnotetext[416]{Efron, 530.}
\end{footnotes}
Chukovskaia while attempting to secure permission to live in Chistopol for herself and her son, “But here there are people…in Elabuga I’m afraid.”

Several other factors contributed to the intelligentsia’s assessment of an evacuation destination. These included the presence of a major cultural institution and related figures; opportunities for continuing work in their specialty; and a less tangible perception of the city’s overall “importance,” or cultural, social and political clout. While this last criterion is not detached from material concerns such as the availability of food and the prospect of better housing, it also encompassed other factors such as distance from Moscow and Leningrad, city infrastructure, perceptions of local communities and levels of culture, and whether or not the intelligentsia felt its work would be appreciated there. The most desirable evacuation destinations frequently overlapped with prerevolutionary Russian cities with some established cultural traditions. Older larger established Russian cities – often also oblast administrative centers – such as Sverdlovsk, Molotov and Kazan were more likely to have educated, urban populations familiar to the intelligentsia—hence Tsvetaeva’s comment regarding “people.” Such attitudes were not

417 Chukovskaia, 340.
418 For writers, this usually meant the presence of newspapers, journals, institutes or libraries that might employ them; for performers, some sort of performance space. A frequent complaint amongst writers was that provincial newspapers that came out infrequently simply could not employ everyone; there was no demand for writers’ pieces.
419 For prerevolutionary culture outside Moscow and St. Petersburg, see Richard Stites, *Serfdom, Society and the Arts in Imperial Russia: The Pleasure and the Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005);
420 Negative impressions (first or otherwise) of regional inhabitants make frequent appearances in intelligentsia diaries, correspondence and poetry, to a lesser degree in memoirs. See Lungina, Aseev, Morozova, Efron, and others. Nor were such impressions limited to cultural elites. See David Shearer’s description of Kaganovich’s instructions regarding peasants in western Siberia, in “Modernity and Backwardness on the Soviet Frontier: Western Siberia in the 1930s,” in *Provincial Landscapes: Local Dimensions of*
new, or unique to the Soviet intelligentsia. Negative conceptions of the provinces as depicted in Russian literature, symbolizing “narrowness…deathly stasis” have existed since the early 19th century.\footnote{Anne Lounsbery, “No, this is not the provinces! Provincialism, Authenticity, and Russianness in Gogol’s Day,” Russian Review 64, 2 (2005), 260.} Finally, most (though not all) desirable cities were also “regime cities.”

Though social and cultural hierarchies confirming Moscow and Leningrad’s superiority in relationship to the provinces had existed even before 1917, the Soviets managed to codify and entrench these hierarchies by adding new official dimensions to them: political “closeness” and material provisioning. When embarking on its first Five Year plan in 1928, the Soviet state found itself facing severe shortages of both reliable, politically trustworthy and social “safe” human cadres, and the resources to provision them. Rationing had had to be introduced again in 1928 and gradually spread to cover ever more foods and necessary products such as fabric and shoes until once again canceled in mid-1930s. R. W. Davies concludes that by 1929, “a rough hierarchy of towns for rationing purposes had emerged.”\footnote{R. W. Davies, \textit{Industrialization of Soviet Russia 3: Soviet Economy in Turmoil, 1929-1930} (London: Macmillan, 1988), 291.} In describing the main trends in state distribution from 1928-1931, Julie Hessler characterizes them as “greater centralization, systematization, and at the same time social differentiation of consumption entitlements on terms defined by the state.”\footnote{Julie Hessler, \textit{A Social History of Soviet Trade} (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 167.} In the early 1930s, authorities inaugurated a campaign to passportize major cities, in order to cleanse them of unwanted social elements.

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Authorities identified a group of cities most important to fulfilling Soviet plans as “regime cities,” in which (theoretically) only “safe” elements would be allowed to reside. Since these cities and their residents were both necessary to fulfilling Soviet plans and politically “close” they would receive better provisioning than everyone else. They were guided in their selections by what Elena Osokina has described as hyper-pragmatism. In a situation defined by shortages, it made sense to invest the state’s limited resources in the most crucial areas and more vital, loyal human resources.\textsuperscript{424} As per this pragmatism, Osokina has argued that the new social hierarchy in the Soviet Union was defined by position close to power and the necessity of one’s job for the performance of state plans.\textsuperscript{425} Hessler has argued that local authorities embraced with zeal the differentiation in consumption rights and exacerbated the difference between groups, taking ration categories as signals from Moscow as to the relative importance of the groups involved.\textsuperscript{426}

Local authorities soon began petitioning to be included as regime cities to ensure a steady supply of food.\textsuperscript{427} The categories grew so rapidly that they soon had to be subdivided into special, first and second classes.\textsuperscript{428} Cities on the special lists received not only higher rations, but the distribution of their rations was more firmly guaranteed. In case of supply issues, cities higher on the list would receive their full delivery at the

\textsuperscript{424} A similar “class ration” had prevailed during the Civil War. See Hessler, 168.

\textsuperscript{425} Elena Osokina, Za fasadom Stalinskogo izobiliia: Raspredelenie i rynok v snabzhenii naselenia v goda industrializatsii, 1927-1941 (Mosow: Rosspen, 1999), 12.

\textsuperscript{426} Hessler, 174.

\textsuperscript{427} Davies, 291; Moine (Muan), “Passportnaia sistema i vybor mesto zhitel’stva v Rossii i Sovetskom Soiuze,” Neprikosnovennyi zapas 4 (2005), 42; Hessler, 175.

\textsuperscript{428} Davies, 291.
expense of stocks available for the other lists.\textsuperscript{429} Regime cities numbered over 30 as early as 1933, including a handful that would go on to be major evacuation destinations: Molotov, Sverdlovsk and Cheliabinsk.\textsuperscript{430} The list of such cities grew rapidly throughout the 1930s, expanding to include “major administrative, economic or population centers…[those that] carried strategic military or political significance for the regime.”\textsuperscript{431} Regional authorities eagerly sought the status of “regime city,” as it handed them an extra tool with which to “cleanse” local populations as well as the designation of political reliability and increased material privilege.\textsuperscript{432} Shearer points to the concept of “socialist” and “nonsocialist” spaces, defined by the presence of large “alien” elements in certain territories.\textsuperscript{433} Popov argues that

Regime cities, “cleansed” of all undesirable elements, gave their residents guaranteed income, but in return demanded “shock work” and complete ideological and behavioral obedience. In this way a special type of “city person” and “city culture” was developed…\textsuperscript{434}

\footnote{Davies, 294.}{\textsuperscript{429}}

\footnote{The list also included a number of large cities already occupied by or under direct threat from the Germans in 1941-1942, including Stalingrad, Rostov, and Nizhny Novgorod. See articles by Popov.}{\textsuperscript{430}}


\footnote{See Natalie Moine (Muan), “Pasportnaia sistema i vybor mesta zhitel’stva v Sovetskom Soiuze,” \textit{Neprikosnovennyi zapas: Debaty o politike i kul’ture} (2005), 54-59; Shearer;}{\textsuperscript{432}}

\footnote{Shearer, 854.}{\textsuperscript{433}}

\footnote{Popov, “Pasportnaia sistema Sovetskogo krepostnichestva.”}{\textsuperscript{434}}
Osokina points out that since provisioning “depended on a territory’s importance for the fulfilment of the plan,” cities on the “special” and “first” lists received bread, flour, grain, meat, fish, oil, tea, sugar and eggs before all other cities, and in greater quantities. The two lists’ combined made up about 40% of the total number of cities, but received 70-80% of central stocks. Moscow and Leningrad occupied the absolute peak of this pyramid, receiving not only the lion’s share of provisioning in all sorts but the vast majority of the cultural opportunities available in the Soviet Union. Hessler identifies the unique feature of 1930s rationing as “its formal calibration of ration levels to the economic and political significance of particular enterprises and cities [italics mine].”

It is worth noting that only the most elite institutions could successfully insist on remaining in a given place at the expense of other institutions. In cities where multiple cultural collectives arrived, more minor evacuated institutions often had to settle for being moved to smaller cities. For example, while Novosibirsk authorities found themselves accommodating “all-union institutions” Leningrad’s Pushkin Theater and Philharmonic along with the bulk of the Tretiakov gallery, the Moscow Operetta Theater had to move to a much smaller town in the Novosibirsk region. Molotov grudgingly accepted the Kirov theater and Russian Museum as well as a number of individual writers and artists, but Leningrad’s TIUZ had to settle for Berezniki, the “second” town in the region. Similar situations arose in Central Asia.

Evacuated cultural institutions or individuals from Ukraine or Belarus faced a more precarious situation. As a group, they were less able to command the weight of

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435 Osokina, 77-95.
436 Hessler, 167.
Moscow’s intervention, as Moscow authorities tended to deal primarily with all-union or Moscow institutions. They were also “lower,” so to speak, on the hierarchy (for the most part institutions of national rather than all-union significance). Such institutions had little hope of settling in one of the more desirable cities and were relegated to regional centers of secondary importance. In Khrapchenko’s November 1941 report for Shcherbakov and Zemliachka on the location and work of evacuated theaters, collectives from Ukraine and Belarus were located in the following cities: Ulan-ulde, Semipalatinsk, Krasnoiarsk, Barnaul, Aktiubinsk, Tobolsk, Tokmak, Tomsk and Uralsk.⁴³⁷ With the exception of Tomsk, none of these were regime cities; they were very distant, smaller in size and, we can assume, behind in infrastructure compared to larger cities. These last two, in addition to being regarded as lacking prestige and being unpleasant, would also have directly influenced cultural elites’ ability to continue their work (due to limited work spaces and audiences).

National institutions attempted to improve their situation by moving to a “better” city, but their attempts usually met with failure even when prompted by acute need, and when they through the correct channels. If local authorities usually bowed to the weight of Moscow’s authority in accepting the most elite Moscow and Petersburg institutions in their major cities, they had more leeway in shunting evacuated national institutions to smaller towns. In one letter exchange from July 1942, the head of the Department for Art of Ukraine wrote to the secretary of the Central Committee Andreev with the following complaint. The Kharkov Shevchenko theater had arrived in Sverdlovsk from Voronezh (fleeing the 1942 German advance), where the local Party secretary Adrianov had

⁴³⁷ RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 75, l. 73.
promptly issued an order to resettle the theater in Nizhny Tagil, on the rationale that five theaters were already working in Sverdlovsk. The head of the Department for Art argued that the theater could be given the House of Culture of Uralmashtroi, and requested from Moscow “your decision on leaving the theater in Sverdlovsk.” Moscow apparently failed to weigh in with any vigor, since the theater eventually found itself in Tagil (and later, in a variety of small towns in Siberia).

Technically, the national theaters – as well as writers and other evacuees from national republics should have remained under the jurisdiction of their own government in evacuation. However, these parties usually failed to satisfactorily perform their functions. In a May 1942 report to the Department of Cadres by the vice-chairman of the KPDI L. Shapovalov, he complains of the head of the Ukrainian KPDI Kompaneets that

…the evacuation of Ukrainian institutions took place non-systematically and in a disorganized fashion…not one of the directors of the department has seriously occupied himself with the lives or activity of evacuated institutions, all the administration of evacuated Ukrainian institutions is carried out by the KPDI and its glavkami.

In the end the central KDPI took over much of the administration of these evacuees, interceding on their behalf with regional authorities and governments of Central Asian republics and attempting to improve their conditions, which were often extremely poor. In one example, Khrapchenko in addition to the chairman of the Latvian SNK had to write to the authorities in Ivanovsk obkom to protest the conditions of Latvian performers evacuated to the oblast. These included 66 people crammed into one

438 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 123 l. 5-8.
439 RGALI f. 962 op. 10 d. 51 l. 29. Report from Shapovalov to F. M. Butov, Upravlenie Kadrov TsK VKP, 8 May 1942.
damp barracks, insufficient food and warm clothing, and the lack of a permanent performance space.\textsuperscript{440} As early as July 1941, Fadeev wrote to Shcherbakov to explain that in connection with evacuation from western territories, talented national writers have found themselves “scattered across small towns and collective farms, in difficult material conditions and without opportunity for work.”\textsuperscript{441} Fadeev recommends recalling the most talented and “politically tested” to Moscow, where they could be of great assistance to the state; the rest should at least be moved to oblast centers, where at least contact with them can be maintained. Many evacuees from the occupied Western territories were Jewish and turned to prominent Jewish intellectuals and the JAC for assistance; in 1943, Mikhoels and Epstein wrote to Shcherbakov to inform him of the urgent need to assist writers evacuated from Ukraine, Belorussia, Moldova and the Baltics, many of whom had “no means of existence.”\textsuperscript{442} However, the KPDI was not willing to devote the same level of resources to ensuring desirable conditions for these institutions as they were for Moscow and Leningrad evacuees. During the war “good conditions” were in short supply, and as before the war Muscovites and Leningraders had first claim on them.

The power struggle over whether or not Moscow could insist on an institution gaining residence in a particular city took on particular significance in Central Asia, where in several cases the republic governments refused to accommodate Moscow’s demands. For example, the Council for Evacuation officially evacuated the Mossovet theater to Almaty, Kazakhstan’s capital. Upon its arrival, however, the Kazakh TsK and

\textsuperscript{440} RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1010, l. 7. Letter from Khrapchenko and Latsio to Paltsev, chairman of Ivanovsk obkom.
\textsuperscript{441} RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 68 l. 132. Letter from Fadeev to Shcherbakov, 18.VII.1941.
\textsuperscript{442} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 649 l. 19. Letter from Mikhoels and Epstein to Shcherbakov, 6 April 1943.
Sovnarkom refused it permission to remain and redirected it to Chimkent. Chimkent is Kazakhstan’s third biggest city, 759km from Almaty to the southwest, a destination that satisfied no one in the theater and led to complaints. The complaints forced the KPDI to dispatch a representative by the name of Plotkin to Kazakhstan in 1942 specially to investigate the theater’s conditions. He reported that the Kazakh governing organizations categorically refused to transfer the Almaty theater to Chimkent and bring the Mossovet theater to Almaty…here on Kazakh territory they will decide for themselves, where it is most sensible and comfortable to distribute the theaters.

Plotkin goes on to report that although he prepared a report recommending Mossovet’s transfer that the Kazakh head of the Administration for Culture Baimurzin had signed. However, before the report was distributed Baimurzin “went to the TsK and illuminated the question in an entirely different light, which served as one of the reasons the theater was refused.” This being said, despite the theater’s dissatisfaction it turned out that Chimkent had received it with great warmth and provided satisfactory material conditions. Perhaps for this reason, it seems Moscow did not insist in the end on the theater’s transfer, but compromised with lengthy summer guest roles in Almaty.

**Everyday Life: Housing and Provisioning**

Once it became clear the evacuated institutions could not be pushed further down the line, their members had to be provided with housing and workspace and fed. These

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443 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 75 l. 71. Report from Khrapchenko to Andreev, 29 November 1941.
444 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 919 l. 67. 19.III.1942.
445 Ibid., l. 67.
tasks fell squarely within the jurisdiction of local authorities, forcing evacuated institutions to work closely with them; this was the first sphere of interaction between the two groups. These interactions also turned upon the most difficult questions: distribution of scarce resources. Here as well, social, cultural and power hierarchies worked in the evacuees’ favor, dictating that the most elite cultural institutions received the best housing, workspace and rations that the regions had to offer, at the direct expense of regional communities.

The most frequent reason that local authorities initially attempted to reject evacuated institutions was simple lack of space in regional centers. As the chairman of the Molotov oblispolkom wrote on the KPDI’s letter evacuating the Russian Museum to Molotov in September 1941, “Reject – nowhere to put them.”\textsuperscript{446} By the time cultural organizations arrived (especially from Moscow later in fall 1941), these cities were already struggling to cope with the enormous influx of evacuees, refugees, and mobilized soldiers that had inundated them. Almost half of all evacuated Soviet factories and 2.2 million people were evacuated to the Urals alone, where prewar populations had been something around eight million.\textsuperscript{447} All indoor spaces were at a premium. Schools were converted into hospitals or barracks; film theaters into factories. Given the rapid urbanization that had occurred during the 1930s, with one scholar arguing that the Urals’ urban populations doubled between 1926-1940, many of these cities had experienced


\textsuperscript{447} \textit{Stranitsy istorii Urala}, 102. For approximation of population of Sverdlovsk, Cheliabinsk and Molotov oblasts, see V. A. Zhuravleva, “K voprosu o chislennosti gorodskogo naseleniia Urala po Vsesouznoi perepisi 1939 g.,” \textit{Vestnik IuUrGU} 13 (2010), 32. A chart gives the entire population of Molotov oblast as 2, 082, 166; of Sverdlovsk oblast as 2, 512, 175; and of Cheliabinsk oblast as 2, 802, 949.
acute housing shortages even before the war. During the war, as their populations increased by half again or even double their prewar capacity, the housing situation became almost unbearable. In Cheliabinsk, where the population by several times during the war, there were only 2 square meters of housing per individual, and some people had to live in bathrooms from which the tubs had been removed. In the first year of the war, the population of small regional town Chistopol skyrocketed from 25,000 to 40,000 – in addition to the writers’ colony, it hosted several evacuated factories including the Second Moscow watch factory, now repurposed for defense work. Molotov, which had received the status of oblast administrative center only in 1938, saw its population double from 300,000 in 1939 to 600,000 in 1943 after receiving 27 evacuated institutions in 1941-1942. At the same time, available housing increased only by 12% -- as a result overall living standards declined from 4 meters per person to 2.7 meters.

Evacuated cultural workers from Moscow and Leningrad laid immediate claim not only to housing, but to some of the most valuable real estate. It was general policy to try and house refugees within reasonable distance of their places of work. For those working in theaters, this meant directly in the city center. In cities still frequently defined by dirt roads and wooden houses without running water or plumbing, local authorities


450 G. Mukhanov, Chistopol’skie stranitsy (Kazan: Tatarskoe izd-vo, 1987).

turned over some of the city’s best housing to evacuated cultural institutions – centrally located, stone buildings, with a higher likelihood of some amenities. In some areas, local authorities went to the extremes of removing locals from their housing in the center to free up space for evacuees.\textsuperscript{452} Housing conditions and procedures for obtaining varied from city to city (to village), with the two constants being its scarcity and the need to receive official permission to remain within city limits. Housing for the evacuated intelligentsia usually took the form of hotel rooms, dormitories and shared private apartments (or rooms in houses in the villages). “Dormitories” could mean anything from regular barracks to converted buildings – schools, theater outbuildings, etc. For example, members of the Bolshoi theater orchestra lived in a former school building for several years.\textsuperscript{453} The MKHAT collective, upon arrival in Saratov, found itself temporarily lodged in the foyer of the local theater – with no beds, people slept on the floors and hung curtains between families.\textsuperscript{454} Writers in Chistopol, upon arriving, took up residence in the dormitory of the pedagogic institute that had been commandeered for their use. After obtaining a registration, the Writers’ Union “evacuation council” administration handed out orders for housing (signed by Aseev, Fedin, and a few others).\textsuperscript{455} Writers then had to go inquire about rooms themselves. After visiting an acquaintance on the outskirts of Chistopol, writer Nikolai Vinogradov-Mamont recalls that “on the way home to the hotel I stopped at every house in search of a room…” And that was still in August 1941, before the main wave of people had arrived. Vinogradov-Mamont managed to resolve his

\textsuperscript{452} Mark Mudrik, \textit{Teatral’nye povesti} (Omsk: 2000), 95. He refers to this as a general phenomenon, not necessarily connected to housing the intelligentsia.
\textsuperscript{453} RGALI f. 1337 op. 5 d. 28 l. 38. Irina Morozova, “Vospominaniia.”
\textsuperscript{454} Mikhailovskaiia, \textit{Glazami serde’sem aktrisy} (Mosow: Iskusstvo, 1986), 182.
\textsuperscript{455} Lidiia Chukovskaia, \textit{Zapiski ob Anne Akhmatovoi} (Mosow: Vremia, 2007), 335.
problems with the assistance of Tveriakova, the chairman of the city soviet, who identified a room for him. As soon as writers found rooms acceptable, Tveriakova issued the stamp confirming the order. This example illustrates the importance of goodwill on the part of the local authorities. Had the city soviet proved recalcitrant in stamping writers’ housing orders, their condition would have worsened significantly. While much evidence of local officials’ frustration at the burden of evacuated cultural institutions remains anecdotal, it further manifests itself in the speeches of regional officials during such major regional creative conferences of which there were several during the war; an all-Urals literary conference held in Molotov in 1943, and a conference on the work of Urals theaters in Sverdlovsk in June 1943. At one of the program’s session, Krylova from the Molotov obkom announced that “the Party and Soviet organs made a mistake in that…the oblast opera theater was practically speaking disbanded. That has been corrected…but it is growing with enormous difficulty.” In 1944, the anonymous diarist at the Russian Museum in Molotov comments that after the celebratory meeting in honor of the Kirov theater’s departure, the ‘opinion of the ‘city fathers’ became known: ‘are we ever going to get rid of this theater?’”

For those arriving with an institution, the city housing office assigned them addresses. In Omsk, overflowing with refugees and evacuees, Vakhtangov actors benefited from the city’s efforts to “provide the theater with housing in the first

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457 Chukovskaia, 335.
458 RGALI f. 970 op. 5 d. 5, l. 23. Stenogram of tvorcheskaia sessiia, Teatry Urala I Kuzbassa. 18 June 1943.
459 Russian Museum f. 243 d. 23 l. 9. Diary entry, 18 June 1944.
instance."  Actors arrived at the office of the ispolkom, where he would give them addresses. The actors would immediately “occupy” the room by tossing in their mattresses and belongings, before anyone else could arrive. Theatrical collectives and other evacuated cultural institutions took over the only hotels available in these cities and occupied them for lengthy periods of time; both the most famous performers and top administrators from the Kirov theater in Molotov and the Malyi theater in Cheliabinsk were housed in hotels, for which they paid nominal fees (in Molotov at the time, the hotel was the only one in the city). In Molotov, the hotel’s residents included ballet dancers Ulanova and Vecheslova, composers Khachaturian and Prokofiev and writer Iurii Tynianov. The Malyi actors paid only 50% of the nominal tariff for their rooms. Even when the obkom/gorkom officially supported the evacuees’ presence, not all other authorities felt the same. According to the anonymous chronicler of the Kirov theater’s life in Molotov, “They were constantly trying to evict us [from the hotel]. By law one could only stay there 2 months, and we stayed for more than two years… but the Party obkom and gorkom were for us.” The same author adds, “‘they’ [sic] took revenge on us…but it was impossible to evict us.”

In the end there were simply too many evacuees to all be housed in the center; those without particular claim to fame found themselves relegated to the city outskirts or to even in smaller towns and villages in the oblast, where housing conditions were frequently significantly worse. Writers (as there were simply so many of them), artists

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460 Mudrik, 94.
461 Mark Mudrik, 95.
463 Teatralityi muzei TIK 22317 l. 45.
464 Ibid., l. 45.
and evacuees lower on the hierarchy (rank-and-file chorus or orchestra members) had less luck in this regard, frequently finding themselves relegated to smaller towns. Villagers were not eager to take on evacuees as tenants; some even tried to force tenants to leave, usually by making living conditions untenable. The Molotov oblispolkom had to issue a special directive to this regard in June 1942 to its rai/gorispolkomy. Apparently it had become a widespread practice in smaller towns and settlements throughout the oblast for local residents to harass their evacuee-tenants with the goal of ousting them from their living quarters. Episodes mentioned in the directive including refusing to heat the apartment and breaking the stove (after receiving a year’s firewood in payment); removal of furniture, window panes or winter window frames from rooms; removal of doors from rooms.\textsuperscript{465} Such episodes occurred so regularly that Stalin addressed the topic in a speech, and newspapers ran articles to on the need to welcome evacuees.\textsuperscript{466}

Evacuees also had to be fed. The process by which evacuated cultural institutions received food likewise varied dramatically, depending on the location and number of evacuees, and number of regional authorities involved. Provisioning policies changed frequently over the course of the war, and everywhere policies depended on local authorities to actually fulfill them. What did not change, however, was that evacuated intelligentsia found itself entitled to much higher rations than much of the Soviet population except for the most privileged workers. Whether or not evacuated

\textsuperscript{465} GAPK f. 564 op. 4 d. 77 l. 214-215. Letter to heads of rai/gorispolkoms of oblast, from Kochergin, 14.XI.1942.
\textsuperscript{466} For newspaper articles, see for example: Solikamskii Rabochii, 23 January 1942, “Zabort’ sia o nuzhdakh evakuirovannykh”; Trud, 6 December 1941, “Evakuirovannyev v kolkhoze”; and Trud, 29 January 1942, “Tak li nuzhno zabort’ sia o nuzhdakh evakuirovannykh.”
intelligentsia received the set limits depended on food supplies in a given area and relationships with local authorities. It hardly comes as a surprise that provisioning functioned according to a hierarchical basis during the war, this has been well established by a number of historians.\textsuperscript{467} In a situation where the state’s existence was threatened, it made sense to invest the most resources in the people most critical to facilitating the war effort. Nor did the hierarchies change, wartime provisioning functioned (with some modifications) according to the same categories as they did in the 1930s.\textsuperscript{468} They remained, as Osokina and Goldman describe, based in principle on the amount of physical energy expended in work and the importance of the particular branch of industry (from 1941-45, to the war effort).\textsuperscript{469} Bureaucrats at the time did not find this embarrassing, in line with the hyper-pragmatism that shaped much of the Soviet approach to the war effort. The wartime people’s commissar for trade Aleksandr Liubimov wrote with apparent conviction of the need to “avoid leveling” and establish norms corresponding to the importance of the worker to the Soviet state and defense effort.\textsuperscript{470} The greater surprise is that the state saw fit to elevate it to the highest levels of provisioning at a time when there was not enough for everyone before the creative

\textsuperscript{467} See Wendy Z. Goldman, “Not by Bread Alone: Food, Workers and the State,” in \textit{Hunger and War: Food Provisioning in the Soviet Union during World War II}, eds. Wendy Z. Goldman and Donald Filtzer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015). For a breakdown of worker hierarchies, see Goldman, 57. However, she does not address the question of the creative or technical elite and their place in the hierarchies. See also, Osokina.

\textsuperscript{468} Osokina, 248.

\textsuperscript{469} Osokina, 248. The “highest” and “first” categories included defense, coal, gas, chemical industries, metallurgy, mechanical engineering, timber and chemical plants, transportation, construction in the defense and heavy industry sectors.

\textsuperscript{470} A. V. Liubimov, \textit{Torgovlia i snabzhennie v gody Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny} (Mosow: Izd-vo Ekonomika, 1968), 27.
intelligentsia had had a real chance to demonstrate its loyalty and use to the war effort (arguably the effects of their efforts became clear only after the war). This readiness to invest such resources in the intelligentsia at a moment of crisis had to stem from, as Vladimir Shlapentokh writes, the state’s assumption “that they cannot influence the people effectively without the active participation of literature, the arts, and professional journalism, and without educated people as propagandists.”

In order 170 of 2 June 1941, the most qualified and elite members of the creative intelligentsia (for example people’s and honored artists of the USSR, winners of Stalin prizes and international competitions) were to receive the same rations as the top category of workers on the “special list.” A second group would receive the same rations as industrial workers and would also be attached to closed stores; this group included directors, artistic directors (khudruk), conductors, artists of the highest – second categories in theaters of all-union – second categories of importance. This second group also encompassed members of the creative unions. Additionally, the order provided for workers of art to receive “lunches in cafeterias of the closed type without noting of talons or…norms of provisioning.” In each city where there were more than 200 “workers of art,” the city was supposed to construct separate cafeterias for the intelligentsia; in other cities, they were to be attached to closed cafeterias of industries. The order does not specify the extra rations for the artists were supposed to come from city supplies, or if extra would be sent from Moscow. The “absence of fonds” was a common excuse for not

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471 Shlapentokh, 10.
472 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 1018 l. 8-9. Order 170, Narkomtorg.
473 Ibid., 8.
fulfilling central orders on provisioning of the intelligentsia; this would suggest that regions were supposed to receive central funds.\textsuperscript{474}

In 1943, Narkomtorg issued another order modifying that order 170. This modification actually put more power in the hands of the intelligentsia itself, in many areas. The new order called for “leading writers and masters of art” to receive without cards lunches according to liter “A” and 500 rubles of groceries a month.\textsuperscript{475} In a second group, honored workers of science and art, people’s artists, writers and mere masters of art would receive lunches of liter “B” and 300 rubles of groceries a month. Honored artists and theater directors (of all-Union and republic theaters) received liter “B” lunches and dry rations. At the same time, these people would retain their bread cards entitling them to limits for either “special list” workers or workers of industrial enterprises.\textsuperscript{476} However, lists of “leading writers and masters of art” and likewise merely “writers and masters of art” were compiled and submitted by the head of the respective creative unions, and the numbers included\textsuperscript{477} in these norms were fairly limited. “Leading writers” were numbered at 55 according to a list compiled by the Writers’ Union, and “leading masters of art” to 85 as approved by the KPDI. Mere “writers” were limited to 100, and “masters of art” to 280 people as decided by the KPDI.

\textsuperscript{474} Elsewhere, in a petition by writers to raise provisioning of the colony in Chistopol to the norms of other cities, writers suggest “providing writers with grocery cards [prodkartochkami] and furnish the funds for issuing these groceries.” RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1076 l. 33.

\textsuperscript{475} “Liter” refers to the quality of the provided food. Such lunches were of higher quality than normal and designated for a special group of people. They differed from “limitnoe pitanie”, which was limited in quantity but was not necessarily of the best quality.

\textsuperscript{476} GAPK f. 511 op. 1 d. 3 l. 24

\textsuperscript{477} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 649 l. 57. Raspioriazhenie SNK 12635-r, 30 June 1943.
Evacuated cultural elites also received rations (*paiki*). The norms of such rations were fairly generous given the Soviet Union’s condition at the time, but also far from providing a comfortable existence for their receivers, particularly those who had to feed families.\(^{478}\) In 1943, rations for workers of art and culture as established by Narkomtorg included: 2.2kg of meat or fish, 1kg of fat, 2kg of macaroni, 2kg of sugar or candy, a piece of soap, 10kg of potatoes and 5kg of vegetables.\(^{479}\) Virtually all members of the intelligentsia depended on these distributions for survival. In 1942, Mikhail Isaakovskii in Chistopol wrote to his friend Boris Sergeevich Burshtyn to congratulate him on acceptance into the Writers’ Union. Immediately after his congratulations, he inquires as to whether or not Burshtyn receives the “so called ‘writers’ ration” and recommends that if he does not, he immediately appeal to be included in the “list.” “I have every month 500g sugar, 100g grain, 900g meat, 900g fish, and 400g butter…in short, though even this is too little, all the same it’s some reinforcement.”\(^{480}\)

Few members of the cultural elite found themselves well-fed during the war, particularly as many shared their rations with numerous family members who rations as “dependents” were very low. Even the most privileged theaters, such as the Kirov, had their dire cases. In December 1941, a doctor’s report concluded that 250-300 theater...

\(^{478}\) Only artists, writers and performers (as well as some administrative and support staff) received the rations set for the intelligentsia. Family members, if they could not find employment that would get them a higher ration, subsisted on dependent rations, and the breadwinners shared their food with the rest of the family. This became an extensive problem later in the war; no matter how much the authorities increased the culture elites’ rations, they remained malnourished after giving their food to their dependents.

\(^{479}\) GAPK f. 511 op. 1 d. 3 l. 25.

employees a month required “extra groceries” according to prescription.\textsuperscript{481} In 1943, the theater experienced a sharp decline in the available groceries, leading in turn the “nutritional value” (\textit{pitatel’nost’}) of the cafeteria meals to deteriorate. As a result, officials recorded cases of dysentery, scurvy and tuberculosis.\textsuperscript{482} As one singer recalled in 1943, “Yesterday I came out onto the stage to sing Trike [in Evgenii Onegin], and my knees were shaking from hunger.”\textsuperscript{483} Nonetheless, given the food shortages facing the Soviet Union during the war, the creative elite’s provisioning was generous.

It should be noted that Narkomtorg’s standards of provisioning were not written for evacuees in particular, but for all members of the intelligentsia who met the criteria, theoretically regardless of location. However, “qualified” writers and actors were disproportionately from Moscow and Leningrad, meaning that evacuees (particularly well-known ones evacuated to major regional centers) received these limits more frequently than regional residents. Those dividing up the spoils did their best to try to distribute the wealth as best as possible; as the secretary of the Writers’ Union wrote to one evacuated writer, “the main thing was to make sure all valuable writers received limits.”\textsuperscript{484} The Kirov theater also attempted via their cafeteria to distribute as much food to as many people as possible. As one administrator remarked in April 1943, the Kirov’s cafeteria should have been serving 600-700 people, while instead it served 3500.\textsuperscript{485} At

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\textsuperscript{481} TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 6 d. 78, l.124. Pamiatnaia zapiska o forme prodovolstvennogo snabzheniia, priniatoi za sistemu v teatre im S. M. Kirova for November and December 1941. The report makes no mention of the employees’ capacity – whether they were performers, administrative workers or otherwise.
\textsuperscript{482} TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 8 d. 96, l. 15. Protocol zasedania partbiuro, 5 April 1943.
\textsuperscript{483} Teatral’nyi muzei TIK 22317, l. 39.
\textsuperscript{484} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 643 l. 32.
\textsuperscript{485} TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 8 d. 96 l. 14.
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the same time the commercial fonds had been annulled, so that “receiving groceries for only part of the theater’s workers, the cafeteria is obliged to provide meals for all theater workers and their families.”

Those less “leading” members of the creative intelligentsia, often clustered in smaller numbers in smaller towns without an important institution to negotiate for them, had far less luck with rationing and found local authorities (already overwhelmed by demand for provisions) less than amenable to their requests. For example, after a personal interview with Mikoian, even Marietta Shaginian was only able to secure 16 “limits” for Sverdlovsk writers, who at the time numbered in the 70s. In January 1944, a writer in Rostov wrote to the Union to point out that Rostov writers are receiving provisioning at the lowest levels; he then comments that “evidently, all these limits are distributed amongst Moscow writers and writers living in the provinces do not receive anything.” In other words, even in evacuation evacuees remained “Moscow writers”; they retained a special, separate status that separated them from their local counterparts.

Conflicts occasionally when evacuated intelligentsia felt its place of residence negatively impacted its material well-being. In late 1942, a group of writers in Chistopol (including Trenev, Fedin and Isaakovskii), wrote to Litfond, Narkomtorg, and the KPDI. In the letter, the group complained that Chistopol was not included in the norms set for provisioning in other major cities. Additionally, the paiki provided by the Tatar republic were half as much (or less) as those in other places: they received 900 grams of meat/fish,

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486 TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 8 d. 96 l. 15. No explanation is giving for why the “commercial fonds” were annulled.
487 Marietta Shaginian, Ural’skii dnevnik, 190. I suspect that these limits probably went to evacuated writers, not locals.
488 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 693 l. 65.
500g sugar and 400g of grains. The local organization of Tatresptorg was unable to hand out anything more.\textsuperscript{489} The petitioners wished to have Chistopol norms raised to the same as Sverdlovsk, Molotov, Novosibirsk and other cities. A more common complaint was that despite Moscow’s instructions, local provisioning authorities simply refused to give out rations, or to attach people to specific stores. As late as 1944, a letter from the Rostov Writers’ Union to the central administration of the Writers’ Union lamented that “the oblispolkom pays little attention to our needs,” and they receive provisioning at the lowest level.\textsuperscript{490} In Chkalov, where a number of evacuated writers were living in desperate conditions, the local branch of the Writers’ Union wrote to Skosyrev in 1943: “Writers have not received firewood, potatoes, household supplies, all that which people whose work is considered necessary receive (all academics, actors, composers, etc.) The letter elaborates, “this can be explained by the nasty attitude towards evacuated writers by local party organizations.”\textsuperscript{491} The tiny group of evacuated writers in Krasnoiarsk could not get attached to a cafeteria or receive bread cards (along with firewood or electricity). Their frequent trips to Gortorg to request cafeteria access finally exasperated local Gortorg officials, who exclaimed “what are you pushing for, writers, writers, when even some of our directors of some industries are not attached to cafeterias.”\textsuperscript{492}

\textsuperscript{489} RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1076 l. 33. Letter from group of Chistopol writers to Litfond, copies to Narkomtorg and Khrapchenko, no date.
\textsuperscript{490} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 693 l. 65. Letter from Rostov writers to central administration of the Writers’ Union, January 1944.
\textsuperscript{491} RGALI f. 631 op. 6 d. 670 l. 87. Letter to Skosyrev from Biuro of Chkalov oblast otdel SSP, X.1943.
\textsuperscript{492} RGALI f. 631 op. 6 d. 670 l. 43. Letter from Mikhail Skuratov to oblast Writers’ Union, 11 June 1943.
Separately came the questions of electricity, heat and firewood, and garden plots. Firewood played a crucial role in the lives of those living in private apartments (whose living spaces would otherwise go unheated), while electricity was necessary for writing at home, particularly during the limited winter daylight hours. Receiving these also required the cooperation of local officials, both to have these things provided and for firewood, to obtain transportation for them. Vinogradov-Mamont’s diary mentions innumerable trips to the city soviet to receive kerosene. An organization’s success (or lack thereof) in obtaining these goods was degree dependent on their ability to organize and establish the necessary relationships with the obkom or gorkom. To this end, larger groups with a legally formulated existence had a significant advantage as opposed to individuals. For example, in Sverdlovsk evacuated writers expended a good deal of effort forming a “Literary Center” and convincing Fadeev to issue the necessary documents to create a “legal entity”493 that would then represent writers living in Sverdlovsk and Molotov territories.

The Molotov Example

Accommodating evacuated cultural elites in conditions of limited resources meant their arrival came at the direct expense of local cultural institutions, who found themselves pushed out into smaller regional cities and towns. Theater buildings and stages already existed in many regional centers.494 Even in those not large enough to

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493 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 572 l. 64. Unfortunately for those living in Sverdlovsk, it seems the government forbade the founding of “filialy” of all-union organizations.
494 The spread of theatrical activity across Russia was obviously not a post-1917 phenomenon. According to one account, in 1899 “European Russia” had 189 theaters, while Siberia had 9. See I. Petrovskai, Teatr I zritel’ provintsial’noi Rossii (L: Iskusstvo, 1978), 133. Actual theater buildings are much harder to count.
already have an independent opera house, performances spaces often existed in houses or
palaces of culture (dom kul’tury), though these were often repurposed at the start of the
war. In any case, these spaces frequently already housed a local troupe, and herein lay
one of the first major issues with the evacuees. If the evacuated troupe could successfully
insist upon the right to live and work in a particular city, facilitating this usually meant
the removal of the local troupe already working in the given space. Most regional cities
could not realistically support multiple troupes of the same genre due both to budgetary
reasons, an absence of workspaces and a lack of sufficient viewer; as with everything
else, the more prestigious evacuated institutions took precedence. In some cases, this led
directly to the liquidation of the local troupe (often already under severe pressure from
the draft and financial cuts in any case). The liquidated troupe’s more talented members
were often absorbed into evacuated collectives, while others found themselves reassigned
to the army or other jobs unrelated to their specialty. In other cases, regional authorities
ordered local performance groups and artists to vacate their buildings and to move to a
smaller city or town in the same oblast for the duration of the war. The demotion of local
troupes could arouse tensions between evacuees and virtually all regional residents, loyal
to “their” cultural elites. The case of the Molotov Opera and Ballet theater was not
untypical.

Molotov had been a major Russian regional center well before the 1930s; before
the revolution, it had been the capital of Molotovskaia guberniia, comprised of Molotov,
Sverdlovsk and a number of other cities on both sides of the Urals. Though it ceded
primacy to Sverdlovsk after the Russian civil war ended and Sverdlovsk was made
capital of the Urals district, it retained many of the features of a regional capital. These
included one of Russia’s oldest opera houses, built in 1870, that had had at least a semi-permanent troupe before the war. When the war broke out, the theater company immediately implemented many of the standard procedures for transferring to a war footing. The amount of time for new production was shortened from 20 to 15 days, with a maximum budget of 15,000 rubles; extra staff were let go. The theater resolved to “bring in…the latest reports from Sovinformbiuro, exhibitions of antifascist posters, and war newspapers. On Mondays there should be plays accessible to everyone; on Tuesdays, concerts with a defense theme” Despite these measures, which were commonplace amongst performing arts collectives in 1941, money remained extremely tight. In August 1941 the company was on tour in Chkalov when they received alarming news. In accordance with an overall decrease in state funding for theaters, many were being liquidated; the KPDI suggested that the Molotov opera reduce itself by 25-30%. The Molotov authorities were trying to preserve the theater, but having difficulties; the theater’s return from Chkalov would cost 200,000 rubles, which no one had at the moment.

Here the Party records break off for a month or so, but the theater apparently made to back to Molotov. A decision of the oblast ispolkom from 11 September 1941 dictates the following: “Liquidate the Molotov oblast theater of opera and ballet. Dismiss the entire staff of the theater, transferring to the Leningrad Kirov theater of opera and ballet a group of soloists…according to a list determined together with the all-union

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495 In the 1930s, the orchestra (approx. 35 people) suffered from constant turnover and a “nomadic lifestyle.” The ballet troupe was also quite small and of a low level. See Permskii gosudarstvennyi ordena trudovogo krasnogo znameni akademicheskii Teatr opery i baleta im. P. I. Chaikovskogo (Moscow: Leto, 1970).
496 GAPK f. 1293 op. 1 d. 42 l. 141. Protocol of partorg of Molotov opera theater, July 1941.
497 GAPK f. 1293 op. 1 d. 42 l. 146.
This list invariably would include many of the more senior and qualified performers. A short time later the ispolkom also transferred all of the Molotov opera’s property to the Kirov theater. These proceedings understandably aroused indignation amongst the former theater’s members, necessitating the intervention of the theater’s administration.

At the meeting on 5 September 1941, the theater’s director announced the impending liquidation. The Kirov theater, he explained, had been evacuated to Molotov “as a theater of all-union significance, that it was necessary to preserve as a creative unit.” However, neither he nor the local authorities had managed to find money to support the continued existence of the Molotov theater (in the amount of 50,000 rubles a month), and the KPDI had refused them. Though Liutravin raised the objection that “in practice…such theaters as ours are not liquidated due to the arrival of another theater” and declared that the obkom should have obtained the money from Moscow, another party member informed him that “our task is to correctly orientate the theater collective as to the reasons for its liquidation. The decision of the VKI as to the preservation of the academic theaters is the main reason for the … liquidation of our theater.” While the expressions of discontent in 1941 end here, one can guess at their intensity from a 1944 report on perspectives for art in Molotov krai. Gitelman, the head of the local branch of the Committee for Artistic Affairs, commented that

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498 GAPK f. 564 op. 2 d. 90 l. 42. Reshenie Molotovskogo ispolkoma no. 1021, 11 September 1941.
499 GAPK f. 564 op. 2 d. 90 l. 75. Reshenie Molotovskogo ispolkoma no. 1040, 27 September 1941.
500 PermGANI f. 1293 op. 1 d. 42 l. 155, protocol of closed party meeting of Molotov opera and ballet theater.
501 PermGANI f. 1293 op. 1 d. 42 l. 156
It’s true, not all comrades understood that in order for the Kirov theater to work productively any by the way establish its work much better than other evacuated theaters, it was necessary to close up our opera theater, the necessity of which many comrades did not understand, they didn’t understand our responsibility and the political importance of this for today. We had to conduct major work to struggle with these unhealthy moods.\textsuperscript{502}

One can understand these moods, looking at what awaited the remnants of the Molotov opera theater. In the end, a number of top soloists joined the Kirov theater. A small collective of those remaining after the draft and Kirov theater had selected their members, no more than 20 people, eventually re-formed as a result of the performers’ desire not to see their theater entirely destroyed.\textsuperscript{503} It led an itinerant existence during the war, traveling throughout the smaller mining towns of Molotov oblast, including Lys’vy, Solikamsk, Kizel’ and finally to Krasnokamsk, performing in marginal conditions primarily for miners and other workers.\textsuperscript{504} In late 1942 the theater was officially reorganized, and from 1943 gradually began to replenish its company. As late as 1945, though, when it had was already established once again in Molotov, the theater remained significantly understaffed.

The displacement of local counterparts concerns not only theaters, though these cases were particularly pronounced since entire collectives had to vacate their usual space. It also concerned art museums, artists and writers, all of whom found themselves suddenly “second-best” in the face of the Moscow and Leningrad arrivals. When the Russian Museum arrived in Molotov, having been redirected there after initially

\textsuperscript{502} PermGANI f. 20 op. 1 d. 2786, l. 37.
\textsuperscript{503} GAPK f. 1588 op. 1 d. 538 l. 14 “Ravitie teatral’noi kul’tury v Molotovi”, N. N. Davidovich and A. K. Sharts.
\textsuperscript{504} Ibid., 15.
evacuating to Gorky, local authorities met them with distinct coolness. They refused the museum permission to unload their cargo for several weeks on the basis of lack of space; instead, they offered them unheated buildings in a regional town some distance away from Molotov. Once again, Moscow had to intercede directly in order to secure the museum permission and suitable buildings to house their items. Molotov already housed a picture gallery before the war, run by Nikolai Serebrennikov. Apparently, he viewed the arrival of the Russian Museum as a direct threat to the interests of his gallery. An anonymous diary maintained by one evacuated museum worker notes on 14 October 1941 that “Serebrennikov is trying not to admit either us or the things,” remarking several weeks later that “Serebrennikov is trying to squeeze us out of here.” Serebrennikov’s worries had plenty of basis in fact. The Russian Museum workers insisted on using the picture gallery as the primary location for storing their cargo, resulting in the gallery’s main function shifting from propaganda and agitation purely to storage, which appears to have enraged Serebrennikov. As late as 1944, he argued passionately to free the gallery from use as a storage space in a letter to obkom secretary for agitation and propaganda:

It is necessary to remove the Molotov picture gallery from the condition of conservation, in which its activity is limited to the function of preserving museum items…even when closed for viewers, the gallery should be used for the wide propagation of art…

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506 Russian Museum f. 243, d. 23, l. 4.: Vospominaniia sotrudnikov GRM ob evakuatsii.”
507 PermGANI f. 1 op. 22 d. 441 l. 99ob.
As long as the evacuated items occupied the space, Serebrennikov’s wishes remained unfulfilled, though he continued his one-man battle to have the evacuated works removed.

Writers, particularly those gathered in small numbers in remote cities, also occasionally hinted at their cool reception by locals, both authorities and their local counterparts: from Novosibirsk, writers in 1942 reported to the central presidium that while they currently have good relationships with local writers, this had not always been the case. “We had to overcome the existing amongst some people “local patriotism” and the tendency to consider that non-Siberians – are not Aryans (ariitsami).” There were also 1-2 local writers, with whom we had to conduct “explanatory work.”

The small group of writers who found themselves one way or another in Krasnoiarsk wrote that

…”We of course were expecting great attention and warmth…not fully understanding and weighing local interests and particularities. However that may be, specifically during the first months we felt a certain coolness, indifference, we were regarded as some sort of alien body…falling out of thin air and dictating our own laws and tastes….”

The head of the literary section of the Vakhtangov theater wrote to Fadeev in 1943 that “in us they [local authorities] see undesirable foreigners…” Mikhail German, evacuated as a child with his mother to a village outside Molotov, most likely had the correct characterization in many cases: “With time the hatred towards evacuees gradually degenerated into condescending indifference – there was no way to escape each other.”

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508 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 602 l. 39. Report of Novosibirsk writers on their work to Prezidium, 22.6.1942.
509 RGALI f. 631 op. 6 d. 670 l. 43. Report on work of Krasnoiarsk writers to oblastnaia komissiia SSP, 11 June 1943.
510 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 643 l. 40. Letter to Fadeev, 12.VI.1943, signature impossible to read.
511 Mikhail German, Sloznoe proshedshee (St. Petersburg: Iskusstvo, 2000), 76.
The more negative reactions to writers almost certainly stemmed from their large numbers, resulting in their distribution across a far greater number of cities, and lack of obvious purpose in the immediate months of the war.

Molotov had not had a strong writers’ organization before the war – though some sources indicate it had its own branch of the Writers’ Union that formed in 1940, other sources indicate that the evacuated writers who arrived in 1941 provided indispensable assistance in officially organizing the branch’s work. While in 1940 there were only 5 members of the Writers’ Union active in Molotov, the influx of evacuees brought this number up to 71 by the end of 1941.512 Though contemporary sources reveal little in the way of conflict between locals and evacuees, a report dated 1944 (when most evacuees had returned home) suggests the frustration experienced by local writers: “The Molotov literary active somehow moved to the background, and while front and center Leningraders and Muscovites are speaking, on whom great hopes rested.”513 Molotov writers found it particularly galling after the war that their sacrifices effectively went unnoticed by both local authorities, while evacuated writers had been surrounded by attention and care from both local and central authorities. In a 1944 speech at a meeting of the Molotov branch of the Writers’ Union, branch leader Aleksandr Speshilov declared that

…it should be said, that Molotov writers have not found the appropriate attention from Molotov organizations…they are still in poor everyday conditions… if the

512 GAPK f. 1188 op. 1 d. 1 l. 1. Spravka izotcheta prezidiuma soiuza sovetskikh pisatelei SSSR “Pisateli Molotovskoi oblasti,” 6.IX.1944.
513 GAPK f. 1188 op. 1 d. 1 l. 22. Spravka izotcheta…
Molotov organizations showed some attention to Leningrad writers living in Molotov, now it is time to take care of native Molotov writers.\footnote{GAPK f. 1188 op. 1 d. 1 l. 4. Spravka iz otcheta…}

While the local intelligentsia accepted the necessity of moving to the back burner for the duration of the war, it expected that its efforts would be rewarded afterwards. With theaters, these rewards proved to be slow but forthcoming, with a number of theaters promoted to first tier status within a year or two after the war’s end.\footnote{GAPK f. 942 op. 1 d. 32 l. 10. Nash Teatr, reprint of postanovlenie SNK SSSR from 20 August 1945.} The Molotov opera and ballet theater, for example, received republic level status beginning from January 1946, and in December 1946 received the Order of the Red Banner of Labor, thereby becoming the first “peripheral theater to become an order-bearer.”\footnote{For this claim, see M. Stepanov and Iu. Silin, Permskii Akademicheskii Teatr Opery I Baleta im. P. M. Chaikovskogo – 125 let: Istoriiia v faktakh i komentariiakh (ZAO Tsentr Operativnoi Pechati: 1996), 19. Also GAPK f. 942 op. 1 d. 32 l. 15, Nash Teatr 26 September 1946.} It took Molotov writers, however, much longer to achieve the same sorts of professional and material recognition.

The initial reaction to the evacuated intelligentsia in many ways differs little from the evacuation of the civilian population (such as it was) or evacuated factories. What set the intelligentsia apart was its ability to insist upon a certain ordering of their affairs, generally at the direct expense of their local counterparts or local communities, broadly speaking, without real challenge. Once an institution won the right to remain in a particular city, they generally did not have to battle for workspace or housing. The unchallenged hierarchy of institutional “worth” and the evacuated institutions’
connections to Moscow enabled them to claim regional resources for their own purposes. The main exception here seems to have been when more than one evacuated collective arrived to the same city, in which case the more prestigious institution got first priority.

**Local Authorities and Evacuated Culture: The Tide Shifts**

By late 1941, “settling” the evacuees had been completed and attention turned to establishing working relationships. Several things encouraged a shift in attitudes towards evacuated intelligentsia, but the most important was increased understanding of the benefits evacuated culture might bring. These benefits came in two forms: raising the overall level of “culture” of a given city, and their assistance in wartime agitation and propaganda.

Moscow did not leave the evolution of friendly relationships with local authorities entirely to chance, but did their best to encourage positive developments by explaining to local authorities how the intelligentsia might assist them, exposing local authorities to unfamiliar forms of work by the intelligentsia and demonstrating its potential uses. By late 1941 the KPDI had begun dispatching officials all over the Soviet Union to regulate these relationships; such trips would continue for the duration of the war. These trips were especially important to writers, whose value usually did not immediately occur to local authorities. Aleksandr Fadeev and other representatives of the Writers’ Union engaged in a flurry of such activity in late 1941. In November Fadeev arrived to Chistopol, where his wife was living. During his time there, he instructed local authorities on how they might best put evacuated writers to use:

A. A. Fadeev’s meetings with party and city leaders help them better understand their role in mobilizing writers’ strengths. The raikom began to more frequently attract writers, actors, musicians for participation in events specially organized for
party-economic (*partiino-khoziatstvenno*), agitational and propaganda actives of the city and region.\textsuperscript{517}

In a sign of the significance the state attached to the intelligentsia’s work, even Khrapchenko appears to have traveled to Sverdlovsk in November 1941, where he “accomplished a lot in the obkom for workers of art.”\textsuperscript{518} Agnia Barto recounts the cold welcome that writers had initially received in Sverdlovsk, where “literary evenings had not been accepted and at first were received rather coolly. Now [mid-1942] they are a desirable occurrence.”\textsuperscript{519} This sort of instruction played an important role both in helping the creative intelligentsia begin working again as quickly as possible, and in helping local authorities see the value of the newly arrived evacuees. As authorities began to perceive the evacuees’ potential value, their attitudes towards them changed.

Usefulness was not the only thing to have influenced officials’ opinions, of course. Some officials seem to have been won over by a personal fondness for the arts; as one historian writes,

> “the nomenklatura circles of Molotov were well aware of the partiality of the boss— that was what they privately called Kuzma Mikhailovich Khmelevskii – to the people of the theater: he provided them without apartments without any line, occupied himself with the allocation of honorary titles, sent salutatory telegrams.”\textsuperscript{520}

\textsuperscript{517} Mukhanov, *Chistopol’skie stranitsy*, 7.
\textsuperscript{518} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 572 l. 22. Letter from Tersian(?) to Fadeev, 11 December 1941.
\textsuperscript{519} RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 621 l. 24. Speech by Agnia Barto at zasedaniia prezidiuma SSP SSSR, 13 May 1942.
\textsuperscript{520} Oleg Leibovich, *V Gorode Mosow: Ocherki Sotsial’no Povsednevnosti sovetskoi provintsii* (Mosow: Rosspen, 2008), 98.
Generally speaking, regional authorities seem to have shown an enjoyment of the social company of the Moscow and Leningrad intelligentsia, likely in part for the satisfaction of claiming some of their cultural capital for oneself. The son of the Molotov obkom chairman recalls in his memoirs that while local performers and writers were not invited to social events, but “between the evacuees and those arriving on guest roles real famous people came – Ulanova…Kaverin, Tynianov, Zavadskii.” Such people appeared in the provinces as representatives of Soviet power, not just art. The more prestigious members of evacuated collectives could rely on regular invitations to semi-social gatherings with the local elite. For example, members of the Vakhtangov theater in Omsk celebrate the 1941 New Year holiday at the obkom’s “prerевolutionary” banquet, where the hungry actors could hardly believe the spread on the table. This could be reciprocal; requests by the Kazan Writer’s Union for the release of extra groceries for semi-social events often use the expected presence of republic officials as leverage for obtaining various delicacies in short supply, including wine, tobacco, sweets, and meat.

As 1942 wore on and the benefits of evacuees’ presence became clearer, the hopes of Vecheslova, the Krasnoiarsk writers and others – that regional cities might be excited to welcome evacuated cultural elites and view their presence as a privilege – were eventually realized. Local authorities gradually grew protective of their evacuated institutions, refusing to let them leave for other cities and attempting to hinder the

523 Konovalova, 161.
524 NA RT f. 7083 op. 1 d. 28, l. 59-60, 144. Request for release of groceries to Narkomtorg from SSP, July 1942; see further requests in the same file.
departure of theaters back to Moscow, which began in 1942. In stark contrast to 1941, in
1942 local authorities also began to actively solicit the presence of evacuated cultural
institutions or at least individual writers and artists. Evacuees contributed to a general
raising of local levels of culture in two senses – they “brought up” audiences to have
better taste, and they improved (or even created new) local cultural offerings by guiding
the development of local amateur cultural activities, or assisting «national» theaters,
establishing teaching institutes, and composing popular regional songs and sketches for
regional audiences based on local materials A higher level of culture in one’s city in turn
enabled regional authorities to either confirm or perhaps raise their city's place in the
geographical hierarchy. After all, a mining town with cultured miners could lay claim to
being “better” than one whose miners relaxed in an uncultured fashion. Local elites were
sensitive to their perceived status. Rather than simply relying on evacuees to make their
mark, did not hesitate to explicitly instruct them in how to do so.

Soviet authorities’ desire to raise the cultural level of regional workers was related
to the mass campaigns beginning in the 1930s, for kul’turnost or “culturedness.” In its
early stages, this was essentially a campaign for minimal standards in behavior to achieve
personal dignity worth of one’s new status as citizens of a socialist society: personal
hygiene, basic manners, elementary literacy were key elements of this campaign.
Eventually, or in its more advanced phases, kul’turnost aimed “to synthesize… the old
opposition between culture and civilization, high and low art, public and private
genres.” Vadim Volkov characterizes it as “a standard stock of cultural knowledge

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525 Svetlana Boym, “Kul’turnost: The Totalitarian Lacquer Box,” Common Places:
121.
which shaped the common cultural horizon,” while retaining its earlier emphasis on hygiene and behavior.\textsuperscript{526} But these campaigns revolved to reflect the idea that “cultured” people were familiar with and had some appreciation for high culture in particular – the sense that someone who had “mastered” culture was above those who had not. As Sheila Fitzpatrick put it, “the wife of a manager who was ignorant of Pushkin and who had never seen Swan Lake was an embarrassment.”\textsuperscript{527} This concept both brought the behavior of Soviet masses into agreement with “uniform social ‘cultured’ norms,” thereby disciplining their behavior somewhat, and integrating lower class and elite values.\textsuperscript{528} Additionally, as Shlapentokh noted, increases in mass education and accompanying riding incomes need to be paralleled by rises in “spiritual development,” if negative behavior such as alcoholism is not to arise.\textsuperscript{529} The state had a vested interest in providing “cultured” entertainment and relaxation opportunities, since workers who relaxed by attending the cinema or concerts, or took part in an amateur art or theater circle, were more effective and reliable workforce than if they spent their spare time drinking and fighting.\textsuperscript{530} Indeed, “uncultured” workers who engaged in hooliganism or other criminal


behavior and disrupted the workplace were a threat to the Soviet regime.\textsuperscript{531} Such concepts were especially important to the newly upwardly mobile Soviet middle classes, who were eager to rid themselves habits that might betray their working class or peasant origin, as well as acquire the cultural patina that would signify their belonging to the elite.\textsuperscript{532} Fitzpatrick has also suggested that Stalin considered the “new Soviet intelligentsia” to be “first-rate people”, of higher social worth than uneducated workers and peasants.\textsuperscript{533} Shortly after interest spiked in “acquiring” culture as part of a social transformation strongly supported by the state, actual opportunities – especially for regional elites – to access it increased as evacuated cultural institutions spread out across the country.

In 1943, a secretary of a regional kraikom wrote to Fadeev, explaining the poor prospects for the “20 beginning writers” in the krai. They tried to publish, but “nothing is coming of it because they still need to grow, their work is raw and weak.”\textsuperscript{534} The letter-writer wished to develop cadres of local talent who could write about the great changes taking place in the area. Therefore, they were specially requesting a brigade of Moscow writers to come and “enliven the work of local literary groups, inspiring it;” the secretary assures the brigade will be shown “special attention, will be warmly met” with all the necessities for productive creative work.\textsuperscript{535} Karavaeva outright refused to send a brigade,

\textsuperscript{531} Volkov, “The Concept of Kul’turnost,” 215.
\textsuperscript{532} Fitzpatrick, \textit{Cultural Front}, 218.
\textsuperscript{534} RGALI f. 631 op. 6 d. 670, l. 39. Letter to Fadeev from sek kraikom VKP Sosnoskii, 5.XI.1943. Location not stated.
\textsuperscript{535} Ibid., 39.
but did offer some advice on “bringing up” literary cadres. While large writers’ colonies existed in Sverdlovsk and Molotov, virtually none went to Cheliabinsk, to the dismay of local authorities. They frequently requested writers be sent to them, but as Fadeev complained at a 1942 meeting of the presidium of the Writers’ Union, “nobody wanted to go. We still have not been able to form a brigade of truly qualified writers.” The further away a city was, the less likely members of the intelligentsia were to go there voluntarily, regardless of the conditions promised them. This contributed to reinforcing the cultural hierarchies already solidly in place by 1942-1943.

The Urals also witnessed at least one attempt at commandeering an evacuated institution away from another city. Sverdlovsk arguably occupied the top of the hierarchy in the Urals, being larger and in possession of better infrastructure for the performing arts (including a large theater) but in fall 1941 escaped the arrival of most theaters. In the summer of 1942, the Kirov theater sent some of its ballet dancers to Sverdlovsk for some guest performances. It was common practice for evacuated institutions to send brigades to other regional cities on tours. The Sverdlovsk authorities (who had shown no interest in housing the Kirov theater in August 1941) were so impressed with what they saw that they began demanding on the arrival of the entire Kirov theater in Sverdlovsk – which amounted «to a second evacuation.» The Kirov theater (at least at the administrative level) having finally accustomed themselves to life in Molotov, had little desire to relocate to Sverdlovsk. Local authorities were on their side, as the transfer would have

536 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 621 l. 29. Stenograma zasedaniia prezidiuma SSP, 13 May 1942.
537 This changed in 1942, when MXAT had to be re-evacuated from Saratov to Sverdlovsk.
538 PermGANI f. 105 op. 8 d. 84 l. 118. Letter from Gusarov to KPDI, 6.IV.1942.
interrupted the theater’s summer work plan, including their pledge to release the new opera *Emelian Pugachev* in the fall for the anniversary of the October revolution, as part of their socialist competition with the Bolshoi theater. This was something the Molotov authorities stood to benefit from directly. An unsigned letter to Moscow with a report on the Kirov theater’s work admitted that the theater’s relationship with local Molotov organizations had been “somewhat clouded” by Sverdlovsk’s insistence. The author points out that to leave Molotov without the theater (which had been the “center of cultural life in the city and oblast) for the summer “would have been unpatriotic and ungrateful… especially since when the theater was in train wagons [in 1941] Sverdlovsk did not display any especial enthusiasm for accepting it and all the difficulties of receiving and settling it fell on the Molotov organizatons.” The Sverdlovsk authorities, not to be denied, turned to Moscow to plead their cause and Moscow initially sided with them. Evgenii Radin wound up having to go to Moscow to plead the Kirov theater's cause, armed with a letter from the Molotov obkom secretary Gusarov explaining that the obkom considered the transfer “unconditionally inexpedient” as it would disrupt the theater’s work on new premiers of opera *Pugachev* and ballet *Schast’e*. In the end the TsK and SNK had to weigh in, not only the KPDI. The Kirov theater prevailed and Sverdlovsk eventually accepted a compromise of mixed guestroles. However, the episode demonstrates the shift in attitudes towards evacuated institutions; if in 1941 Sverdlovsk had shown no interest in accepting the theater and Molotov had done so only

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539 TSGALI f. 2245 op. 1 7 d. 89 l. 109. Undated/unsigned letter to Aleksandr Ivanovich with report on conditions of theater’s work and everyday life, clearly written by senior Party member. Sometime in late 1942.  
540 PermGANI f. 105 op. 8 d. 84 l. 118.  
541 Ibid., 89.
under pressure, by summer of 1942 the two cities were sparring over who would host the theater for the summer.

In several other cases (particularly in remote Siberia or Central Asia), authorities tried to prevent the departure of an evacuated theater from their particular city or town in 1942 or 1943. Since these instances occurred in towns or cities of secondary importance, this was probably in the recognition that their towns were unlikely to enjoy cultural institutions of such quality again for any extender period of time. Locals could leverage the assistance of the evacuated cultural institutions in ways that would become much more difficult after they departed, regardless of any feelings of gratitude that may have remained. In 1942, the head of the Moscow Theater of Operetta in a letter to Shapovalov, deputy head of the KPDI, states that the «Stalinsk city authorities have ecstatically welcomed the theater and will fight for it to remain there until the very last minute of re-evacuation.»

In 1943 authorities in Stalinabad, temporarily housing the Leningrad Comedy Theater, insistently requested that the theater be left in Tadzhikistan for another year, noting their extreme success with local audiences and the extensive help they provided to local theater arts. This also applied to the departure of individual artists, some of whom remained after re-evacuation for set periods of time – not all of them by their own choice, but by agreement between the KPDI and local authorities on the distribution of cadres. Even in Sverdlovsk, in 1943 the local branch of the KPDI noted that they “received significant cadres by way of evacuation…now we are noticing strong

542 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937, letter from MTO to Shapovalov, 77. Stalinsk is now known as Novokuznetsk, a town near Russia’s southern border with Kazakhstan.
543 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 1096 ll. 52 and 54.
desire to re-evacuate, which could lead to greatly undesirable results. We think this question must be specially studied.”

Achieving lasting impact on regional communities came perhaps most easily to film studios such as Lenfilm and Mosfilm, invited to Almaty specifically in order to help Kazakhstan create its own film industry. In other areas, where evacuated institutions built on local foundations rather than created something entire new, evacuees needed somewhat more assistance in determining how they might leave lasting impacts, and encouragement to do so at all – something local officials were often eager to provide. Speeches by regional officials (many of whom sat in on the gatherings of evacuated institutions to voice their interests) articulate their expectation that evacuated cultural institutions would do their best to leave traces of their presence on local culture. In spring 1943, a member of the Molotov Leninskii raikom sat in on a Kirov theater Party meeting and encouraged the theater to «already be thinking about what Molotov will remain with when they leave, they need to already think now about how they can help the local opera.» At a Molotov obkom meeting, Krylova requested that the theater leave some of its members behind to direct their opera theater, further its development and the obtaining of ballet masters, choir directors and other cultural workers, who transmit the Leningraders’ cultural experience. In August 1943 several Molotov officials attended a meeting of the Kirov theater’s party organization, where one comrade Liampert noted that the theater should already be considering what Molotov will remain with upon its

544 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1047 l. 89. Report from Sverdlovsk branch of KPDI, 17 March 1943.
545 TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 18 d. 97 l. 27.
546 Karskaia, 90.
departure and how it might help the local opera. At another meeting, Krylova inquired “if the party had been involved with the question of which artistic cadres to leave behind in Molotov after re-evacuation,” suggesting that the decision to leave someone behind had already been taken. In response, the Kirov party organization remarked that they were waiting to hear who the city considered necessary. Such requests appear to have been not uncommon.

Moreover, in this area, the interests of regional authorities fully aligned with those of the central authorities. As Nikolai Gusarov declared at plenary session of the Molotov obkom in 1944, “Already in the course of the war the Party gave us the task of raising the level of culture in the Urals to that of Moscow and Leningrad. We will especially have to work on this problem in the postwar period…” The Soviet authorities had actively promoted the development of culture in the regions since early after the revolution and made “culturedness” an entire campaign. In accordance with this, many towns received theaters or performance spaces, houses of culture and clubs during the intensive construction and urbanization of the 1930s. The Soviets also encouraged amateur talent troupes, right down to the kolkhoz level. However, the difference between the quality of

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547 TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 d. 97 l. 83, protocol from meeting of July 1943.
548 PermGANI f. 24 op. 1 d. 13 l. 62. Stenograph of speech at Molotov obkom plenary session, 1944.
549 Large numbers of theaters, workers’ clubs, houses of culture, and other spaces for political cultural work were built in the 1920s and 1930s, after the violence and privations of the Revolution and Civil War had effectively destroyed much of the pre-revolutionary cultural framework. The Bol’shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia has the total number of “club institutions” in 1922 at 12,200 and 118,000 in 1940; the number of theaters in the Soviet Union by 1940 had risen to 908, though this number sharply declined during the war (only 502 existed in 1960), and by 1986 recovered only to 640. See Narodnoe khoziaistvo v SSSR za 70 let (Moscow: Finansy i statistika, 1987), 568. For attempts at culturing workers in the 1930s, see Kotkin, Magnetic Mountain, 180-1982.
regional performances (and the tastes and expectations of their viewers) was usually quite marked.\textsuperscript{550} In addition to using evacuated cultural institutions for openly agitational purposes, central and regional authorities recognized the enormous potential the evacuations carried for boosting regional levels of culture. As one Party figure from Cheliabinsk opined,

Sverdlovsk had the Theater of the Red Army, Cheliabinsk had the Malyi, isn’t this a most valuable factor in the development of taste of our viewers? The viewer who is brought up on the work of the Malyi theater for years changes…the viewer yearns to see the reflection of such mastery that inspired and overjoyed him.\textsuperscript{551}

Here, central authorities were firmly on the regions’ side. In an undated circular (presumably 1942), Falkovskii informed all theaters that

...up until this point our capital theaters have done very little to raise the stage culture of the republics and oblasts where they have been evacuated. The order of the KPDI on anniversary staging, requiring major directors to stage performances in republic and oblast theaters, should serve as the first step in bringing closer and assisting creatively the art of the periphery by leading theaters.\textsuperscript{552}

Falkovskii was referring to an order by the KPDI dispatching prominent directors from major theaters to regional and national theaters, where they were required to stage performances in honor of the October revolution. Central authorities did not reserve these instructions for written communication. Officials from Moscow traveled to the regions to inspect work\textsuperscript{553}, award prizes and take in premieres and conferences used these pretexts

\textsuperscript{550} See for example, RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 959 l. 78, an undated but clearly prewar report on the “Theaters of Molotov and Molotov oblast,” by one L. Mlechin. Mlechin is highly critical of the quality of performances by the oblast drama theaters; he admits that the local opera theater has talent, but is hampered by a lack of singers and poor direction.

\textsuperscript{551} RGALI f. 970 op. 5 d. 4 l. 47. Stenogram of creative session on theater work of Urals and Kuzbass, 1943. Speech by Krasnianskii from Cheliabinsk.

\textsuperscript{552} RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 1017 l. 65. Circular written by Falkovskii, undated, likely late fall 1942.

\textsuperscript{553} See Khrapchenko’s visit to Molotov in 1943. \textit{Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo},
to instruct evacuated collectives on their obligations to local communities. In Novosibirsk in 1942, after regaling his audience of “workers of art” at an all-city meeting with tales of German destruction of culture, Shapovalov went on to tell the evacuated theaters that their main task was:

To raise the theatrical culture of the region, oblast’, or republic where it is, achieve significant improvements in the work of local theaters, help them with practical advice, send to them for consultation work their leading leading workers with noted creative experience.  

Likely to the theaters’ dismay, Shapovalov pronounced that only having accomplished these tasks could the evacuees truly begin to prepare for re-evacuation to their homes. In a 1943 address to the Kirov theater after having observed their work in Molotov, Solodovnikov informed them that it was now necessary for the Kirov theater to help the Molotov organizations. Continuing, he pointed out that “You have raised the level of stage culture here, but after your departure that culture must not be allowed to sink. You must help…It is necessary that from Molotov amateur activities with time can be grown professional cadres.” Solodovnikov suggests that the theater will have to organize future trips to Molotov to continue assisting its development.

Beyond raising local culture levels, regional authorities came to appreciate the use of evacuated institutions in agitational and propaganda purposes, especially for the quality they brought with them (that became an important aspect of the propaganda message, see chapter IV on cultural production). Evacuees could increase the scale of cultural agitation in a way simply not practical given the comparatively limited resources

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554 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 969 l. 68. Speech by Shapovalov to all-city meeting of workers of art, Novosibirsk, March 1942.
previously accessible by regional cities; one needs only to remember the jump in Writers’ Union membership in Molotov from 5 to 71. In other words, the evacuations furnished regional authorities with unheard of “cadres.” By July 1942, not quite a full year after evacuation, the Kirov theater had given 599 concerts and performances; not one other cultural establishment in the oblast came close. The theater simply had far more people available to mobilize for this sort of work than any other ensemble in the area. In a 1943 Party-Komsomol report for the development of mass cultural work in Molotov, the author explains that entertainment establishments play an enormous role in bringing up the masses. The Kirov theater figures prominently in the proposed plan; of the 55 individuals to be sent to establishments to direct artistic amateur activity, 25 were to come from the Kirov theater. The resources of evacuated theaters also furnished cadres for the spring sowing campaign; 21 brigades gave 384 concerts in fields and kolkhozes, a form of agit-mass work that “mobilized collective farmers to take up their patriotic duty in front of the motherland and the front and conduct the spring sowing in the fastest time possible.”

Of course, we cannot measure the actual impact of concert performances or lectures on the 1942 sowing or harvest campaigns or on the recovery of sick and wounded soldiers. But we do know that local authorities attached significant importance to such activities, including cultural institutions in the overall plans for agitational

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557 PermGANI f. 105 op. 8 d. 326 l. 28. Report on agit-prop work to TsK soiuza rabotnikov iskusstv, 27.VII.1942.
558 PermGANI f. 1 op. 22 d. 441 l. 41.
559 PermGANI f. 105 op. 8 d. 326 l. 28a.
activities. The Kirov theater’s reports frequently refer to the “special task” assigned them by Party authorities, which typically involved brigades to entertain kolkhozes or mines, with specially prepared repertoire. In his 1944 speech cited earlier, Gusarov complained that the intelligentsia had not been widely used enough for “conducting political and cultural-enlightenment work amongst population.” He particularly advocated using cultural elites more for lectures in clubs, houses of culture, and reading huts/libraries. In a 1944 report on the Kirov theater’s work in Molotov, the secretary of the city soviet for agitation and propaganda characterized their work as “great social-political results, was real help to those who…forged victory here in the hinterland.” In other words, they thought these activities made a difference. Indeed, without some of the evacuated artists (who in Molotov produced the «TASS windows» posters), it is difficult to imagine how certain agitational goals could have been filled.

Finally, the presence and work of evacuated cultural figures had the benefit of attracting new resources and attention to these regional cities, a benefit local authorities sought to maximize. While the regions may have produced much of the Soviet Union's talent, by the 1930s Moscow had proved extraordinarily effective at sucking up rising regional talents to Moscow or Leningrad, who once arrived, did not necessarily turn their attention to local materials. Before the war regional writers, composers etc. had been known primarily in their own regions. As Tikhonov denounced at a plenary session of the

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560 TSGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 218 l. 8. Report on work of Kirov theater from 1941-September 1942.
561 PermGANI f. 24 op. 1 d. 13 l. 63. Stenogram of speech at Molotov obkom plenary session, 1944.
562 PermGANI f. 1 op. 22 d. 441 l. 115. Report by Makhanek, secretary of Molotov gorkomfor propaganda, May 1944.
Writers’ Union, “Bazhov has been writing for twenty years and not one writer has paid attention. The reader has long ago valued his works, but the critics didn’t even know of his existence.” Tikhonov was referring to the grandfather of “Urals” literature, Pavel Bazhov in Sverdlovsk, a writer already advanced in years by the time of the war. His work – rooted in Urals folklore, and therefore incorporating the all-important “local element” writers were being exhorted to capture – had received very little notice before the war, but his profile received a sudden boost with the arrival of a significant number of prominent writers to Sverdlovsk during the war. Selected by Karavaeva as the “local” representative for the ill-fated Urals Literary Center, he played prominent roles in the Urals literary conferences of the war years, well-attended by Moscow and Leningrad writers.

Evacuees not only frequently actively promoted local works, they also turned their own attention to local material, which then received prominence at an all-regional level thanks to the author’s name. This meant the regions had a chance to lift their profile a bit as articles on regional cities and works based on local materials began appearing in all-union newspapers and journals. As the regional kraikom secretary wrote rather sadly when requesting a writer’s brigade, “our krai is just as interesting, many-sided and heroic as our entire country Sadly, there is almost no one to write about it.” Regional achievements and themes had a new opportunity to take on all-Soviet significance. Evacuated figures might petition Moscow for various resources, for example demanding the formation of official chapters of the Writers' Union, or admission of individuals into

563 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 278 l. 14.
564 RGALI f. 631 op. 6 d. 670, l. 39, letter to Fadeev 5.XI.1943.
creative unions. Evacuees also clamored for the establishment of publishing houses and «thick» journals in regional cities; the presence of film studios led to the creation of regional film studios not only in Almaty but also in Stalinabad and even the Urals.565 Beginning from late 1943 and 1944, KPDI received an onslaught of requests from regional authorities for funds and cadres to create regional theater troupes in smaller towns in cities based on the “heightened demands of the working class.”566 One may conclude logically that part of this demand stemmed from enjoying evacuated culture, while part probably stemmed from the influx into Urals and Siberian towns of workers from other parts of the Soviet Union, perhaps with more developed taste. A final factor came from local frustrations that their sources of entertainment had been shut down early in the war and never been restored; people were unwilling to see this state of affairs remain permanent.567 Early that year in 1943 the Chelabinsk authorities (who had hosted the Malyi theater until late 1942) made a request to build an opera theater, “taking into account the enormous growth of Cheliabinsk’s population, and likewise the growth in the cultural demands of the workers.”568 Given Cheliabinsk’s status as a up and coming “industrial and cultural center” of the Urals, it was unbefitting for it to lack the corresponding cultural life. In Sverdlovsk, the local branch of the KPDI requested that based on the strength of its wartime work, the local opera and ballet theater be transferred

566 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1121 l. 4. Request to KPDI from Kochergin in Molotov oblast to open new stationary theater in Lysva-Solikamsk, December 1943.
567 RGALI f. 2075 op. 1 d. 122 l. 30, otchet for 1942 on the condition of institutions of Molotov otdel po delam iskusstv.
568 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1121, l. 113. Letter to Khrapchenko from Cheliabinsk obkom.
to all-union significance.\textsuperscript{569} Though the KPDI had to refuse most of the initial requests for lack of cadres and funding, after the war things began to look up. Not only were new theaters built, but many regional theaters were raised in status in 1945-1947, which carried an accompanying rise in the salaries received by theater workers.

**Local Residents: Intelligentsia and Others**

Smoothing over rough spots and establishing good working relationships with local authorities took cultural institutions comparatively little time – by early 1942 most evacuated institutions and groups had established functional relationships. Figuring out how to live with local communities took longer. The relationships between evacuees and locals often fell into one of two categories. First, relationships between evacuees and their regional counterparts, the local intelligentsia. The evacuees were in effect foisted onto the locals, into their workspaces and professional organizations; the two groups had no choice but to figure out how to accommodate each other. Also, each group could provide valuable assistance to the other; locals could smooth the arrival and initial setup of evacuees, and they in turn could redirect central attention and resources to locals.

Secondly came relationships with regular local citizens. These interactions seem to have fallen primarily into the category of landlord/neighbor, audience members, and at the markets.

The arrival of the evacuees must have aroused a mixed reaction from regular regional residents. Locals could distinguish evacuees simply by physical appearance – their clothing differed markedly from that available in the regions. “Against the

\textsuperscript{569} RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1047 l. 89. Report from Sverdlovsk branch of KPDI, 17 March 1943.
background of gray dismal overcoats, military uniforms and black quilted jackets, artists of the Leningrad theater in short coats and pillbox hats looked surreal! Many also were not used to the rigors of life outside Moscow and Leningrad, where general infrastructure was significantly better. Unfortunately, very little in the way of sources remain to enlighten us as to locals’ opinions of evacuees. The best we can do is guess at it from the perspective of the evacuees, who occasionally mention their landlords/neighbors in their memoirs. This reveals a very mixed bag. Some people had the good fortune to live with people more than willing to assist them in any way possible. Galina Konovalova with the Vakhtangov theater in Omsk recalls that upon receiving the upper floor of a two story wooden house for their family of six, upon arrival it turned out that the space was entirely devoid of furnishings of any sort. Their neighbors, living on the first floor, were kind enough to immediately offer, upon meeting the evacuated artists, a children's bed for Konovalova's baby daughter, mattresses, and a couple of chairs. She also recalls a few single male actors living with an old woman who cared for them as if they were her sons. However, stories also abound of deeply unpleasant (likely to both parties involved) experiences, as well as simple cultural barriers. Kirov theater choir member Nikolaenkaia featured in a satirical article for Krokodil: living with a Molotov surgeon, the article emphasizes the landlady's basic lack of hygiene and describes the dark, smelly atmosphere in the house. It turns out that this is due primarily to the presence of “a well-fed rooster and hens strutting about the room…they roost on the back of the bed.” In her horror at the «chickens and intolerable dirt,» the author forgets to acknowledge the

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571 Konovalova, 153.
572 Teatralnyi Muzei TIK 22317, 70.
fact that the chickens provided the surgeon with a vital source of protein and possibly income from the sales of eggs.

Another form of interaction between locals and evacuees of all sorts were the markets. Members of the intelligentsia, often very poorly prepared for the evacuation, frequented open-air markets to barter their possessions in exchange for the necessities of life in the regions. In addition to items they had brought from Moscow, the comparatively privileged evacuated intelligentsia could barter food from their rations or special provisions that they received. Natalia Sokolova, in Chistopol, recalls that the local villagers had not seen sugar for years on end, and their children frequently did not even know what it was (having only ever eaten honey as a sweetener). “More riches than a bag of sugar they couldn't imagine – that was a fairytale, something fantastic.” In exchange for the small portions of sugar or candy from the evacuees’ rations (that villagers were not entitled to), village women “were ready to give anything – flour, pork, butter, wool.” According to Sokolova, certain items of clothing could also have similar effects since they simply were never available in the regions: “Girls dreamed of a pair of pumps, but grew old without having obtained them.” The author of the anonymous chronicle at the Kirov theater remarks in 1942 that “at the market on Sundays you could meet anyone, distinguished artists and ‘lesser mortals’. They sold bread, vodka, matches and their clothing.” Frequently evacuee memoirs mention cases of being deceived at the market; and in general the enormous prices and extraction of goods for housing seem to have left

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573 RGALI f. 3270 op. 1 d. 26 l. 93.
574 Ibid., 94.
575 Ibid., 94.
576 Teatraily Muzei TIK 22317, l. 56.
deeply negative impressions in the minds of many of the evacuees. Sokolova describes
the Muscovites' amazement at the high quality of clarified butter available in Chistopol
from the surrounding villages; however quite quickly, peasants realized that when selling
this to evacuees in freezing weather, it was enough to cover a wooden block with butter a
few centimeters thick – no one would be able to tell until they got home.\textsuperscript{577} Another
method Sokolova describes (also during winter) was to sell bottles of «milk» that turned
out to only have an inch or two of cream in the neck of the bottle covering some other,
non-edible substance. Given the combination of personal humiliation and negative
experience, perhaps it is unsurprising that most sources do not dwell at length on the
market interactions. Mark Mudrik, who interviewed former evacuees with the
Vakhtangov theater in the 1980s, remarked that most of them warned their reminiscences
of the market were “not for print.”\textsuperscript{578}

Much more extensive interaction took place between evacuated members of the
intelligentsia and its regional counterparts. These were not always smooth or positive to
start, as locals understandably resented being shunted to the side in favor of the evacuees.
Upon arrival in evacuation, members of the creative intelligentsia frequently depended on
their local counterparts for basic assistance in daily affairs. Local writers in particular
relied on locals for help as they began arriving in the regions in droves in fall 1941, for
assistance in locating housing and other basics; local connections, influence and
knowledge of regional conditions could prove crucial in establishing oneself
satisfactorily. Without an organization present to advocate for their needs (something

\textsuperscript{577} RGALI f. 3270 op. 1 d. 26 l. 92.
\textsuperscript{578} Mudrik, 100.
theaters, museums and film studios automatically had), local help played a much larger role in the intermediate time it took evacuees to organize their own bureaucratic structures and establish a “representative” to deal with local authorities. In Molotov, arriving writers were almost entirely dependent on the local Writer’s Union for the first few weeks. Aleksandr Speshilov, Party member and secretary of the local writer’s organization, “had to forget about creative plans…and occupy myself with receiving and settling evacuated writers from Leningrad and other cities. Many of them upon arrival stayed in my apartment.”579 Speshilov and his wife also ran the writers’ distribution center out of their apartment for a year and a half.580 The assistance of locals took on even greater significance when it came to families of evacuated cultural workers. In some cases, this resulted in relationships that lasted well beyond the war years, with correspondence continuing on into the 1950s and even 1960s. For example, in 1958 Kornei Chukovsky wrote to Liudmila Rimskaia repeating his gratitude for the assistance Rimskaia had rendered his daughter-in-law Marina, and requested that “when you will be in Moscow, visit us – Marina in Moscow and myself in Peredelkino.”581 Writer Vera Panova, who arrived to the Urals in 1943 and left for Leningrad in 1946, also maintained a lengthy correspondence with Rimskaia through the 1950s and 1960s.582

The following situations defined the interaction between evacuated and local workers of culture. First, they might find themselves united in one troupe, usually with

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579 POKM NV 5701/16, l. 2. Letter from Speshilov to party organization of the Molotov publishing house, 1966.
580 Ibid., 2.
581 GAPK f. 1380, op. 1 d. 21 l. 1. Letter from Kornei Chukovsky to Liudmila Rimskaia, 27.1.1958.
582 GAPK f. 1380 op. 1 d. 19, all.
locals under the artistic guidance of evacuees. Evacuated institutions frequently absorbed the most talented and qualified members of local institutions that had been dissolved upon their arrival. For the Molotov opera theater, this only added insult to injury, as the remnants of the former theater attempted to continue performing without their strongest soloists. Evacuees were expected to take on responsibility for artistic amateur activities and leading local cultural development. They also came together under one local branch of the pertinent creative union or branch of the Committee for Artistic Affairs. Although Moscow and Leningrad institutions remained “administered by” and answered primarily to Moscow and the KPDI, the KPDI’s local branches played important roles in the organization of concert work, military patronage (shefstvo) and front brigades. Finally, both groups participated in major regional conferences and projects.

As already mentioned, in cases where local cultural institutions were dissolved at the start of the war or to make room for evacuees, the evacuated institutions occasionally absorbed some the locals into their troupe (generally the most talented and qualified). They also occasionally simply hired new employees to compensate for those who hadn’t made it into evacuation. In some cases, this was done deliberately with the idea of improving the qualifications of local performers, which they would then be able to transfer back to regional institutions. This practice was not limited to theaters. Museums also employed local artists and relied on their knowledge of things such as preserving fine art in unheated buildings in the Urals and Siberian winters, for example. However, talented and already qualified performers appear to have rarely permanently joined the evacuated institutions; beginning in 1943-1944, they started returning to their original institutions. At the end of the war local authorities put up fierce resistance in order to
keep the most talented local cadres in their own regions to build up local culture.

Khrapchenko had to appeal to Shcherbakov for permission to requisition artists from regional theaters, whose transfer the academic theaters was “in all ways hindered” by “local organizations.”\textsuperscript{583} Having successfully pleaded his cases, Khrapchenko received the positive answer that the Department for Agitation and Propaganda was in the process of making the necessary agreements with the obkoms.\textsuperscript{584} As one regional representative groused at a conference on theatrical work in 1943, even if a regional city managed to open a studio and produce masters, “they’re given to republic administration, not kept in the periphery.”\textsuperscript{585}

For younger figures in local culture, the arrival of the evacuees opened up enormous possibilities; they stood to benefit from the things the evacuees had to teach them. As formally less qualified, they had far more opportunity to return with their institution to Moscow or Leningrad after the war. Local authorities, while determined to retain talented and highly trained cadres for their own collectives, were less likely to forbid the departure of the very young, and evacuated institutions were likely to need their help; most of those drafted were from the ranks of less-qualified artists, particularly men. Cultural institutions were in sore need of reinforcements in 1944-1945. There seems to have been a tacit agreement that the evacuated theaters would not take the most talented and qualified performers back with them, thereby depriving regional theaters of

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\textsuperscript{583} See RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 297 l. 63. Letter from Khapchenko to Shcherbakov, 1944 and RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 216 l. 72, letter from Khrapchenko to Shcherbakov, 1943. Khaikin also complains about difficulty in getting cadres from regional theaters; see RGALI f. 2894 op. 1 d. 582 l. 7, letter from Khaikin to Khrapchenko, 1944.

\textsuperscript{584} RGALI f. 17 op. 125 d. 216 l. 72.

\textsuperscript{585} RGALI f. 970 op. 5 d. 4 l. 51. Stenogram of creative session on work of theaters of Urals and Kuzbass, 1943.
the best talent; few top regional performers departed for a major capital at the end of the war. Instead, even if they had performed with an evacuated theater in the war, they were transferred back to their regional theater. Most of the fighting came over mid-level performers, as this is where the academic theaters experienced shortages, according to Khrapchenko.586

Evacuees contrived to bring significant benefits to their colleagues. This came primarily in the form of intercessions by evacuees (more likely to have the name or connections that might catch people’s attention and carry weight) on behalf of local cultural figures. This could frequently mean petitioning Moscow to hasten along a candidate’s admission into a creative union, with all the material benefits that entailed, or assistance in getting manuscripts noticed. For example, in Sverdlovsk Anna Karavaeva took it upon herself to push through the acceptance of several young Sverdlovsk residents into the Writers’ Union.587 But it also took the form of individual petitions by authoritative Moscow figures to assist particular local individuals, whose plight had caught the attention of an influential evacuee. Aleksandr Fadeev intervened both with central and local authorities to procure material assistance for needy regional writers.588 Finally, it could come in the form of promotion and/or recognition of an individual’s work, as with Pavel Bazhov. Several of these benefits continued to bear fruit well after the war, as the infrastructure put in place by evacuees became stronger and gathered

586 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 op. 216 l. 72. Letter from Khrapchenko to Shcherbakov.
587 RGALI f. 631 op. 6 d. 642 l. 74. Letter from Karavaeva and Bazhov to Presidium of SSP, no date.
588 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 759, l. 54, letter from Fadeev to Gusarov in Molotov oblast, 10 October 1942.
speed. Creative union chapters in particular became much more active in the regions in the 1950s and later.

**Conclusion**

Evacuated institutions and cultural elites remained, for the duration of the war, “Moscow” or “Leningrad” institutions. They continued to be administered by and answer to the all-union KPDI, and they continued to enjoy Moscow’s protection and material privileges in evacuation. Even if the intelligentsia could not take significant decisions on its own, it could Moscow to force local authorities to accommodate its priorities and interests. This ability, particular only to elite cultural evacuees and directors of crucial industrial enterprises, ensured that in 1941 power flowed in one direction: from Moscow and Leningrad to the regions. The intelligentsia’s desire to remain in the “best” Soviet cities and Moscow’s willingness to insist that it be accommodated in such cities ensured that the evacuation of cultural institutions disproportionately benefitted those cities already well within the circle of “Soviet” spaces. In doing so, the evacuation of culture reinforced a particular social and cultural spatial hierarchy in a way that evacuation of the general population did not necessarily. However, by displacing regional cultural institutions to even smaller oblast towns and industrial settlements where they also participated in the wartime effort to mobilize and propagandize via culture, one could argue that a more general stimulus to regional cultural development occurred during the war as well.

However, this center-heavy dynamic could not continue for the duration of the war. Moscow’s attention turned elsewhere to deal with the most pressing problems at any given moment, its involvement with evacuated intelligentsia more sporadic, and both
cultural elites and regional authorities discovered significant incentives to reach some sort of understanding with each other. After regional authorities discovered the assets of hosting evacuated cultural institutions, they actively sought to maximize the benefits their city received from these institutions. They demanded maximal involvement both with war-related propaganda, mobilization and agitation activities, and significant investment by cultural elites in developing regional cultural infrastructure and highlighting regional accomplishments and achievements. The desire of regional authorities to raise their city in the socio-cultural hierarchy of Soviet spaces drove their behavior, as no one wished to be relegated after the war to the status of cultural and intellectual backwater. Given the link between cultural capital and other forms of material privilege in the Soviet Union, it should hardly be surprising that regional authorities were so eager to accumulate it, and the evacuations gave them an unprecedented opportunity. For the evacuated intelligentsia, evacuations (and the war in general) were a chance to finally prove to the state in a moment of crisis that it deserved the privileges it had already been afforded. It then used this behavior as leverage to secure still better conditions for itself after the war.

Finally, though the evacuations reinforced and confirmed the intelligentsia’s privileges and the state’s willingness to defend it at the expense of others, the war also widened the opportunities to share in the intelligentsia’s privileges. Young, talented cultural workers benefitted from the evacuees’ input into local infrastructure and the attention they drew to regional work. Some had the chance to attach themselves to major performance ensembles and move to Moscow and Leningrad after the war, while others entered the creative unions thanks to the efforts of evacuated colleagues. Moreover, at the war’s end, the state made a significant effort to reward the entire creative intelligentsia,
regardless of location. Many regional collectives received significant upgrades in status, one must assume in part in recognition of their efforts during the war.
Chapter IV
Cultural Production, Consumption and Civilian Mobilization Behind Frontlines

As I argued in Chapter I, culture was evacuated with the intent of preserving and maintaining Soviet culture and talent as a form of state wealth. However, central authorities also tasked evacuated intelligentsia with raising morale, agitating and shoring up support for the state. As a result of the evacuations, cultural opportunities for regional audiences during the war did not fall off as sharply as one might have expected in Russia’s regions, while the quality of the available culture rose. Regional Soviet citizens – workers and soldiers, evacuees, wounded and those waiting to leave for the front – had the opportunity to experience culture at a level that they almost certainly would never have been able to without the war. Beyond morale, the state sought to use culture to influence behavior, facilitate increased tempos of work, better harvests and greater production norms than in peacetime. As a result, the emphasis on wartime work shifted from entertaining at draft points to raising work productivity in factories, mines and collective farms by providing opportunities for “cultured rest” that was simultaneously entertaining and inspiring, with some translation into action. In a war that from the beginning was a struggle between two ideologies for total domination and eradication of the other, cultural organizations offered accessible interpretations of the war and the Soviet citizen’s role in it. But if the state was trying to sell a specific wartime ideological message, it was the intelligentsia that had to do the selling.

In this chapter I will argue that the numerous wartime cultural opportunities provided by evacuated cultural institutions and the creative intelligentsia to regional audiences provided inspiration, mobilization and a framework of understanding for the
war effort that would have been difficult to effect without the evacuations. The success of the campaign to use elite cultural performers and producers as a form of propaganda for the Soviet state rested on the elite status of the performers, the quality of the cultural production and their content, or the production of new works appropriate to wartime and appealing to regional audiences. The campaign received an enormous boost simply from the names associated with evacuated culture, that had enormous clout in Soviet society as representatives of the best the system had to offer. Additionally, the presence of such elites in the regions pointed to a leveling of social hierarchies, a demonstration of unity. These results depended on the intelligentsia’s willingness and ability to determine how best to reach and impact regional audiences and effectively put their message across, and here I argue the intelligentsia itself took the lead in figuring out how to tailor its approach. The campaign also depended on the audience’s willingness to “consume” this culture and to buy into the interpretations, emotional mindsets and narratives it was selling them. But this was not left to chance. As I argue, culture’s impact on regional audiences was carefully staged and managed throughout the entire war, from its creation, content and performance to its reception. The provision of high quality culture to workers became an important tool of legitimation for the Soviet state, something that set them decisively apart from the Nazis in their eyes. Finally, the social unity that it demonstrated, with evacuated elites making a concentrated effort to serve workers and soldiers, played to the important Soviet notion of unity and cohesion during the war.

There has been comparatively little work done on Russian culture during the war years. Changes in the content and themes of Russian wartime culture have been catalogued by scholars such as Richard Stites and David Brandenberger, as well as a
number of Russian scholars. L. V. Maksakova’s description of wartime literature and art is traditional: the main themes were “unselfish patriotism, love of motherland, hatred of invaders, heroism of the people, humanism of liberating and fair war, belief in victory… the main hero – fighting people, man at war [chelovek na voine].” These themes have entered general memory of the war so thoroughly that they are no longer surprising. Scholars have also directed their attention to the question state control over and censorship during the war, with debate tending to center over whether or not there was a relaxation or temporary “thaw” during the war. This chapter therefore chooses to address less analyzed phenomenon. Hardly anyone has paid attention to the ways culture actually reached its audiences; the “marketing” of the wartime culture, the efforts by which Soviet citizens were convinced to appreciate it, what it meant (or what the state wanted it to mean) to them to consume wartime culture, or to the way in which culture fit into the larger narrative of what the Soviet Union was fighting for. Finally, narratives of culture during the war tend to neglect the fact that most cultural elites were evacuated, and that this had an impact on how they worked and what they worked on. My research look at the forms of culture that became popular during war and reasons behind them,

590 Much was done to popularize understanding of these themes by Richard Stites’ work on culture. See Stites, ed., Culture and Entertainment in Wartime Russia (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), especially the introduction; and Stites, Russian Popular Culture: Entertainment and Society since 1900 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
591 See for example, D. Babichenko, Pisateli i tsenzory (Moscow: Rossiia Molodaia, 1994); A. V. Speranskii, V Gornile Ispytanii: Kultura Urala v gody VOV (Ekaterinburg: 1996); See also commentary on war in Ekaterina Clark and Evgeny Dobrenko, eds., Soviet Culture and Power: A History in Documents (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).
taking into consideration both high and low culture since both were integral to the propaganda campaign. What happens when elite performers sing mass songs or talented actors perform factory sketches? Are the songs and sketches somehow endowed with more cultural validity than before? In considering these questions, it is important to keep in mind that the campaign took place against background of extreme material hardship and deprivation. In part, culture took on extra importance because the regime did not have the incentives to offer: it had no resources to give material incentives, and no desire to make political concessions.

In terms of content and form, this chapter also seeks to bring the regions back into the story of Soviet culture at war. Images of culture on the frontline or in besieged cities rise to the foreground in the postwar telling, although most culture actually happened in evacuation, especially in 1941. I suspect this is in part due to the less exciting nature of culture in evacuation, something evacuated elites struggled with as well — the sense that the meaningful action was happening somewhere else.

**Reaching Audiences**

Amongst the first tasks of theaters, symphonies and cinemas after the war broke out was to evaluate their repertoire and remove everything that did not correspond to “current demands”. A July 1941 directive of the KPDI to all its republic, krai and oblast branches announced that “the main and most important task of all creative workers…[is to] help the mobilization of the entire people for the patriotic war against German fascism, facilitate the increasing of productive work, strengthen discipline and

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organization of the country’s people.”  

Mikhail Khrapchenko, head of the All-Union Committee for Artistic Affairs, announced in an interview in 1941 that “now, as never before, theaters must fulfill the function of agitators and propagandists.”  

Theater, ballet, opera, film, literature and art all aimed to mobilizing feelings of intense patriotism, pride in the Soviet Union and hatred of the enemy, and demonstrated up-to-date models for correct Soviet behavior during the war, helping Soviet citizens fight better and work harder. As the Evgenii Radin director of the Kirov theater explained to the collective, “today our performances are also defense work. They are that spiritual food, that we give to soldiers departing for the front and workers demonstrating in their factories examples of working heroism and glory in the name of defending the Motherland.”

Once it became clear that culture’s task during the war would be for culture to effectively mobilize Soviet citizens, this meant culture had to reach as large an audience as possible at a time when it was not clear potential viewers had either the time, means or interest to plan for and attend traditional theater and concert performances and museum exhibitions, and when regional cultural offerings contracted sharply. Literature and film faced serious production and distribution issues due to lack of paper, film and the disruption of distribution networks; new material often simply never reached the regions. Libraries everywhere during the war fell into catastrophic conditions, and cinema facilities outside major urban centers often lacked films to show or were in need of equipment and repairs. From a 1943 report to the Molotov department for agitation and propaganda, we see that in the town of Lys’va approximately 50 miles from Molotov, the

593 Ibid., 19.
594 Trud (26 November 1941), 4.
595 Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo no. 25 (8 November 1941), 3.
cinema is in poor, “anti-cultured” condition and on the city’s outskirts, up to 7,000 workers have not seen a film in over 2 years.\textsuperscript{596} Regional writers, artists, musicians and performers were drafted, while regional theaters and chapters of creative unions were being disbanded or simply collapsing due to lack of funds and members.

Evacuations made using culture as an instrument of mass propaganda a reality. By redistributing cultural institutions and the cultural elite from Moscow and Leningrad, where they were overwhelmingly concentrated pre-1941, to regional centers, it furnished the necessary manpower to conduct such a campaign. As evacuated cultural institutions arrived in the provinces,\textsuperscript{*} their local counterparts lucky enough to still be working in their specialty were reassigned to the next biggest towns in the area in an outward cascade effect that likely stabilized the number of overall areas being served by cultural organizations. In Molotov, for example, upon the arrival of the Kirov theater, the local opera theater was disbanded; the remnants (in 1942 only 25 people) banded together and spent the war years serving a handful of small towns in Molotov krai, with miners as their main audience.\textsuperscript{597} In Novosibirsk, the arrival of the Pushkin theater, the Leningrad cappella and philharmonic forced the local drama theater to a small town in a nearby mining region. In this way at least theoretically, opportunities to access culture existed deep behind frontlines. Of course, the first step was to restart cultural production after the evacuations. All cultural organizations came under significant pressure to begin work

\textsuperscript{596} PermGANI f. 105 op. 9 d. 357 l. 33, dokladnaia zapiska on the state of cultural service of workers in Lys’va, 12.VI.1943.
\textsuperscript{*} Organizations evacuated from Ukraine, Belarus or the Baltics were much more likely to be sent to smaller areas or to be broken up and incorporated into other groups.
\textsuperscript{597} GAPK f. 790 op. 5 d. 1357 l. 176 “Molотовская опера за 75 лет своего существования”
again without delay, despite the change in locale and unfavorable circumstances such as unsuitable stages. A February 1942 article in *Literatura i Iskusstvo* sums up the intelligentsia’s tasks well:

...“all for the front” – means to in the shortest times possible create highly artistic (high artistic merit) productions of the stage and screen, works that mobilize the people to rout the hated enemy, rout hitlerism. It means – to work in new places, in far from the front places, as if you were on the front.”\textsuperscript{598}

Many collectives strove to restart performances within days of arriving in their new cities. The Kirov theater’s first performance occurred on 13 September 1941, a mere 14 days after arriving in Molotov and only seven days after receiving the theater building for rehearsal. As part of their reconfiguration to wartime footing, theaters (and most cultural institutions) drastically cut the amount of time it took them to prepare new productions and revive older repertoire. The director of the Kirov theater set as little as a few weeks or one month for revivals and opera *Emelian Pugachev*, an entirely new production written in evacuation in the Urals in honor of the 25\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the October Revolution in 1942, was put together in 4.5 months.\textsuperscript{599} In smaller cities, reviving as many works as possible was critical, as there were not enough audience members to support showing the same pieces over and over again. The same people had to be enticed with a variety of options. As a local history professor remarked in a letter to the Kirov theater in Molotov, “The theater should remember that the circle of viewers is incomparably smaller than in Leningrad, and the theater will be able to hold the viewers within their sphere of gravity only by persistently moving forward and incessant

\textsuperscript{598} *Literatura i Iskusstvo* no. 9, 28/2/1942, 1.
\textsuperscript{599} TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 6 d. 68 l. 53; TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 7 d. 89 l. 104.
work.”\textsuperscript{600} The demand for the creation of new repertoire that would “reflect the rich events, ideas, emotions, the full-blooded and tense/intensive life of the country and its people” also rose dramatically.\textsuperscript{601}

But relying on traditional performances and work schedules proved insufficient for the needs of wartime. The creative intelligentsia also had to expand their work beyond its usual formats, incorporating non-standard performance times, styles and locations to accommodate viewers who worked long hours and in remote locations and were unable to make it to traditional performances. Theaters and performing arts collectives gave almost daily performances in their main building for the general public but also had contracts for extensive “shefskaia rabota” with the numerous local military outposts and military hospitals populating the Soviet hinterland. Shefskaia rabota, or patronage work, consisted of a formal agreement between a cultural institution or creative union and military hospital, base or unit in which the cultural institution committed to providing its clients with no less than a certain minimum of concerts a month, as well as providing volunteers for practical help with artistic amateur activities and more prosaic tasks such as laundry, mending and cleaning, or writing letters for soldiers. For the institution receiving patronage, this generally entailed some sort of performance every day. It had existed in practice since the Civil War, in peacetime as well, but took on entirely different scale in World War II. As Evgenii Radin described it, such work had gone from being “honorable social responsibility...[to] an organic part of the theater’s production

\textsuperscript{600} Za Sovetskoe iskusstvo no. 25 (8 November 1941), 4.
\textsuperscript{601} TsGALI f. 332 op. 1 d. 21 l. 17
The Kirov theater established ties with the local garrison house immediately upon arriving in Molotov. When the army administration offered them the chance to give 30-40 concerts a month, “the theater responded with a plan taking responsibility for no less than 50 concerts a month.” The Party and state monitored patronage work very intensively during the war, as demonstrated by the extensive archival holdings regarding such work in multiple archives.

While patronage work traditionally applied to the military, during the war it also expanded to include workers — particularly those in key industries. For workers, theaters periodically gave closed performances for factories, and scheduled performances beginning at midnight for those who worked late. To reach more distant audiences, mobile brigades were formed, including actors but also writers, composers, musicians and sometimes lecturers from universities or museums. These brigades traveled widely in their regions, servicing workers in outer-lying plants and factories. Such brigades were not limited to theaters, but often included writers, composers and musicians and sometimes lecturers from other organizations such as museums. In mining regions, brigades would often perform for the miners at the entrance to the mines directly before they descended for their shifts. They traveled to kolkhozes especially during sowing and harvest and performed for agricultural workers, in the hopes that these performances would facilitate increased agricultural productivity. In addition to large symphonic

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602 GARF f. 5508 op. 3 d. 22 l. 32. Report by Radin on Kirov theater’s voenno-shefskaia rabota for period of war, 1943.
603 GARF f. 5508 op. 3 d. 22 l.32. Report by Radin on Kirov theater’s voenno-shefskaia rabota for period of war, 1943.
concerts, smaller quartets and even jazz ensembles formed that could more perform for small audiences, including for seriously wounded soldiers unable to move in order to attend bigger concerts – the string quartets could play right in the patients’ rooms.605

In cities in the summer, orchestras, jazz bands and musical groups offered open-air concerts in parks. Writers offered regular “literary evenings” for the public discussing the works of both established and young authors, gave extensive lectures in factories, schools and elsewhere, and frequently spoke on the radio. Together this extensive campaign to provide culture to the working masses in the hinterland made it easier – indeed, sometimes inescapable – for soldiers and civilians alike to access culture than simply attending regularly scheduled traditional performance in the main theater building.

Appealing to Consumers

To influence its audiences effectively, culture needed not only to be available but to appeal to consumers as well. The appeal of evacuated culture was not guaranteed automatically, despite the reputations of the arriving institutions. After displacing their regional equivalents, evacuated cultural institutions often met with a less than welcoming reception from their audiences, who remained loyal to “their” local writers and performers. As ballerina Natalia Dudinskaia remembered upon leaving Molotov in 1944, “the Molotov viewer did not immediately react to us warmly…he had to be won over.”606

Marietta Frangopulo, in her chronicle of the Kirov theater in evacuation, wrote that, “Molotovites remembered their “home” opera and ballet theater, whom they knew and

605 *Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo*, no. 4 (15 June 1942), 2.
606 GAPK f. 1588 op. 1 d. 533 l. 2.
loved, and compared the Kirov theater to them. Applause at the initial performances was restrained.” Tatiana Vecheslova recalled in her memoirs of the Kirov’s first performances in Molotov that “neither the orchestra’s wonderful sound under Pazovskii’s direction, the wonderful young voices of Kashevarova, Nelepp and Iashchugin could thaw the ice in the audience…Even the brilliant performances of Dudinskaia and Sergeev did not arouse the desired reaction.”

In addition to resentment at the displacement of local culture, some regions had never been exposed to a particular art form before and did not know how to react to it. Leningrad’s Theater of Young Viewers (TIUZ) arrived to Berezniki, an industrial city in Molotov oblast where the children had never attended a play before, only movies. In Chkalovsk, local audiences had never seen operetta or ballet when the Malyi Opernyi Teatr arrived from Leningrad. Even before the war authorities there had been concerned over the lagging interest in and low popularity of some art forms, including symphonic music. Writers had no immediately obvious way to make their activities readily available and useful to the everyday lives of local residents. In all these cases and more, the cultural institutions in question had to win over audiences to their art form to both fulfill central demands and individual desires to help the war effort and to ensure their own material and professional survival in evacuation. They attempted to accomplish this by both changing their repertoire as quickly as possible to produce and perform material that would appeal to local audiences – including composing new works that

607 Karskaia, 60.
608 Tatiana Vecheslova, Isa-Balerina (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1964), 145.
610 Karskaia, 170.
incorporated regional material local audiences could identify with – and maintaining the highest artistic standards under adverse conditions.

Creating Appeal: Changes in Repertoire, Form and Content

Evacuated cultural institutions and the intelligentsia understood “appealing” to consist of new, diverse, relevant and war-time appropriate repertoire, rather than old standards (though theaters in particular were also warned not to merely rely on the number of titles they could show) and incorporation of local and current material that interested regional audiences, solidified by the high quality production of the culture itself.

Repertoire was a constant sore spot for all fields of art, in that many of them had difficulty determining exactly what the content of such culture should be, or what form it should take. When the war began, most cultural organizations found themselves unprepared and at a loss as to how best bring their talents to serve the needs of wartime, or indeed if culture was even needed at all. In 1943 writer Lev Rubenshtein reflected that in 1941, while too many writers had applied for the army press, “writers sat around at home…it should be said, that the Writers’ Union really did not know what was needed and did not give any definite instructions.” The question arose, Rubenshtein remembers, as to the specific genre with which writers should occupy themselves:

According to the experience of past wars, the only genre which was needed during war was journalism (газетный жанр)…unable to get into front newspapers some writers went to work for those in hinterland and wrote very poorly. Others, not working for newspapers, still began to write briefly and khalturno, thinking that this was necessary during wartime. There were even some enthusiasts who maintained that during a war one shouldn’t consider quality.

In the theaters, Rubenstein comments, “…there was confusion. Used to chewing on each new production no less than one year, theaters didn’t know what they were to
do.” For large theaters like MKhAT transitioning to “smaller” things was very difficult. While a new genre suited to wartime writing appeared rather quickly (narrative wartime/military novellas), it took much longer for serious literary works to appear. Aleksandr Gladkov in his diaries commented in 1943 that he is not terribly impressed with war literature so far, and supposes that real war works will only appear in several years’ time. While artists and museums were able to respond relatively quickly once they were set up in evacuation, it took performing arts collectives a similarly lengthy period of time to respond to the new challenges of war and the self-doubt seems to have been at a greater level. Amongst men in the Kirov troupe, “they were ashamed to paint their face…and clown around in front of suffering people.”

Shifts in artistic forms in the early war years meant shorter, more flexible genres took the lead. Even the performing arts managed to adapt in relatively short time. The Kirov theater made effective use of “creative self-reports,” reportedly allowing more contact between performers and audience than usual, mixed thematic concerts incorporating music, song and dance selected around a particular theme, and small mobile performing groups such as a jazz orchestra or string quartet. A report on patronage work from Novosibirsk noted in August 1942 that while earlier, small agitation concerts had been more prevalent, recently “there have been more requests for longer, artistically whole concerts, of various genres and with high quality performers.”

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611 IRI RAN, 2 VII 5 l. 1. Interview with Lev Rubenstein.
612 IRI RAN, 2 VII 5 l. 1
613 A. Gladkov, “Dnevnik,” in Muzy v Shineliakh, 268.
614 Vecheslova, Ja-Balerina, 145.
615 Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, no. 6 (20 October 1942), 2.
616 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1046, 5.
However, through the end of the war central and regional authorities as well as leading members of the intelligentsia themselves criticized the lack of variety in repertoire and expressed frustration with the rate at which new, “Soviet” works were released. This was particularly true for “monumental” or large-scale films, novels, plays and operas, which the central authorities prioritized above all other art forms. A January 1942 directive from the all-Union KPDI reminds cultural producers that “their most important task is creating monumental works, reflecting at their core the great struggle of the Soviet people and all progressive humanity with fascism”\(^{617}\) – and these reminders continued for the remaining war years. There was also frequent disapproval of the supposedly weak enthusiasm with which writers, composers, and performers alike turned their attention to new works.

Regional audiences enjoyed works that incorporated local or very current themes and material, and incorporating such content became a major priority for writers, performing arts collectives and museums alike. In addition to satisfying local audiences, such works offered the added benefit of highlighting regional achievements to the war, which satisfied the demands of propaganda and mobilization at the same time. Depicting regional achievements and local characteristics became a key component both in enhancing regional pride and love for the motherland, desired by the state, and in demonstrating the evacuated intelligentsia’s familiarity with local conditions – which enhanced the position of the intelligentsia in the eyes of the state and local residents. It also gave great pleasure to local authorities, who tended to feel the strengths of their region were overlooked at a national level. Sverdlovsk held a competition for the best new song about the Urals, selecting as the winner “Uralites fight great!” with lyrics by

\(^{617}\) TsGALI f. 332 op. 1 d. 21, 1.
evacuated poet Agnia Barto and music by evacuated composer Khrennikov. In a
March 1943 report to the KPDI, the head of the local Sverdlovsk branch complained that
“The Urals thematic is exceptionally weak and insufficiently represented in the works of
composers, writers and poets. The rich Urals folk songs and dances have not been used
widely, nor in an interesting fashion.” As a party representative from Cheliabinsk
complained at a conference in 1943, “dramaturgy should come not only from Moscow
but from all cities…”

Evacuated members of the intelligentsia – most of all writers and playwrights –
came under heavy pressure from the Party-state and their own creative organizations to
familiarize themselves with local conditions and demonstrate their familiarity thereof in
their works. Not only would incorporation of such knowledge inspire locals, it was also
aimed at inspiring Soviet citizens in other areas to “discover” their country and love it
even more. Aside from pieces related immediately to the war, approved themes for new
repertoire according to the KPDI included “the heroism of the hinterland, on socialist
competition, pieces on the construction of soviet culture, on the struggle for the creation
of a socialist state.” Catherine Merridale has written that soldiers’ notions of the Soviet
motherland changed as they fought their way across territories they would not otherwise
have seen, coming to appreciate its vastness personally. Authorities hoped to use

618 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1047 l. 5. Report from head of Sverdlovsk branch of KPDI, 17
March 1943. The song in Russian is title “Ural’tsy b’iutsia zdorovo!”
619 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1047 l. 45. Report from head of Sverdlovsk branch of KPDI, 17
March 1943.
620 RGALI f. 970 op. 5 d. 4 l. 56. Speech, stenogramma tvorcheskoj sessii teatrov Urala I
Kuzbassa, 16 June 1943.
621 TsGALI f. 332 op. 1 d. 21 l. 17.
622 Catherine Merridale, Ivan’s War: Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945 (New
York: Picador, 2006), 381.
culture in a similar way, bringing to people’s attention in an appealing format (whether literature, theater, or ballet) the achievements, efforts and natural glories of the Soviet hinterland. The Urals, hosting so many evacuated factories, played an especially prominent role.

Agitprop monitored regional culture and propaganda throughout the war, and clearly felt that the inclusion of more local material should be a key component agitation work. In a 1943 agitprop report with how to improve the inadequate agitation and cultural work in the Urals, Aleksandrov proposes requiring more information on the Urals in the all-Union weekly film chronicles, as well as founding a film chronicle studio in Sverdlovsk; creating two full-length films on the Urals; dispatching some of the Soviet Union’s strongest writers such as Leonov and Tvardovskii to write about the Urals, and opening an art exhibition entitled “Sovetskii Ural.”623 He also recommends directing some of the country’s best theaters to the Urals’ major cities, and bringing several top composers (Glier, Khachaturian, Khrennikov) there on business trips and creating a special plan of guest tours for the Urals by the country’s best performance collectives. Regional authorities apparently agreed with him, as a March 1943 report from the head of the Sverdlovsk branch of the KPDI recommended “attracting leading dramaturges, artists and composers to work on productions on the Urals.”624 Writers particularly came under direct pressure to incorporate current, local material since their art form lent itself to immediate use and quick circulation. Writers were also the most widely dispersed group

623 RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 104 l. 189. As far as I understand, most of the suggestions in the end went unfulfilled.
624 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 1047 l. 89. Report from Sverdlovsk branch of KPDI, March 1943.
of evacuated intelligentsia, and the Writers’ Union frequently urged them to gather local material, write about the activities of the hinterland and to take pride in this activity. Skosyrev, the Writers Union secretary, informed Natalia Venkstern that the Writers’ Union would like her to “depict kolkhoz life in the hot days of bringing in the harvest. This is recognized as the main work of the Writers’ Union at the moment and we consider it to be frontline work.”625 Such reassurances notwithstanding, most writers failed to believe this.

When staging the new opera Emelian Pugachev in honor of the 25th anniversary of the October revolution, Radin played up the subject’s historical connections to the Urals area, even dedicating the production to the Urals. “‘Emelian Pugachev’ – is a production in many respects ‘of the Urals,’” Radin wrote, addressing the general in Molotov’s newspaper Zvezda.

The libretto was written in the Urals, the final version was produced in the Urals, even the subject of the opera itself is in many ways connected with the Urals. To the Urals, its heroes on the front and in the hinterland our theater dedicates its production of Emelian Pugachev, in the hopes that the theater will worthily answer the heroic deeds of the Urals people with its performance, where the main character is the Russian people.626

Composers affiliated with the Kirov such as Fardi and Pritsker composed new and mass songs based on Urals material and its industrial workers, which were then performed by the Kirov’s top artists in concert. Such songs included titles like “Boevaiia Uralskaia,” “Ia s putevkoi narkoma prishel na Ural,” “Pesen’ shakhtera” and “Spasibo,

625 RGALI f. 631 op. 15 d. 603 l. 54.
Occasionally composers also rearranged versions of traditional local or folk songs. Here the elite status and prominent names of those performing mass songs in concert leant them a gravitas they would not have otherwise had. Such performances were very popular amongst workers.

The first real wartime large-scale works did not begin appearing until late 1942, with Pugachev, Shostakovich’s 7th symphony, and plays such as Simonov’s Russkie Liudi and Leonov’s Nashestvie. In the meantime, the Kirov theater resorted to thematic concerts – based around, for example, Tchaikovsky or an evening dedicated to the Ukraine – or concert productions. Usually dedicated to a specific event such as the first of May or the anniversary of the Soviet armed forces, these thematic multi-act events combined song, dance and symphonic performances. A review in the Molotov newspaper describes the 1st of May, 1942 concert as consisting of the following: a first half entitled “The Heroic Past of the Russian People” with Tchaikovsky’s 1812 overture and a number operatic arias from Russian operas plus a handful of Russian folk songs, and a second half consisting of three dance scenes depicting “typical” celebrations of 1 May in 1913, 1936 and 1942.628 Local authorities in Molotov especially approved of this particular form of cultural work, and First Secretary of the regional party committee Nikolai Gusarov “insistently” requested more of these concerts, considering it to be inseparably connected with the present moment.629 The theater created such special concerts for most May Days, for anniversaries of the Red Army and October Revolution, and for the

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627 Literal titles in translation: “The Fighting Urals Song,” “I came to the Urals with a command from the People’s Commissariat,” “The Miner’s Song,” and “Thank you, People of the Urals!”
628 Zvezda 8 May 1942, 5.
629 TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 d. 89 l. 47.
liberation of Ukraine in 1943. Even the Molotov philharmonic orchestra joined in this sort of activity, phrasing it more explicitly as agit-prop work by artistic means with a variety of “thematic evenings” reporting on “actual political and cultural topics with literary and musical illustrations.” Participants include leading evacuated writers such as Slonimskii, Perventsev, Lilia Brik and top artists of the Kirov theater as well as local professors and party workers, and the most popular topics proved to be: The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people, military-political surveys, great Russian military commanders, Russian folk songs and a cycle of evenings on great Russian writers and composers. Other, apparently less popular topics included the Red Army as liberator, Soviet women in the war, Slavs in the fight for freedom, and the fighting friendship of freedom loving peoples.  

Dramatic theaters also got creative in trying to make culture relevant to the daily life of those working for the war effort. In factories in Ekaterinburg, writers and actors would show up by agreement or invitation in a factory, discuss with the directors immediate issues facing the factory, and on the spot compose short sketches depicting these problems and resolutions to them. These were then performed for the workers that same day. Marietta Shaginian reports of a sketch written by evacuated writers Evgenii Molotoviak and Viktor Tipot: “Neither Molotoviak nor Tipot anticipated the success of this genre, the hotness with which it would be met.”

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630 PermGANI 1 22 441, 110.
631 Marietta Shaginian, Ural v Oborone (Mosow: 1944), 121.
Creating Appeal: Quality and Personal Interaction

The other strategy at the disposal of the intelligentsia in order to appeal to regional consumers was to attract audiences with the high quality of their work. In the initial months of the war a collapse in artistic quality seemed very possible, given the sharply reduced state funding for the arts, generally poor regional conditions for artistic production, possibility of demoralized cadres in the chaotic conditions of evacuation, loss of cadres to the draft and personal uncertainty that anyone had time or use for culture. Pressure to maintain and even raise quality came from several directions. It certainly came from above. The Department for Propaganda and Agitation, creative unions, the Committees for Artistic Affairs and for Cinematography and various theatrical and musical professional organizations continued to monitor the quality of evacuated institutions’ work. The Committee for Artistic Affairs and all creative unions periodically dispatched officials to most major cities the Soviet Union as early as autumn 1941 and continuing for the duration of the war to monitor of the lives and work of their members.632 The KPDI instructed all theaters that they should focus on creating new monumental works, “but only preserving the attained level of theatrical culture and with further development and deepening of mastery. The fight for culture is one of the forms of fighting with the fascist barbarians, destroying all the cultural valuables created by humanity.”633 Poor quality performances were considered to “discredit” Soviet art.634 As Katerina Clark has noted, culture had become a major sphere of competition for the

632 RGALI f. 962 op. 3 d. 926 l. 41.
633 TsGALI f. 332 op. 1 d. 21 l. 1.
634 Radin, “V Novom Sezone,” Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo 14 August 1943
Soviet Union, an area that defined Soviet identity.\textsuperscript{635} To risk losing the level of Soviet art that had been achieved was to sacrifice influence – over both Soviet residents and observers abroad.

The quality of Soviet culture, and the Soviet role in preserving the very best of Russian and world culture and making it available to the general public was a key Soviet claim in the war effort, differentiating them from the Nazis. Prewar Soviet depictions of Nazism up until 1939 had relied primarily on emphasizing fascism’s backwardness and repressive, “barbaric” nature.\textsuperscript{636} They also highlighted Nazi destruction of culture in attempt to assert Soviet superiority in this regard.\textsuperscript{637} Reports of Nazi destruction of Russian or Soviet culture reached the media quite early, with rumors of Kiev libraries being destroyed or the destruction of the historical architecture of Novgorod and Pskov. In December 1941 after Soviet forces retook the city of Klin and the extent of vandalism of the nearby estate of Lev Tolstoi, Iasnaia Polana, became clear, this solidified the idea that Nazis were wantonly destroying the heights of “human culture” sheerly out of hatred for what it represented. As one correspondent reported of the damage, including the burning of Tolstoi’s library and bedroom, “not one of these acts of vandalism can be justified by even the shadow of military necessity…the fascists will not be able to justify themselves before humanity….”\textsuperscript{638} The article portrays the destruction of

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{635} Katerina Clark, \textit{Moscow, The Fourth Rome}, 9.
\item \textsuperscript{636} Nor were the Soviets alone in their depiction of Nazis as culture-less barbarians. See Brian Foss, \textit{War Paint: Art, War, State and Identity in Britain, 1939-1945} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 40.
\item \textsuperscript{638} \textit{Izvestiia}, “Ne zabudem, ne prostim!” (18 December 1941), 1.
\end{itemize}
culture as a deliberate, intentional offense against all of humanity in opposition to the Soviet system.

In October 1942, Soviet forces captured Norman Ferster, member of a special battalion under the German Ministry of Internal Affairs. Ferster wrote a report addressed to the Soviet authorities that was printed in Russian translation alongside pictures of the original German in several major Soviet newspapers. In his confession he describes the existence of special battalions whose sole purpose is to extract cultural valuables from major captured cities immediately after German forces take the city. He describes in detail the valuables removed from the Leningrad palace museums, the trophies removed from the Ukrainian library of sciences, Kiev Medical Research Laboratory and Kiev museums. In Kharkov, several thousand rare books were dispatched to Germany and the special battalion destroyed the remainder, written by Russian and Ukrainian authors.639 The unnamed Sovinformbiuro correspondent then went on to flesh out Ferster’s description, following up with more details of thefts from Leningrad, Lvov, Odessa, Kiev and other cities. Sovinformbiuro emphasizes that all these acts have an organized, state character and therefore can only be the result of deliberate government order, as Ferster asserts, lest anyone assume this was the work of undisciplined troops looting. He concludes that the Hitlerites “have set as their goal to not only materially but spiritually destroy the peoples of the USSR, so as to make it easier…to turn them into silent, wordless slaves of the German barons.”640 In effect, the Ferster confession as an excellent

640 Pravda “Prestupnaia klika…” (17 November 1942), 2.
public confirmation, straight from the source, of Soviet assertions on the Nazi relationship to culture.

Central and local authorities worried that poor quality culture would not simply fail to achieve the desired mobilization effect, but would negatively impact their consumers. In other words, there was no neutral: if high quality culture could have a positive effect, low quality culture led to demoralization. As a member of the Molotov Party organization commented in 1943, theater could fulfill its task of bringing up the people “only when the quality of its performances is high, because viewers can only believed the actor when he truly performs the role well, if he performs it poorly the viewer won’t believe it.”641 While newspapers and publishers could and did reject poor quality or inappropriate works by writers, theaters were subject to constant preemptive haranguing from local authorities, Agitprop and the Committee for Artistic Affairs on the need to protect quality. In an undated (most likely summer 1942) letter distributed to all local branches of the Committee for Artistic Affairs and all theaters, Solodnikov, head of the All-Union Theatrical Association announced that “Soviet theater does not have the right at such a time to lower the achieved creative level.”642 A directive from the Main Directorate of Theaters to all local branches of the Committee for Artistic Affairs stated that “Theaters should attain a sharp raising of the artistic quality of their work, taking as their main goal to stamp on large-scale, deep, artistically-sound productions the historical war of the soviet people with fascism, creating models of the heroes of the Great Patriotic

641 RGALI f. 970 op. 5 d. 5 , l. 123. Stenogramma of tvorcheskaia sessia, Teatry Urala I Kuzbassa.
642 TsGALI f. 332 op. 1 d. 32 l. 18.
war.\textsuperscript{643} Prikaz 358 of August 1943 by the Committee for Artistic Affairs in Moscow notes the recent weak attendance at the Molotov drama theater of no more than 72\% for the first half of 1943 and blames it in part to the theater’s lack of attention to artistic quality. It directs the theater to conduct “systematic work to raise the ideological-artistic level of its productions” and not accept any compromises.\textsuperscript{644}

While mobilization needs came first and foremost in the emphasis on quality, authorities also felt that soldiers going to the front or working in war industries deserved the best entertainment and culture the Soviet Union had to offer, and that it was the intelligentsia’s wartime responsibility to provide this. As the Main Directorate of Theaters concluded in its prikaz 278 of 29 July 1942, “Soviet people work hard in wartime conditions. At the theater, they seek sensible, cultured relaxation. It is the foremost duty of theater directors to create this cultured and cozy atmosphere.”\textsuperscript{645} According to this logic, those privileged enough to remain working at their specialty in culture did not have the right to lessen their standard of work, or work less, than those giving everything to the front, as were soldiers and factory workers working double shifts. Since the Soviet state had lavished such care and protection on its cultural institutions, this bound the creative intelligentsia in return to work as hard as possible for their audiences, demonstrating their unity with soldiers and workers. Officials in the Writers’ Union constantly exhorted Soviet writers to produce more and better works, emphasizing their responsibility in front of the Soviet people.\textsuperscript{646}

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\textsuperscript{643} TsGALI f. 332 op. 1 d. 21 l. 1
\textsuperscript{644} PermGANI f. 105 op. 9 d. 351 l. 88
\textsuperscript{645} TsGALI f. 332 op. 1 d. 21
\textsuperscript{646} see any of a number of letters from the Presidium of the Writers’ Union to individual writers, in RGALI 631 15 758 and 760.
\end{flushright}
Not all pressure to maintain quality came from the outside. It also originated within institutions themselves, and at the individual level – most noticeably amongst well-placed members of the creative intelligentsia. Leading members of the creative intelligentsia regarded it as their duty to work just as hard as those in the factories or those at the front. A combination of a desire to serve their country and the war effort, gratitude at being able to continue practicing their art during wartime (as opposed to being drafted) and being inspired by how hard others worked seems to have driven their enthusiasm. The Kirov theater’s main conductor Arii Pazovskii informed the Kirov theater at a general meeting that “Right now it is necessary to directly subject art to the propaganda and agitation of great liberating ideas that inspire our people to fight the enemy. But the main task remains unchanged…that task is: the quality of artistic work. Our art will achieve no political goals if for its staging we use faulty means.” Radin wrote in the Kirov theater’s newspaper that “The question of quality takes on special importance now. After our productions the Molotov worker returns to his machine, the military units depart for the front. The working and Red Army audience…are our main viewers. We need to serve them in such a way, that inspired by the best examples of Soviet art the worker takes up his place at the machine and the soldier leaves for the front!”

Cultural elites appear to have been committed to serving the war effort in evacuation. As discussed in chapter II, this corresponds to the memoir descriptions of the immediate desire amongst the intelligentsia after the war broke out to offer their services

647 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 249 l. 3. 
648 Radin, Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 21 January 1942, 2.
– many tried simply to enlist (and were generally refused). Assignment to a front brigade or, for writers, to a military journal became a privilege to be competed for since there were far more willing participants than there were spaces – the Writers’ Union regularly had to turn down writers’ requests to be assigned to a front newspaper. Spaces in front brigades were reserved for talented but also politically reliable, trustworthy and well-behaved artists, and the privilege could be withheld in the face of poor behavior. At the Kirov theater, two young dancers’ behavior drew displeasure from the administration. One had been excluded from the Komsomol and had the temerity to not be disappointed by this. Young ballerina Stukolkina was prone to making scenes and demands in the director’s office and regarded her personal ties to Nikolai Kanin as “a means of personal influence on the theater.” Boris Freidkov, perhaps the most fiery Communist at the Kirov theater, wrote to Moscow to request the two young people be refused the opportunity to join a front brigade, as it would reward their bad behavior.649

Cultural elites themselves began many of the initiatives that proved successful during wartime. These included socialist competitions, both amongst ensembles and joining the socialist competitions of their city’s workers with the soldiers of a given front, and fund raising drives. For example, the Kirov theater challenged the Bolshoi to a socialist competition, and refused to let the matter drop when the Bolshoi failed to accept its challenge in a timely fashion. It also joined the socialist competition of Molotov with the “soldiers, commanders and political workers of the North-Western front,” for which amongst other things it gave a specially prepared concert performance on 23 February

649 TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 d. 89, l. 50. Letter from Freidkov to Aleksandr Vasilievich in Moscow, 1 April 1942.
1942, the anniversary of the Red Army.\textsuperscript{650} The state took socialist competitions very seriously as a means of mobilization. Obligations usually included several new premiers, a commitment to quality, and some patronage and front brigade promises. In Cheliabinsk, an appeal to the evacuated Malyi theater by workers of the nearby industrial city of Magnitogorsk for help in improving the quality of their local theater. In response, the theater’s top performers met with the theater administration to compose a response, in which they took the theater under their wing.\textsuperscript{651} None of these responses were forced upon the theaters by the state, but rather reflected the initiative and willingness of the evacuated intelligentsia.

Problems of quality and how they might affect culture’s mobilization impact were discussed both at general meetings and in Communist party cell meetings. Wartime viewers were considered to be especially sensitive to anything “false” or shallow in theater. As Radin put it, a poor quality performance was equivalent to “poor quality live ammunition.”\textsuperscript{652} Elsewhere in his extensive haranguing of the Kirov troupe to devote more attention to the quality of their performances at internal meetings, he argued that “in our hands is a powerful weapon. That weapon is – art. Our theater cannot remain only the cultural center of the city, it should be a true propaganda station.”\textsuperscript{653} Some members of the intelligentsia drew personal inspiration from the intense efforts of Soviet workers. Dancer Boris Shavrov recalls that upon traveling to regional factories and mines and “seeing what difficult and intense work they [workers] performed to help the defense of

\textsuperscript{650} Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 5 March 1942, 1. For the competition with the Bolshoi, see the appeal published in Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 8 September 1942, 1.
\textsuperscript{651} Malyi Teatr na frontakh Velikoi Otechestvennoi Voiny (Mosow: 1948), 129.
\textsuperscript{652} Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo n. 25, 8 November 1941, 3.
the motherland, we understood that the theater must give these people well-deserved relaxation and a good re-charge for new heroic feats of labor.”

In any case, evacuated theaters quickly realized that danger of “discounting” regional viewers or resting on their pre-earned laurels. A letter from the Leningrad Bolshoi Dramaticheskii Teatr, temporarily located in the city of Kirov, notes dangers of the “discount on ‘provincial-ness’”, that condescending and arrogant attitude towards viewers. Our first performances demonstrated that here it is impossible to work at “half voice”...each actor has to re-win the respect of the audience, proving his mastery.”

**Incentives for Quality Work**

Many of these prominent figures appear to have taken their duty as bearers and preservers of Soviet culture seriously and been dedicated to the idea of defending this culture from the ravages of war. The Kirov theater’s director Radin, for example, was reported to have only one objective in August 1941: ensuring that the theater and its collective was preserved. Arii Pazovskii’s dedication to maintaining quality and his strict approach to rehearsal were legendary at the Kirov theater, to the point where some orchestra members felt intimidated. As Pazovskii pronounced, “The fact that our orchestra is better than that in Sverdlovsk, as I often hear, is not a compliment. I want to withstand comparison with the London Philharmonic.” These artists were grateful they could still practice their art in time of war (many had been deeply worried about having to work outside of their specialty at the moment of evacuation, not to mention being

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654 GAPK f. 1588 op. 1 d. 533, 14.
655 Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, no. 2 (5 March 1942), 4.
657 Teatralnyi muzei, TIK 22317, untitled manuscript, 58.
drafted) and happy that their original fears of being superfluous proved unfounded, that their art seemed to be needed and could make an impact on the war effort. The mere fact of high audience turnout appears to have surprised many of them: as one ballerina in Sverdlovsk remembers with surprise, “But how audiences went to the theater during the war! You can’t even imagine!” Boris Shavrov recalls in 1944 that upon departing from Leningrad, “many of us were tortured over whether or not we, that is the theater, art, would be needed here in the deep hinterland. Wouldn't we be a burden to the city? These doubts were dispersed immediately after the first performances. We understood, that we are not only needed, we are irreplaceable.” Shavrov was not the only one to be surprised by such a realization. Many of those who performed in front brigades or for the troops recalled the audiences’ reactions to their performances as what convinced them to keep performing, rather than enlisting or serving the war some other way. Irina Morozova, cellist at the Bolshoi, decided to form a brigade with fellow evacuees: initially just two singers and a ballerina. They performed primarily in hospitals and military outposts. After one such concert in the winter, the women were preparing to leave when a young soldier on crutches dressed only in a robe came running after them as best he could, shouting “I’ll really give it to them now!” As Morozova recalls, “I could never have imagined how our unelaborated art could inspire people.”

Some cultural elites believed their experiences reflected the exceptionalism of the Soviet system, in a good way. Kirov ballet dancer and instructor Olga Mungalova remarked in a letter in 1942 that she can't believe that

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658 *Glavnaia v zhizn’ rol’: teatral’nye memuary* (Ekaterinburg, 1995), 303.
659 GAPK f. 1588 op. 1 d. 533, 14.
660 RGALI f. 1337 op. 5 d. 28, l. 44. Morozova, memoirs.
in days of war we have the opportunity not only to exist, but to show our achievements in a different city...such an attitude towards art is only possible in our country...one can only bow down and be infinitely grateful that in wartime...people find time to organize guestrole tours for performers. It's too wonderful.»

This unexpected appreciation seems to have helped spur the intelligentsia to work harder than normal. Radin noted at a meeting of the Kirov theater party organization that he could not remember a time when all the theater’s leading masters had been at the forefront of the theater’s work, both production and social. Freidkov, in a 1942 letter, happily reported that the “dictatorship of individuals, especially premiers, in relationship to production” had also been dealt with. In a speech at the creative session “Theaters of the Urals and Kuzbass in 1943,” comrade Krylova of the Molotov obkom remarks with satisfaction that “If earlier it was impossible to make an artist like Sereda...[and others] do anything else but sing on stage, now they haul potatoes, prepare firewood, plant potatoes and prepare costumes for Pugachev along with everyone else.” Krylova clearly means this as a compliment, a mark of progress. The theme of cohesion and unity within an ensemble is common in wartime reports by evacuated theaters to Moscow, and is usually presented as a contrast with the prewar period. However, the concept also makes an appearance in individual memoirs. As Nina Mikhalovskaia, actress with MXAT in Moscow wrote upon their arrival in evacuation in Saratov, “And here the theater demonstrated to the fullest degree its cohesion, collectedness, dedication to its

661 Teatralnyi Muzei, 12891/16, 2.
662 TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 7 d. 84 l. 26.
663 TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 7 d. 89 l. 49. Letter from Freidkov to Aleksandr Vasilievich, April 1942.
664 RGALI f. 970 op. 5 d. 5 l. 123. stenogram of tvorcheskaia sessiia “Teatry Urala i Kuzbass”, 1943.
beloved business…no ranks, no privileged positions in those days existed: everyone did what the theater needed.” Mikhalovskaia’s description sounds very well, though this was hardly the case during the war, as rationing and housing make quite clear. However, the idea of a “people’s war” in which divisions between elites and rank-and-file had no place, even within the intelligentsia itself, was clearly something people valued — especially in memories of the war later on.

Cohesion also manifested itself in elevated levels of work. In a separate article, Radin that “many leading artists have had to significantly increase their norms, for example Sereda, singing 12-14 performances a month out of a norm of 8…” He also lists the following artists as consistently exceeding norms: Ulanova, Balabina, Vecheslova, Dudinskaia, Sergeev, Kaplan, Freidkov, Nelepp, Kashevarova and others. These names all rank amongst the Kirov theater’s top ballet and opera soloists. In his speeches to the entire troupe, Radin often encourages the general collective to follow the example of leading artists, working above and beyond the norms. The personnel files of top artists of the Kirov theater often comment on the artists’ exceptionally hard work during the war, as well as their unique artistic achievements: “Sereda’s work ethic showed especially in evacuation. Not considering the established singing norms, exceeding them by several times, Sereda carried upon himself the entire repertoire of a lyric tenor, which facilitated the quick revival of the theater’s entire repertoire.”

Dedication could come financially as well. Leading artists as well as the Kirov theater’s administration added their names to the many general appeals to the collective for

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666 E. M. Radin, “Kirov theater in the current season,” TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 17 l. 16.
667 TsGALI f. 337 op. 2 d. 321 l. 9. Kharakteristika of Nikolai Sereda, 1946.
increased work norms or donations of money, given the letters extra clout. For example, the Kirov theater newspaper *Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo* published an appeal from the Vakhtangov theater appealing to all Soviet theaters to collect money for building airplanes by giving two days salary and perform several plays, proceeds of which would go into the airplane fond. The Kirov theater publicly accepted the Vakhtangov’s challenge, in a letter signed by many of the Kirov theater’s top artists, including Ulanova, Dudinskaia, Balabina, Vecheslova, Sergeev, Nelepp, Orlov, Freidkov, Khait, Mungalov, and others.668 Of course, these performers could well afford to sacrifice two days’ salary. Nor was it unheard of for Stalin prize winners such as Aram Khachaturian or Marion Koval’ to donate their prizes to the Defense fond, voluntary acts which were highly publicized and which received public personal, if succinct, acknowledgements from Stalin.669

Frequent positive reactions from audience members reinforced the intelligentsia’s other motivations for maintaining quality. In their memoirs, artists frequently recall the positive reaction of audiences and wounded soldiers with feelings approaching surprise and gratitude. One actress with MKhAT describes her interactions:

“I’ll never forget how soldier Grigorii Nikiforov, a young intelligent person, seriously wounded in both legs, said to me once: “You can’t even imagine, how much courage, moral strength, sensation of life you give us! After your visits (poseshchenii), talks with us strengthen certainty that you’ll return v stroi, that people are waiting for you, love you. Without that it’s difficult to perezhit all that which falls to a soldier’s lot.”670

668 “Sozdam eskadriliu protivotankovykh samoletov ‘Sovetskii Artist,’” *Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo* (21 January 1942), 2.
669 See for example *Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo*, 8 May 1943.
Moskvin likewise comments that “We experienced sincere joy and a genuine creative pod’em, seeing, with what sincere acknowledgement our new viewers respond to our plays.” Of course, the memoirs and sources come for the most part from leading artists, who enjoyed much better living conditions in evacuation and who were far more likely to benefit from admiration and acceptance on the part of regional communities impressed by their talents.

**Ideology and Mobilization**

The ability to cloak wartime ideological activities in notions of quality and entertaining one’s fellow citizens may have been beneficial to those members of the intelligentsia ambivalent about state ideology. However, the above emphasis on intelligentsia dedication to quality is in no way meant to qualify the intelligentsia’s very active participation in the wartime ideological project, though virtually all memoirs minimize this side of their activity, focusing exclusively on their creative development in evacuation. Quality was, as I have argued above, in part a means to sell ideologically infused culture to the public. For example, in the Kirov’s three part May day concert of 1942, the third part was set in a village liberated from the Nazis. To Rachmaninoff’s prelude, Tatiana Vecheslova danced the role of a mother whose child had been killed by the fascists. A more direct play on the audience’s emotions is difficult to imagine, and in case anyone missed the point, following review in the paper was entitled “Art, calling to revenge.” That this level of cooperation occurred is perhaps unsurprising. Those who

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671 *Literatura I Iskusstvo.*  
672 Vecheslova, *Ia-balerina,* 154. Interestingly, although the performance officially received high marks from local authorities, the local culture editor for Molotov’s newspaper *Zvezda* objected to the content, as “It is possible not to agree with the dramatic interpretation of may 1942 shown by the theater, since our May is typified not by
truly detested the Soviet regime had ample opportunity during the war to avoid supporting it, as discussed in chapter II. That part of the intelligentsia that made it into evacuation was both the most elite and likely the most loyal, even if this loyalty had its roots in gratitude for various privileges. More importantly, during the war Party and intelligentsia interests overlapped directly in ways they had not in the 1930s. The intelligentsia could legitimately mobilize around its wartime tasks, which were both newly concrete, comprehensible, and accessible to all while also seeming noble enough in nature so as not to put anyone off. All member of the intelligentsia, regardless of political convictions, could feel morally correct and justified in supporting the war effort.

At an individual and institutional level, plenty of material and practical incentive for quality work existed as well. High quality was one safeguard against disbandment – collectives could argue for their continued existence given their artistic and ideological significance. Quality work was also leverage when arguing to receive limited privileges (such as early return to Moscow from the provinces, or receiving a better building than before upon return). Writers, for example, in their innumerable requests to be recalled from evacuation, invariably emphasize their qualifications, prizes and their wartime work to demonstrate their deservingness. Those with consistently high quality work (either individuals or groups) could hope to be rewarded in a variety of ways, including monetary or material prizes ranging from relatively small to the all-union Stalin prizes, inclusion in a creative union with all their benefits or promotion at the individual or village level. [8]

villages, burned by fascist vandals, but by the enormous work uplift of the entire Soviet people.” This notwithstanding, Rozenfeld makes sure to compliment the quality of the dancing and singing. See Zvezda, 8 May 1942, p. 4.
institutional level to a higher category with all privileges attending it.\textsuperscript{673} Irina Morozova openly admits that evacuees from the Bolshoi were eager to perform concerts at the rest house of the Soviet Air Force, as “they fed you well” afterwards. This also acted as extra incentive to perform summers in the kolkhozy, where performers received payment in kind. For evacuees who chronically did not receive enough to eat and whose heads were “constantly in a fog” from hunger, such meals were privileges to be fought for.\textsuperscript{674} Evidence of working hard and well had to be exhibited when requesting something during the war years, as it demonstrated one’s “use” or “value” to the Soviet system. Works that brought in viewers or were accepted for publication (for literature or music) also meant ticket sales and income that were vital to many theaters’ and writers’ survival at time of greatly straitened state resources for culture. Solodovnikov, head of the Main Directorate of Theaters, had to specifically warn directors against achieving high attendance by the sale of beer and other alcoholic beverages during intermissions, and to encourage audiences with improved creative work and the staging of better plays.\textsuperscript{675} There is indubitably an overall effort by evacuees to prove their good behavior to the state in their reports, emphasizing as mentioned above their cohesion, unity and “working uplift.”

Evacuated members of the creative intelligentsia enjoyed a remarkably privileged lifestyle in comparison to the average citizen. First and foremost, they were exempt from dangerous, demanding physical labor either at the front or in the industrial complex, and enjoyed the social status which representatives of culture enjoyed. Beyond that, they had

\textsuperscript{673} GAPK f. 629 op. 1 d. 1 l. 35  
\textsuperscript{674} RGALI f. 1337 op. 5 d. 28, l. 44-46. Morozova, memoirs.  
\textsuperscript{675} TsGALI f. 332 op. 1 d. 31 l. 20
exceptional economic privileges. In 1942 artists at the Kirov theater frequently earned upwards of 700 rubles a month, with top administrators and performers earning 1200 and more. Salaries ranged up to 3000 for the theater’s top dancers, and to 5000 for the principal conductors. Prominent members of the intelligentsia felt that they had to be seen to “earn” this lifestyle and to justify their evacuation. High-quality culture work in evacuation was supposed to be the equivalent of work for the front and to earn the resources and respect the state had given it, safeguarding them from being sent to the front and treated as expendable. Those perceived as being lazy or not making their contribution, sitting out the war in the relative comfort of the hinterland, came in for sharp public criticism in both public and private settings, if not immediate punishment. As discussed in chapter II, the intelligentsia was not supposed to want to evacuate. One article in Literatura i Iskusstvo refers to the presence amongst writers of “frightened ‘intellectuals,’ people who are holed up in safety sitting out the formidable ordeals of their people…Soviet writers cannot have anything in common with these people.” In a 1942 letter to an evacuated writer, Mark Egart mentions that “of course, sitting in your Chistopol burrow is difficult. You have all become used to warmth and well-being there.” The tone of derision and concision is unmistakable. Being perceived to “earn” one’s privileged status took on even more importance during the war years, when service to the war effort was becoming the defining standard for good Soviet behavior. As scholars such as David Shearer have pointed out, after the war service to the state came to

676 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 238, 119 “shtatnoe raspisanie teatra opery I baleta im. S. M. Kirova vo vremia evakuatsii v gor. Molotove, 1942”
678 RGALI 631 15 565, l. 73. Letter from Egart, addressee unreadable, 1942.
supplant class and nationality as the key factor in defining a citizen’s relationship to the state. Many Soviet citizens seem to have intuitively sensed this would be the case, and hurried to capitalize on this. This provided plenty of impetus for the intelligentsia to fully support and join in the campaign for quality. It likely had the most effect towards the intelligentsia’s lower ranks, where the danger of being reassigned to work — likely dangerous, physically demanding and much less prestigious from a social sense — outside one’s specialty was greater.

**Creating Reactions and Expectations: Selling Soviet Culture During the War**

Audiences reacted above all to the high quality of evacuated culture, in recognition that evacuated culture was on a fundamentally different level than that which they had had access to before. But regional audiences were not left to come to the conclusion that evacuated culture deserved their appreciation on their own. Via the press, central and local authorities and evacuated institutions themselves all engaged in extensive efforts to frame the evacuation of cultural institutions in a way that would appeal to or at least not antagonize local residents, convincing them that evacuated culture deserved the privileged treatment it was receiving at local residents’ expense. While this was almost certainly in part an attempt to assist propaganda, some of these articles were also probably trying to head off resentment of evacuated intelligentsia. The treatment of evacuees by local communities was a cause for serious concern. The sudden appearance of the intelligentsia, as a rule better dressed and with its special rations,

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closed cafeterias and privileged access to central housing could easily have provoked hostile reactions.

However, there appear to have been the least resentment of the most privileged performers. No one seems to have complained about the comparatively luxurious lifestyles led by Natalia Dudinskaia or Tatiana Vecheslova, who received 3000 or 2300 rubles a month respectively as two of the Kirov theater’s prima ballerinas.\textsuperscript{680} Such sentiments are echoed elsewhere. For example, violinist at the Vakhtangov theater Iurii Elagin attributes the remarkably the privileged lifestyle of the intelligentsia not only to government policy and personal connections, but to “the exceptional love for art, in particular for theater, that began developing in all groups of the population starting with the era of Stalinist five year plans.”\textsuperscript{681} Encountering resentment was more likely for those evacuees at lower level. Regular orchestra and choir members (like actors and writers), whose value was less obvious and celebrated, tended to live in overcrowded conditions with occasionally unwilling local landlords. Writers and artists more than performing artists seem to recall conflict with their hosts, perhaps because there were simply so many of them (and far from all being well-known or obviously contributing to their communities) that not all of them could be provided with favorable housing. These groups were also more likely to be settled in small villages or kolkhozes, since they theoretically did not “need” access to buildings in towns in order to work.

Public speeches by local city and Communist Party officials at meetings and newspaper articles all impressed upon readers and listeners that the Soviet culture was a

\textsuperscript{680} TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 247 l. 79. Otchet o zagruzke personala Len akadem ordena lenina teatra opery I baleta im Kirov.
\textsuperscript{681} Elagin, \textit{Iskroshchenie iskusstv},
precious valuable, repository of the best that culture had achieved in the world so far; that the Soviet state as being advanced enough to care for its works and preserve culture for their benefit and enjoyment, unlike the Nazis, which kept its civilians ignorant. As People’s artist actor Ivan Moskvin (from 1943 director of MXAT) explained in a 1942 article, “MXhAT arrived in Saratov in order to… completely preserve and develop its art, belonging to the Soviet people, who are with such unparalleled courage defending the independence and freedom of the motherland.”682 In a March 1942 article in the more popular newspaper Moskovskii Bolshevik, the head of the Committee for Artistic Affairs Solodovnikov explains that the

… central theaters, widely known both to Soviet audiences and abroad, constitute the “golden fond” of our theatrical art, tenderly protected by the Soviet state. Of course, it is entirely understandable that during the war many creative collectives have been temporarily sent to other cities…this gave the theaters the opportunity to acquaint the wide masses of workers with the achievements of Soviet art.683

The slightly defensive tone suggests a need to justify the evacuation and special treatment of the intelligentsia to the rest of Soviet society. Solodovnikov proceeds to give a description of the theaters’ activities, their reception in the regions and the new productions they were working on. Arkadii Perventsev, writing for the Molotov newspaper Zvezda, described the evacuation of TIUZ from Leningrad to Berezniki in Molotov oblast as “care for both the theater and the working viewer-chemist.”684 Such articles helped Moscow and Leningrad readers understand the necessity of evacuations and the importance of cultural work in the hinterland, avoiding panic over the mass departure of cultural institutions and maintaining a to the evacuees.

682 Literatura i iskusstvo, no. 8 (21/2/1942), 4.
683 “Moskovskie teatry na periferii,” Moskovskii Bolshevik (5 March 1942), 4.
The articles informed regional viewers, on the other hand, of the extent to which the intelligentsia was trying to serve them and the care that the Soviet state was lavishing on workers. All in all, the protection of Soviet culture was portrayed not as the preferential treatment of a spoiled or even cowardly minority but as the mark of a benevolent state that cared for its citizens enough to protect culture so that they might have access to it. This was in sharp contrast to Hitler’s Germany, where in the eyes of Soviet propagandists, elites sought class-based revenge against uppity proletariat, including denying them access to culture.\(^{685}\)

Articles also emphasized how hard members of the creative intelligentsia were working alongside everyone else and the honor they felt at serving their fellow citizens on the front or in the factories. One actor in *Vecherniaia Moskva* proclaimed that he and his fellow actors want to offer as great a number of performances as possible, to work “like the Stakhanovites work in the hinterland, as the soldiers fight at the front.”\(^{686}\) In the Molotov newspaper *Zvezda*, frequent articles in 1942 and 1943 kept Molotov residents up-to-date on the extensive local activities of the Kirov theater, the variety, breadth and number of their concerts. In particular, the newspaper covered trips by artistic brigades to collective farms, factories and mines, describing special factory performances where songs were sung in honor of Stakhanovite workers, or how new songs were being

\(^{685}\) Katerina Clark and Karl Shloegel, “Mutual Perceptions and Projections,” in *Beyond Totalitarianism: Stalinism and Nazism Compared*, eds. Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick. That fascism was the worst form of capitalism and therefore that fascists were against the working class was something the Soviet Union was at great pains to convey to its citizens. See RGASPI f. 17 op. 125 d. 28 l. 56. “Plan tezisov” for agitation and propaganda.

\(^{686}\) *Vecherniaia Moskva* (3 June 1942), 3.
composed in order to help the harvest. Amongst other things, these trips helped maintain the illusion that there was no division between cultural elites and the people they served.

The media also took care to ensure Soviet citizens understood why Soviet culture was exceptional. In an appeal to national pride, newspapers emphasized the Nazis’ desire to “destroy, eradicate Russian national culture and the national cultures of other peoples of the Soviet Union,” “disarming” the Soviets morally and spiritually to turn them into slaves more easily.\(^687\) In one article, Aleksander Fadeev explained to Soviet citizens the essence of fascist hatred of Soviet culture; because Soviet culture is truthful and humane, and the creative intelligentsia – free, national, patriotic, “of the people.” Since fascism fears truth, so must it fear Tolstoy, Tchaikovsky, and attempt to exterminate any human memory of them.\(^688\) Even provincial newspapers republished articles on the Nazi desecration of the estates of Tchaikovsky and Tolstoy. Particularly after fall 1941, as information on Nazi occupation policies gradually became public, Nazi destruction of Soviet culture became a symbol for the Nazi destruction of humanity’s best achievements. The contrast between Nazi and Soviet attitudes towards and uses of culture became a major propaganda topic. As Soviet citizens were taught more and more to value and appreciate their own culture and the access to culture that workers had in a Soviet state, the Nazi destruction of it appeared ever more barbaric, and the Nazis’ relationship even to their own citizens, whom they were depriving of these world treasures and heritage – more repressive.

\(^687\) *Vecherniaia Moskva* (15 November 1942), 3.
\(^688\) *Literatura i Iskusstvo* (1 January 1942), 3.
Cultural elites themselves also did their best to “sell” Soviet culture at the individual level, using the influence afforded them by their status as members of the creative elite and opportunities opened by their new form of wartime work. Participants in agitational performances (especially in non-traditional settings, such as those in hospitals or factories) were not supposed to limit their role to merely performing, but were also expected engage in informal discussions of material and interactions with audience members. In this way performers could highlight and bring out relevance of material to wartime, which was not always obvious; these moments became more opportunities for the intelligentsia to exert political guidance and influence. As G. Orlov wrote in the Kirov theater newspaper in his 1942 report on patronage work, “…artists should enter close contact with soldiers, and the result of this should by friendly personal ties. Only then will military patronage work be successful.”\textsuperscript{689} Indeed, the aforementioned Agitprop report recommended sending the best film actors and directors to the Urals to meet with cinema audiences at showings of the planned films. In Berezniki, Leningrad TIUZ’s productions of Afinogenov’s Mashen’ka became an opportunity for Komsomol members to discuss the meaning of friendship (including in a wartime context).\textsuperscript{690} In concerts for workers’ clubs and in mines, artists would announce that they were dedicating a song to a particular shock worker or shock brigade.\textsuperscript{691} Those artists in performing brigades often engaged in other activities besides their performances, helping with daily tasks such as writing letters, reading out loud letters that had arrived from the front or newspapers, help with decorating public spaces with new

\textsuperscript{689} Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 20 October 1942, 2, G. Orlov, “God voenno-shefskoi raboty”
\textsuperscript{690} Karskaia, 331.
\textsuperscript{691} Zvezda (7 April 1942), 4.
posters and the publication or institutional newspapers as well as discussing their performances with audience members.\textsuperscript{692} From the state’s perspective, this was yet another opportunity for artists to exert political influence and guidance over their fellow citizens, directing their interpretation of what they had seen in a politically appropriate direction. Artists were encouraged to make these personal connections both in evacuation and in front brigades.\textsuperscript{693} G. Orlov, who led a highly successful brigade to the front in August 1942, reported that he “attributed at least 50\% of our success…to the fact that 100\% of our brigade interacted quite socially with the soldiers, in addition to the stage.”\textsuperscript{694}

In addition to convincing Soviet citizens of the inherent value and use of Soviet culture and the virtue of the Soviet state in defending it, both central and local authorities made attempts to persuade the Soviet public that they, too, were participants in the preservation of Soviet culture. According to this reasoning, the preservation of Soviet culture was not merely the accomplishment of creative institutions themselves or the government, but of the local residents who supported these institutions, facilitating their growth and development during the war years, providing them with the access to “real life” experience that the creative intelligentsia and cultural organizations all needed in order not to become obsolete. (And of course, the achievement of the Red Army that fought to defend this culture.) As average Soviet citizens identified more with Soviet culture and felt some connection to the creative intelligentsia, they felt a sense of pride.

\textsuperscript{692} RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 940 l. 6.
\textsuperscript{693} Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 20 October 1942 n. 6, p. 2
\textsuperscript{694} Teatral’nyi Muzei im. Bakhreshina 546 681, l. 1. Report by G. Orlov on trip to Kalinin front, August 1942.
that their communities had provided the necessary conditions for its continued existence and growth during the war. As one Molotov resident remarked in 1944, as the Kirov theater prepared to depart: “Of course the theater’s success was undoubtedly facilitated in part by the grateful public – the working viewer.” This sense of pride and contribution would appear after the war, manifesting itself in the increased cultural demand of regional viewers, who no longer wanted to be relegated to the status of cultural backwaters.

The increased wartime cultural opportunities benefitted from the coalescence of two earlier Soviet campaigns. One officially sanctioned the right of Soviet citizens, dating from 1935, to a prosperous life with access to the trappings of prosperity that used to only be available to the wealthy. While this is commonly thought of as encompassing foodstuffs and material goods (clothing, furniture, household items and so on), it also included access to culture and civilized entertainment, the opportunity to enjoy oneself and have a good time. In practice of course most of these material goods were scarcely available to any Soviet citizen except a tiny, privileged elite – there simply were not enough for everyone. However, in keeping with the notion of socialist realism, the promise of a bright future prosperous and comfortable life in a socialist society was held out to all, with examples such as Stakhanovites representing to regular workers the rewards awaiting them in the future. A similar standard applied to culture. As Russia was still underdeveloped, “there was not yet enough culture to go round, just as there were not enough consumer goods. Inevitably, in a world of shortages, some people had priority

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695 Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo n. 5 (9 June 1944), 4.
access to the supply of material and cultural goods. Particularly given the remarkable degree to which Soviet culture was centralized in Moscow and St. Petersburg, access to it was a priori limited to residents of those cities. Provincial residents, with the exception of guestrole tours, were almost automatically excluded from the heights of Soviet culture. However, the evacuations during World War II actually gave regional residents a taste of this culture and what it was like to have access to it on a regular basis. Moreover, evacuated cultural institutions made extensive efforts to make culture available to workers in ways that they did not during peacetime.

**Audience Reactions: Growing Expectations and their Implications for the Postwar Period**

Mass reactions of provincial residents to new cultural opportunities are difficult to judge. For sources I have used letters from viewers themselves; memoirs of soldiers and workers; intelligentsia memoirs; and records of evacuated institution. Letters from viewers themselves are limited in quantity (I have not been able to locate major deposits of them), and consumers with negative reactions most likely did not write in. It is also true that priority was placed on serving segments of the population already privileged, at least nominally: the military and industrial-defense complex. This is reflected in the fact that the most common letters are from Red Army members, stationed in the hinterland, in the military hospitals, or in response to front brigade concerts; and from members of the local intelligentsia or privileged workers, at a time when the overwhelming available audience was women, other evacuees, and peasants, often subsisting in almost dire circumstances. In all possibility, the newly available opportunities were still the purview

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of those with at least some small amount of extra income and free time, not the majority of Soviet citizens simply preoccupied with surviving. On the other hand, cultural organizations and the intelligentsia appear to have taken audience reactions fairly seriously and discussed them internally, along with other shortcomings in their work, so I have utilized these references when possible. Local and central authorities also kept tabs and wrote reports on the success or lack thereof of cultural work. Finally, artists also make note of local residents’ reactions in their memoirs and communications, recording some of their specific interactions, which I have treated as genuine.

One way to judge reaction is to evaluate how many people consumed the culture that became available to them, and here at least official statistics suggest that evacuated culture was quite popular. By the end of 1941, many theaters were playing to capacity. The Molotov opera building seated 900 residents, and within a few months the Kirov theater was playing to capacity, as least as recorded in their internal statistics. By the first quarter of 1942, attendance for the theater’s evening shows was 94.8% and at morning performances was 95%, and would only increase for the remainder of the theater’s time in Molotov. By 1943, attendance is at 99% for both morning and evening performances. The number of performances seems to have approximated slightly less than 1 a day, and a dozen or so morning performances for every three month period. During its time in Molotov via official performances alone, the theater probably managed to serve close to a million viewers via performances in its stationary building alone. This

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697 TsGALI f. 337, op. 1, d. 219, l. 177. “Ob’iasnitel’naia zapiska k lomy kvartalu” 1942.
698 Ibid., 40.
699 Ibid.,
does not take into account the thousands of non-standard performances given for shefskaia rabota or front brigades. It is therefore reasonably to assume that some significant percentage of the city’s residents (if far from all of them) had the opportunity to partake in evacuated culture and the demand to do so appears to have been high. While the Kirov theater may have been exceptionally successful, other evacuated theaters also reported high attendance. The end-of-year official reports for performing arts collectives in the Urals claim to have served hundreds of thousands of viewers during the war years. In 1943 the Molotov Philharmonic claims to have served 310 thousand viewers in regular concerts and 226 thousand with guesstrokes; in Sverdlovsk oblast, for the war up until December 1944 theaters and the symphony had served more than 9 million people.\footnote{700} Such high attendance surprised performers and central authorities alike, forcing the latter to reconsider their initial policy of shutting down performance arts collectives in the early months of the war. From the city of Kirov, the evacuated Leningrad BDT reported that audiences refused to be deterred by winter temperatures of down to -50 celsius or difficult road conditions in autumn, packing halls regardless of conditions.\footnote{701} In 1944, Gusarov reported that:

\[\ldots\text{workers and the intelligentsia attend each production in the Kirov theater’s staging upwards of 4-5 times\ldots the theater could not accommodate all those wishing to enjoy this high Soviet art\ldots Collective farmers from outlying regions gather in groups of 500-700 and travel to Molotov to attend the theater.}\footnote{702}


\footnote{701} Karskaia, 332.

\footnote{702} Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 9 June 1944, n. 5, p. 2 (speech by Gusarov)
A report from the local department of Agitprop in Molotovskii raion* in November 1941 confirms that while the workers’ most favorite cultural activity is cinema, cultural outings paid for out of their own pockets were organized to the performances of the Kirov and regional drama theater. For classics like *Evgenii Onegin*, *Susanin*, *Charodeika* and *Russkie liudi*, multiple trips had already been organized. In Prokopevsk, a small mining town east of Novosibirsk, the Moscow Theater of Operetta performed their repertoire not 3-4 times as they had been told to expect, but that “each production can, receiving encores, play over 20 times…in Moscow in September and October the theater could not dream of encores.” In January 1942, the theater’s director wrote to the KPDI that “thanks to the [theater’s] hard-earned popularity amongst the surrounding mines and evacuated factories, the theater has overfulfilled its 1941 plan by all indices…” and for 1941 proudly refused state subsidies. Hospitals in more remote areas wrote to theaters seeking to procure their services for their patients, promising to provide food and transportation. A letter to the Kirov theater from an unidentified military hospital in Cheliabinsk (where the Kirov theater performed in summer 1943) explains that the wounded soldiers heard “with the greatest interest and joy” that the theater was in their city, and their interest was piqued even more after hearing several radio transmissions:

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* Molotovskii raion most likely refers to the current Motovilikinskii raion, which was a former industrial settlement incorporated into the city of Molotov. Its primary characteristics are still industrial.
703 PermGANI, f. 1 op. 22 d. 251 l. 285, “otchetyne materialy raikomov VKP I perepiska s nimi”
704 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 937 l.
705 RGALI f. 962 op. 7 d. 938 l. 30.
706 TSGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 7 d. 89 l. 55. Letter from hospital in village of Karagai, Molotov oblast, to Freidkov at Kirov theater.
Deprived of the chance to visit the theater [ourselves], we forcefully request that the collective give at least one small performance here in our hospital...you will find simple but sincere viewers...who will carry with us to the front warm remembrances of the art of those creating art.\textsuperscript{707}

After becoming accustomed to the increase in available cultural opportunities, any decrease came to feel like a loss. When the Leningrad TIUZ, having performed with great success in Berezniki for 7 months, departed for three months in the summer on a barge, the city’s residents lined the river banks to greet them on the day of their return.\textsuperscript{708}

Why attendance at cultural events was so high during the war years – what was it that viewers received from attending? Was it purely for recreation and relaxation? In search of a model of wartime behavior or for help in interpreting current events? As a mark of patriotism or expressing/deepening one’s Soviet identity? Separately, the question remains of whether or not wartime culture effectively fulfilled its intended function of increasing levels mobilization and bolstering morale, thereby making a concrete contribution to the war effort.

The letters viewers wrote to collectives and individual members of the intelligentsia suggest that audiences found these performances inspirational and motivational, indicating that the performances may have positively impact mobilization at work or in the field and morale at the front. In addition to the general benefit of raising viewers’ spirits and providing some relaxation and entertainment, viewers seem to have come away from performances motivated to work harder for the war effort. Evacuated culture offered workers and soldiers a concrete and tangible taste of the Soviet

\begin{footnotes}
\item[707] letter to Kirov theater from wounded soldiers and commanders, 17 May 1943, TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 282 l.7.
\item[708] Karskaia, 333.
\end{footnotes}
civilization they were fighting to protect. Thus the Leningrad TIUZ, traveling on a barge for the summer, received a letter of thanks from workers of river depots stating that they

…with your help acquitted themselves of the set tasks [state plan] not badly and will conduct the future struggle with even more energy… your productions teach us to work anew, with our best energy, especially during the patriotic war against the cursed German fascists.\footnote{TsGALI f. 521 op. 1 d. 46 l. 12}

In another letter, a factory engineer writes that his fellow workers go to the opera and ballet theater with great pleasure, and that “with its good performances the theater mobilizes viewers against the fascist bandits, who want to take away from the Soviet people their wonderful culture.”\footnote{Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, “Slovo Molotovskomu zriteliu,” 5 March 1942, p. 4} Other letters to theaters and to individual performers comment that performances aroused courage in them;\footnote{Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 2 January 1942, p. 3} while Red Army member G. Neustroev wrote to the theater that operas such as Ivan Susanin, Kniaz Igor and V Buriu arouse feelings of “hot Soviet patriotism” in viewers. In a discussion of the Kirov theater’s performances, he conveys, several soldiers and commanders declared that such productions “fill… us with new strengths to fight for the honor and freedom of our motherland.”\footnote{Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 21 January 1941, 3.} Neustroev goes on to suggest introducing short reports before each performance so that productions are accessible to even the most unsophisticated viewer and suggests that more places in theaters be set aside for soldiers and commanders, as they often are not able to secure tickets to regular performances.\footnote{Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 21 January 1941, 3.} Another letter from a military hospital train states that: “…Your art has poured into us a new stream of energy

\footnote{This suggestion seems to have been implemented; there was a special “voinskaia kassa” with seats reserved for those in the military.}
which has lifted us even more to the fulfillment of the tasks in front of us.” In a 1942 newspaper column in Berezniki’s Udarnik entitled “Zametki zritelja,” one enthusiastic audience member comments that Leningrad TIUZ’s Prodlzhenie sleduet “…is impossible to watch indifferently, with calm feelings…the performance’s truthfulness is deeply affecting…the audience leave the theater thanking the artists for their masterful performance.” In an undated letter by wounded Hero of the Soviet Union Colonel Nekrasov, he thanks the opera and drama theaters for their care for him: “…your care and heartfelt treatment of Red Army commanders inspires and requires me to fight the fascist bands even harder and I leave for the front giving you my promise to, not sparing my strength and life, smash and destroy the German occupiers until their complete destruction.” This spirit of being required to fight harder in gratitude for the care showered on one by the state in the form of “cultural service” (kul’turnoe obsluzhivanie) reappears very frequently in letters from the Red Army. These are consistent themes throughout the letters addressed to institutions and collectives, with many letter writers commenting on how performances energized and inspired them to fulfill their plan with new energy. Writers also received such letters. Evgeniia Trutneva, a Molotov writers who corresponded actively with the front and sent the troops small plays and pieces for their military newspaper received the following thanks: “All this is exceptionally touching and raises us to even more responsible glories, that our dear country is awaiting…Please write

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714 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 260 l. 1. 17 February 1942.
715 TsGALI f. 521 op. 1 d. 51 l. 1, Udarnik, “zametki zritelja”, 1.II.1942
716 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 260 l. 60.
to us more…and in return we promise you to with even greater effort…fulfill our commands.”

But audiences also seem to have appreciated culture for its relaxation and entertainment purposes, as well as enjoyment of high quality performances. Life for all Soviet citizens, on the front or otherwise, during the war years was grim. They faced grueling physical labor in extreme circumstances with very few material comforts. Many workers were on the brink of starvation. They lived and worked in buildings where hygiene and amenities were minimal. In so far as they had time to relax, they had very little to occupy themselves with: libraries during the war fell into catastrophic conditions, radio programs were sporadic and many cinemas stopped showing films. Against this background, the popularity of evacuated culture becomes more understandable. Soviet citizens in the hinterland enjoyed the sheer entertainment after exceptionally long days of physical labor, the enjoyable diversion that it posed from everyday cares. In letter from a hospital in Tashkent to the Kirov theater, a wounded soldier originally from Kharkov “sends a hot hello to the wonderful ballet collective of the Kirov theater…I recall with rapture my attendance [at your performances] and the enormous joy you gave me with your art.” Letters from service members consistently thank performing brigades for the “cultured relaxation” (kulturnyi otdykh).

Fan letters are replete with comments expressing simple enjoyment of and amazement at the quality of evacuated culture. In letters written after the war, the reader

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717 GAPK f. 941 op. 1 d. 13 l. 57, “pis’mo s fronta!”, undated, unsigned
718 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 260 l. 41. undated letter from N. Maiborov.
719 See most of the letters by soldiers written in response to the Kirov theater’s front brigades, TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 259 and 260.
also sees longing for something no longer available to regional residents. As two girls from Molotov oblast wrote to a famous soprano at the Kirov theater after hearing her over the radio in the 1950s: “…your performances seemed like happy, magical dreams, which will never occur again…we dreamed of being transported to Leningrad, even for an instant…”

720 Tenor A. N. Korobeichenko received the following letter from a group of Sverdlovsk viewers, informing him that “We often gather and remember the time that you appeared on the stage of our opera theater [during the war]. How much pure aesthetic pleasure you gave us with your rare combination of excellent vocal abilities, acting gifts, scenic appearance and that special flame, which gives life to music and song.”

721 The writers are sure he will never see a tenor of comparable level again in Sverdlovsk, and therefore particularly values these wartime memories. The writer, a mechanical engineer, requests a few photos and if it was not too much trouble, perhaps a few lines of correspondence.

It was not uncommon for prominent artists, especially dancers, to receive poems written about them or in their honor, written by anyone from local professors to schoolchildren. Many of those writing in to individuals or collectives – particularly soldiers on the front, commenting after front brigade performances – emphasize the pure aesthetic pleasure (esteticheskoe udovolstvie) they received from the performance, the likes of which they had never experienced before. Writes one soldier: “we have not heard or seen such a wonderful performance of these numbers in a long time. We offer our

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720 TsGALI f. 579 op. 1 d. 24 l. 71.  
721 Teatralnyi muzei, 82
thanks to the collective for the aesthetic enjoyment you gave us.”722 Other front letters thank them for their “masterful performance,” the “great artistic mastery,” the “high examples of true art” and for the “enormous pleasure and satisfaction” the performances gave the troops.723 The aforementioned military hospital train began its letter by expressing their rapture “at the wonderful performance of talented masters of Soviet art.”724 A letter from a group of miners in 1942 expresses their “exceptional satisfaction with the high quality of the performed numbers,” most of which appear to have been folk and popular mass songs.725 Another letter writer, engineer Vaulin, remarks that in all the theater’s performances one can see the “well-coordinated work” of the theater, the artistry of whose performances left a impression on him. In listing the performers who impressed him the most, he names the Kirov theater’s top performers.

The frequency with which letters comment on quality – and the few occasions where quality was gently critiqued – implies that for the average Soviet citizen in provincial cities, this culture was a cut above that they were used to. But for many workers and soldiers, who often expressed their gratitude for the time cultural organizations devoted to them, these opportunities also reassured them that the intelligentsia, one of the most elite groups in Soviet society, was working together with them and supporting them and validated the extreme efforts they were making on behalf of the war. Reviews of shefskaia rabota and letters frequently thank the theater for the attention spared them, and claim to be impressed by the intelligentsia’s ability to function

722 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 259. “Dnevnik frontovogo brigada teatra,” letter of 2.XII.1942, unreadable signature
723 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 259.
724 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 260, 1.
725 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 260, 52, 27.XII.1942
in very difficult circumstances (this was particularly true of reviews of front brigades, who deeply impressed soldiers with their willingness to perform literally under fire). In the reviews by miners of the concerts performed for them, they write that “the collective was met by the miners with great love. The respect for the collective was inspired by their straightforward, simple and sensitive attitude to the miners’ requests.”

Elsewhere, several wounded soldiers wrote in that

...your warm, friendly relationship to us and constant care for us give us much pleasure. It is especially pleasant to see, that despite how busy you are you find time to devote much attention to us...only in the country of socialism is such a connection between representatives of culture and servicemembers possible.

One final way to gauge the success of evacuated culture was the regional reaction when institutions began reevacuating. In chapter III, I discussed efforts by regional authorities to raise cultural development in their cities. As it turns out, regional audiences shared their feelings. None of the regional communities wanted to be relegated back to the status of cultural backwater. Both individual letters from regular citizens and the perception of local and central authorities attest to this fact. As the Magnitogorsk workers wrote in their appeal to the Malyi theater, “we must work harder, with even more self-sacrifice. The city’s cultural organizations can and should help us, since well organized rest inspires people to new achievements.” As the war neared its end, the implications of this increased cultural consumption in the regions became clear. In 1944 a student at the Molotov pharmaceutical institute stated as the Kirov theater departed that: “The theater has enirched us, introducing us to the high quality of its work...the theater's

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726 TsGALI f. 337 op. 1 d. 260 l. 57. Otzyv by predsedatel shakhtov, no date.
727 Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, 21 Jan. 1942, p. 4, “pis’ma boitsov” of 2.1.1942
728 Malyi Teatr, 130.
influence is felt everywhere.”⁷²⁹ A letter from the head doctor at the Molotov clinic writes that “it is wholeheartedly too bad, that the true pleasure that [the ballet] gave the Molotov viewer cannot be extended.”⁷³⁰ Culture had become a part of what Soviet citizens had fought for, and they felt that they had earned their right to it. Theatrical networks had grown significantly during the previous two decades, and as early as 1943 Soviet authorities were already looking ahead to the postwar period and predicting an international expansion in the influence of Soviet culture. Nikolai Gusarov noted in a 1944 speech that «the enormous interest in Soviet literature, Soviet art, Soviet science, in one word, Soviet culture...by various foreign countries and particularly by the intelligentsia of these countries became a well-known fact during the war...it is clear that the all-sided strengthening of our ties with foreign countries in the postwar period will indisputably lead to the increase in the influence of Soviet culture on the West...»⁷³¹ Naturally authorities expected continued growth in the level of regional Soviet culture would continue to accompany Soviet culture's increasing international prestige.

But cultural consumption during the war had brought consumers into the bargain. Culture was no longer something to be simply handed down as a projection of what appropriate Soviet cities should look like, but something regional residents clamored for. Regional communities were sorry to see cultural institutions leave and insistently requested continued help in improving local culture after the war, and both central and local authorities supported them in these demands. At a general meeting of the Molotov

⁷²⁹ Zvezda (2 June 1944), 3, “Молодежь благодарна театру.”
⁷³⁰ Zvezda (2 June 1944), 3, “Созданное на Урале не забудется.”
⁷³¹ PermGANI f. 24 op. 1 d. 13 l. 61. Speech by Nikolai Gusarov, chairman of obkom, at XV plenum of Molotov obkom, 1944.
obkom late in the war, a comrade Krylova rose to request that the theater leave some of its members behind to direct the Molotov opera theater, further its development and the obtaining of ballet masters, choir directors and other cultural workers to transmit the Leningraders’ cultural experience.\textsuperscript{732} As Gusarov noted in his June 1944 speech to the Molotov party organization, the departure of the Kirov theater meant a “large and irreplaceable loss in the realm of culture and art for our city,” but promised that the obkom would do everything in its power to satisfy the cultural demands of the Molotov worker.\textsuperscript{733} The secretary for propaganda of the Molotov city committee Konstantin Makhanek confirmed that “During the war years in the life of the Urals serious changes have occurred, that have produced sharp growth in the cultural demands of millions of Soviet people.”\textsuperscript{734} In addition to the many notes of thanks the Kirov theater received, as a gesture of gratitude workers in Kizel donated all their over-plan production to the Kirov theater for the restoration of their building in Leningrad, damaged by a bomb. This included hundreds of tons of coal, timber and glass.\textsuperscript{735} Local authorities frequently specifically requested that evacuated institutions leave behind at least some cadres to help train local performers, making public appeals both to evacuated cultural institutions themselves and to the authorities to require this help. Matiushin requested that the Kirov theater Party cell more actively incorporate workers from the former Molotov opera and ballet theater into their productions. In training theses artists and helping them to improve their abilities, they would permanently “enrich the culture” of the Molotov theater after

\textsuperscript{732} Karskaia, 90.
\textsuperscript{733} Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, no. 5 (9 June 1944), 2.
\textsuperscript{734} PermGANI f. 1 op. 22 d. 441 l. 115. Report by Makhanek, May 1944.
\textsuperscript{735} Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo, no. 5 (9 June 1944), 2.
their departure.\footnote{736} Solodovnikov, upon reviewing the theater's work in 1944, explained that the theater had “raised the level of stage culture here [in Molotov], but after your departure it is impermissible that this culture should sink again. You must help.”\footnote{737} In addresses to the theater collective in 1944 printed in the Molotov newspaper \textit{Zvezda}, local residents request continued cultural assistance from the theater. One might have expected the strongly-worded desire of Professor Bogoliubov (whose letters had appeared before in the theater's newspapers) that the theater establish “unending ties with our city and the Molotov theater, giving this interaction solid and definite organizational forms.”\footnote{738} The letters from technical workers, each with their own favorite ballet dancers and opera singers, are slightly more surprising. Engineer Butusov writes that “one hopes, that after the theater departs its ties with people of the Urals will not be severed. It is desirable that to establish systematic trips of ballet and opera soloists to the Urals…” while M. Shuster, senior foreman of a mechanical workshop repairing engines has the following final wish for the theater: “Don't forget the Urals! Come back to continue the large cultural work you have begun with the working viewer.”\footnote{739} In the end, a number of high-level performers remained behind voluntarily for periods of a few years to assist the Molotov theater, and a group of lower-level employees were left behind “involuntarily.”\footnote{740}

At the end of the war, most evacuated cultural institutions returned to their original cities triumphantly. They had preserved Soviet art and culture, and many were

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\item \footnote{736} TsGAIPD f. 2245 op. 1 7 d. 85 l. 4.
\item \footnote{737} Teatralnyi Muzei, TIK f. 22314 l. 104.
\item \footnote{738} \textit{Za Sovetskoe Iskusstvo} (9 June 1944), 3.
\item \footnote{739} \textit{Zvezda}, 2 June 1944, 4.
\item \footnote{740} Teatralnyi Muzei, TIK f. 22317 l. 117.
\end{itemize}
returning home with new achievements (*tvorcheskii pribyl*) to be proud of. The success of their mobilization work was confirmed officially by the increasing privileges they received as a group from central authorities. The wartime campaign to convince regional audiences they should appreciate the arrival of the evacuated institutions as a privilege, earned by their hard work for the war effort, succeeded. Both authorities and the intelligentsia were deeply conscious of this in the postwar period. Only now regional communities felt that they deserved this culture as a right and that it should no longer be a scarce resource limited to the capitals, Moscow and St. Petersburg. Having defended Soviet culture at high cost to themselves, they now expected access to it and for both central and local authorities to attended to their desires.
Conclusion

By 1945, evacuated cultural institutions were firmly ensconced back in their home cities. Cultural institutions joined in the euphoria and triumphal mood of 1945, sharing in the general conviction that “a better life would be the people’s just reward.” Moreover, the creative intelligentsia found itself feted and honored for having helped facilitate the victory. Front brigades composed of elite performers from theaters such as the Bolshoi accompanied the Red Army right up to Berlin, where they performed on the steps of the Reichstag, emblazoning the idea of Soviet cultural leadership and its relationship to the military victory onto the international stage. Stalin himself readily not only acknowledged but lauded the intelligentsia’s part in the war. From a potentially tenuous position at the war’s outbreak as “frightened little intellectuals,” the Soviet creative intelligentsia had emerged firmly ensconced as an integral part of the Soviet elite. Such a shift was only possible thanks the state’s decision to accept the intelligentsia’s contribution as equal to that of everyone else’s, and to Soviet audiences’ willingness to be impressed by Soviet culture and accept evacuated cultural elites as intermediaries and role models. The first factor speaks to Stalin’s need, as Vera Dunham and Sheila Fitzpatrick have written, to find a partner in rebuilding after the war. Having proven their loyalty and willingness to cooperate for the right incentives, the intelligentsia seemed like an appropriate choice. The second factor speaks to the unique status of culture and its

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741 Catherine Merridale, *Ivan’s War*, 337.
producers in the Soviet Union, and its enhancement by the status imparted by Moscow or Leningrad residency.

One of the most striking things about the wartime story of culture is that it is impossible to escape the sense that how the war is remembered influenced sources even as early as 1945. The desire to have a triumphal, positive narrative of unity between intelligentsia and the people and culture in service of the war appears to have been overwhelming. This is less surprising in sources that appeared during the Brezhnev years. As Merridale has demonstrated, during the 1960s and 1970s the state used the war myth to rebuild their sense of purpose, using various forms of commemoration to demonstrate that the nation fought as one; no other interpretations were allowed.\footnote{Merridale, 374.} As she points out, this was a narrative that satisfied many people, and I would argue it satisfied cultural elites as well. It is a narrative that confirms their contribution and its meaning, which became the basis for the increasingly privileged position in Soviet life after the war. However, even sources generated much earlier reflect the desire for this narrative to be true. Cultural elites sensed very early on that the war offered them a prime opportunity to decisively prove to the state their loyalty and potentially put an end to the instability and repression of the 1930s. For example, it is easy to read a certain righteousness back into Eugenia Vasilievskaya’s condemnation of the peasants who sympathized with the Germans; her reaction in 1942 may have been different than her recollection of events in 1944, when interviewed.\footnote{Nauchnyi Archiv IRI RAN, 2 VIII 2 6, l. 6. Stenogramma besedy s artistkoi balleta GABTa Vasilievskoi Evgeniia Dmitrievna.} In any case, the intelligentsia made sure that to the question “what have you done for the front?” it had an answer, in the well-documented numbers of...
concerts and performances given for soldiers and workers; the new pieces composed and premiers produced; the number of brigades sent to the front, and the assistance offered to local cultural institutions. They could claim to return home with artistic and creative growth, demonstrating to Moscow and Leningrad audiences “what they [theaters] have done for those fighting at the front.” By 1945, both state and Soviet audiences were willing to accept the narrative that keeping cultural live on the home front had been a contribution to the war effort overall. However, the overall narrative of unity raises interesting questions for the selection of narrative threads in memory of the war. During the war itself, the mobilization effort was so expansive, it had room for all aspects of culture: in evacuation, at the front, in blockaded Leningrad. After the war, as cultural elites converged back on the Soviet Union’s capitals, one strand had to become more dominant.

The story of evacuated culture demonstrates once again the importance of self-mobilization and individualization (along with some decentralization) of power in the Soviet war effort, allowing the Soviet bureaucracy to be worked around. Had the intelligentsia not mobilized itself, it seems likely the evacuations and the use of culture as propaganda on the home front could not have been conducted in the same manner. Even when central political control relaxed, the Soviet system still functioned, and at a moment of crisis, in Moscow and Leningrad Soviet citizens including the intelligentsia proved ready and willing to mobilize for the tasks set them by the state. It is hard to find evidence of people abandoning the Soviet project in droves in these stories.

745 RGALI 962 7 969, l. 68. stenogramma obshchegorodskogo sobrania rabotnikov iskusstv g. Novosibirsk, 1941-1942, speech by Shapovalov. The question of “creative growth” during evacuation was important to all ensembles. See for example, TsGALI 337 1 219, l. 199, report on activity of Kirov theater for 1941-1943; or
Secondly, the story of evacuated culture makes it clear to what extent culture became an integral part of Soviet propaganda and efforts to raise morale, in the first half of the war. Cultural may have initially been evacuated as to preserve a perceived form of wealth by the state, but the activities of evacuated cultural institutions in the hinterland became an integral part of the war effort. The state had intended for culture to be mobilized from the first days of the war; this was part and parcel of organizing for total warfare, in which all elements of society needed to be mobilized and set to that task where they would bring the most benefit. But the evacuations presented new possibilities in terms of reaching larger audiences across the country. It did not take either central or regional authorities long to realize the resources at their disposal. Culture became propaganda as the state sought ever more to convey its ideological priorities to the home front in an appealing and influential fashion. Culture provided an excellent vehicle for this. The social status and cultural capital attributed to the evacuated intelligentsia lent the entire affair a weightiness it might not have otherwise had, while also ensuring that cultural was of the necessary quality to be taken seriously and believed.

In addition to using culture itself as a conduit for a subtle but emotiona

destruction of Iasnaia Poliana, the palace museums outside Leningrad and other cultural monuments struck a chord with Soviet citizens especially as the evacuated cultural institutions began stepping up their activities 1942. The success of the Soviet cultural campaign suggests that Soviet citizens were much more steeped in the ideology of their state than other combatants, and culture was once instance where ideology and propaganda seemed to bear each other out. Additionally, it helped that the Soviet message was a positive one rather than one of destruction. As I have shown, this aspect of the war effort was successful. Regional communities came to accept Soviet culture as an important part of their identity, and did not wish to part with it at the war’s end.

As for the intelligentsia, the wartime interlude reveals several things about it as a group. First, self-mobilization in service of the state in the characterized the intelligentsia’s reaction to the outbreak of war. This is all the more striking the almost total absence of repressive episodes against members of the intelligentsia during the war. Though some were arrested in 1941 or early 1942 usually for careless remarks and there were a few more well-publicized cases of criticism from 1943 on, as a whole the state had other things to attend to during the war besides using force against errant members of the intelligentsia. Carrots played a much great role during the war than sticks, so to speak. The intelligentsia had been mobilized before the war, in particular ever since the formation of the creative unions and KPDI and the formation of an official Soviet cultural agenda in the early to mid 1930s. World War II presented a welcome change in that not only were the tasks at hand concrete, they were ones that the intelligentsia could legitimately feel righteous about. There was little conflict about the correct way to

746 These cases included Dovzhenko, Aseev and Shaginian, and Zoshchenko. See Babichenko, *Pisateli i tsenzory*, 87-100.
proceed, and plenty of enthusiasm for the task of creating. The confluence of state and intelligentsia interests facilitated the extent of its successful self-mobilization. In this way, the intelligentsia’s reaction to the war can be deemed a success for the state. In the absence of repression it was not a foregone conclusion that the intelligentsia would prove so amenable to supporting the state. The degree of self-mobilization and enthusiasm for state-set tasks suggests a significant sector of the intelligentsia had bought into the Soviet ideological project and did not desert it in a moment of crisis, even if their ideological motivations may have been accompanied by more practical or material considerations.

But the scale of mobilization suggests that material privileges alone cannot explain everything. Evacuations threw a potential wrench into this mobilization, both removing the intelligentsia from under the eye of the state and severing it from its usual comfortable habitat and accustomed patterns of existence. Here, real potential for demoralization existed, and it is thanks to the efforts of the creative unions and cultural administrators that this did not occur. While the evacuations forced a great many new problems and responsibilities onto their plate, it also gave union administrators in particular exceptional power over the lives of their members, by designating the unions as the distributors of almost all “goods” the state had to offer, from rations to evacuation destination to return to Moscow.

Not only did the intelligentsia mobilize along the tasks the state desired, it did so along the lines of the hierarchy set by the state, without significant challenges to this hierarchy. Cultural elites may have fretted over the place of their institution within the overall cultural hierarchy, but few disputed the principle of removing the most “valuable” institutions from harm’s way. This in turn suggests that the intelligentsia had accepted
and internalized these hierarchies. It also, as discussed above, recognized early on the opportunity the war offered to trade on its behavior during the war effort in return for extra support from the state. Finally, the war saw the intensification of hierarchies within the intelligentsia itself, but not significant reorganization thereof. If the 1920s and even early 1930s had seen significant turnover for a variety of reasons including aesthetic or political convictions or unfortunate patron selections, the war saw the strengthening of those hierarchies that existed in June 1941. The most elite and powerful cultural figures acted during the war as power brokers in their own right, with great influence over the daily lives of other members of their group. Occasionally evacuated figures who felt they were being ignored tried to circumvent these channels, going directly to a powerful Party figure, but generally during the war this was not successful, as top Politburo figures had other matters to attend to. The evacuations also illuminate the intelligentsia’s relationship with power. Upon their arrival in evacuation, cultural elites quickly set about establishing the same sorts of personalized relationships with local authorities that they had in Moscow and Leningrad — except that in evacuation, these relationships were in a way more equal, given the outsized social and cultural status the evacuees had in the regions. Each party involved in negotiations had something the other wanted in a way that was much less true in Moscow, where political patrons had such outsized power. In this way, the evacuations highlight how closely evacuated cultural elites worked with power, as they cooperated with local authorities to determine how to best serve local communities. Such activities likely occurred before the war in Moscow and Leningrad as well but their scale and significance was quite different during the war.
Despite the narrative of unity and fighting as one without any divisions, the story of evacuations lay bare the intensely hierarchical nature of the Stalinist system, both socially and geographically. These divisions were not overcome by the war effort, but in some ways exacerbated as the state had to do more with less resources. The most elite and privileged cultural institutions were evacuated to the “best” regional cities, where they focused their efforts on serving the people most important to the state: soldiers and workers in defense factories. As I have argued, the geographic dimension was both reconfirmed and then reinforced as the elite cultural institutions redoubled their efforts to impart Soviet culture to cities that were already perceived as better. Such hierarchies also manifested themselves in the economic dimension of the intelligentsia’s history. While frequently overlooked, the evacuations in particular expose how connected economic privilege was to residency in Moscow and Leningrad. Unlike regular evacuees, however, the intelligentsia in evacuation retained its Muscovite or Leningrad status and found itself entitled (at least nominally) to the same privileges they had enjoyed at home. Very few other evacuees except the state and Party apparatus could say the same.

Part of the surprise surrounding cultural efforts during the war stems from the fact that cultural mobilization took place against the backdrop of such deprivation and hardship in all other aspects of life, at a time when industrial workers regularly starved and lived with malnutrition for extended periods of time.\textsuperscript{747} Efforts to raise levels of local culture took on significance primarily because both regional authorities and local communities came to actively these levels them for themselves. While many may have dreamed of a more comfortable or at least satisfactorily fed existence, these things may

\textsuperscript{747} See Wendy Goldman and Donald Filtzer, \textit{Hunger and War}. 
have seemed beyond the possible at the time. Evacuated culture, on the other hand, was present and immediately available. Regional communities saw in the evacuations a chance to gain significant amounts of cultural capital unlikely to accrue to them in any other fashion, and certainly in the telescoped timeframe that was possible during the war. The experience of evacuated culture shows that by the 1940s, Soviet citizens throughout the country had bought into the notion of kul’turnost as cultural capital. Accumulation of such cultural capital and the status it implied suggested increased possibility of parlaying these things into economic and geographic privilege at some point in the future.

The intelligentsia’s wartime work received recognition at the highest levels of Soviet government, leading to an adjustment in the relationship between government and cultural elites in the postwar period. The intelligentsia mobilized itself during the war, without waiting for force to be implemented, and continued to overall act in the state’s interest even in the absence of repressive measures. In evacuation the organizational and management power of the creative unions and large cultural institutions expanded, as their evacuated members relied on them to arrange all manner of problems. Leading figures in the intelligentsia progressed to acting as ideological and material brokers or “patrons” in their own right. The intelligentsia may not have received the liberalization they dreamed of during the war, that would permit them to write or compose what they saw fit.748 However, it did retain and in many cases increased material privileges, social status, increased professionalization and control over its internal affairs.749 They also

749 On increased professionalization, see Kiril Tomoff, chaps. 1-2, and Vera Tolz.
emerged from the war to find their social position consolidated. The 1930s had been characterized by the effort to create a “Soviet” intelligentsia that had seen significant social upheaval with arrests and execution of prominent cultural elites such as poet Osip Mandelstam and Vsevolod Meierhold, as well as heavy casualties amongst the ranks of former members of RAPP, the Russian Association of Proletarian Writers.\textsuperscript{750} The intelligentsia during the war saw little to none of this sort of turnover, but rather a consolidation of social status and hierarchies to emerge from the war as one of the most privileged groups in Soviet society. These social hierarchies in the postwar period became quite entrenched, with little to none of the rapid upward social movement that took place in the 1930s.

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Nauchnyi Arkhiv IRI RAN
Teatr’nyi Muzei im. Bakrushina
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Molotov
GAPK Gosudarstvennyi Arkhiv Molotovskого Kraia
PermGANI Permskii gosudarstvennyi arkhiv noveisheii istorii

Kazan
NA RT Natsional’nyi arkhiv respubliki Tatarstan
TSG IPD RT Tsentral’noi gosudarstvennyi arkhiv istoriko-politicheskoi dokumentatsii
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