

Boris Nicolaevsky and Boris Gurevich. Particularly Nicolaevsky's blurring of the distinction between surrender and defection, and his notion that political motives were paramount, have been influential for decades.

The sources for the book are highly diverse, ranging from memoirs to calculations based on Edele's fascinating main German source: contemporary notes made about 344 defectors interrogated by the 296th Infantry Division in 1942–43. Such a source must be treated with caution, of course. The German historian Christian Hartmann found many indications of a very strong antisemitism within this particular division. All the more remarkable, then, that only five of the 344 defectors explained their defectors in an antisemitic manner.

My one quibble with the book is that perhaps we are still expected to conclude too much from these interrogations. Edele notes that most defectors did not explain themselves in a narrowly political sense—as an expression of their wish to fight Stalin. Still, Edele underlines that the second-largest group (well over a third in his database) did give political motivations. But if they did, can we really believe them? Can we really conclude that “for many of those who actively sought surrender politics remained central”? (156). It was, after all, the wisest thing to say when facing Germans at that time.

The book is engagingly written. Various places in the book describe Major Ivan Kononov, who defected in August 1941, engaged in bloody anti-partisan operations in Belarus, became Ataman of All Cossack Forces within General Vlasov's movement, and ended up in Australia as a Polish Displaced Person. It is such a vivid tale that the reader has to be emphatically reminded that Kononov's motives were not typical. And although I cannot remember seeing any other work in Soviet history where all chapter titles have just one word (such as “Profiles” and “Implications”), it works well.

In short, Edele uses all the right sources, poses smart questions about a difficult and understudied topic, and clearly presents answers that significantly advance our understanding. For all these reasons, this excellent book must be highly recommended.

KAREL C. BERKHOFF

NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies

Stalin's World War II Evacuations: Triumph and Troubles in Kirov. By Larry E. Holmes. Modern War Studies Series. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2017. x, 231 pp. Notes. Bibliography. Index. Photographs. Maps. \$39.95, hard bound.

doi: 10.1017/slr.2018.342

Larry Holmes's new book is a follow-up to his 2012 study of Kirov's pedagogical institute during and after the Second World War. The new monograph is short and takes a broader look at the devastation inflicted on a single Soviet home front city, but an important one given its relatively close (500 mile) location from Moscow. This is an enjoyable book and the narrative comes alive through the extensive use of diaries, letters, and a wide array of state and provincial archives.

Holmes takes a more nuanced view of World War II and the evacuation than the Soviet and contemporary Russian master narrative that is so steeped in patriotism. The book's best moments are when he showcases the struggles experienced by both evacuees and their hosts in the city of Kirov, at times in brutal and disturbing detail. The study is not innovative since other historians, as he acknowledges, have written

similar critical studies of the World War II-era evacuation and home front life in recent years. What makes his study worthwhile is his concentration on an important Russian city and the fact that this monograph accompanies the author's broader body of work on the city of Kirov. He showcases how the rarely efficient Soviet bureaucracy—which he has previously documented so well—was stretched to its limits by the war, adding to our understanding of Soviet crisis management. In the author's view, the evacuation period is one of “considerable heroism and good intention. It is also one of neglect, death by privation and massacre” (16). The bulk of the book documents this dichotomy.

This book helpfully puts the Soviet wartime evacuation into the broader historical context of the mass forced population movements of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. He highlights that violence inflicted on Soviet displaced peoples was not unique. Empires, authoritarian states, and even democracies do it. Often overlooked, he notes that children evacuated to rural areas in wartime Britain were often met with physical or sexual abuse.

While acknowledging the successes of the evacuation, Holmes focuses more attention on the on hunger, diseases, and the utter confusion experienced by residents and evacuees alike, all of which stoked friction within the city. He underscores the disdain of many of Kirov's temporary residents for this provincial capital, its people, and its institutions, many of which were devastated by theft and neglect by the city's temporary institutions. He examines socioeconomic, educational, and ethnic hierarchies of power, as scores of Soviet citizens and institutions came through the city. Some—like the Commissariat of Education and Commissariat of Forest Industry—gained prime real estate and assets of local institutions, curtailing the abilities of the latter to function for years to come.

The initial cooperative spirit that met many evacuees rapidly evaporated as city residents realized that the quick war that Soviet propaganda had promised was not coming true and the strain of the constant stream of new arrivals broke the city's already strained infrastructure and social safety net. The evacuees—many of whom came with nothing—were also seen as a privileged group by locals, no matter whether they were orphans, intellectuals, or government bureaucrats. Holmes, however, examines the various gradations of privilege, noting that many privileges were ephemeral in a city where access to food, clothing, adequate housing, and medicine was severely limited by the exigencies of the war and chaos of Soviet crisis management. Central authorities often made things worse. In coordinating the evacuation, they paid little heed to local realities and needs. Disputes between evacuated and local institutions occurred frequently, as ostensibly weaker provincial institutions pushed back at central decisions. This highlights what Holmes calls the “paradox of Soviet power” where Moscow stepped in to end one conflict, while usually creating another by ignoring regional interests and underestimating the ability of locals to push their own agenda (146).

Academics will find the book of interest; although the narrative tracks with recent works on the impact of the war on front line and Central Asian home front cities, it complements those studies nicely and highlights the remarkable flexibility of the Soviet system, which struggled to respond to the evacuation crisis but ultimately did. The book also is highly accessible to general audiences and would work well in a classroom setting. It is a good regional study, a fine analysis of wartime civilian life, and a useful study that sets the evacuation into a broader history of massive forced migration.

PAUL STRONSKI

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Russia and Eurasia Program