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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Citizenship Under the Plan: Managing Migrant Worker Inclusion in Late-Soviet Moscow

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Abstract

What explains the contested conditions for migrant worker citizenship under socialism? Migration scholarship often elides socialist contexts, tracing migrant deservingness to the neoliberal rise of labor-based conditionality for legal status across Western states in the late twentieth century. However, a broader historiography suggests that socialist states, despite their institutional differences, conditioned migrant inclusion on labor performance throughout the twentieth century. To explain how this form of civic conditionality operated under socialism, this paper draws on the case of migrant "limit" worker management in Moscow from the early 1960s to 1987. Using archival materials, I show that state-owned enterprises operated as migration intermediaries, establishing and enforcing a labor-based conditionality for local citizenship even as the state pursued additional civic aims. I find that civic campaigns initiated in the early 1960s provided an ideological framework and material base for enterprises to govern migrant workers at their dormitories. Managers and officials at the dormitory redirected resources intended for social activism and cultural tutelage toward ensuring baseline productivity and compliance. Enterprise managers and union officials additionally substituted the material conditions at the dormitory for the assessments of individual migrants' moral and productive status. This paper extends the literature on migrant deservingness to a socialist context, showing how conditionality for civic inclusion develops beyond the neoliberal shifts in contemporary citizenship.

Keywords: Soviet Union; deservingness; internal migration; citizenship; housing; migration; conditionality; infrastructure; labor

Introduction

In a January 1983 meeting of the Moscow Executive City Committee, chief district inspector I.G. Smirnov, a high-ranking police official, pleaded to the city's Communist Party and bureaucratic leadership to raise migration standards for the capital. "We are particularly concerned about the situation in the dormitories," he began. Newly arriving workers "believe that they can freely disturb public order,"

getting drunk, skipping work, and breaking the law. But, Smirnov complained, enterprise managers, citing labor shortages, block the authorities from expelling enough from the city: "we submit to the entreaties of enterprise management to leave in Moscow offenders who are apparently indispensable workers."[1]

Smirnov's protests emerged well over a decade into an internal labor migration program, which lasted from the 1960s to 1987. Through a yearly employment quota, tens of thousands of "limit workers" arrived each year on contract. Labor contracts excluded migrant limit workers from the rights to social welfare, housing, or permanent employment held by long-term city residents. This exclusion was part of a broader hierarchy of legal status for Soviet citizens that belied the official rhetoric claiming a common socialist horizon. However, if deemed deserving by the end of the contract, limit workers could receive local citizenship. Officials made the enterprise-owned dormitories where limit workers lived critical centers for assessing, cultivating, and, as Smirnov made clear, contesting migrants' deservingness. As the district police chief noted, conflicts over migrant deservingness were pronounced in dormitory housing, where state, enterprise, and union officials struggled to articulate and enforce their visions of good citizenship.

The conflicts recounted here seem familiar to contemporary accounts of the push and pull between state and private business to govern migrant inclusion. Starting in the mid-1970s and intensifying in the 1990s and early 2000s, liberal migrant host countries across Europe and North America developed laws that made migrants' legal status conditional on individual performances of worth—their deservingness as aspiring legal subjects (Chauvin, Garcés-Mascareñas, and Kraler 2013; van Houdt, Suvarierol, and Schinkel 2011; Calavita 2005). These states often assessed deservingness through evidence of consistent employment via a moral framework that positioned productive and self-sufficient noncitizens as worthy (Wyss and Fischer 2022; Chauvin, Garcés-Mascareñas, and Kraler 2013). Business interests aided in these efforts, benefiting from the flexible and cheap labor that unauthorized migrants provided (Calavita 2005; Zolberg 1997). As managers of migrant labor, private employers came to wield an independent authority over the conditions for legal inclusion—for example, renewing documents only for those workers they prefer, or preserving labor flexibility by preventing legalization altogether (Surak 2018; Cox and Posner 2012; Bustamante 1978). Scholars have attributed this global trend toward a rhetoric of self-reliance and economic integration in immigration policy to rising neoliberal politics (Landolt and Goldring 2015; Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas 2012; Guzman Garcia 2018), stemming from the delegation of state power to business interests and market logics.

From its foundation, the Soviet Union also organized civic deservingness through the frame of labor, but several key characteristics distinguish it from late twentieth-century neoliberal migration states. First, deservingness determined inclusion in the context of internal migration rather than international migration; urban and regional centers held quality goods and services as compared to rural areas and villages, and many outside cities aspired to local legal inclusion and its benefits within their geographic and administrative boundaries (Sahadeo 2019; Dunham

[1]TsGAMOS-P *fond* (collection) 4, *opis* (division) 199, *delo* (file) 79. TsGAMOS is the Central State Archive of Moscow and P is the Division for the Social and Political History of Moscow.

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1990). Unlike international labor migrants, Moscow's limit workers were Soviet citizens, facing the same campaigns for civic cultivation as their peers, all governed under a nominally unitary state structure and ideological rhetoric. Yet, limit workers' legal inclusion was still ultimately conditional on their individual worthiness as determined by state-employer negotiations.

Second, labor under Soviet citizenship was part of a broader rhetorical and institutional emphasis on making a new socialist person, with nationwide efforts for civic activism and internal moral and ideological transformations (Cherkaev 2023; Yekelchyk 2014; Titov 2009; Alexopoulos 2006). Scholars have pointed out expectations that citizens engage in military service, youth organizations, voting, and party organizations under Stalin (Yekelchyk 2014; Alexopoulos 2006), and the mobilization of claims of army and party participation to access housing and other social benefits (Varga-Harris 2015; Harris 2013). Neoliberal states, by contrast, tied civic worthiness more directly to productive labor (Wacquant 2010; Somers 2008).

Third, local intermediaries and the institutions they ran—such as Moscow's enterprises and its workers' dormitories—were expected to participate in and enforce the civic frames of the state. They thus stood in contrast to private employers in neoliberal migration states, who more freely shirk or supplant migration administration with their own interests (Surak 2018; Cox and Posner 2012; Hertog 2010).

Late-Soviet enterprises thus had to exercise a broader civic mission with less leeway in governing their workers than their neoliberal counterparts. Nevertheless, like private employers in late twentieth-century North America and Europe, they established and enforced a labor-based standard of migrant deservingness. How did enterprise intermediaries negotiate the state's distinct and sometimes conflicting demands of labor and cultural transformation to determine the civic worthiness of limit workers? Why did a labor-based civic deservingness develop as the outcome of these negotiations?

Using archival materials assembled to cover multiple layers of state administration and industry involving migrant limit workers in the former Soviet capital, I examine how enterprise managers and state officials understood limit workers' civic deservingness and determined their local citizenship. I find that enterprise intermediaries—managers, officials, staff, and party and union members—directed efforts for cultural education among migrant workers toward ensuring that they engaged in productive labor. Novel federal efforts from the early 1960s onward sought more intensive social transformations in Soviet citizenship, encompassing culture, social activism, and peer discipline. However, enterprise intermediaries appropriated state resources provided for these aims to monitor and expel those who threatened production. A major site for this work was the enterprise dormitory, which housed limit workers and was a center for official efforts toward civic cultivation (Elliott 2019). Firms rerouted this infrastructure toward productivity, with managers promoting labor discipline by surveilling limit workers, enacting programs for civic cultivation as "prophylaxis" against threats to production, and ejecting incorrigible migrants. While the encouragement and preservation of labor through prophylactic interventions, warnings, and punitive measures was an element of Khrushchev's broader attempts to cultivate a socialist populace, intermediaries' approach made this logic key to governing migrants' pathway to local citizenship. Further, enterprise intermediaries sometimes substituted migrants' conditions for assessments of their individual worth: intermediaries could make negative evaluations of migrants when they resided in

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low-quality dormitories whose infrastructural infirmities undermined efforts at surveillance and reform. Civic deservingness in late-Soviet Moscow was thus directed toward productivity by state employers who prioritized production, outside the bounds of neoliberal governance and beyond the centralized directives of the socialist state.

Investigating the administration of migrant limit workers destabilizes scholarly narratives of neoliberalism as an explanatory key for the emergence of a conditional, labor-based standard of worth for migrants. Moscow's late-Soviet enterprises were not private employers of noncitizen labor; they operated within the distinct socialist context of internal migration, state control, and transformational civic aims. Nevertheless, these intermediaries steered the conditions for migrant inclusion toward their value as productive workers. Enterprises used three mechanisms specific to the Soviet context to do so: first, they selectively prioritized certain official demands over others; second, they used the state's organizational and ideological resources to surveil and evaluate migrants; and third, they substituted migrants' material conditions for individual assessments of moral and productive status. These findings open space for a broader reconsideration of the interface between state and market, and how this interface structures the conditions for citizenship. Contemporary post-socialist states from the People's Republic of China to the post-Soviet world administer legal status for hundreds of millions of internal and international migrants. Though liberalizing reforms have given rise to private migration intermediaries, socialist-era citizenship institutions remain powerful tools of administrative control over legal status (Ruan 2024; Turaeva 2022; Schenk 2018).

The following section will delve into sociological treatments of the management of citizenship through migrant deservingness in neoliberal and socialist contexts. I then discuss how internal migration in the Soviet Union involved movement across an institutionalized urban-rural civic hierarchy, with migrants' performance in the home and enterprise crucial for attaining full civic inclusion. After introducing data gathered from Moscow municipal and federal archives, I trace out how enterprise and dormitory intermediaries conferred and managed local citizenship at Moscow's enterprise-owned dormitories along each of the three mechanisms discussed above. Finally, I conclude with the broader implications of this paper for the comparative study of migrant deservingness across neoliberal, socialist, and post-socialist contexts.

Civic Deservingness in Labor Migration

The literature on migration governance has begun to emphasize how intermediaries apply ideas of deservingness to shape the conditions for migrants' membership in the civic body (Faist 2014; Lakhani 2013). Intermediaries are part of a complex "assemblage" (Landolt and Goldring 2015) that administers migration and citizenship (Xiang and Lindquist 2014). Scholarly accounts emphasize that these mid-level gatekeepers decide, in practice, what constitutes "deservingness" for noncitizens seeking a less precarious legal status (Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas 2012: 249–251). Intermediary agents assess and at times even seek to cultivate noncitizens' ability to maintain, among other behaviors, "noncriminal conduct, economic reliability, fiscal contribution, identity stability, and bureaucratic

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traceability" over time (Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas 2012: 248; also see Galli 2020; Moffette 2014). Migrant deservingness has been framed in multiple ways. Migrants' claims to deservingness for legal status may hinge on their possession of specialized professional skills, their ethnocultural proximity to the native population, or their experiences of violence (Chauvin and Garcés-Mascareñas 2014). By providing an inclusive view of intermediaries, the literature has effectively mapped the interaction of various local, mid-level, and national interests, the "logics of operation" involved in each migrant trajectory (Xiang and Lindquist 2014: S124), and the "variable and dynamic configurations" of worth and inclusion that determine noncitizens' legal status over time (Landolt and Goldring 2015: 860).

Scholars argue that the development of "neoliberalism" in the last decades of twentieth-century Europe and the United States established the performance of individual labor as a dominant frame for civic deservingness. Loïc Wacquant argues that, as the U.S. government shed its role in guaranteeing support for citizens in the 1970s and 1980s, it promulgated an ideology of personal investment into labor and labor skills that spread across liberal states thereafter (2010: 210–14). Individual productivity was a core element of deservingness here; debates over U.S. welfare expansion in the 1960s and 1970s made work the singular qualification that transformed citizens into the "deserving poor." Welfare reforms in the 1990s reinforced the moral and practical standard that state support required active labor (Steensland 2006; Somers 2008: 47). Immigration schemes in these decades similarly amplified work as the key condition for migrant legal inclusion: eighty-seven percent of migrants who received legal status across the European Union from 1973 to 2008 had done so through employment programs (Kraler 2009: 23). Like welfare restrictions for "undeserving" citizens, immigration policies in liberal countries mark individual productivity as proof of one's cultural integration and thus one of the most important conditions for legal recognition (Chauvin, Garcés-Mascareñas, and Kraler 2013: 10).

The scholarship on migration intermediaries demonstrates how private employers can enforce or complicate the labor conditionality developed under neoliberalism. Private employers sponsor legal status, provide and renew legal documentation, and continuously evaluate migrant worker performance. However, their decisions about which migrants are more deserving need not follow official criteria imposed by the state: employers may benefit from cheaper costs and increased flexibility by keeping productive workers in a non-regularized status (Cox and Posner 2012). Consequently, private employers may lobby collectively to reinforce labor flexibility by restricting pathways to citizenship, as a wide scholarship has argued (Surak 2018; Calavita 2005; Zolberg 1997; Bustamante 1978). If the state seeks to integrate noncitizens, business interests may come into conflict with official efforts. At a more local level, individual employers may seek simply to profit from the rent-seeking enabled by their control over documentation renewals—that is, by selling documents or exchanging documents for lower wages (Hertog 2010). Neoliberal contexts thus delegate migration administration to private firms, such that employment is expected of migrants seeking legal inclusion—even if it does not guarantee legal status.

As compared to private employers in late twentieth-century Western Europe and the United States, socialist state-owned enterprises also governed civic inclusion, but with two nominal distinctions. First, they were charged with the cultivation and assessment of their workforce according to a broader set of standards of worth than

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their private counterparts. Second, they had less room to shirk promoting their own interests, as they operated usually with the direct involvement and oversight of party officials. Early Soviet party committees conducted extensive political education campaigns with enterprise workers, even to the detriment of production (Hoffmann 2011: 159). From the late 1940s, North Korea borrowed and developed this structure, turning enterprises into sites of political and moral cultivation, where good citizenship dovetailed with high productivity (Kim 2018: 56). In the early 1950s, the People's Republic of China similarly incorporated Soviet principles for ideological management in enterprise production (Kaple 1994). By 1975, socialist Vietnam expanded grassroots "work-study schools" into a general educational system for producing the new socialist person (Duong and Phan 2020: 622).

However, in practice, state-owned enterprises in socialist states exhibited surprising similarities to private firms in their administration of civic inclusion. One was their role as gatekeepers: mid-to-late-twentieth-century state-owned enterprises administered citizens' access to social welfare. Specifically, Soviet constitutional guarantees like housing, schooling, and healthcare were often controlled by state-owned enterprises (Smith 2012), and workers needed to demonstrate their long-term performance of labor to claim these goods (Varga-Harris 2015; Harris 2013). Through employment and assessments of worker value, state-owned enterprises determined which citizens could achieve full inclusion, and which could not. Looking beyond the Soviet Union, state-owned firms in planned economies like those of mid-twentieth-century China, North Korea, and Vietnam were similarly organized, as they controlled access to social benefits like food and housing (Leung 1994; Kim 2018; Duong and Phan 2020). Like private firms' control over migration documentation, this institutional design gave teeth to efforts to assess and reward citizens' worth, as their ability to access basic goods was tied to their performance in the enterprise.

State-owned enterprises' control over social rights also meant that citizenship was critically tied to determinations of worth through labor, despite socialist states' transformative social aims. This control was part of a broader valorization of labor, explicit from the beginnings of the Soviet state, as an expectation of what citizens ought to perform to earn recognition and inclusion (Hoffmann 2011: 48). As early as 1918, the revolutionary Russian state established "labor booklets" for citizens that sought to prevent nonworkers from freely traveling in the country or accessing basic food rations, putting into practice the revolutionary and constitutionally enshrined principle that "he who does not work, neither shall he eat" (Baiburin 2017: 73). Basic rights were at times limited to workers: in 1929, amid famine and mass starvation, Soviet officials restricted the distribution of ration cards to enterprise workers and provided additional rations to those who demonstrated "outstanding" labor (ibid., 93). Those stripped of citizenship in the early Stalinist period, similarly, could use claims of outstanding labor contributions to petition for enfranchisement (Alexopoulos 2006: 515). Work was enshrined as civic duty again in the 1936 Soviet constitution, and popularized as heroic and aspirational through the Stakhanovite Movement of the mid-1930s.

By the 1940s, Soviet officials drew from divisions in material provisions and welfare that the United States afforded to workers according to their labor skills and perceived moral status (Link 2020; Brown 2013). Brown details how state largesse in the U.S. nuclear industry established middle-class inclusion among white workers in manufacturing and research, while pushing out Black and itinerant workers. Soviet nuclear officials in the late 1940s sought to reproduce this structure while

transposing their own moral boundaries to establish exclusion, keeping prisoners sent to nuclear sites from accessing resources (Brown 2013). Though the Soviet Union pursued new efforts to cultivate socialist citizenship under Premier Khrushchev in the 1950s and early 1960s, citizens still perceived these ideological aims as rooted in work—calling workers not to shirk or slack (Titov 2009: 20). Even as the explicitly ideological content of socialist civic deservingness faded in the last decades of the Soviet Union, good citizenship remained tied to labor (Titov 2009: 22).

Furthermore, the close relationships between party and firm in socialist states did not foreclose deviation from state aims or agency in how those aims were approached. State-owned enterprises' obligations to meet production goals were not necessarily always aligned with the creation of new socialist people (or the exclusion of those outside such a vision). Generally, lower-level party officials were adept at leveraging the formal rhetoric and structure of Soviet state ideology to pursue their own substantive ends (Yurchak 2005). Such strategies accord with broader evidence that front-line officials exercise discretion away from the law on the books (Lipsky 1980). Those who manage citizenship administration are no exception (Gilboy 1991; Calavita 2000). Little work clarifies how tensions between employer intermediaries and the state resolved themselves in the governance of civic deservingness through migrant labor. Mapping out the obligations of state-owned firms under the conditions of socialist citizenship, however, reveals why these tensions emerged.

Governing Local Citizenship for Internal Migrants in the Soviet Union

From the first five-year plan of 1928–1932 onward, Soviet governance focused on the development of urban space over that of rural life. Massive resources were poured into the construction (and postwar reconstruction) of dense industrial zones and urban centers that concentrated industry, employment, and welfare. This work spurred urban in-migration both as a demand by the industrializing state, and as a popular option among rural citizens seeking a better life. The state distributed local membership and goods through urban enterprises to attract workers and incentivize higher quality labor. Informal migration, however, largely outpaced state efforts to direct or limit freedom of movement (Buckley 1995; Siegelbaum and Moch 2015: 112–122). Peasant laborers used internal associations and networks to establish bottom-up migration pathways to urban centers like Moscow and furnish industrial efforts with necessary labor (Hoffmann 1994). The 1920s and 1930s saw some of the most rapid growth in the region's history as the population of Moscow doubled, an upward trend that would ebb in the following decades but never cease. The result was not state-led urban development as much as the "ruralization" of Soviet cities through massive rural-to-urban migration (Lewin 1994).

Nevertheless, the state worked extensively to establish urban membership as a privileged and limited right. Soviet officials concretized urban membership through paperwork, first mandating internal passports to control rural to urban migration among citizens in 1932. Famine in the early 1930s as well as forced collectivization led to fears that uncontrolled numbers of peasants and aggrieved former landowners—*kulaks*—would descend into better-off cities (Kessler 2001; Baiburin 2009). The Soviet passport indexed citizens along precise lines of nationality, employment, local housing registration (a stamp called the *propiska*), and other characteristics—following the structure of the Russian Imperial passport that preceded it. It was

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provided primarily to residents of major regional centers and cities, while most rural citizens would not be eligible until 1974. The passport and *propiska* made it possible for police offices to conduct investigations and administer (or curb) rights accorded to social or national groups (Shearer 2004: 840). This documentation thus became central to a broader "hierarchy of states of civic belonging" within the everyday experience of Soviet citizenship (Alexopoulos 2006: 510). Because *propiska* was tied to residence, and registration at a particular address and housing was generally inherited by family members, local urban citizenship was also heritable—further entrenching this system of internally stratified citizenship. During the Cold War period, socialist states like China and Vietnam drew from this institutional arrangement to adopt similar controls for internal rural to urban movement (Chung, Draudt, and Tian 2020: 83).

Massive investments in housing that began with postwar reconstruction and expanded under Premier Khrushchev in the 1950s further extended the meaningful benefits of urban legal status for Soviet citizens (Smith 2010). Urban housing was already an administrative focal point for managing local citizenship, as *propiska* was tied to one's address, but these investments solidified the city apartment as the material realization of Soviet citizenship. In the 1950s and onward, the Soviet Union built millions of separate-family apartments throughout cities and industrial zones. Those with urban citizenship did not always get new housing but could make claims to it (among other social rights) and stand on the queue (Varga-Harris 2015). By contrast, migrants in the city who lacked *propiska* documentation were typically restricted to shared dormitories and could not claim the rights of urban citizenship, including access to new housing. Furthermore, though state control over movement remained limited, control over urban social rights was more established by the 1950s and 1960s (Buckley 1995).

The state's increasing administrative capacity over this period coincided with Khrushchev's efforts to develop new social demands of urban dwellers hoping to claim full civic inclusion. Khrushchev made his civic cultivation campaign explicit with the 1961 adoption of the Third Party Program, which articulated a vision of Soviet society moving toward a communist horizon as civic association displaced the state (Cherkaev 2023: 101; Titov 2009). As they unfolded, these efforts were reinterpreted by officials and incorporated into policing as much as cultivation (Cherkaev 2023: 103-4, Titov 2009). Soviet adjudication and courts had already been organized around public, moral education (Lukina 2021; Berman 1972). New (or renewed) institutions like volunteer militias (the *druzhiny*) and peer judgment through "comrades' courts" extended this work to the lay citizenry, mobilizing the public to prevent and punish deviant behavior (LaPierre 2006; Gorlizki 1998). Morally destructive elements—parasites, idlers, drunks—needed to be purged (Fitzpatrick 2006). The *Moral Code of the Builder of Communism*, part of the Third Party Program, provided a scheme of proper behavior to achieve good citizenship. In practice, citizens often shared the view that moral cultivation meant cutting down on drinking and idling rather than pursuing a flawless disposition (Titov 2009: 20).

Though this fervor died down in the 1970s and 1980s, Khrushchev-era "prophylactic" institutions continued to be used to enforce social consequences and social control (Kozlov 2011; Kharkhordin 1999: 301–02). Most Soviet citizens, especially those in urban space, needed to navigate the language of moral status and righteous behavior to avoid exclusion. Even with passports and local *propiska*, urban citizens fought to

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convince city officials of their worth—they were veterans, long-term party members, hard workers—so they deserved a separate family apartment (Varga-Harris 2015). Officials struggled over masses of requests for limited housing and adjudicated the moral and social standing of those they felt deserved to be first in line (Harris 2013: 126–29).

Yet, the labor demands that initially brought millions into the cities remained a fundamental element of Soviet economy (Filtzer 1992); enterprises saw constant worker shortages, and, in the Khrushchev era, the state established a new official route for rural dwellers to plug urban labor deficits. This was the limit worker program, which offered migrants a "probationary pathway to permanent residency" with the opportunity to earn local citizenship through work (Elliott 2019: 19). Despite retrospective claims that the late-Soviet period was one of stagnation, many rural dwellers saw dynamism and better opportunities in cities like Moscow, a theme repeated across personal histories, population statistics, and cultural productions of the time (Sahadeo 2019; Siegelbaum and Moch 2015: 134). By the early 1970s, the vast majority of migrants to Moscow were limit workers (e.g., numbering ninety-one percent of all migrants in 1973). During this period, limit workers were overwhelmingly young ethnic Russian women and men from rural areas (Elliott 2017). By the 1980s, the incoming number of limit workers dropped, and a greater proportion arrived from other Soviet republics, but they continued to be employed in fields like construction and maintenance that native Muscovites avoided (Elliott 2019: 94–100). This scale was reflected in industry as well; among enterprises that hired limit workers in Moscow, limit workers made up a third of total staff (and far more in sectors like construction) (Loeber 1984). Yet, work was not an automatic path to inclusion. As temporary employees under the watchful eye of managers, officials, police, and even peers, limit workers were subject to the same social discipline that other urban workers faced—with the added pressure that their pathway to citizenship was on the line if they failed to observe it.

In effect, the limit worker program recruited enterprises as migration intermediaries, with migrants' permanent residency depending on the tutelary and prophylactic efforts of a host of actors deployed at the enterprise (Elliott 2019: 19). Shop floors, dormitory housing, and public places, with all their respective particularities in design and constraints, were turned into the spaces where surveillance and interventions directed toward migrants could occur. Party and union officials, dormitory educators and staff, enterprise managers, and migrant peers supervised limit worker behavior.

This approach, however, seemed to chafe against demands for increased labor, as the disciplining and expulsion of migrant workers was in tension with enterprises' desire to address labor shortages. Enterprises primarily sought limit workers as productive employees, which fit with longstanding civic expectations that tied good citizenship to exemplary labor. However, this aim did not fit clearly with the late-1950s drive to reorient citizenship around proper manners, civic volunteerism, and mutual social policing. In reconciling their obligations toward acculturating internal migrants into a society of model Muscovites and keeping production up, enterprises defined the boundaries of local Soviet citizenship. This paper investigates how enterprises resolved this tension.

Method and Data

This paper is based on an analysis of primary archival materials gathered across several Moscow archives. I sought out materials that would enable me to construct a view of migrant labor management in Moscow's workers' dormitories, from high-level municipal objectives and reports to quotidian tasks and anxieties among local dormitory staff. This multi-sited approach, covering several layers of Soviet organizational and bureaucratic authority, helped clarify the role that dormitories played over the course of a migrant labor program that resulted in, but did not guarantee, urban citizenship for hundreds of thousands of rural migrants.

Consulted municipal and federal sources in the capital include two divisions of the Central State Archive of Moscow (TsGAMOS): the division for post-1917 documents[2] and the division for the social and political history of Moscow,[3] as well as the State Archives of the Russian Federation (GARF). Transcripts, meeting minutes, reports, memos, and notes across several organizations and institutions were gathered to detail both the broader organization of the limit worker program as well as its everyday operation across several major enterprises that employed and housed limit workers.

Archival materials pertaining to the overarching management and discussion of the limit worker program by city and federal officials and experts include documents from Russia's state committee on the use of labor resources, Russia's people's control committee, meetings of the Moscow Communist Party, and Moscow's Administration for the Use of Labor Resources (UITR)—the last of which managed and tracked the limit worker program in the city. Wherever relevant, I noted discussions of limit worker housing constraints and concerns across the city.

City-wide documents on the management of the limit worker program enabled a more targeted approach to the enterprises and organizations that employed, housed, or represented most limit workers. Reports on limit worker employment showed that two industries together employed a majority of limit workers in Moscow: construction and machine work. By the 1970s, for instance, a little under thirty percent of all limit workers arriving in Moscow took on work in construction enterprises.[4] I draw on archival materials gathered from major enterprises in both industries as well as official industry-wide unions. Because enterprises employed rural citizens alongside urban citizens and unions represented all employees regardless of citizen status, these materials also facilitated comparison of how officials and managers evaluated the two groups.

For construction, my archival materials cover many of the largest construction enterprises in the capital. These include documents from the city-wide union for construction and factory material workers, which officially represented the vast majority of construction workers and frequently discussed dormitory conditions. Moving from the union to local management, I consulted records, primarily of meetings, within and across several subsidiaries of Glavmosstroy, Moscow's largest state enterprise in construction and a major employer of limit workers. Of the 62,646 migrants who arrived in Moscow through the limit in 1974, over fifteen percent took positions in Glavmosstroy alone.[5]

[2]Archival documents from this division appear as TsGAMOS-R.

[3]Archival documents from this division appear as TsGAMOS-P.

[4]TsGAMOS-R, *fond* (collection) 249, *opis* (division) 2, *delo* (file) 236, *listy* (folios) 3–4.

[5]TsGAMOS-R f249 o2 d211 l.37.

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For machine work, I looked at Moscow's city committee for the machine worker union. I also drew from Avtomobilny Zavod imeni Leninskogo Komsomola (AZLK) party committee meeting minutes and transcripts. AZLK was one of the largest automotive enterprises in late-Soviet Moscow. By the early 1980s, it housed over 8,000 workers in enterprise-owned dormitories.[6]

Archives on construction and machine work enterprises and unions were reviewed for any mention of worker quality or conditions. Where managers or officials discussed workers, I noted the context, group of workers that were referred to, and the content of any particular evaluation of workers. I also noted any consequences for these evaluations, especially if related to formal citizenship status. An inductive analysis yielded a preponderance of cases where managers or officials specified markers of moral status and deviance for workers, differentiating among groups of workers who more or less approximated good civic behaviors, or differentiating among the dormitories that housed workers by their relative quality.

Analysis

Developing Labor Discipline through the Cultivation of Civic Virtue

Late-Soviet Moscow's migrant-receiving enterprises and dormitories were not simply sites for carrying out and reproducing labor. There, frontline officials and managers would seek to educate workers using the framework of cultural, moral, and political cultivation that was federally established by the early 1960s under Premier Khrushchev.

As state-owned enterprises, construction and machine-work firms were bound to incorporate the ideological demands of the state into the fabric of employee management. Limit workers were brought into a holistic system of training, education, and surveillance that made little distinction between public and private life. Officials organized labor, leisure, and socialization toward the cultivation of the proper disposition for a Soviet and Moscow citizen, and the development of job skills among workers. Party officials' involvement in cultivating workers through political and moral agitation, education, and the factory floor had been a longstanding feature of Soviet enterprises. By the outset of the limit worker program in the early 1960s, these efforts were augmented by a push to promote social cohesion and education in the home and neighborhood (Harris 2013: 201–3).

Rhetoric among enterprise officials emphasized the importance of this work for Soviet society at large as well as for the interests of the enterprise. Echoing Khrushchev's mass campaigns in the early 1960s for the creation of a moral public sphere, one representative remarked at a 1964 AZLK party conference that "the primary goal of our work is the education of the new [Soviet] person."[7] It was only through this everyday educational work, elaborated assistant director of cadre management T. Androsov, that the stability of cadres at the automobile manufacturing enterprise could be ensured.[8] Similar efforts emerged across Moscow's major construction enterprises. A 1964 Moscow construction union report emphasized the importance of ensuring that young workers followed the *Moral Code of the Builder of Communism*, a document

[6]TsGAMOS-P f3862 o1 d381.
[7]TsGAMOS-P f3862 o1 d171.
[8]Ibid.

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released under Khrushchev in 1961 that prescribed a set of dispositions toward labor as well as public and private life that all citizens ought to follow.[9]

In Moscow's state-owned enterprises, however, the interpretation and enactment of these directives was mediated by a more longstanding obligation imposed by the state: maximizing productivity. Impediments to production such as labor shortages and high turnover were core concerns for enterprises in the closed capital city. In the eyes of some enterprise managers and academics, the enforcement of *propiska* rules on internal migration shrank the available labor force in the capital.[10] Growing shortages pushed enterprises to hire workers without desired qualifications. At a 1968 conference on the use of labor resources in Moscow, a representative from Trekhgornaya Manufactory attested to a shortage of hundreds of workers and difficulties in recruiting local youth.[11] Those hired, she stated, were increasingly drop-outs without technical backgrounds, and, "although we educate the majority of them, there are those adolescents who even the militia cannot discipline," and were ultimately fired.[12] At a Russia-wide meeting the next year, the head of the Moscow UITR declared a formal labor shortage of nearly 200,000 workers and growing in the city.[13]

Worker scarcity meant that turnover, work stoppages, and defects in production caused by worker error became particularly thorny issues. As one enterprise director at a 1970 union meeting put it, recruits all too easily "internalize[d] the mercy of Soviet laws that guarantee employment," violating rules with the knowledge that labor shortages made them even more indispensable.[14] Concern over these issues was reflected in reported statistics, both at individual enterprises and at the industry level. Annual cadre reports for enterprises tracked turnover totals and broke down the reasons why workers exited the enterprise, including firings from arrests or labor violations. Similar anxieties were expressed into the 1970s, as Moscow Communist Party secretary I. N. Ponomarev estimated over one million total workdays were lost across the city's construction enterprises over the first nine months of 1978 due to poor labor discipline, on top of widespread, "serious" labor shortages.[15]

Enterprise officials employed migrant limit workers as a direct response to labor shortages, but when this new workforce failed to ameliorate issues in production, officials turned again to education as a readymade solution. The Moscow UITR, which managed the limit worker program, understood it from the outset as a pipeline for "difficult and unhealthy" jobs that Muscovites took only "reluctantly."[16]

[9]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1076 l.2. Several other enterprise and union documents from this period mention educating workers up to the *Moral Code of the Builder of Communism*; this seems to drop out of explicit use into the 1970s, however. In general, references to these ideal types—like the new Soviet person or the moral principles they should follow—subsided in reports and meetings into the 1970s and early 1980s. Nevertheless, education for workers in moral, cultural, and political terms remained a central focus across major enterprises and their unions.

[10]TsGAMOS-R f249 o2 d26 ll.39–40.

[11]TsGAMOS-R f249 o2 d26 ll.83–4.

[12]TsGAMOS-R f249 o2 d26 ll.86. In the following sentence, the representative says that "two girls" fired last year for this kind of behavior were subsequently expelled from Moscow, suggesting that at least some of those in this group were limit workers.

[13]GARF f10005 o1 d110 l.144.

[14]TsGAMOS-R f19 o1 d962.

[15]TsGAMOS-P f4 o188 d3.

[16]TsGAMOS-R f249 o2 d211 l.19.

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They contracted young women and men for the work: a UITR survey from 1968 found that limit workers were on average twenty-four years old, sixty percent men, forty percent women, and mostly from Russia.[17] However, the arrival of limit workers seemed to heighten managers' anxieties around turnover and discipline and left them with disagreements about how to address these issues.

For instance, in the early 1970, a division of construction enterprise Glavmosstroy successfully petitioned for and hired limit workers from outside the capital. By August of the same year, however, it became clear at Glavmosstroy that limit workers faced the same issues of turnover that plagued the workforce at large. Some managers blamed what they saw as limit workers' lack of education and low labor discipline. One cadre manager, espousing this view, argued that it is the responsibility of the enterprise's cadres and social organizations to strengthen limit workers' ties to their peers and to create educational groups.[18] Others questioned the usefulness of the intra-enterprise apparatus of civic cultivation for limit workers and pointed to broader structural issues. In response to the cadre manager, several Glavmosstroy construction chiefs claimed that limit workers were often fired because they married and were thus no longer eligible for dormitory housing, while others, due to lack of documentation, faced difficulty accessing basic services like medical care. These chiefs felt that education was a wasted expense when it did not resolve these issues. Instead, the enterprise should focus on building its inventory of dormitories to properly house and care for limit workers.[19]

Indeed, according to the bureau of cadres at one workshop in the automotive enterprise AZLK, young workers reported leaving due to difficult working conditions and long hours. However, this type of diagnosis, focusing on structural issues, rarely prevailed among enterprise officials or their counterparts in the party and professional unions. In most cases, officials saw limit workers as behaviorally problematic "youths" [*molodezh'*] who needed to have their cultural standing raised by enterprise, party, and union.[20] In line with such concerns, officials often argued that poor labor discipline and turnover was a more pressing issue among young limit workers than other employees. The bureau's response was therefore to recommend meetings with veterans, mentors, and enterprise executives—to raise their labor and social discipline through education and example.[21] The broader organizational infrastructure of social inclusion and cultivation, much of which had been established or promoted under Khrushchev's campaigns for civic activism, needed to be mobilized toward these goals. Young workers should attend "schools of the working youth," join volunteer militia patrols [*druzhiny*], participate

[17]TsGAMOS-R f249 o2 d42 ll.2–5.

[18]TsGAMOS-R f200 o1 d718.

[19]Ibid.

[20]It is important to note that officials at the enterprise and dormitory often conflated limit workers with "youth" as a broader category that typically encompassed those under thirty. Elliott (2019: 72) argues that ninety-four percent of limit workers in Moscow's Liublinskii district fell into the category of youth. At Zavod imeni Likhachova, the largest car manufacturing enterprise in the capital, the "vast majority of dormitory residents" in 1970 were limit worker youths between the age of 18 and 25. In Glavmosstroy, around half of dormitory youth without a high school education in 1978 were limit workers or brought in through *orgnabor*, another migrant labor program. The Moscow UITR estimated that nearly eighty-seven percent of limit workers who arrived in 1970 were youths under the age of thirty.

[21]TsGAMOS-P f3862 o1 d304.

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in weekend community service, and, if necessary, be reprimanded by peer-led "comrades' courts." As an AZLK party representative put it, the problem of high turnover among youth emerged because management did too little to encourage that they share "their plans, worries, difficulties, or very first success."[22]

Officials thus couched their educational efforts in line with the broad push in the Khrushchev-era and onward to cultivate Soviet citizenry, but, in practice, governed migrants in terms of their ability to reliably contribute to the economic needs of the enterprise. State policy and rhetoric around civic deservingness was not displaced by local interests at the enterprises that hired migrant workers. Rather, the national project for an upright citizenry funneled down to the state-owned enterprise in the form of ideological and organizational oversight and resources. Faced with endemic labor shortages and production issues, enterprises in the capital co-opted the state's rhetoric and organizational templates to address the pressure they faced. As a result, the conditions for becoming a Moscow citizen were set in practice around behaving like a reliable worker.

While these educational efforts were established in the early 1960s under Khrushchev, enterprises still sought to resolve productivity issues by redirecting leisure time toward civic cultivation into the 1970s and 1980s. As active campaigns for civic cultivation dimmed, the organizational form of these efforts remained embedded throughout Soviet society, including Moscow's enterprises (Kharkhordin 1999: 301). Employees' participation also continued to condition access to many goods beyond local citizenship; "voluntary" social and civic programs outside of work hours were a means for impressing enterprise heads who controlled and disbursed everything from housing and basic services to vacation time (Oberländer 2017: 575–76). To officials and managers across Moscow's construction and machine work enterprises, in turn, encouraging migrants' personal growth was the answer to demands for better quality in the workforce.

Cultivating Model Citizens at the Workers' Dormitory

As demands around a cultivated citizenry traveled down from the state to the enterprise, the workers' dormitory became the major site for civic management and pedagogy. All limit workers were housed at the workers' dormitory for the duration of their contract. Enterprises owned and managed their dormitories, and, in concert with union, party, and local administration, used dormitories to monitor and cultivate residents, filtering out those deemed problematic. Enterprises sought to control leisure time at the dormitory toward official and proscribed activities. If some open space for independent cultural pursuits remained up to the late 1960s, it was foreclosed in favor of official cultivation by the 1970s (Tsipursky 2016: 212–14).

Dormitories were staffed by educators [*vospitateli*], overseers [*komendanti*], and housing officials—each of whom were charged with educational work. At machine work enterprises, dormitory staff organized excursions into the capital and visits to the movies, museums, and art shows.[23] Inside, dormitories were typically equipped with libraries, leisure spaces, and red corners (typically spaces for political education, but that also housed publicly accessible journals, gazettes, and televisions). Residents

[22]Ibid.

[23]TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2597 l.1.

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were expected to form organizations of peers to maintain dormitory quality. This meant the creation of dormitory councils that helped to organize volunteer services, sports, housekeeping, and cultural events.[24] These also included lectures oriented toward issues of moral behavior, with titles like "Alcoholism—the road to crime" and "On vigilance."[25] A 1970 machine work union report asserted that, at the auto manufacturer Zavod imeni Lenina (ZiL), overseers and dormitory councilmembers conducted daily inspections of room hygiene and hung up evaluations for each room in public spaces.[26] Residents within and across dormitories were encouraged to participate in competitions for room, floor, and dormitory quality. Winners were publicly announced and awarded "valuable prizes."[27] At ZiL, additional educational staff ran educational circles, clubs, and local "colleges" for dormitory residents.[28] Alongside security staff, dormitory councils and voluntary patrols were charged with surveilling residents and dealing with those who violated behavioral rules.

Dormitories within the construction industry had similar internal posts and organizational structures.[29] Statistics and notes from a 1986 Moscow construction union report included quarterly meetings to ensure and improve "political-educational, mass-cultural, physical-health work, resident welfare…leisure, and relaxation" across 177 dormitories housing 68,000 "young [construction] workers" in the city.[30] A few standouts among the organizations these dormitories developed included 278 dormitory councils to organize political-educational work and leisure, twelve "youth vocal-instrumental ensembles,"[31] and meetings across all dormitories to encourage "a sober way of life" in "every dormitory room, hall, and building."[32] Dormitories across industries ran evening schools for young workers as well, which provided training and education for those not separately enrolled in vocational schools or other external academic institutions.

Cultural education meant inculcating values among young dormitory residents that matched those of model Soviet citizens. In 1977, dormitories at Glavmospromstroy, another major construction enterprise, held meetings between residents and "old Bolsheviks, veterans of the Great Patriotic War,[33] and masters of art and literature."[34] Dormitories set up internal venues for teaching various aspects of cultural life. At the close of the decade, Glavmospromstroy dormitories launched four additional "people's universities of culture," focusing respectively on legal knowledge, the struggle of art for humanity, everyday family culture, and the "world of music."[35] Dormitory youth had, a 1981 report declared, become accustomed to visiting theatres, concert halls, and circus acts.[36] At one House of Culture affiliated with Glavmospromstroy, an evening lecture was scheduled around the theme of model dormitories for the model capital.[37]

[24]TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2597 l.2.
[25]TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2597 l.6.
[26]Ibid.
[27]Ibid.
[28]TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2597 l.3.
[29]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1908.
[30]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1908 l.3.
[31]This was the official Soviet term for a rock or pop band sanctioned by state officials.
[32]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1908 ll.5–7.
[33]The Soviet and Russian term for the Second World War.
[34]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1650 l.2.
[35]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1769 l.3.
[36]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1769 l.5.
[37]Ibid.

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Similar efforts certainly prevailed for the cultivation of older cadres as well, but dormitory organizations most often saw their audience in particular terms, as youth. At ZiL, union officials discussed organizing city excursions to familiarize youth with the past, present, and future of Moscow.[38] Evening lectures for youth on themes like "drunks, hooligans, and parasites—get out of Moscow!" and "proudly carry the title of Muscovite" were conducted at ZiL dormitories.[39]

For local officials and managers, the cultivation of limit worker residents at the dormitory was treated as an important tool to address labor concerns. Here, citizenship policy was a positive project supported by the dormitory's extensive pedagogical and disciplinary network, and not, as in market-based states, a set of laws for private firms to avoid violating (Ruhs and Anderson 2007). The state provided the template for this network, while the enterprise, party, and union supplied the organizational resources required to prop it up. Successful cultural work—like at one AZLK dormitory, which a union representative appraised in August 1973 as an active center for concerts, lectures, sports, and "cultural trips"—went together with fewer labor violations among residents.[40] As one of the directors of AZLK's 8,000-person dormitories explained in a 1981 enterprise meeting, "experience shows [us] that, in those dormitories where mentors conduct their work with genuine effort, the dormitories do not cause us any problems…. The better the living conditions we establish for our people, the lower our turnover will be, and the greater the guarantee that we will fulfill our plan."[41]

It was difficult for limit workers to avoid educational efforts at the dormitory. To earn permanent local citizenship, limit workers needed to stay at the dormitory for at least three years and display "positive character."[42] Officials, managers, and staff thus had time to conduct extended and repeat interventions into limit workers' lives. Although success in these myriad activities could result in the accumulation of prestige for limit workers,[43] there is little evidence that this translated directly into a decision to grant local citizenship. Rather, it was in policing and "prophylactic" interventions that citizenship came into play—by denying it to those who broke the rules.

Punitive Control in the Workers' Dormitory

A clear priority for enterprise officials was to ensure that the dormitory worked as a prophylactic or punitive tool against limit worker behavior that threatened labor discipline. To do so, officials developed social organizations promoted under

[38]TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2636 ll.293–97.

[39]Ibid.

[40]TsGAMOS-P f3862 o1 d251. During the meeting, held by the party bureau of the AZLK bodywork shop, the union representative emphasized that this dormitory on Zhigulevskaya street had had no rule violations or instances of truancy among its residents.

[41]TsGAMOS-P f3862 o1 d381.

[42]As described in TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2725 l.14, a 1974 machine workers' union report on dormitory conditions throughout the industry in Moscow. The report notes, however, that these conditions for the acquisition of local citizenship by limit workers are not explicitly covered by municipal law and requests their formalization.

[43]TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2599, for an instance of trade unions drawing up lists of "best" people and "best social participants" [*obshchestvenniki*] among migrant and local employees.

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Khrushchev's drive for socialist morality that extended surveillance and punishment from the courts and security organs into the workplace and home. Because these punitive controls carried with them the threat of temporary *propiska* annulment and expulsion, they structured limit workers' citizenship outcomes. At the same time, the use of corrective interventions provided enterprises with an officially sanctioned logic for keeping, rather than expelling, young migrant workers who behaved improperly but nonetheless could contribute to productivity.

The Soviet judiciary had long intended for legal encounters to educate citizens and promote socialist values; the limit worker program coincided with a Khrushchev-era drive to mobilize laypeople in accordance with these aims (Berman 1963). Citizens were expected not just to punish offenders under the formal letter of the law, but to nurture them so as to change offenders' internal state and prevent future violations (Berman 1972; Lukina 2021). This was the purpose of "prophylactic measures" as introduced by Khrushchev in a 1959 speech and as extended by Premier Brezhnev into the 1970s (Kozlov 2011). By extracting public contrition from offenders, prophylaxis would prevent moral failures and encourage a shared sense of personal responsibility to socialist society—which included strong labor discipline (Berman 1963: 297).

Violations to be singled out could be directly related to work, as in absenteeism, but could also involve behavioral issues like alcoholism and hooliganism. Even as campaigns for moral cultivation dimmed by the 1970s, the state continued instituting measures for urban workers to monitor and discipline one another. Judicial institutions and security organs increasingly adopted the prophylactic approach to deviant behavior under Premier Brezhnev (Kozlov 2011: 56, 343). In 1974, officials simplified procedures for coworkers to force their peers into alcoholism-treatment centers, which were constructed in Moscow from the mid-1970s onward (Raikhel 2016: 66). Enterprise managers at firms with limit workers took similar measures, blaming alcoholism for lowering labor discipline (Elliott 2019: 71). An essential element of these efforts was their extension outside of "public" life—the workplace or the street—and into the home. As such, enterprise officials communicated with dormitory educators and other residential staff to keep abreast of violations among limit workers and institute efforts to prevent them. Without education toward "communist morals, ethics, and respect for Soviet law," dormitory residents would keep bringing in alcohol and missing work, among other issues, as the resolution of a January 1978 Glavmosstroy construction division meeting warned.[44]

Violations of norms, laws, and rules in the dormitory could result in one's firing and expulsion from Moscow. In the first nine months of 1981, an AZLK dormitory director explained, three percent of all young residents were arrested for petty hooliganism or drunkenness. Expulsion, as Moscow's construction worker union explained in a 1985 report on dormitory conditions, was reserved for repeat and serious offenders; 185 limit workers who committed similar violations, for instance, had their temporary *propiska* annulled and were removed from Moscow's Glavmosinzhstroy and Glavmosremont construction enterprises over the course of the year.[45] Without *propiska*, they would be unable to legally reside in the city or access any of its services.[46]

[44]TsGAMOS-R f316 o1 d621.

[45]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1908 ll.7–8.

[46]Threats to material and social inclusion extended to permanent residents too, though in different forms; such workers could lose, for instance, their place on the housing queue if they failed to prove remission from alcoholism (Raikhel 2016: 69).

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For these enterprises, however, the prospect of further depleting a workforce already afflicted with endemic turnover likely militated against the more liberal use of expulsions. As I. G. Smirnov, the chief district inspector cited at the beginning of this article, relayed to Moscow's city committee in January 1983, enterprise managers could persuade militia not to expel some limit workers in spite of their criminal offenses around the dormitory.[47] Instead of expelling the unworthy, intermediaries at the dormitory therefore sought to bring behaviorally problematic limit workers into citizenship's acceptable bounds (defined, by the same intermediaries, as the acceptable bounds of enterprise employment). Before they would resort to expulsion, managers oversaw interventions at the dormitory meant to shame and reincorporate recalcitrant limit workers. Many of these interventions were organized by limit workers' peers—fellow dormitory residents—and took the form of social organizations and activism encouraged throughout Soviet civic life at the time.

The comrades' court was exemplary. Broadly implemented under Khrushchev in the late 1950s across Soviet enterprises, housing, and other institutions, the comrades' court sought to offload judicial labor onto regular workers who would socially censure and induce apologies from peers for light offenses around labor discipline, hooliganism, or drinking (Kawamoto 2015; LaPierre 2012). In the dormitory, they took on much the same function. The comrades' court at the two dormitories owned by machine work factory Mosmekhanmontazh in 1977 was composed of five of its residents and reported fining or warning offenders of possible expulsion if their behavior continued.[48] Dormitory councils, also led by peer residents, had a very similar role, and met with violators to discuss infractions and paths toward better behavior. At construction enterprise Glavmospromstroy, for instance, 371 of 425 violators of dormitory internal order in 1977 were made to speak to their dormitory council, with the punishment for a majority that a letter would be sent to enterprise administration for "appropriate measures to be taken."[49] However, neither the comrade's court nor dormitory councils had much formal power to directly punish limit workers. Their aim was rather to work *with* violators to bring them back into acceptable behavior.

For limit workers in general, interventions and activities at the dormitory were developed as safeguards, either to prevent the possibility of violations in the first place or to demonstrate the dangers of poor labor discipline. Prophylactic measures were used for public messaging, demonstrating to limit workers how deviance could endanger their acquisition of local citizenship. For instance, chief inspector Smirnov assured city officials that, when expelling a limit worker, militia always brought the offender up to the dormitory council and residents to explain why their violations earned removal from the capital.[50] In other cases, interventions preempted violations. Officials sometimes conducted "raids" in dormitories immediately after payday to make sure that limit workers had not spent their earnings on alcohol.[51]

[47]TsGAMOS-P f4 o199 d79.

[48]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1650 l.9. Interestingly, limit worker residents at Mosmekhanmontazh dormitories worked across various construction and machine work enterprises, including over half of those listed by name as punished by the comrades' court.

[49]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1650 l.3. One hundred thirty-one of the limit workers were ultimately expelled from Moscow, the union report states.

[50]TsGAMOS-P f4 o199 d79.

[51]TsGAMOS-R f316 o1 d840.

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Sports organized among dormitory residents were in particular justified as one of the most effective tools to prevent truancy, fights, and alcoholism.[52] Dormitories like those owned by the ball-bearing manufacturer GPZ-1 were staffed with doormen or "militarized security" who ensured that only those with residential passes could enter.[53] Certain residents were named room and floor heads [*starshie*] and charged with maintaining order and reporting infractions to dormitory staff.[54]

Dormitory Quality in Migrant Deservingness and Civic Outcomes

Despite schemes to monitor and enforce migrants' labor discipline at the dormitory, managers and officials sometimes found the dormitories so broken down as to make such efforts impossible. Individual dormitories in Moscow varied widely in quality, upkeep, and oversight. Problematic or decrepit dormitories not only prevented managers' and officials' attempts to intervene in the lives of residents, but were seen as actively inducing migrants to exit, either because migrants would rather leave than endure dormitory squalor, or because squalor provided an environment ripe for crime and deviance among migrant residents. Bad dormitories, in other words, could preempt efforts to enforce deservingness through productivity by pushing migrant workers out of the city regardless of their individual discipline or behavior.

Enterprise, union, and party representatives often came to understand the material condition of individual dormitories as a causal force for migrant labor outcomes at the enterprise. It is not clear whether their perspective on dormitory quality systematically structured citizenship acquisition or migrant expulsions. However, party and union officials' focus on the moral consequences of dormitory infrastructure suggests that assessments of deviance and threats to production were at least in some cases clustered by dormitory, rather than by the case-by-case behavior of individual limit workers. Thus, dormitories as physical spaces could both structure and interfere with enterprises' efforts to manage civic conditionality.

Union officials and enterprise managers discussed the effects of poorly functioning dormitories, where interventions were absent and material conditions were poor. Not only did these environments make it difficult to prevent violations, but, as described by officials, they were positively criminogenic. Low quality dormitories were dominated by antisocial behavior that pushed migrants toward expulsion or, at minimum, turnover, as they decided to leave rather than finish their contract and attain local citizenship.[55] "The fate of the youth who come to our industry rests on the way we greet them and the path we send them on," explained a Glavmosstroy foreman at a February 1978 joint construction committee meeting; he continued, "of course, the ten young

[52]TsGAMOS-R f316 o1 d621.

[53]TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2597 l.3.

[54]TsGAMOS-R R f16 o1 d1650 l.10, for example.

[55]These findings accord with shifts elsewhere in official Soviet practice and rhetoric that positioned individual character as the product of material surroundings. From the early 1960s, legal scholars at the Procuracy Institute, a major scholarly institution that produced knowledge on the origins of crime in the Soviet Union, pivoted away from understanding criminal behavior as the result of individual personalities or the "remnants of capitalism," and began to emphasize the importance of "community and work environment" (Dowling 2017: 28). Investigators argued that corruption and moral failures among workers were the products of a working environment where abuse of authority mixed with material deprivations at the factory (ibid., 37).

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electricians we crowded into poorly maintained, cold, and uncomfortable housing were obliged to leave [the enterprise], with some missing work for days."[56] It is unclear whether lower quality dormitories indeed expelled more of their limit worker residents; weaker organizational infrastructure may have meant that infractions were less visible to intermediaries. But the issue of turnover among limit workers was well documented.

Poor living conditions at the dormitories drove limit workers out of Moscow—a view shared among municipal heads as well as local intermediaries. Forty percent of the 13,000 limit workers hired by Glavmosstroy in 1977 were fired or quit by the end of the year and similar figures applied across other major construction enterprises. Moscow Communist Party secretary I. N. Ponomarev blamed these statistics in part on the fact that "some workers' dormitories are in an unsatisfactory state, with educational work at an extremely low level."[57] Given the relatively smaller numbers cited elsewhere on criminal or work-related expulsions, a large number of these exits by limit workers were presumably voluntary and implied a choice not to pursue local citizenship. Local intermediaries provided more detailed portraits of how poorly managed dormitories led to violations and exits among limit workers. One instance was the abject state of GPZ-1's 3,500-resident dormitories in the early 1970s. Most of the thirty-four structures were run-down former barracks or basements, converted into "temporary" dormitories while the enterprise waited on the construction of higher quality housing. According to dormitory heads, limit workers lived in "disgusting conditions." While the overall enterprise workforce was assessed positively, officials nevertheless pointed to these dormitories as ridden with "squalor, insects, and binge drinking," conflating residential conditions with residents' behavioral outcomes. Dormitory councils managed to deal with those who violated rules, but turnover was so high that representatives of the Komsomol, the major youth organization of the Soviet Communist Party, had trouble establishing any local branches at the GPZ-1 dormitories for pedagogical work.[58]

The perception among intermediaries that dormitories either pull limit workers into the proper bounds of labor and citizenship, or, when mismanaged, push them out, is most clearly demonstrated in a 1970 trade union report on the quality of education and everyday cultural welfare across the twenty-nine dormitories owned by Glavmosinzhstroy. Of six dormitories singled out as particularly exceptional, descriptions point to the presence of culturally beneficial amenities, like red corners, televisions, gazettes, journals, reading halls, as well as residents' propensity to visit or use these (with, for instance, 173 of 700 residents in one dormitory described as "active readers" of their dormitory library).[59] At another well-equipped dormitory, the proper organization of free time and education meant that "the girls work hard," and purchased appliances like refrigerators with their relatively high salaries.[60] Residents who violated moral norms or labor discipline in this set of dormitories were effectively reprimanded by a council of their peers and quickly amended their misbehavior.[61]

[56]TsGAMOS-R f316 o1 d461 l.5.
[57]TsGAMOS-P f4 o188 d3.
[58]TsGAMOS-R f17 o1 d2598 ll.32–36.
[59]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1463 l.5.
[60]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1463 l.3.
[61]Ibid.

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By contrast, notes on the twelve dormitories listed as particularly problematic drew similar connections between residents' negative behaviors and broader dormitory conditions. The causal chain in one dormitory is described like this: the red corner lacks proper materials, there is no dormitory council, no floor or room elders, no doormen, and no mentoring and, as a result, there is no educational work being done, strangers freely enter and exit the dormitory, and residents drink and brawl.[62] At another dormitory, a lack of organized free time was connected to drunkenness among residents.[63] Issues with organized surveillance, education, and activities in one dormitory were brought up to explain drinking among the young construction workers, two cases of hooliganism, and even a murder that resulted from a drunken brawl.[64] The report specifically castigated management at this dormitory for bringing in non-Muscovites without proper screening, who engaged in "fictitious divorces"[65] in the hope of securing additional housing.[66] While the report ultimately placed responsibility on enterprise and dormitory management for the conditions of the dormitories, these conditions were then understood to shape the behavior of all residents living within them, cultivating proper civic morality among the residents of some and allowing or causing deviance among the residents of others. Under this rhetorical strategy, enterprise officials gauged civic deservingness among limit workers by their affiliation with a particular dormitory rather than by individual performances of good conduct.

Conclusion

While scholars have focused on how neoliberal states from the 1970s onward identified laboring, productive migrants as deserving of citizenship, the roots of labor-based civic inclusion stretch back to the early twentieth century in socialist societies, running across internal and international borders. In an effort to negotiate revolutionary ideological demands, widespread famine, and fears of internal enemies, the early Soviet state bound rights to food and shelter in cities to workers and the enterprises that employed them (Baiburin 2017). At the same time, officials seeking to create new Soviet subjects infused citizenship with expectations of everyday emotional investment and civic participation (Yekelchyk 2014; Alexopoulos 2006). In the Khrushchev era, as the limit worker program was getting underway to meet labor shortages, official campaigns and organizations for civic activism and cultivation proliferated, including within enterprises and the nexus of institutions that governed urban migrant workers. Moscow's late-Soviet enterprises were thus faced with the dual tasks of extracting as much labor as possible from their migrant workers while also imbuing them with proper civic culture during their probationary stay in the city. To manage this tension, migration intermediaries at Moscow's late-Soviet enterprises turned to the newly extended logic of prophylaxis to reform or expel those who threatened production. Intermediaries' co-optation of these novel

[62]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1463 l.6.

[63]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1463 l.7.

[64]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1463 l.8.

[65]Fictitious divorces in the Soviet Union usually referred to attempts to take advantage of living space standards for individual citizens. Two unmarried citizens could secure more living space separately than a married couple, incentivizing married couples in some cases to file for divorce.

[66]TsGAMOS-R f16 o1 d1463 l.8.

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frames for civic deservingness magnified and reproduced the role of labor as a longstanding element of Soviet citizenship. The result was that, as Western immigration policy in the 1970s and onward began to emphasize the performance of labor for civic deservingness, Soviet enterprises enforced an equivalent scheme for newcomers to the capital. These findings demonstrate that the rise of neoliberalism and retreat of the state is only one among many historical pathways to conditionality in citizenship.

Furthermore, the limit worker program shows how the concentration of multiple civic interests into a centralized space, under the supervision and control of state authority, can nevertheless produce administrative discretion around who ought to earn legal inclusion and why. Workers' dormitories established comrades' courts, volunteer patrols, resident councils, and other educational and cultural programs, institutions that sought to involve citizens in the prevention of deviant behavior and the cultivation of socialist values (Berman 1963; Lukina 2021). Intermediaries at state-owned firms took advantage of these templates and resources to preserve labor amid endemic shortages and high turnover. While ideological demands dimmed in the 1970s and 1980s, these organizations (as well as broader labor issues) remained (Kharkhordin 1999). Firms in the capital thus produced a form of conditionality (Landolt and Goldring 2015) geared toward expelling problematic migrant workers rather than in selecting model citizens.

Indeed, this embedding of educational, civic, and ideological organizations within state-owned enterprises that were also bound to production goals was common to socialist states (Duong and Phan 2020; Kim 2018; Kaple 1994). In these contexts, as in the Soviet Union, citizens' local legal status, and thus their access to housing, healthcare, education, and other forms of welfare, was often dependent on their performance and standing as workers. This analysis shows how enterprises can pull concentrated, transformational civic efforts into the rubric of policing production. By extending this analysis on the operationalization of civic deservingness to other socialist contexts, future work may investigate how enterprise intermediaries resolved civic inclusion for internal migrant workers more generally—for instance, in assigning local household registration in late twentieth-century China or Vietnam.

Additionally, a greater focus on how material conditions shape the substance and practice of civic deservingness may extend conceptual models beyond either socialist or neoliberal contexts. The possibility of civic inclusion for limit workers was shaped by intermediaries' perception of migrant dormitory quality. The conditions at each dormitory enabled or hindered intermediaries' ability to assess and educate noncitizens. In other cases, residents exited voluntarily, balking at the quality of their dormitory. As with other residential structures, some dormitories could signify crime and misbehavior among all or most workers living there, breaking down their intended purpose as centers of moral cultivation and growth (Golubev 2020; McDonnell 2010). Such failure to maintain the infrastructure that intermediaries use to govern migrant status may be a product of higher-level policymaking but could also be an issue of state capacity and resource expenditure. Sadiq shows, for instance, that developing states have more trouble controlling documentary verification for legal status, producing pathways to citizenship that rely on collecting (e.g., buying or forging) papers rather than following the formal process (Sadiq 2009: 113–19). Comparing the management of internal migrants in the mid-twentieth-century U.S. and USSR, Brown finds that, despite Soviet officials' attempts to mirror the

labor practices of their American counterparts in the plutonium industry, the USSR's relative poverty hobbled early efforts to exclude unwanted workers (Brown 2013).

By exploring how the logic of deservingness operates under a planned economy, future scholarship should more clearly delineate the role that boundaries between state and market, or public and private spheres, play in migrant deservingness and civic inclusion. Contemporary and ongoing reconfigurations of the boundaries between state and market make such scholarship more pressing. Migration regimes in former socialist states are undergoing liberalization, matching the delegation of migration control to private actors that occurred in the late twentieth-century West (Xiang and Lindquist 2014; Pham 2008). However, Soviet-era local citizenship, as governed by household registration, persists among many of its successor states and has diffused to the *hukou* system used in the People's Republic of China. Reforms in China and Russia over the last decades have delegated control of household registration to urban municipalities (Light 2016; Chan and Buckingham 2008), which determine what characteristics make migrants worthy of local citizenship (Schenk 2018; Zhang and Wang 2010) and thereby control the services and goods that residents can access, like employment or healthcare. In Russia, private homeowners have replaced the officials and staff at enterprise-owned dormitories and taken on the role of migration intermediaries, assessing and managing the deservingness of their migrant tenants. While documenting these policy shifts, the existing literature has yet to trace the legacy of socialist civic deservingness in contemporary migration controls or explore the effects of the powerful local intermediaries who decide and assess civic worth. By examining the consequences of the retreat of state-ownership and rise of market economies for hundreds of millions of internal and international migrants in post-socialist states, future work may better historicize modern transformations in civic deservingness and the prospect of citizenship.

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