

accessibility that is usually thought to be more indicative of a capitalist system (p. 319). Admittedly, the economic situation has recently worsened, rendering a report on cultural policy slightly irrelevant. While there are insufficient food-stocks to see Russia through the winter, it is understandable that very meagre provision will be made for cultural policy and development. The council goes some way in anticipating these problems by the statement that a comprehensive cultural programme and vision are part and parcel of extracting the country out of its mire of poverty and chaos. Truly, it is a great feat that such a frank and complete report was ever carried out. The fact that cultural policy conforms to some plan in present day Russia, regardless of anyone's ability to implement it, is on some level reassuring.

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John Biggart, Georgii Gloveli & Avraham Yassour, *Bogdanov and His Work: A Guide to the Published and Unpublished Works of Alexander A. Bogdanov (Malinovsky) 1873–1928*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998, vii + 495 pp., £50.00.

SINCE THE 1960S both in the former Soviet Union and in Western countries there has been a small but growing number of scholars who have developed an interest in the life and ideas of Alexander Bogdanov. Bogdanov was not only a major figure in the history of social-democracy in Russia but a prolific and popular writer on philosophical and theoretical questions. Because his knowledge ranged over the humanities and the natural sciences, he was able to speak authoritatively on both spheres of knowledge as well as on their interconnection. In retrospect Bogdanov has been recognised as a thinker who anticipated modern general systems theory. Even before the Bolshevik revolution Bogdanov foresaw that it would result in a repressive regime, and refused Lunacharsky's invitation to join the Bolshevik government. He died in 1928 while carrying out an experiment in blood transfusion on himself. Bogdanov is that rare phenomenon: a Russian socialist thinker of world standing, who remained uncontaminated by the inhumanities of the Soviet regime.

Although Bogdanov has been a very attractive subject for study the difficulties of carrying out such a study have been enormous. Because of his long-standing quarrel with Lenin, Bogdanov was subjected to a campaign of harassment and persecution. Following his arrest by the Cheka in 1923 the publication of a bibliography of his works was halted. His name all but disappeared from the historical record. With his published works extremely rare, little memoir literature on him to speak of and archival sources unavailable, the study of Bogdanov's life and thought has until recently been possible only in a fragmentary manner.

As John Biggart explains in the Introduction to this volume, one of the consequences of Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* was to make it possible for scholars to study Bogdanov and to gain access to archival materials relating to his life and work. In 1988 within the Institute of Economics of the Academy of Sciences a 'Commission on the Scientific Legacy of A. A. Bogdanov' was set up under Leonid Abalkin and Nadezhda Figurovskaya, with Georgii Gloveli as secretary. Under this Commission a number of Bogdanov's works were re-published and some hitherto unpublished works issued for the first time. In 1989 John Biggart and Georgii Gloveli agreed to work with Avraham Yassour to expand the bibliography of Bogdanov's works that Yassour had published in *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* in 1969. The present volume is the fruit of that cooperation, and constitutes the fullest bibliography of Bogdanov's published and unpublished works to date.

The body of the book lists Bogdanov's writings in chronological order of composition, their details of publication or their archival references. Library locations for each published work are

given, and any known reviews are also listed. There are sections devoted to new editions of Bogdanov's works that have appeared between 1989 and 1998 and to the various translations of his writings that have appeared over the years.

The value of the work is enhanced by the introductory section, which contains three essays. The first, by John Biggart, outlines Bogdanov's life, the campaigns to discredit him and his rehabilitation in Russia and in the West. The second essay, by Georgii Gloveli, gives a brief but perceptive characterisation of Bogdanov's thought and its evolution. In the third essay the archivists Nina Antonova and Natalya Drozdova outline the history and whereabouts of the various archival collections pertaining to Bogdanov's life and works. A useful appendix to the work is Peter Plyutto's biographical chronicle of Bogdanov, which is complete with source references.

This is a work of exemplary scholarship and an important landmark in the field of Russian historical studies. It is a bibliography that maps out an entire field for research. It reclaims for Russian political and intellectual history an entire area of investigation that had been artificially removed at Lenin's insistence. But perhaps the most significant thing about this book is that it has grown out of an international collaboration between Bogdanov scholars inside and outside Russia. It is an example of organisation that would have delighted Bogdanov himself.

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JAMES D. WHITE

Olga E. Glagoleva, *Working with Russian Archival Documents: A Guide to Modern Handwriting, Document Forms, Language Patterns, and Other Related Topics*. Toronto: Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Toronto (Stalin-Era Research and Archives Project, Working Paper No. 2), 1998, iv + 109 pp., \$15.00 (North America), \$20.00 (rest of the world).

THE BODY OF THIS BOOK, based on courses offered to graduate students at the University of Toronto, derives from the distinction between 'graphical' and 'logical' methods of documentary analysis. The graphical method concentrates on the characteristics of typical and individual hands in any given period; the analytical method is designed to highlight the sort of conclusions about chronology, authorship and context that might plausibly be drawn from certain types of document. Acknowledging that the experienced reader will instinctively apply both methods simultaneously, Olga Glagoleva conscientiously sets out the structure of each in turn for the novice. It is perhaps inevitable that parts of her text should be no more exciting than the instructions for putting up a deckchair. Certainly a buzz sounds in the brain when one is told that 'the size of a person's natural handwriting can be *normal*, *small* or *large*' (p. 27). But anyone tempted to pour scorn on what the Russians call 'auxiliary historical disciplines' need only recall the Hitler Diaries fiasco. In that case, a distinguished historian was wrongfooted by an impenetrable script when simple tests might have established that the paper on which the so-called diaries were written dated from after Hitler's death. It is odd that Glagoleva, though plainly interested in forensic tests for forgery, makes no mention of such a celebrated incident. Neither does she discuss the Kurbskii-Groznyi correspondence, nor indeed any other Russian case of dispute from within her period. Examples of this kind might have helped to enliven her book. Still, those who wish to pursue the study of seals, heraldry and watermarks in the Russian context will find useful pointers in her excellent bibliography, which also offers an up-to-date guide to the principal archival *putevoditeli*. In any case, one suspects that the main value of this book for most readers will lie not so much in its methodology as in its 85 archival examples, each of which is printed out in full in an appendix, which also identifies their provenance.