

and very few errors are to be found. The only weak spot is in the index, which contains mistakes and omissions.

The strengths and the shortcomings of the book are in its bias. The author is very sympathetic to the Bolsheviks and essentially agrees with their interpretation of events. He accepts Lenin's view that the working class on its own can develop only trade-union consciousness and that political direction must be provided by the party. This assumption gave him the opportunity to follow the path of Soviet historians and, by questioning their most conspicuous claims, to produce a more credible version of Bolshevik success. Reichman's weakness stems from his reliance on Marxist conceptualizations that concentrate on class consciousness and class antagonism. His principal target is the All-Russian Railroad Union, an organization that strove to unite the varied groups of railwaymen under an umbrella organization dedicated to the achievement of common political concessions from the regime. Its principal goal was to organize a general strike for that purpose. The leadership of the union was primarily made up of liberals with ties to revolutionary parties. Social Democrats, particularly Bolsheviks, were leery of liberals becoming involved in political activities among the workers. From the start, the Bolshevik organization in Moscow embarked on a policy of undermining the influence of the railroad union. They formed their own union with an almost identical name (Union of Railroad Employees) and tried to recruit workers into it in order to gain control of the railroad union, and, when they were unable to do that, they withdrew from the union. When the railroad strike was initiated by the railwaymen in October, the Bolshevik position was ambiguous. In my opinion, the Bolsheviks opposed the October general strike led by liberals and tried to sabotage it. This, of course, is not the view of the author. He makes every effort to denigrate the actions of the liberal leadership of the railroad union and to extol the activity of the Bolsheviks.

As an example of such bias, I would point to the discussion of the attitude of the Bolshevik committee in Moscow toward support of the October general strike. Recollections of Bolshevik participants in the events admit the overcautious attitude of Bolsheviks to the general strike, but Reichman rejects them. For example, a Bolshevik participant tells us that prior to October 10 only two members of the Bolshevik Moscow committee supported a general strike, while seven opposed it. At a tumultuous Bolshevik conference of the entire Moscow region on that day, which was attended by eight hundred to one thousand workers, there was such overwhelming and enthusiastic support among rank-and-file workers for the railroad strike, al-

ready in its fifth day, that the Committee was moved to support the strike. Even then it was not until October 12 that a leaflet calling for a general strike was issued, indicating that there still remained some reluctance on the Bolsheviks' part to join the strike in progress. Reichman disregards this evidence, while claiming steadfast support of the Bolsheviks for the strike, although he distinguishes support for a railway strike from support for a general strike. He is entitled to his opinion, and one could disagree with him, but his approach is simply to disregard long-accepted opinions supported by evidence.

The founding of the railroad union has been associated with the liberals' Union of Unions. Reichman hardly mentions the Union of Unions, dismissing its influence out of hand (one entry in the index and that only in passing). Moreover, he disregards information that would support the opposite point of view. For example, literature dealing with involvement of liberals in 1905 is not discussed, and works of S. Galai, who has written extensively on this subject, are not even listed in the bibliography.

Notwithstanding the above comments, the book is a valuable addition to literature on the revolution of 1905. It nevertheless needs to be used with caution because, although it tells us much about the activities of the Bolsheviks among the railroad workers, it says very little about the role of other political groups among them.

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ZENOVIA A. SOCHOR. *Revolution and Culture: The Bogdanov-Lenin Controversy*. (Studies of the Harri- man Institute.) Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 1988. Pp. x, 258. \$24.95.

Alexander Bogdanov (1873–1928), V. I. Lenin's rival between 1904 and 1909, when he was expelled from the Bolshevik wing of the Russian Social Democratic Workers party, was also a complex and innovative thinker. He wrote on philosophy, economics, sociology, and the natural sciences (he was trained as a physician) and was a pioneer of systems theory. Yet, until recently, he was a relatively unknown figure, and no full-scale study has been done of all of the dimensions of his life and thought. He was off-limits to Soviet scholars for many years because of Lenin's hostility to him. Western scholars have focused on Bogdanov as Lenin's rival (first within the party and then outside it) and as the inspirer of *Proletkult*, a truly grass-roots movement that flourished between 1917 and 1921.

Zenovia A. Sochor focuses on Lenin's and

Bogdanov's different visions of the relationship between revolution and culture and the implications that those visions had for the development of Soviet society, especially Stalinism. She maintains that the conflict between Lenin and Bogdanov had permanent consequences, for the struggle against Bogdanov revealed and contributed to the authoritarian aspect of Leninism and created the preconditions for the political control of culture that followed. The book is divided into four parts. In part 1, "Points of Departure," Sochor sets the background for the controversy in terms of revolutionary praxis ("a revolution, by definition, must change the political culture" [p. 16]) and describes the main tenets of "Bogdanovism," treating it from a political science perspective as a model or system, so that the historian is left wondering whether there is a pre- and postrevolutionary Bogdanov and whether the three volumes of his major work, *Tektology*, published in 1913, 1917, and 1922 (the 1922 edition included all three volumes), display important shifts in emphasis and approach.

Part 2, "After October—which way to Socialism?" treats Lenin's and Bogdanov's views on the relationship of war and revolution, concentrating on their contrasting opinions on German state capitalism, war communism, and the long term effects of war. Sochor then discusses Lenin's views on the "school of capitalism," as a model of economic efficiency and labor discipline and as a work ethic, contrasting those views to Bogdanov's vision of *Proletkult* as a "school of socialism" that would not simply transmit knowledge and overcome the deficiencies of the past, for example, illiteracy, but actively nurture new ideas, values, and attitudes essential to socialism, especially collectivism and universalism (overcoming the psychological fragmentation and dependency caused, in Bogdanov's view, by professionalization, specialization, and authority-subordinate relationships). Bogdanov believed that industrial labor created a collective consciousness that would supplant bourgeois individualism but that this consciousness would not occur automatically. It had to be deliberately induced and fostered.

Part 3, "The Origins of Political Culture," contrasts Lenin's insistence on the political hegemony of the party with Bogdanov's insistence on the "cultural hegemony" of the proletariat. To Lenin, cultural revolution meant the acquisition of attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary for restoring order, building the economy, and maintaining power; it involved emphasizing class struggle, the leading role of the party, Marxist ideology, and assimilation of past culture and was foreshadowed, Sochor maintains, in the "tutelary dictatorship" and combat model of Lenin's *What is to be*

*Done* (1902). By contrast, Bogdanov challenged authority and advocated equality rather than hierarchy and a reduced political realm. Antiauthoritarian and antidogmatic, he foresaw the threat to equality produced by technology itself and the problems created by psychological dependency. A Marxist revisionist, he feared that the dominance of the propertied would be replaced by the dominance of the educated and foresaw the new power relationships implicit in the separation of ownership and control. In part 4, "Laying the Foundation of the Soviet System," Sochor discusses Lenin's vulnerability to a challenge from the Left, whose adherents wanted to see their utopia realized, and argues that Lenin's decision to squelch the Left led to resentment and frustration. "Stalin tapped this resentment and frustration, unleashed its power, and directed it to his own ends" (p. 215). The result was a fusion of Leninism and Bogdanovism, authoritarianism and collectivism.

Sochor contends that Bogdanov offered a viable alternative to Leninism just as N. I. Bukharin did to Stalinism. Less inclined than Lenin to massive outbursts of will or to posit shortcuts to the future, the more scientifically minded Bogdanov stressed method and gradual transformation. His model for society was a dynamic equilibrium of freely moving parts rather than the centralized rigidity imposed by Lenin and Stalin. Unlike Bukharin, who became a moderate in the 1920s, Bogdanov, Sochor says, was a moderate even during the civil war. He lamented the flight of the intelligentsia, advocated a tolerant policy toward the peasants, and preached the creation of a new life rather than the destruction, hatred, and class struggle with which *Proletkult* is so often associated—erroneously in Sochor's opinion. Her book is a corrective to views that insist that, if only Lenin had lived, all would be well in the Soviet Union, but in making her case for Bogdanov, Sochor idealizes him, focusing on the aspects of his thought that are appealing to Westerners and downgrading, though she does admit them, offensive aspects. These include his exaggeration of the virtues of collectivism, which led many *Proletkult* writers to submerge "the 'I' in the collective 'we'" (p. 137); his "rather chilling indictment of 'deviant organisms'" (p. 198); the loss of the human element in his rationalistic utopia of organization and planning (satirized in Evgenii Zamiatin's famous novel *We*); and the antidemocratic proletarian exclusiveness that ignored the majority of the Russian population, the peasants, and could not but engender hostility to "bourgeois" specialists and intellectuals. The economic viability of Sergei Bulgakov's vision of collective creativity and the end of authority-subordinate relationships and of specialization in industry—a major issue in an improv-

erished society—is not discussed, nor is there any indication of whether or not these dovetail with Bogdanov's writings on political economy. Had Bogdanov prevailed over Lenin and actually had to implement his ideas, there surely would have been a conflict between his gradualism and his utopianism, between the Bogdanov of positivism, technology, and systems analysis and the Bogdanov of cultural liberation and *Proletkult*, and it is difficult to predict what he would actually have done. Nevertheless, the book provides a much needed survey of the ideas and approach of this major figure and contributes new material and a fresh perspective on the issue of the link between Leninism and Stalinism. It is required reading for students of Russian and Soviet history and society.

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VLADIMIR N. BROVKIN. *The Mensheviks after October: Socialist Opposition and the Rise of the Bolshevik Dictatorship*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 1987. Pp. xviii, 329. \$39.95.

The subtitle of this book best describes its central concern. Vladimir N. Brovkin's thesis is that, before foreign intervention and the civil war began to threaten Bolshevik survival, a dictatorial transformation had come about as a result of the Bolshevik attempt to prevent the moderate socialist parties—the Mensheviks and the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs)—from coming to power through free elections to local soviets. Brovkin describes a sequence of events that seems to offer a clear, even simple, explanation for the Bolsheviks' increasing tendency to force their authority on the soviets. First, there were the Mensheviks' and the SRs' electoral victories in many provincial soviets during the spring of 1918. Second, there was the Bolsheviks' disbanding of many such soviets and their "legal" and forceful infringements of the right of both workers and organized parties to practice political opposition. Third, he cites the turn to armed struggle in June 1918 by "the Right Mensheviks, the SRs, the peasants, and the workers in many cities" against the Bolsheviks (p. 297). And, finally, there was the Red Terror, which began in July and was directed against all forms of dissent.

In the process of arguing his case, Brovkin adds much to our understanding of the short but crucial interregnum from October 1917 to the outbreak of civil war in the summer of 1918. He correctly emphasizes the interconnectedness of various developments—the advent of economic disaster and foreign threat, the Bolsheviks' chaotic policies in response to those dangers, and the

regime's struggle to establish its authority. Brovkin is meticulous in outlining the factional differences among the Bolsheviks, especially in regard to the issue of political pluralism. But, although it is certainly suggestive and quite tempting in its revisionist sweep, Brovkin's central thesis is not entirely convincing.

Fundamental to Brovkin's argument is the contention that the Mensheviks and the SRs posed a viable political alternative to Bolshevik rule, one that could have won out had the electoral process been allowed to run its course even within the limits of the soviets' franchise. Indeed, Brovkin's narrative shows that the failure of the Bolsheviks' variable and contradictory policies to improve economic conditions or secure peace produced among many workers a mood of disappointment and anger that expressed itself in demands for new elections to the soviets, in the formation of the independent Workers' Assemblies of *Upolnomochenny* (representatives), and in the widespread strikes of May and June 1918. But did those problems and demands indicate a shift in the political loyalties of workers (or specific sections of that aggregate social group), from "bolshevism" to "menshevism"? In a recent round-table discussion of that question, which was published in the *Slavic Review* (Summer 1985), Brovkin argued that such a shift indeed took place, and the central section of his book is dedicated to supporting that assertion. He points out not only that the Mensheviks led the Assemblies of *Upolnomochennyye* but also that their slogans and demands were in the forefront of the strikes. Even though he describes his data for provincial elections as incomplete, he contends that the Mensheviks and the SRs won majorities in almost all of the newly elected soviets. The case for a Menshevik-SR victory in the elections to the workers' section of the Petrograd Soviet is particularly suspect because of a discrepancy between the figures Brovkin cites in table 4 and those on page 243.

The difficulty is not only in establishing a precise and general picture of the parties' electoral strength but also in determining the depth of workers' support for the Mensheviks and the Mensheviks' ability to act as an alternative to Bolshevik power. No doubt, as Brovkin writes, "the workers as a social group and the Mensheviks as an organized political party shared an interest in opposing the Bolsheviks' claim to speak on behalf of the workers" (p. 175). Was it not that shared interest, as well as menshevism's historic commitment to workers' self-organization, that made the Mensheviks welcome leaders for the *Upolnomochennyye* movement rather than workers' conversion to the Menshevik view of the revolution? In any case, the Mensheviks remained, as