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WAS BOGDANOV RUSSIA'S ANSWER TO GRAMSCI?

Gramsci has received world-wide acclaim during the last decade while Bogdanov remains an obscure figure. Yet, these two theorists perceived similar problems in the process of revolutionary change and offered comparable solutions. Both were aware that it is possible to seize power without initiating the transition to socialism; both prescribed cultural change as the necessary dimension of revolutionary change. Both diverged considerably from the Leninist approach.

This paper will explore some of the more striking similarities in the ideas of Bogdanov and Gramsci, and contrast them to Lenin's ideas. Such a comparative study serves to draw attention to Bogdanov's thought, but more importantly, it challenges the commonly-held assumption that there is a wide disparity between Bolshevism and its more creative variant, Western Marxism. A comparison between Bogdanov's and Gramsci's views attests to the diversity in early Bolshevism and refutes the notion that an interest in 'subjective factors' was the preserve of European Marxism.¹ Whatever the reasons for the Leninist, and eventually Stalinist, outcome, it cannot be attributed to a lack of 'European' ideas or alternatives. Bogdanov provided the Gramscian perspective within the Russian context.

Lenin's views are, of course, well-known, but they are employed here as a reference-point to highlight what is novel in Bogdanov's and Gramsci's thought.² It should be noted at the outset that, on a number of important questions, Lenin, Bogdanov, and Gramsci converged in their views. All three rejected a determinist Marxist position, exemplified by Gramsci's somewhat mistaken exultation that the Bolshevik Revolution was a "revolution against Karl Marx's *Capital*".³ Bogdanov and Gramsci, in fact, preferred to consider Marxism as an expression of 'laws of tendency' rather than inevitable laws of development.⁴ Taken as a whole, Lenin was more orthodox in his basic acceptance of Marxist philosophy while both Bogdanov and Gramsci looked to other political thinkers to supplement Marxist thought.⁵ Bogdanov went so far as to adopt an empiriocritical and positivist point of view, which was emphatically rejected by Lenin and Gramsci.⁶

In terms of politics, all three supported the notion of the Party as the

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'conscious agent' in the revolutionary process. All three accepted the necessity of strict discipline of the labor force, whether exacted by the leadership in the Party or by Taylorism in the industrial system. Bogdanov and Gramsci, however, expressed more concern for the disparity between the authoritarian implications of political struggle and the long-range goals of 'comradely relations' and collectivism. Bogdanov and Gramsci also were politically more radical and uncompromising in their attitudes toward parliamentary tactics. Gramsci, for example, was accused of being an Italian version of 'otzovizm', the boycott policy identified with Left Bolsheviks and Bogdanov.⁷ Generally speaking, Gramsci was closest to a Bogdanovite position during his *Ordine Nuovo* period, when he emphasized cultural-educational work. Following the collapse of the Turin uprising in 1920, Gramsci edged nearer to a Leninist position, with a new appreciation of Lenin's stress on the Party and armed insurrection.

Chronologically, of course, Bogdanov preceded Gramsci, and it is entirely possible, although difficult to prove, that Gramsci was familiar with Bogdanov's ideas.⁸ The two Party schools organized by Bogdanov in 1909–11 took place in Bologna and Capri; hence, something of Bogdanov's work was probably known in Italian Party circles. Perhaps it was not entirely coincidental that at the Socialist Youth Congress held in Bologna, Tasca, Gramsci's early mentor in the Socialist Party, appeared as an ardent advocate of a program of culture and education for the working class. Parallel to the *Proletkul't* activities in the Soviet Union, Gramsci, Togliatti, and Tasca founded a journal, *Ordine Nuovo*, in 1919, as a weekly 'review of socialist culture'. Gramsci, referring to this period, recalled that "the only sentiment which united us, in our meetings . . . was based on a vague enthusiasm for a vague proletarian culture".⁹ A specific point of contact took place in 1920, when an Italian delegation attended a meeting in Moscow, immediately after the Second Comintern Congress, to establish an International Bureau of *Proletkul't*.¹⁰ Finally, Gramsci lived in Moscow between May 1922 and December 1923, and was no doubt exposed to some of the trends and debates within the Bolshevik Party.¹¹

Whether Gramsci actually read any of Bogdanov's works or approved of them is a moot point. Of direct relevance to this paper is not the ancestry of ideas but the parallel development of ideas. Since a discussion of the entire range of ideas espoused by Bogdanov and Gramsci is beyond the confines of an article, we will compare their ideas in relationship to one central

problem in Marxism: the transformation of the proletariat. This is a problem which agitated all three theoreticians under consideration. It stemmed from a host of questions left unanswered by Marx. Since consciousness was at the core of Marx's thought, how precisely would the proletariat acquire it? Would this be a spontaneous process? Would the proletariat require assistance?

Two strikingly different images of the proletariat occur in a Marxist scenario: the physically and psychologically debilitated proletariat in the pre-revolutionary period, versus the fully competent and conscious creator of the new socialist order in the post-revolutionary period. Clearly there is a hiatus between the two. Marx viewed the closing of this gap largely as a spontaneous process, as a by-product of changes in the economic base of society, reinforced and crystallized by revolutionary struggle.¹² This rather vague formulation led some analysts to conclude that Marx "deliberately sidesteps the question of the revolutionary practice which will turn a mere fragment of a man into a fully developed individual".¹³ Another analyst sees a 'leap of faith' in Marx's assertion that the proletariat would successfully undertake the construction of the socialist order, since "Marx nowhere seeks to prove that the worker *is*, in fact, fitted for the role assigned to him."¹⁴

Marxists succeeding Marx could not avoid confronting the problem of the transformation of the proletariat. We will examine in this paper how Lenin, Bogdanov, and Gramsci perceived this dilemma and how they proposed to overcome the hiatus between the existing and projected proletariat. In particular, we will address three aspects of the problem: (1) the role of intellectuals; (2) the organizations proposed for cultural-educational work; and on a broader level, (3) the relationship between cultural change and the transition to socialism.

I. ROLE OF THE INTELLECTUALS

Surveying the status of the Russian working class, Lenin was more than dubious about the spontaneous transformation of the proletariat. Neither the 'school of capitalism' nor the revolutionary struggle produced a sufficiently altered proletariat. Left to its own efforts, Lenin lamented, the proletariat developed only a "trade-union consciousness".¹⁵ Spontaneity 'overwhelms' consciousness and introduces myopic arguments that "a kopeck added to the ruble [is] worth more than Socialism and politics".¹⁶

Lenin offered a remedy which would at least circumvent the problem, if not solve it. Since working-class consciousness did not arise of its own accord, the proletariat would have to look to 'professional revolutionaries' for assistance. These were the vanguard of the working class, composed of the most 'conscious elements' from among the workers and sympathetic 'bourgeois intellectuals'. They would assume the leadership of the proletariat and guide the "spontaneous awakening of the masses". Above all, they would ensure that the working class was not diverted from its real goal, which was not simply the settlement of a particular grievance but the overthrow of the entire system.¹⁷

Bogdanov and Gramsci readily accepted the premise that spontaneity alone did not transform the proletariat nor that it necessarily resulted in change in the desired direction. They objected, however, to Lenin's somewhat contrived solution, which superimposed bourgeois intellectuals on the workers' movement.

Gramsci had no quarrel with relying on intellectuals as such. "Critical self-consciousness means, historically and politically, the creation of an elite of intellectuals". Even more emphatically, he asserted, "there is no organization without intellectuals".¹⁸ The major difference, from Gramsci's point of view, was that the intellectuals should originate in the working class; they should be 'organic intellectuals'.¹⁹ Gramsci hoped that intellectuals, who were expressly nurtured from within the ranks of the working class, would play an innovative and leading role, but at the same time would "remain in contact" with the masses, "to become, as it were, the whalebone in the corset".²⁰

Along similar lines, Bogdanov questioned the long-term effect of depending upon forces external to the working class: would this not reinforce the submissiveness of the proletariat? While Bogdanov acknowledged that bourgeois intellectuals rendered service to the proletariat, he hastened to add that intellectuals who genuinely adopted the workers' point of view were as rare as 'white crows'. More typically, intellectuals imparted their own 'individualist' habits of thought and behavior within working class organizations, since collectivism and equality were not native to their experience. Stirred by these misgivings, Bogdanov counseled the working class not to place its trust in outside classes but to "verify everyone and everything in its own mind, with its general class-consciousness". The liberation of the workers, to be authentic, had to be "a matter for the workers themselves".²¹

Bogdanov and Gramsci were far more inclined to aid the workers than to act for them, as Lenin was apt to do. Possibly this was due to their involvement with workers at the grass-roots level. Unlike Lenin, Bogdanov and Gramsci were active in workers' circles, thereby gaining an appreciation of the concrete needs and desires of the workers, as well as their range of abilities and limitations. One of Bogdanov's comrades commented that this experience convinced Bogdanov that workers were perfectly capable of "engaging independently in creative scholarly and ideological work", a view which "fundamentally contradicted Lenin's doctrine on spontaneity and consciousness".²²

Gramsci's point of departure also was a rather sanguine appraisal of worker capabilities. He believed that "each man . . . carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a 'philosopher', an artist, a man of taste, he participates in a particular conception of the world".²³ What Gramsci envisaged was some form of interaction between 'spontaneity' and 'conscious leadership', meaning that the popular conception of the world, which men developed spontaneously, had to be "*educated*, directed, purged of extraneous contaminations" by the more conscious elements, by the intellectuals.²⁴

It is quite clear that Gramsci's and Bogdanov's solutions to the problem of consciousness implied a rather lengthy and protracted process of transforming the proletariat. Whether it was to develop 'organic intellectuals' or to increase proletarian self-reliance, a remedial educative course of action was indispensable. Lenin's solution, on the other hand, suggested a shortcut to the consciousness-raising process. The "substitution of party for class as the motive force of revolution", was, according to one scholar, "Lenin's most distinctive innovation in revolutionary theory and practice".²⁵ Nonetheless, it had a manipulative and elitist connotation, argues a critic. Consciousness came to denote "any willingness on the part of the workers to follow the commands of the party". Nor were the negative implications eliminated after the October Revolution: "the original mission of the vanguard, that of raising the masses to consciousness, tended to be forgotten because of the more immediate problem of keeping the party in power".²⁶

Precisely this concern motivated Bogdanov and Gramsci in pushing for a concerted effort to educate and raise the general level of the workers. With this orientation in mind, we shall take a closer look at the organizational schemes proposed by Bogdanov and Gramsci to bolster the transformation of the proletariat.

II. CULTURAL-EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Gramsci's earliest foray in translating his ideas on worker education into a specific effort took the form of 'Clubs of Moral Life', organized in 1917. These clubs, although short-lived, had the lofty aim of accustoming young people in the socialist movement "to dispassionate discussion about social and ethical problems".²⁷ What is particularly interesting is Gramsci's felt need to create an organization specifically devoted to cultural work, which was, at the same time, separate from organizations engaged in direct political work. These were, in Gramsci's view, both legitimate but distinct activities. Another attempt to institute political education of the workers came in 1919 with the founding of the 'School of Culture and Propaganda', in Turin. Through a series of lecture-courses on historical and theoretical topics, Gramsci and his fellow organizers hoped to extend the revolutionary and educational program of the *Ordine Nuovo*, and to supplement the technical skills which the workers were acquiring in the Labor Schools.²⁸ Yet another effort was made in 1920 by Gramsci and Zino Zini, to create 'Institutes of Proletarian Culture', directly modeled on the Russian *Proletkul't*, although little is known about the work or duration of the institutes.²⁹ It may very well be that Gramsci found in the *Proletkul't* movement a source of inspiration, or at least, justification for his own cultural-educational program. He published, for example, an article by Lunacharsky on proletarian culture in *Il Grido*, claiming that a 'great similarity' existed between "the moral and intellectual conditions of the two proletariats, the Italian and the Russian".³⁰ An interesting point is made by one scholar who argues that Gramsci's knowledge of Lenin's work was extremely limited until 1921, and that until then, for Gramsci, Leninism was "reduced to the manifestoes and slogans of the Communist International, or the cultural politics of Lunacharsky".³¹

Gramsci's most original contribution to the whole idea of worker education, however, lay in the Factory Councils (although these too Gramsci mistakenly believed were patterned after a Russian institution — the Soviets).³² Factory Councils formed the nub of his ideas on how to transform the proletariat and how to usher in the transition to socialism. By organizing themselves into committees at the factory, and involving themselves in the decision-making process in industrial production, workers would, Gramsci foretold, develop a 'Communist psychology' and become aware of their "capacity to produce and exercise sovereignty . . . without need for the

capitalist and an indefinite delegation of political power".³³ This is because Councils

give the workers direct responsibility for production, provide them with an incentive to improve their work, instill a conscious and voluntary discipline, and create a producers' mentality – the mentality of a creator of history.³⁴

From Gramsci's viewpoint, not only would Factory Councils encourage a change in self-perception but also they would imitate the workers' state, albeit in molecular form: they would act as units of workers' control, foster worker solidarity, and teach workers essential managerial and technical skills. As such, Gramsci believed Factory Councils constituted the "first concrete indication of the communist revolution in Italy".³⁵

There is no institutional equivalent to Gramsci's Factory Councils in Bogdanov's work, although some of the underlying ideas were held in common. Bogdanov, too, felt that socialism would elude the workers unless a change in attitudes and in authority relations took place, particularly in the workshop but also in other spheres of social life. Bogdanov believed, however, that advanced technology would transform relations of production, creating conditions which would eliminate the gap between the ordinary worker and the engineer, and give rise to a 'new consciousness'. Most significantly, Bogdanov thought, these developments would lay the groundwork for a 'new comradely discipline', activated by the 'will of the collective' and governed by considerations of competence rather than power relations.³⁶

It is worth noting that both Bogdanov and Gramsci had an enormous faith in technology, as in fact, did most socialists at the time. With extensive automation and economic planning, Bogdanov predicted the proletarian state would function as a "giant statistical Bureau", organizing and distributing labor efforts in a scientific way.³⁷ Bogdanov's 'technological bent' was echoed in Gramsci's 'productional bent', as can be seen in Gramsci's designation of the factory as "the cell of a new State", and in his vision of a Communist society "organized on the model of a large engineering works".³⁸ Despite Gramsci's emphasis on a "new pattern of economic life and work techniques",³⁹ he, nevertheless, saw virtue in an eminently capitalist technique, i.e. Taylorism.⁴⁰ This attitude was shared to varying degrees of enthusiasm by Lenin and Bogdanov.⁴¹ All three advocated a disciplined, efficient, and industrious labor force, and did not shirk from the use of 'Americanism' in transforming the backward working class of Russia or Italy.

Bogdanov's proposals for cultural change, however, did not stop there. He rejected a purported similarity between proletarian and labor culture;⁴² he envisaged a change in the entire sphere of ideas and knowledge, and not merely an inculcation of a Communist 'work ethic'. Despite his faith in the beneficial consequences of advanced technology, Bogdanov was not convinced that the 'new consciousness' would be born unassisted. If anything, he argued that cultural change lagged behind technological change,⁴³ and posed obstacles to the complete transformation of an emergent class. The proletariat was still guided by 'ideological remnants' from the past, by attitudes suited to the bourgeoisie, but not the proletariat. These included, among others, individualism, authoritarianism, competitiveness, and divisiveness — all 'fetishisms' which had to be purged if the proletariat were truly to be liberated.⁴⁴ For this reason, Bogdanov considered the existing concept of a socialist revolution to be unduly restrictive — it was reduced to a "revolution of property, a change of rulers", whereas, in fact, the revolution should be perceived as

a creative revolution of world culture, with spontaneous education and struggle of social forms replaced by conscious creation — a matter of a new class logic, new methods of unifying forces, new methods of thinking.⁴⁵

Toward this end, together with Lunacharsky and Gorky, Bogdanov organized two Party schools in Capri and Bologna during the pre-revolutionary period. The Party schools consisted of a series of lecture-courses, intended to provide workers with at least a smattering of knowledge in several fields (e.g., political economy, history, literature), and some training in basic organizational skills (e.g. writing speeches, preparing political pamphlets).⁴⁶ A more substantive effort followed after the October Revolution, when Bogdanov and Lunacharsky founded *Proletkul't*, a mass organization of 400 000 members, with its own administrative apparatus, factory cells, and a network of studios. The express purpose of *Proletkul't* was to revolutionize the cultural sphere as a complement to changes being undertaken in the political and economic spheres. As a first step, the studios, the most prominent unit in *Proletkul't*, attempted to inaugurate new forms of art, created by the workers themselves.⁴⁷

More important than the direct results — the novels, plays, posters, which were admittedly tentative and meager, were the indirect results — the changes in the proletariat. What counted was the very process of creating these early

products of proletarian culture. The methods of work were designed to foster desired characteristics, such as collectivism in place of individualism, and universalism rather than 'narrow specialization'. *Proletkul't* adherents fervently believed that art contained cognitive as well as esthetic functions, and that by engaging in artistic endeavours, workers would begin to develop initiative, originality, and creativity. Moreover, they hoped the worker-as-artist would break free of the elitist notion that certain types of activities, epitomized by the arts, were reserved for intellectuals. Neither the workplace nor a formal educational program acted upon the psyche as *Proletkul't* sought to do, attempting to instill a new self-esteem in workers' perceptions of themselves.⁴⁸

Cultural transformation, moreover, was not limited to the work performed in the *Proletkul't* studios, according to Bogdanov's overall scheme. He assumed it would proceed on several levels and would include, at a minimum, the work being done in the numerous *Proletkul't* journals, in the Proletarian University, and in other institutes of learning. Eventually all of past culture would be submitted to a critical review, and a new proletarian culture, encompassing philosophy, arts, and sciences, would emerge.⁴⁹ To those who objected that Bogdanov's plans were too ambitious and that the proletariat was already too burdened with physical work to take on the additional task of creating a proletarian culture, Bogdanov retorted with the following comment:

And if [proletarian culture] were beyond one's strength – the working class would have nothing to count on, except the transition from one enslavement to another – from under the yoke of capitalists to the yoke of engineers and the educated.⁵⁰

Whatever the merits of that argument, it cannot be said that Bogdanov's, or Gramsci's, ideas were put fully to the test. *Proletkul't* studios turned into a conspicuous but brief experiment, cut short by Lenin in 1921, partly because of continuing mistrust of Bogdanov, partly because Lenin considered them frivolous in the face of more pressing needs.⁵¹ Factory Councils, in similar fashion, remained more a blueprint than a reality, as the unsuccessful Turin uprising convinced Gramsci of the need to rely on more orthodox 'Leninist' methods and institutions.

Even if preliminary, considerable nuances emerge from these efforts. Through the Factory Councils, Gramsci hoped to develop the managerial skills of the workers and to instill a new 'producer's mentality'. Bogdanov,

on the other hand, aimed at something broader and more illusive in the *Proletkul't* studios – the creation of a proletarian culture, the development of multi-dimensional capabilities and interests of the workers.

What these diverse efforts had in common was the active pursuit of new modes of thought and behavior on the part of the workers. The emphasis was on self-change, with organizations designed to assist in this process. In addition, Bogdanov and Gramsci stressed an explicit cultural-educational program because they perceived culture as a vital source of influence on a person's make-up, and not merely as an embellishment or subsidiary phenomenon. For Gramsci, the whole point of education was not to accumulate 'encyclopaedic knowledge', but to achieve consciousness and command of self. Culture, Gramsci wrote, is

organization, discipline of one's inner self, a coming to terms with one's own personality; it is the attainment of a higher awareness, with the aid of which one succeeds in understanding one's own historical value, one's own function in life, one's own rights and obligations.⁵²

From a slightly different point of view, that of society rather than that of the individual, Bogdanov complained that the 'place and function' of ideology in the 'system of life' was barely appreciated. There was a common thread to "speech, cognition, art, customs, law, rules of propriety, and morals", namely, that they "regulated and controlled all of the practical life of society". In other words, culture had an 'organizational function', and unless the proletarian devised his own 'organizational tools' (proletarian culture), he would not gain independence and self-mastery.⁵³

To grasp the significance attached to cultural-educational work by Bogdanov and Gramsci, in contrast to the relative indifference on the part of Lenin, at least during the pre-revolutionary period, it is necessary to turn to a consideration of their views on cultural change in relationship to the revolutionary process as a whole.

III. CULTURAL CHANGE AND THE TRANSITION TO SOCIALISM

Lenin was undaunted in his belief that the seizure of power was the single most important goal for the proletariat; all other considerations were subservient to this goal. Consequently, whatever energies were expended on the education and training of the proletariat, they were invariably linked to

political struggle. Anything which distracted the proletariat from this central concern was considered a waste of time. Lenin expressed annoyance and impatience when “pedagogics were confused with questions of politics and organization”. Undeniably, workers had to be raised to the level of intellectuals “in regard to party activity”, but in other respects, it was “not so easy and not so imperative”. The appropriate cultural task was to “assist every capable worker to become a *professional* agitator, organizer, propagandist, literature distributor”.⁵⁴

Looking back at this period, Trotsky noted Lenin’s “tense concentration on his goal”, his total absorption with “concrete, direct, immediate work toward the practical aim of speeding the outbreak of the revolution and of securing its victory”. Lenin was not interested in “‘general’ literary-revolutionary work”, but in building, in the shortest possible time, an ideological and organizational base for the revolution.⁵⁵

Within Lenin’s framework, socialism proceeded in a series of stages, with specific tasks allocated to each stage. There was a clear demarcation point between capitalism and the transition to socialism, which consisted of the seizure of power. The transitional period was, in fact, predicated on the seizure of power. Other prerequisites to socialism, such as a high level of economic development and a mature working class, could be fulfilled during the transitional period.

In contrast, to Bogdanov as well as to Gramsci, socialism did not represent a series of stages, but a continuum. The seizure of power was one political moment in a lengthy process of revolutionary change. By implication, therefore, the transition to socialism had its genesis under capitalism and the socialist revolution was the culmination of all the changes preceding it. In Bogdanov’s words, “socialist development will be crowned with socialist revolution”.⁵⁶

Bogdanov, in particular, protested that the socialist effort would be undermined if goals were compartmentalized and some were relegated to the distant future. He saw this as a problem which originated in Marx’s own analysis: “According to the old concept [of the 1850’s] . . . socialism first conquers and then is implemented; up to its victory, it is not a reality, it does not exist, it is simply the ‘ultimate goal’ ”.⁵⁷ Consequently, Bogdanov advocated the conscious cultivation of socialist prerequisites prior to the seizure of power. As he pointed out, between the realm of necessity and the realm of freedom lay “not a leap, but a difficult path”.⁵⁸

Gramsci lodged a similar complaint, declaring that “a lucid and precise awareness of the end is not accompanied by a comparably lucid and precise awareness of the means that are needed at the present moment to achieve that end”.⁵⁹ Both he and Bogdanov rejected the seizure of power as the sole focal point. Socialism, to Bogdanov, was not simply a question of a “massive outburst of will” or of “winning the battle”.⁶⁰ The revolution, Gramsci argued, was not a “thaumaturgical act, but a dialectical process of historical development”.⁶¹

In playing down the seizure of power as the basic problem of revolution, Bogdanov and Gramsci suggest a potential point of convergence with Bernstein’s ‘revisionism’.⁶² Certainly, Bernstein shifted attention from a cataclysmic episode associated with the revolutionary seizure of power to a non-violent, evolutionary series of measures. He believed the new society could not be introduced ready-made by decree but had to build on elements initiated under capitalism. In this spirit, Bernstein declared, “what is generally called the ultimate goal of socialism is nothing to me; the movement is everything”.⁶³

As is well-known, orthodox Marxists launched a barrage of criticisms in response. Bernstein, they argued, underestimated the revolutionary moment and suggested a complacent policy, rather than preparing the workers for the unavoidable clash and conquest of power. Interestingly, Bogdanov was also accused of minimizing or ignoring the inevitability of revolutionary struggle and of “qualitative leaps”.⁶⁴ Neither did Gramsci escape being denounced for ‘reformism’ and for ‘social-democratic’ rather than Communist views by some of his fellow Communists.⁶⁵

The resemblance between Bernstein, on the one hand, and Bogdanov and Gramsci, on the other, should not be overdrawn, even if all three did emphasize socialist transformation as a process more than an event, and a process which begins under capitalism. In the final analysis, Bernstein advocated a gradual reform of capitalism, while Bogdanov and Gramsci promoted a gradual implementation of socialism. This was an important difference in orientation. To Bogdanov and Gramsci, the destructive aspect of revolution, the violent overthrow of the bourgeois state, was unavoidable; the point was it had to be accompanied by a creative aspect, the building of the proletarian state.

Both Bogdanov and Gramsci recognized that the conquest of power was itself not a panacea. In no case can *Zusammenbruch* (revolution) be a moment of “direct creation of a new technology and a new ideology, but

must be ready in the productively-developed class". Indeed, Bogdanov continued, unless the ascendant class were fully prepared for its new role, the seizure of power could prove to be a retrogressive act.⁶⁶ Even leadership under the Communist Party, and conquest of power by the Communist Party, would not necessarily guarantee a new socialist order, attested Gramsci. In fact, the worst possible scenario could occur, with the revolution "degenerating pathetically into a new parliament of schemers, talkers, and irresponsibles".⁶⁷

Precisely for this reason, preliminary constructive work had to be initiated under capitalism. This is the idea Bogdanov had in mind when he noted that the struggle against capitalism could not be equated with the struggle for socialism. The former was largely confined to the political arena, while the latter involved the "creation of new elements of socialism in the proletariat itself, in its internal relations, and in its conditions of everyday life".⁶⁸

Bogdanov and Gramsci alike drew inspiration from the example set by the Enlightenment and specifically, the work of the French *encyclopédistes* in the period prior to the French revolution. To Gramsci, the Enlightenment represented "a magnificent revolution in itself"; it provided Europe with a "bourgeois spiritual International in the form of a unified consciousness", and was the "best possible preparation for the bloody revolt that followed in France".⁶⁹ Bogdanov, no less enthusiastic, prescribed cultural transformation as an indispensable component of the proletarian revolution. The Proletarian University would issue "leaders of the proletariat", who would fulfill the roles of Diderot and the *encyclopédistes*, by preparing a 'Proletarian Encyclopedia'. By this Bogdanov meant they would examine the unstated premises in all spheres of knowledge, making revisions and changes as appropriate, to ensure compliance with the workers' class point of view, much the same way as, he assumed, the bourgeois class had done.⁷⁰

Also drawing on historical analogies, Gramsci observed that cultural change was an indicator of revolution, and perhaps a prerequisite. "Every revolution has been preceded by an intense labor of criticism, by the diffusion of culture and the spread of ideas amongst masses of men who are at first resistant".⁷¹ With this as a point of departure, Gramsci became convinced that the proletariat had to secure hegemony, that is, "moral and intellectual leadership", prior to the seizure of power. "A social group can, and indeed must, already exercise 'leadership' before winning governmental power (this indeed is one of the principal conditions for the winning of such power)".⁷² This implied, according to one scholar, that the working class could not

expect to play a role in history without creating its own *Weltanschauung*, without first establishing its claim to be a ruling class in the political, cultural, and ethical fields.⁷³ For Gramsci, the basic problem of revolution was not political insurrection but “how to make a hitherto subaltern class believe in itself as a potential ruling class and credible as such to other classes”.⁷⁴

Although Gramsci expressly acknowledged his debt to Lenin in developing his concept of hegemony, it seems that Gramsci meant something quite distinct from Lenin’s dictatorship of the proletariat. Rather than a relationship based largely on power and force, hegemony involved a consensual relationship, with a minimum use of force. One commentator contends that Gramsci went “far beyond Lenin in seeing hegemony as a political and cultural predominance of the working class and its party aimed at securing the ‘spontaneous’ adherence of other groups”.⁷⁵ This adherence would be obtained through a process of persuasion and education, since “every relationship of ‘hegemony’”, Gramsci asserted, “is necessarily an educational relationship”.⁷⁶

While not as developed as in Gramsci’s analysis, the concept of hegemony was not absent from Bogdanov’s lexicon,⁷⁷ as can be seen in the political platform of the *Vpered* group, with which Bogdanov was affiliated. “General cultural hegemony” was the necessary complement to “political hegemony”, the platform contended, and Bolshevism should be understood not only as a political movement but also as a socio-cultural movement. Indeed, the ‘latent precondition’ for Bolshevik victory was the creation of a proletarian culture “within the framework of present-day society”, a culture which was “stronger and more structured than the culture of the declining bourgeois classes”.⁷⁸ Bogdanov warned that socialism would be possible only when the proletariat would be able to oppose the “old cultural world” with its own political force, its economic plan, and its “new world of culture, with its new, higher methods”.⁷⁹

For cultural hegemony to be achieved, or at least initiated, prior to the seizure of power, institutional props were required. Bogdanov and Gramsci expected worker organizations to fill this demand, and exhorted them to adopt a prefigurative role. The Party, to Bogdanov, was not merely an instrument for seizing power; it was also the nucleus of the new society. According to Bogdanov’s line of reasoning, a strong, well-disciplined, well-organized ‘vanguard Party’ was necessary but not sufficient. What was needed was ‘internal strength’, mutual ties and solidarity among the workers, thereby creating in embryonic form the comradely relations of the future socialist society.

A conscious comradesly organization of the working class in the present and a socialist organization of all of society in the future – these are different moments of one and the same process, different degrees of one and the same phenomenon.⁸⁰

Bogdanov was not satisfied that the Party was moving in this direction. On the contrary, he detected in the Party's internal relations a reinforcement of the habits of passive submission and weakness of initiative already instilled by the capitalist production process and its attendant culture. Admittedly, a certain amount of 'authoritarian discipline', of blind adherence to leaders, and of centralization, was an inevitable result of class struggle. This was all the more reason, Bogdanov contended, to counteract the authoritarian tendency by promoting areas of collectivism and comradesly relations, because new attitudes and new authority relations would not arise *deus ex machina* after the revolution.⁸¹

Gramsci also believed there had to be elements of continuity in worker associations before and after the revolution, and he was as skeptical as Bogdanov that the Party was adequately attuned to tasks beyond the seizure of power. Eventually, he accepted the more limited but critical role of the Party in waging political battle, turning instead to the Factory Councils as the 'model of the proletarian state'. Councils were "the most effective organ for mutual education and for developing the new social spirit", Gramsci concluded.⁸² From his point of view, the Party functioned within the confines of bourgeois society, but the Factory Councils already prefigured the organizational structure of socialist society.⁸³

The reservation toward the Party was reflected in a similar reservation toward trade unions. Without denying the importance of the discipline and organization instilled by trade unions, Bogdanov and Gramsci claimed that trade unions were governed by the rules of capitalist society. Gramsci insisted that trade unions could not become "the instrument for a radical renovation of society". They were by nature 'competitive, not Communist'; they secured economic gains and provided the proletariat with 'skilled bureaucrats', but offered "no scope for the selection of proletarian individuals who are capable and worthy of running society".⁸⁴ In almost identical terms, Bogdanov complained that trade unions were permeated with 'fetishisms' such as private property, individualism, legal and moral norms; they acted on the basis of competition within the market and on the basis of compromise within the political arena. The English and American trade unions, for example, understood organization as a collection of individuals, not a collectivity, as far as

Bogdanov was concerned. They reflected the existing culture rather than fostering new attitudes and values. In this capacity, Bogdanov argued, they could not serve as adequate transitional forms for the construction of socialism.⁸⁵

It is interesting to recall that Lenin had a much more positive estimate of trade unions after the revolution, and even assigned to them an educational function:

The trade unions are not state organizations, not organizations for coercion, they are educational organizations, organizations that enlist, that train; they are schools, schools of administration, schools of management, schools of Communism.”

He insisted that during the transitional period the proletariat had to make use of the instruments “capitalism has left us”. Nevertheless, there was an ambivalence in Lenin’s thinking, since the trade unions were considered a “reservoir of state power” as well as an intermediary link between the Party and the masses (as ‘transmission belts’). The duality was resolved in favor of the former function, the trade unions soon becoming vehicles for implementing state policy and enforcing discipline of the labor force.⁸⁶

Bogdanov’s and Gramsci’s qualms about the existing worker organizations prompted both of them to look elsewhere, *Proletkul’t* in one instance, and Factory Councils in the other.⁸⁷ It is important to bear in mind that Bogdanov and Gramsci founded these organizations to supplement, not to replace, the existing ones. In fact, both envisaged an organizational triad in socialist society, and attempted, with varying degrees of success, to define their separate roles.⁸⁸ Bogdanov and his adherents were the most clear-cut; they believed the Party should predominate in the political sphere, the trade unions in the economic sphere, and *Proletkul’t* in the cultural sphere. Such a scheme would have the dual advantage of dispersing the authoritarian tendency and of granting autonomy to *Proletkul’t*.⁸⁹

The assumption underlying the institutional arrangement, shared by Bogdanov and Gramsci, was that the ‘cultural front’ was a legitimate area of effort and concern, on par with the political and economic fronts. This is consonant with their conviction that cultural change was an essential, and overlooked, component of the transition to socialism.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

If a comparison between Bogdanov and Gramsci has not seemed readily apparent heretofore, it is at least partly due to Bogdanov’s forgotten status,

which is only being corrected now. In addition, scholars who link Bogdanov's name with positivism may be skeptical of the validity of a comparison between the two theorists, given Gramsci's disdain for positivism. On the face of it, this philosophical difference places Bogdanov and Gramsci poles apart. Bogdanov's identification with positivism, however, has been overdrawn and has for too long submerged his other original and iconoclastic ideas. Once we move beyond blanket descriptions, we see that Bogdanov and Gramsci in fact subscribe to a similar core of ideas, as this paper has attempted to demonstrate.

Gramsci is particularly interesting as a point of comparison because he stands somewhere between Lenin and Bogdanov. Gramsci remained a 'Leninist' in his staunch support for the Party and in his belief in the 'primacy of politics'. The self-transformation of the proletariat which Gramsci advocated was inherent in political struggle, not apart from it. This standpoint was undoubtedly related to Gramsci's position in the Party; his political life was interwoven with Party life, in contrast to Bogdanov, who was expelled from the Party and, as a result, focused on non-Party activities.

Gramsci became a 'Bogdanovite' in so far as he looked beyond the seizure of power to discern the elements of a 'complete revolution'. Both Bogdanov and Gramsci were dissatisfied with formal definitions of socialism, which stressed public ownership of the means of production and the dictatorship of the proletariat. They searched for a more dynamic definition, one which penetrated to the core of socialism, and thought they found their answer in the cultural realm, in the complex of social relations.

Consequently, they directed their attention to cultivating new modes of thought and behavior, believing these were the essential criteria of socialism. They realized the hiatus between the existing proletariat and the projected 'new man' of the socialist order would not be overcome by a single blow, at the moment of revolution, and could only be bridged by a process of actively sponsored cultural change. For Bogdanov as much as for Gramsci, therefore, the cultural revolution was the necessary complement to political and economic revolution.

The comparison between Bogdanov's and Gramsci's views also highlights the essentially political nature of *Proletkul't* and its underlying philosophy. One of the reasons why Bogdanov has remained unknown in the world of political thought is because up to now *Proletkul't* has been studied as a literary movement, with little recognition of its political significance. Bogdanov,

nevertheless, was one of the most influential intellectuals in the Party, and the political import of his ideas did not disappear simply because he refused to rejoin the Party after the October Revolution.

At the same time, it is not entirely clear that Bogdanov and Gramsci saw eye to eye on the concepts implicit in the *Proletkul't* movement. An argument can be made that Gramsci sought mostly to diffuse culture rather than to change it, to raise the intellectual level of the workers and their consciousness. Certainly this seems to have been the intention of the Factory Councils, Gramsci's main organizational effort. They were to be 'schools of Communism, schools of management', much the same way as Lenin once thought the trade unions might be. Lenin did, in fact, call for a 'cultural revolution' when he realized that workers woefully lacked the skills and knowledge to build socialism after the take-over of power. Moreover, Gramsci, no less than Lenin, railed against an abstract or vague 'proletarian culture'.

And yet, Gramsci seemed to imply something as abstract when he called for a new *Weltanschauung*, a new world of culture, and a new cultural hegemony. If Gramsci was somewhat equivocal on this issue, or at least left it open-ended, Bogdanov plunged in resolutely. He stressed in his writings that the cultural revolution could not consist mainly of an acquisition of skills and knowledge; rather, the cultural revolution meant a thorough revamping of bourgeois culture and a step-by-step creation of a new proletarian culture.

To the degree that a discrepancy existed between Bogdanov and Gramsci on this score, it should be considered within the context of a Communist Party which was in power and one which was not. Both prescribed 'new values and attitudes', but Bogdanov was confronted with the task of defining these values and attempting to set them in motion. In contrast, Bogdanov and Lenin were consistently at loggerheads on the very necessity and feasibility of a 'new world of culture', debating this point both before and after the revolution. *Proletkul't's* demise was, in fact, less surprising than its inception under Lenin's regime.

One of the virtues of the comparison between Bogdanov and Gramsci is that it casts a new light on the Lenin-Bogdanov debate. Once Gramsci is inserted into the picture, the controversy acquires a significance beyond the confines of Bolshevik intra-Party disputes. Questions raised by Bogdanov and then Gramsci were questions which troubled a host of subsequent Marxist thinkers. Indeed, European Marxism involved a continuing dialogue with

Leninism and a challenge to its premises; in many ways, it was the Lenin-Bogdanov debate on a grand scale.

Recent critiques of Leninism betray a strong Gramscian influence, gained since the 'discovery' of Gramsci during the last decade. Typical of the New Left misgivings about Leninism is the following set of questions:

If the Russian Revolution could degenerate into the relationship between the Party and the masses that constituted Stalinism, had Lenin really been right in viewing the accelerated political awareness of the proletarian vanguard as a sufficient basis for carrying through the revolutionary transformation? Put in another way, did the capitulation of the bourgeoisie and a take-over of power in the name of the proletariat make the revolution 'successful'? Or was more than that involved?⁹⁰

Clearly, Bogdanov, as well as Gramsci, was convinced that more was involved, and to this question, Bogdanov provided the same answer in Russia as Gramsci did in Italy.

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NOTES

¹ Two books which draw a sharp contrast between Orthodox Marxism (largely identified with Soviet Marxism) and European Marxism are Perry Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism*, Verso Editions, London, 1976, and Dick Howard and Karl E. Klare, (eds.), *The Unknown Dimension: European Marxism since Lenin*, Basic Books, New York, 1972.

² For a comparison of Lenin's and Bogdanov's views, see Bertram D. Wolfe, *Three Who Made a Revolution*, Dial Press, New York, 1964, Chap. 29; Karl G. Ballestrem, 'Lenin and Bogdanov', *Studies in Soviet Thought* 9 (1969), 283–310. A more comprehensive study may be found in Zenovia A. Sochor, 'Modernization and Socialist Transformation: Leninist and Bogdanovite Alternatives of the Cultural Revolution' (unpublished Ph. D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1977). For a comparison of Lenin's and Gramsci's views, see Alastair Davidson, 'Gramsci and Lenin, 1917–22', *Socialist Register* (1974), pp. 125–50; Franco Ferraroti, 'Legitimacy, Hegemony and Domination: Gramsci – With and Versus Lenin', in Bogdan Denitch (ed.), *Legitimation of Regimes*, Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, Calif., 1979, pp. 101–23.

³ Gramsci, 'The Revolution against "Capital"', in Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Political Writings (1910–20)*, ed. by Quintin Hoare, Lawrence & Wishart, London, 1977, p. 34.

⁴ See A. Bogdanov, *Filosofija živogo opyta*, 2nd ed., Gt., Moscow, 1920, p. 10; A. Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Note-books of Antonio Gramsci*, ed. by Quentin Hoare and Geoffrey Newell Smith, International Publishers, N.Y., 1971, pp. 401, 412.

⁵ For sources of influence on Bogdanov, see Dietrich Grille, *Lenins Rivale*, Verlag Wissenschaft and Politik, Cologne, 1966. For Gramsci's intellectual background, see

Alastair Davidson, *Antonio Gramsci: Towards an Intellectual Biography*, Merlin Press, London, 1977.

⁶ A summary of Bogdanov's views may be found in Leszek Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, Vol. 2, Oxford U.P., London, 1978, pp. 432–45; Alexander Vucinich, *Social Thought in Tsarist Russia*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1976, pp. 206–30. An extended study, and sympathetic interpretation, of Bogdanov may be found in K.M. Jensen, *Beyond Marx and Mach: Alexander Bogdanov's Philosophy of Living Experience*, D. Reidel, Dordrecht, Holland, 1978. Lenin's criticism of Bogdanov appears in V.I. Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, International Publishers, N.Y., 1927. Gramsci's criticism of Bukharin, who reflected many of Bogdanov's views, appears in 'Critical Notes on an Attempt at Popular Sociology', in *Prison Notebooks*, pp. 419–72.

⁷ This is Bordiga's description of Gramsci's position. An anonymous article in *Communist Politics*, ed. by Karl Korsch, repeats the label 'otso-novist' (supposedly a combination of 'otzovism' and *Ordine Nuovo*). See Christian Riechers, *Antonio Gramsci: Marxismus in Italien*, Europäische Verlagsanstalt, Frankfurt a/m, 1970, p. 143.

⁸ For a discussion of this point, and a comparison of Bogdanov and Gramsci, see *Ibid.*, Chap. 5. A review of Riechers appears in Gian Carlo Jocteau, *Leggere Gramsci*, Feltrinelli, Milano, 1975, pp. 147–51.

⁹ Quoted in the Introduction to *Prison Notebooks*, p. xxxvii.

¹⁰ Bombacci represented the Italian delegation at the International *Proletkul't* meeting. See 'Brat'jam proletarjam vsex stran', *Proletarskaja kul'tura*, Nos. 17–19 (August–December 1920), pp. 1–5. Also see the memoirs by the Swiss delegate, Jules Humbert-Droz, *Mon Evolution du Tolstoïsme au Communisme, 1891–1921*, À la Baconnière, Neuchâtel, 1969, pp. 367–8.

¹¹ For references to Gramsci's stay in Moscow, see Davidson, *Gramsci*, passim.

¹² For an elaboration, see Robert C. Tucker, *The Marxian Revolutionary Idea*, Norton, N.Y., 1969.

¹³ Paul M. Sweezy and Charles Bettelheim, *On the Transition to Socialism*, 2nd ed., Monthly Review Press, N.Y., 1971, p. 114.

¹⁴ R.N. Carew Hunt, *The Theory and Practice of Communism*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1963, p. 66.

¹⁵ V.I. Lenin, *What is to be Done?* International Publishers, N.Y., 1929, pp. 32–33.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, passim. Although Marx did not speak of 'professional revolutionaries', he did subscribe to the idea of 'outside help' for the proletariat. "Entire sections of the ruling class" find themselves aligned with the proletariat due to changed material circumstances; they also supply the proletariat "with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress". Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, ed. by Samuel H. Beer, Meredith, N.Y., 1955, p. 20.

¹⁸ Gramsci, 'Some Preliminary Points of Reference', in *Prison Notebooks*, p. 334.

¹⁹ See Gramsci, 'The Intellectuals', in *Prison Notebooks*, pp. 5–25. Also see James Joll, *Gramsci*, Fontana/Collins, Glasgow, 1977, Chap. 9.

²⁰ 'Some Preliminary Points', p. 340.

²¹ A.A. Bogdanov [Maksimov], 'Proletariat v bor'be za sotsializm', *Vpered*, No. 1 (July 1910).

²² St. Krivcov, 'Pamjati A.A. Bogdanova', *Pod znamenem marksizma*, No. 4 (1928), p. 180. For a discussion of the differences between Lenin's and Bogdanov's approaches to the workers, see James D. White, 'From Marx to Bogdanov', *Coexistence* 15 (1978),

187–206. Another writer makes the interesting point that Bogdanov's approach to the workers stemmed from his philosophical convictions. "Bogdanov's conception of truth as ultimately a group consensus meant in practice more responsiveness to the moods and opinions of the rank-and-file members of the Bolshevik faction, which in turn, of course, was thought to embody the collective consciousness of the industrial proletariat." Kendall Eugene Bailes, 'Philosophy and Politics in Russian Social Democracy: Bogdanov, Lunacharsky, and the Crisis of Bolshevism, 1908–1909'. Master's degree essay, Russian Institute, Columbia University, 1966, p. 117.

²³ Gramsci, 'Intellectuals', p. 9.

²⁴ Gramsci, 'The Modern Prince', in *Prison Notebooks*, pp. 198–99.

²⁵ E.H. Carr, 'A Historical Turning Point: Marx, Lenin, Stalin', in Richard Pipes (ed.), *Revolutionary Russia*, Harvard U.P., Cambridge, 1968, p. 287.

²⁶ Alfred G. Meyer, *Leninism*, Frederick A. Praeger, N.Y., 1957, pp. 55–56.

²⁷ Quoted in Davidson, *Gramsci*, p. 79. See also Romano Giachetti, 'Antonio Gramsci: The Subjective Revolution', in Howard and Klare (eds.), *Unknown Dimension*, esp. pp. 154–55.

²⁸ See Martin Clark, *Antonio Gramsci and the Revolution that Failed*, Yale U.P., New Haven, 1977, pp. 72–73.

²⁹ See Antonio Gramsci, *Œcrits Politiques*, Vol. 2 (1921–22), ed. by Robert Paris, Gallimard, Paris, 1975, pp. 342–3, footnote 2. See also Riechers, *Gramsci*, pp. 142–3, footnote 2.

³⁰ Quoted in John M. Cammett, *Antonio Gramsci and the Origins of Italian Communism*, Stanford U.P., 1967, p. 241, footnote 76.

³¹ Davidson, *Gramsci*, p. 164.

³² See Clark, *Gramsci*, p. 55, Clark's book is the most exhaustive study to date on the Factory Council movement.

³³ Gramsci, 'The Development of the Revolution', in *Political Writings*, pp. 91–92.

³⁴ Gramsci, 'Unions and Councils', in *Ibid.*, p. 101.

³⁵ Gramsci, 'The Programme of the Workshop Delegates', in *Ibid.*, p. 118.

³⁶ A. Bogdanov, *A Short Course of Economic Science*, trans. by J. Fineburg, Labour Publishing Company, London, 1923, p. 383.

³⁸ Gramsci, 'The Factory Council', in *Political Writings*, p. 263. Clark discusses, and denies, the charge that the *Ordine Nuovo* movement was a 'productivist movement'. See Clark, *Gramsci*, pp. 69–70.

³⁹ 'Unions and Councils', p. 101.

⁴⁰ See Gramsci, 'Americanism and Fordism', in *Prison Notebooks*, pp. 277–318.

⁴¹ See Zenovia A. Sochor, 'Soviet Taylorism Revisited', *Soviet Studies*, forthcoming.

⁴² This was spelled out in greater detail in Bogdanov's critique of Gastev, a major proponent of Taylorism in the Soviet Union during the 1920's. See A. Bogdanov, 'O tendencijax proletarskoj kul'tury (otvet A. Gastevu)', *Proletarskaja kul'tura*, Nos. 9–10 (June–July 1919), pp. 46–52.

⁴³ A. Bogdanov, *Iz psikhologii obshchestva*, Izd. Dorovatovskago i A. Charushnikova, St. Petersburg, 1904, pp. 77–78.

⁴⁴ A. Bogdanov [A.A. Malinovskii], *Elementy proletarskoj kul'tury v razvitii rabočego klassa*, Gt., Moscow, 1920, pp. 52–72.

⁴⁵ Bogdanov, 'Ideal i put', in A. Bogdanov [A.A. Malinovskii], *Voprosy sotsializma*, T-vo. 'Knigoizd. Pisatelei v Moskve', Moscow, 1918, pp. 100–01.

⁴⁶ See S. Livshits, 'Kaprijskaja partijnaja škola (1909)', *Proletarskaja revoljucija*,

No. 6, 1924, pp. 33–74; S. Livshits, 'Partijnaja škola v Bolon'e (1910–11)', *Proletarskaja revoljucija*, No. 3, 1926, pp. 109–44. Also see Jutta Scherrer, 'Les Écoles du Parti de Capri et de Bologne', *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique* 19, No. 3 (July–September 1978), 258–84.

⁴⁷ This section draws on the author's research in Sochor, 'Modernization and Socialist Transformation', Chap. 7. One of the more recent sources on *Proletkul't* is V.V. Gorbunov, *V.I. Lenin i Proletkul't*, 1974. Gorbunov provides a listing of articles on *Proletkul't* in the Introduction, pp. 3–14. Also see Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Commissariat of Enlightenment: Soviet Organization of Education and the Arts under Lunacharsky, October 1917–21*, Cambridge U.P., N.Y., 1970, Chap. 5; Marc Slonim, *Soviet Russian Literature: Writers and Problems, 1917–1977*, 2nd rev. ed., Oxford U.P., London, 1977, Chap. 4. Current work is being done by John Biggart, 'Anti-Leninist Bolshevism: *Vpered* and the Origins of the Proletkul't', Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Association for Soviet and East European Studies, 29–31 March 1980, Cambridge, England.

⁴⁸ The best review of these ideas may be found in *Proletkul't's* principal journal, *Proletarskaja kul'tura*, 1918–21.

⁴⁹ In addition to Bogdanov, *Elementy proletarskoj kul'tury*, Bogdanov's views on this topic may be found in Bogdanov, *Iskusstvo i rabochii klass*, Moscow, Tip. t-va. I.D. Sytina, 1918 and Bogdanov, *O proletarskoj kul'ture, 1904–1924*, Izd. Kniga, Moscow, 1925.

⁵⁰ 'Ideal i put', p. 104.

⁵¹ Lenin's criticism of *Proletkul't* appears in 'On Proletarian Culture', 8 October 1920, in V.I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, One Vol. ed., International Publishers, N.Y., 1971, pp. 621–22. For a discussion, see Carmen Claudin-Urondo, *Lenin and the Cultural Revolution*, Humanities Press, Atlantic Highlands, N.J., 1977.

⁵² Gramsci, 'Socialism and Culture', in *Political Writings*, p. 11.

⁵³ Bogdanov, 'Programma kul'tury', in *Voprosy socializma*, pp. 54–56, 62–63.

⁵⁴ *What is to be Done?*, pp. 122–23.

⁵⁵ Leon Trotsky, *Lenin: Notes for a Biographer*, Capricorn Books, N.Y., 1971, pp. 68–69.

⁵⁶ 'Ideal i put', pp. 102–03.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 100–01.

⁵⁸ 'Programma kul'tury', p. 74.

⁵⁹ Gramsci, 'The Conquest of the State', in *Political Writings*, p. 77.

⁶⁰ 'Programma kul'tury', p. 72.

⁶¹ 'Development of the Revolution', p. 92.

⁶² This argument is made by Riechers, *Gramsci*.

⁶³ Quoted in Kołakowski, *Main Currents*, p. 108.

⁶⁴ See I. Vajnštejn, 'Teknologija i taktika', *Pod znamenem marksizma*, Nos. 6–7 (June–July 1924), 90–96. A contemporary Soviet critique along these lines is made by L.N. Suvorov, *Bor'ba Marksistsko-Leninskoj filosofii v S.S.S.R. protiv buržuaznoj ideologii revizionizma v perexodnyj period ot kapitalizma k socializmu*, Izd. M.G.U., Moscow, 1961, pp. 27–37.

⁶⁵ See Cammett, *Gramsci*, pp. 182–86. For Bordiga's claim that the *Ordine Nuovo* policy coincides with reformism, see Bordiga, 'Towards the Establishment of Workers' Councils in Italy', in *Political Writings*, p. 223. A discussion of Gramsci's 'gradualism' and its relationship to the 'Italian road to socialism' may be found in Frederico Mancini and George Galli, 'Gramsci's Presence', *Government and Opposition* 3 (1968), 325–38.

- ⁶⁶ *Iz psikhologii obshchestva*, pp. 90–91.
- ⁶⁷ 'Conquest of the State', p. 78.
- ⁶⁸ A. Bogdanov [Maksimov], 'Sotsializm v nastoiashchem', *Vpered* (1911), p. 68.
- ⁶⁹ 'Socialism and Culture', p. 12.
- ⁷⁰ *Filosofija živogo opyta*, p. 13.
- ⁷¹ 'Socialism and Culture', p. 12.
- ⁷² Gramsci, 'Notes on Italian History', in *Prison Notebooks*, p. 57.
- ⁷³ Cammett, *Gramsci*, p. 205.
- ⁷⁴ E.J. Hobsbawm, 'The Great Gramsci', *New York Review of Books*, 4 April 1974, p. 42.
- ⁷⁵ Cammett, *Gramsci*, p. 205. For an opposing view, see H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society*, rev. ed., Vintage Books, N.Y., 1977, p. 101. Soviet analysts generally find a close link between Gramsci's hegemony and Lenin's dictatorship of the proletariat. See, for example, V.A. Trofimov, 'Leninizm i problemy gegemonii proletariata i ego diktatury v trudax A. Gramši', in A.M. Rumjancev, (ed.), *Problemy rabočego dviženija*, Mysl', M., 1968, pp. 183–90.
- ⁷⁶ 'Some Preliminary Points', p. 350.
- ⁷⁷ Plekhanov and Axelrod were the first to employ the term 'hegemony', and Gramsci later adopted it, according to Anderson, *Considerations on Western Marxism*, p. 79.
- ⁷⁸ *Ko vsem tovarishcham* (Paris, n.d.), p. 5.
- ⁷⁹ 'Programma kul'tury', p. 73.
- ⁸⁰ 'Sotsializm v nastoiashchem', p. 68.
- ⁸¹ A. Bogdanov [A.A. Malinovskii], *Nauka ob obshchestvennom soznanii*, Knigoizd. Pisatelei v Moskve, Moscow, 1914, p. 182.
- ⁸² 'Unions and Councils', p. 100.
- ⁸³ For a discussion of this point, see Carl Boggs, *Gramsci's Marxism*, Pluto Press, London, 1976, Ch. 4.
- ⁸⁴ 'Unions and Councils', pp. 99–100.
- ⁸⁵ 'Programma kul'tury', *passim*.
- ⁸⁶ V.I. Lenin, 'The Trade Unions, the Present Situation, and the Mistakes of Comrade Trotsky', 30 December 1920, in *The Lenin Reader*, ed. by Stefan T. Possony, Henry Regnery, Chicago, 1966, pp. 186–87. Just what functions trade unions should perform during the transitional period was a matter of dispute among Party leaders. See Margaret Dewar, *Labour Policy in the U.S.S.R., 1917–1928*, Oxford U.P., London, 1956.
- ⁸⁷ As a result, both Bogdanov and Gramsci earned the epithet of syndicalism. See Clark, *Gramsci*, p. 69, and Gorbunov, *Lenin i Proletkul't*, p. 170. A forthcoming article, which unfortunately was not available to this author, deals with the syndicalist influence on Bogdanov. See Robert C. Williams, 'Collective Immortality: The Syndicalist Origins of Proletarian Culture', *Slavic Review*, forthcoming.
- ⁸⁸ On the relationship between the Party, the trade unions, and the Factory Councils in Gramsci's thinking, see Clark, *Gramsci*, pp. 62–69, and Cammett, *Gramsci*, pp. 83–88.
- ⁸⁹ See 'Pervaja vserossijskaja konferencija', *Proletarskaja kul'tura* (1918), p. 31; Lunacharsky, 'Ešče o Proletkul'te i sovetsoj kul'turnoj rabote', *Proletarskaja kul'tura*, Nos. 7–8 (April–May 1919), reprinted in A.V. Lunacharsky, *Sobranie sočinenii*, Xudož. lit., Moscow, 1963–67, Vol. 7, p. 205.
- ⁹⁰ Giachetti, 'Gramsci', p. 161.