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Review

*Bibliografiia prizhiznennykh publikatsii proizvedenii Viacheslava Ivanova: 1898-1949* by Devidson, Pamela [Pamela Davidson].; K. Iu. Lappo-Danilevskii

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Devidson, Pamela [Pamela Davidson]. *Bibliografiia prizhiznennykh publikatsii proizvedenii Viacheslava Ivanova: 1898–1949*. Edited by K. Iu. Lappo-Danilevskii. University College London School of Slavonic and East European Studies and Rossiiskaia Akademiia Nauk, Institut Russkoi Literaturny (Pushkinskii Dom). Kalamos, St Petersburg, 2012. 337 pp. Illustrations. Notes. Indexes. \$34.90 (paperback).

PAMELA DAVIDSON has devoted a lifetime to chronicling and elucidating the work of Viacheslav Ivanov — a task impossible for any scholar who is not a polymath in their own right. It demands not only a command of a wide range of modern languages (the works in this bibliography appeared in various countries in eleven different languages) but, at the very least, a serious reading knowledge of Greek, Latin and Hebrew. It also requires insight into the history of thought, comparative religion, literature and art and a certain familiarity with the contemporary cultural scene in Russia, Germany, Italy, France, England and the nascent state of Israel. To revert to Isaiah Berlin's seminal terminology, Ivanov was too wily a fox to be fairly assessed or represented by any hedgehog.

The self-effacing, labour-intensive publication we have here, like Davidson's previous Ivanov bibliography of the critical literature, published in the United States in 1996, is an essential guide to his work — in a sense still more so, since it provides a clearly drawn map of the scholar-poet's life in literature.

It is also a monument to Anglo-Russian co-operation. Davidson supplies an enlightening introduction and a chronological across-the-board survey of publications listed according to genre. Her editor, Iurii Lappo-Danilevskii, provides an opportunity to check on individual works, including poems, listed in alphabetical order and preceded by a clear explanation of the principles according to which it was drawn up. Both scholars co-operated on the invaluable index of proper names, including dedicatees. The work is all the richer for having enjoyed a previous life on the internet during which contributions and corrections were added; it is a hallmark of the compilers' scrupulous modesty and dedication that, even in this lovingly produced printed version, they appeal for further reader input.

The book is modest, too, in size and price. In spite of its international significance, it is particularly welcome in that it is published in Russia and in Russian, precisely because the renaissance of interest in its subject began outside Ivanov's native land. As the recent internet publication of Andrei Shishkin's illustrated lecture at the Russian Christian Humanist Academy in St Petersburg and the ensuing debate chaired by Aleksandr Ermichev shows (<<http://www.rhga.ru/science/conferences/seminar/russm/stenogramms/vjach-ivanov.php>>), Ivanov is still today considered — even by cognoscenti in Russia — a difficult and elitist writer for the few — albeit an intensely interesting one. At a conference at IMLI (Moscow) on Aleksandr Blok in October 2012, the opinion was voiced that ideas which shimmer 'behind seven

seals' in Blok's poetry are often elucidated with greater transparency and depths in Ivanov's writing. Viacheslav the Magnificent does indeed hold the key to many mysteries of Russian Symbolism, and this wonderful little book provides scholars with a precise guide as to how best to use it.

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AVRIL PYMAN

Soboleva, Olga and Wrenn, Angus. *The Only Hope of the World: George Bernard Shaw and Russia*. Peter Lang, Oxford, Bern and New York, 2012. xi + 231 pp. Illustrations. Notes. Bibliography. Index. £40.00 (paperback).

ONE of the features most likely to strike anybody perusing the current repertoire of Russian theatres is the continued prominence of the plays of George Bernard Shaw. By contrast, contemporary British theatre-goers are less likely to be familiar with his works; as Olga Soboleva and Angus Wrenn suggest in their introduction, although he currently 'enjoys a positive reputation', he is nonetheless 'generally regarded as being a little too remote in period [...] to be considered an altogether twentieth-century figure and a major influence on upon the drama of the present day' (p. 1).

Appropriately enough, then, Soboleva and Wrenn devote the sixth and final chapter of their study to Russian productions of a number of Shaw's lesser-known dramas of the 1920s and 1930s, as well as detailing the striking success in Russia of Jerome Kilty's *Dear Liar*, a play based on Shaw's correspondence with Mrs Patrick Campbell (played in one production by no less a figure than Liubov' Orlova, directed by her husband Grigorii Aleksandrov in a translation by Elsa Triolet). The notion that Russia has been as interested in Shaw as he was in Russia is one of the guiding themes pursued by Soboleva and Wrenn, and is exemplified by two earlier chapters dedicated to Shaw's relationships with and interest in Tolstoi and Gor'kii as dramatists with a particular commitment to social action above aesthetic form. A further chapter considers the almost entirely forgotten *Annajanska, the Bolshevik Empress*, a play written immediately after the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 (and which Soboleva and Wrenn have enterprisingly staged with their students at the London School of Economics). An opening chapter deftly situates Shaw within the context of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British interest in Russian literature and culture, delineating his relationships both with key British Russophiles and influential individuals from the émigré community. The importance of these predominantly literary chapters cannot be underestimated. Carefully researched and documented (and including a number of new archival sources), they amply demonstrate that Shaw's long interest in Russia predated his infamous visit to the Soviet Union in 1931. They also embody the authors' welcome commitment to 'focusing on textual analysis of Shaw's dramatic