European culture in its modernist phase. The question that recurs in the analysis of desire as absence, or the Other as Lack, is this: can desire be fulfilled without immobilizing itself? The discourses surrounding this question are what Testa explores in Balzac, Flaubert and Bulgakov. Obviously, the mirage of Utopia appears in such an exploration, and Testa rightfully follows the track to *The Master and Margarita*

Anyone compiling a collection of useful and provocative readings of Bulgakov's demanding text will wish to include Testa's chapter "Bulgakov: The "Evil One" and the "evil ones," with special attention given to the section on "Utopia In Times of Anguish" (pp. 136-55). I acknowledge the discussion because of its insights, not because I agree with it. Not everyone will agree that the "novel . . . denounces the Master's passivity toward the pursuit of the humanist ideal, whose militancy is not sufficient to sustain his actions past the miraculous end of his vicissitudes" (p. 148). At issue here is the problem of why the lovers get Peace instead of Light. What kind of an issue is it? Is there really any reason, in or outside the text, to indicate that the Light must be preferred to Peace? Is not the "Light," as we say, just a discourse? And a "theological" one at that. Bulgakov has written a profoundly spiritual text, but not a theological one (in spite of its mythology). I have reservations about Testa's concluding remarks on the novel. I can find no excuse for the omission of any reference to Ivan Nikolaevich Ponyrev (pen name "Homeless"), at the end a professor but once the hapless poet whose adventures begin the novel and whose strange dreams of demons and desire provide the last scene. Testa says that the end of the novel is "overdetermined." Unfortunately, he does not discuss, or even identify, the end. His reference to "the deadly diseased author" as the writer of chapter 32 is at best uncertain and confused. Some basic work on narrative practice would help. However, an "underdetermined" conclusion to a discussion of a novel that cannot be enclosed is somehow fitting.

*Desire and the Devil* is provocative, deliberate, supported by extensive reading and thought, usually sound in its analyses, and written with a certain élan. It will, I think, neither immobilize desire nor close off the discussion of the devil.

Ben Jones

Carleton University


Workers in the hot-metal printing industry have played a special role in history because of their central part in the production of books and newspapers, those fundamental means for the transmission of culture. As these skilled printers in recent times have been displaced by workers in lithography, xerography, and electronic publishing, historians have begun to assess the cultural contributions of the practitioners of yet another "lost art."

Mark Steinberg finds the men and women who set the type and ran the presses an especially attractive group in the workers' movement in Russia in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Among industrial workers, printers had the highest literacy levels, and they were leaders in creating organizations to speak for their own rank and file. Printers not only formulated sound demands for improved work conditions but also developed effective techniques to press their employers to grant them.

The central argument of Steinberg's study is that Russian printers were united by more than common conditions of work and common grievances. They were additionally bound
by intangible moral ties resulting from their pride in advanced skills, their belief in printing as a high calling that advanced culture, and their sense of sharing a familial relationship with employers. (The patriarchal traditions of Russian employers fostered the belief, if not the reality, that mutual concerns and a respectful regard bonded those who owned the printing plants with those who served them.)

_Moral Communities_ explores these several dimensions in the lives of Russian printers during a period of revolutionary upheaval, among whose central events were the printers' strikes in 1903 and in 1905. It was in this period that printers—especially in St. Petersburg and Moscow, the focal points of the Russian printing industry—emerged from the chrysalis of old Russian society to discover an intrinsic self-worth and rights of their own along with flaws in their employers and the state. Tending more and more to view their bosses as an exploitative class with opposing interests, they began to redirect their loyalties into a close brotherhood with fellow workers.

Printers became leaders of the workers' movement of 1903-05 because the grim conditions of early industrialization had already hit them by the turn of the century. Large newspaper and book publishing firms in Russia were among the first to import advanced mechanical equipment to produce a better product faster and cheaper, even as serious problems resulted for the labor force. Not only was printing machinery noisy and dangerous, but work areas in printing were poorly lighted and so little ventilated that lead dust and chemical fumes hung in the air. Additional tensions resulted when a distinct workers hierarchy, salary differentials, and a range of political outlooks developed because of the variety of demanding skills in the industry.

Compositors—that is, hand setters of type—performed an especially demanding task. Each held a "stick" in one hand close to the body and gathered into it lines of type one letter at a time from a drawer filled with tiny lead letters, each of which was "type high." The job was physically demanding, hard on the eyes, and kept each compositor at his place for at least twelve hours per day—although working hours began to come down after the turn of the century. Because most compositors were literate and could read what they were setting (although the letters were upside down and backwards), they, more than other industrial workers, were broadly exposed to new ideas. Compositors consequently took a leading role in the workers' movement, in part because they exploited their own skills to produce broadsheets and newspapers to publicize workers' needs.

Agitation of this sort galvanized printers to stage their first large-scale strike in Moscow in 1903 and another in September of 1905. Grievances began to be expressed in "class" terms, on the grounds that the interests of printers and owners were inevitably at odds. The printers, union organizers argued, must unite to press their demands and promote their "rights" by confronting employers with strikes, protests and the like. Leaders of the print workers then went on to seek an even wider following for broader social and even political aims.

Through them the old idea of a "moral community" was reshaped. Printers began to go beyond demands for material improvements in the workplace, to seek "culture" and "human dignity" for themselves and their families. They sought and sometimes won collective agreements, conciliation boards and negotiating panels. But they failed to gain some degree of control over hiring and firing or to acquire a role in company affairs through elected representatives from the shop floor.

_Moral Communities_ effectively shows a Russian pre-revolution labor movement among printers in St. Petersburg and Moscow that reached a high organizational and cultural level.