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Thomas Lahusen  
Collection of Vasilii Azhaev's Materials  
(2B Annex)

Thomas Lahusen collection of Vasilii Azhaev's materials

**Dates:**

1935–1994

**Extent:**

10 boxes

**Biographical Note:**

Vasilii Nikolaevich Azhaev (1915-1968) was born in the village of Sotskoye, Moscow province, in 1915. Arrested in 1934 for 'counter-revolutionary activities,' Azhaev was sentenced to four years as a prisoner in the Corrective Labour Camp of the Baikal-Amur Main Line of the People's Commissariat of Internal affairs (BAMLAG NKVD) in Svobodnyi, in the Far East. Following his early release in March 1937, Azhaev remained in the camp as a 'free labourer.' He also contributed to and worked as a chief editor of various camp publications. These did not circulate beyond the camp's limits. There he completed his novel *Daleko ot Moskvy* [Far from Moscow], which won the Stalin Prize for literature in 1949. The novel depicted construction of a pipeline in the Far East. He died in 1968 in Moscow.

**Scope and Content:**

Thomas Lahusen collection of Vasilii Azhaev's materials includes mostly photocopies of drafts of manuscripts, articles, readers' conferences reports, notebooks, photographs, personal correspondence as well as official documentation pertaining to Azhaev's imprisonment and further employment in the Corrective Labor Camp of the Baikal-Amur Main Line. The collection includes photocopies of periodicals produced and disseminated within Soviet labour camps. For the most part, the collection combines material from Azhaev's personal archives with some documents from the State Archives of the Region of Khabarovsk. Thomas Lahusen collected and used these documents when writing his manuscript, *How Life Writes the Book: Real Socialism and Socialist Realism in Stalin's Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997). Most of the material are copies from Azhaev's personal archive that were given to Thomas Lahusen by Irina Liubimova-Azhaeva in 1992.

**Source of Acquisition:** Gift of Professor Thomas Lahusen, Department of History, University of Toronto, October 2016.

**Language:** Russian.

**Processing Information:** Processed in 2018 by Natalia Barykina.

<b>Box 1</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
1:1	Photocopy of Vasilii Azhaev <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> [Far from Moscow] (in Russian)	1949
1:2	Photocopy of German translation of Vasilii Azhaev <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> [Fern von Moskau]	1951
1:3	Correspondence about different versions of <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> ; photocopies of photographs of labour camp life and of camp periodicals' covers; letter confirming Azhaev's employment at NKVD Labour Camp of the Baikal-Amur Mainline (Bamlag); Azhaev's character reference; photocopies of pages from Azhaev's diary; his publications in specialized labour camp journals such as <i>Putearmeets</i> [Soldier of the Tracks] of Bamlag and in <i>Khudozhestvennaia literatura</i> [Fiction]; photocopy of the draft of the story <i>Tarakany</i> [Cockroaches]; letters from P. Zhagir (photocopy) and M. Belov (original); photocopy of a special issue of <i>Putearmeets</i> dedicated to International Women's Day	1938-1964
<b>Box 2</b>		
2:1	Readers' comments about the book <i>Far from Moscow</i> . Includes comments (handwritten) from employees of Kirovskii factory, Leningrad; comments (typescript) from patrons of several libraries in Leningrad	1949
2:2	Correspondence with readers about <i>Far from Moscow</i> (handwritten and typescript)	1948-1949
2:3	Photocopy of Azhaev's novel <i>Vagon</i> [Box Car] from <i>Druzhba narodov</i>	1988
2:4	Photocopy of Azhaev's collection of stories <i>Predislovie k zhizni</i> [Preface to Life]; photocopy of Arsenii Nesmelov's <i>Bez Moskvyy, bez Rossii: stihotvoreniia, poemy, rasskazy</i> [Without Moscow, without Russia: Poems and Stories]	1987-1990
2:5	Photocopy of chapters from <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> in <i>Novyi mir</i> [New World]	1948
2:6	Photocopy of chapters from <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> in <i>Novyi mir</i> [New World]	1948
<b>Box 3</b>		
3:1	Photocopy of <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> (Part 2, Chapters 1-7) in the Khabarovsk journal <i>Dalnyi Vostok</i> [The Far East]	1947
3:2	Photocopy of <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> (Part 1, Chapters 1-11) in the Khabarovsk journal <i>Dalnyi Vostok</i> [The Far East]	1946
3:3	Photocopy of <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> (Part 1, Chapters 12-20) in the Khabarovsk journal <i>Dalnyi Vostok</i> [The Far East]	1946
3:4	<i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> (handwritten manuscript draft, photocopy); Chapter 9 (typescript)	1946
3:5	<i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> (handwritten manuscript draft, photocopy)	1946
<b>Box 4</b>		
4:1	Articles; includes an issue of <i>International Herald Tribune</i> from Tuesday, June 16, 1992; article by L. Lobachev "Kolyma v poesii" [Kolyma in Poetry], in <i>Na rubezhe</i> 3 (1937); articles in <i>Svobodnyi-God 1937</i> [Svobodnyi-Year 1937], <i>Seiskie ogni</i> 166 (1988); several copies of the certificate of Azhaev's release from the NKVD Administration of the	1937-1992

	Corrective Labor Camp of the Baikal-Amur Main Line (Bamlag), Svobodnyi	
4:2	Azhaev publications in Bamlag periodicals including <i>Zoloto</i> [Gold], <i>Predislovie k zhizni</i> [Foreword to Life], <i>Kak Umara Magomet poterial svoyu shapku</i> [How Umara Magomet Lost is Hat], <i>Piat' let zhizni</i> [Five Years of Life] (photocopies). Also includes a collection of poetry <i>Putearmeitsy</i> [Soldiers of the Tracks], publication of Bamlag NKVD, and a collection of stories edited by Azhaev <i>Stakhanovtsy vtorykh putey</i> [Stakhanovites of the Second Tracks] (photocopies). Also includes a photocopy of V. Korobkov's book, <i>Falangovaia sistema na rabote</i> [The Phalanx System at Work], 1935	1935-1937
4:3	Drafts of the following Azhaev stories: <i>Doverie</i> [Trust], <i>Piat' let zhizni</i> [Five Years of Life], <i>Na sed'moi den'</i> [On Day Seven], <i>Smert' cheloveka</i> [The Death of a Human Being], <i>Izmerenie sily</i> [Measure of Force] and <i>Materialy k povesti o chekistakh</i> [Materials for the Novella on the Chekists]	1937-1948
4:4	Azhaev's Komsomol'sk diary (handwritten) and notebooks (photocopies) kept during Azhaev's employment at Bamlag, in city of Svobodnyi	1940-1941
<b>Box 5</b>		
5:1	<i>Daleko ot Moskvy</i> (handwritten and typescript manuscript draft, photocopy), includes Table of Contents, original handwritten drafts	1946
5:2	<i>Daleko ot Moskvy</i> (manuscript draft, Part 2, typescript)	1946
5:3	<i>Daleko ot Moskvy</i> (handwritten manuscript draft, Chapters 1-22, photocopy)	1946
<b>Box 6</b>		
6:1	Two drafts of chapters 10-15 of <i>Daleko ot Moskvy</i> (handwritten, photocopy)	n/d
6:2	Minutes of the Soviet Writers' Union discussing Azhaev's <i>Daleko ot Moskvy</i> ; also includes minutes of the meeting with the editorial board of <i>Novyi mir</i> to address proposed changes to <i>Daleko ot Moskvy</i> 1944-1948	1944-1948
6:3	Photocopy of the manuscript of Azhaev's novel <i>Boxcar</i> [Vagon]	n/d
<b>Box 7</b>		
7:1	Photocopy of the manuscript of Azhaev's novel <i>Boxcar</i> [Vagon]; letter of acceptance to publish the novel in <i>Druzhba narodov</i>	1965
7:2	Readers' letters to Azhaev (photocopies)	1949-1951
7:3	Readers' reports and comments (photocopies)	1946-1968
<b>Box 8</b>		
8:1	A list of readers' conferences (1948-1949); includes minutes of a readers' conference in Zaporozh'e (transcript) and readers' reports	1948-1949
8:2	Newspaper articles and reviews of <i>Daleko ot Moskvy</i> (originals, in Russian)	1946-1954

8:3	Letters from Charles Snow, Max Zimmering, includes a postcard from CP Snow (English, German); letter from Konstantin Simonov to Azhaev (signed; original); reviews of <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> in Polish, Czechoslovak, British, Romanian, French, and Chinese publications; readers' responses from various countries (typescript, translated into Russian)	1950-1971
8:4	Readers' letters (Russian; originals)	1949
<b>Box 9</b>		
9:1	Photographs, including Azhaev in front of Bamlag and of labour camp settlements, photocopy of dedication to V. Azhaev from G. Svirskii, stills from the film <i>Far from Moscow</i> (1950); readers' responses, handwritten notes, including letter to K. Simonov; <i>Chuzhoi kalendar'</i> by Azhaev and Zhagir in <i>Bulletin-Repertoire</i> [Repertuarnyi Biulleten'], 1935, (BAMLAG publication); Azhaev's diploma (1939); Azhaev's character reference (1939) (photocopy); portrait of Vasilii Batmanov	1935-1968
9:2	Pages from <i>Putearmeets</i> [Soldier of the Tracks] 4/1935 (photocopy); photocopies of pages from Azhaev's diary and notes for <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> ; hand-drawn maps of the pipeline by Azhaev (photocopy); photographs, letters from readers	1935-1949
9:3	Transcripts of readers' discussions and conferences about <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> ; handwritten commentary by high school students	1949-1956
9:4	Readers' and colleagues' letters to Azhaev (photocopies), includes a letter from Soviet Writers' Union confirming Azhaev's acceptance to the European Community of Writers; Azhaev's drafts of articles about First Congress of Soviet Writers, 45year Anniversary of the October Revolution, Yuri Gagarin's journey into space (photocopies)	1953-1967
9:5	Notebooks containing Azhaev's notes (original) and photocopies; Azhaev's publications in <i>Literaturnaia gazeta</i> ; correspondence with foreign readers of <i>Sovetskaia literatura</i> and <i>Proizvedeniia i mneniia</i>	1957-1965
9:6	Photographs of Azhaev; maps (photocopies) and stills from the film <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> (Mosfilm, 1950)	1939-1976
<b>Box 10</b>		
10:1	Material relating to the film <i>Daleko ot Moskvyy</i> (1951); transcript of the Soviet Writers' Union proceedings on <i>Far from Moscow</i> ; photocopy of handwritten notes titled <i>Lagernye dokumenty</i> [Labour Camp Documents]; materials about A. Ratner, professor of Medicine (photocopies of handwritten notes)	1947-1973
10:2	Background material (photocopies) for <i>How Life Writes the Book</i> ; includes T. Lahusen's notes (handwritten)	1993
10:3	Certificate of photocopy permission for Thomas Lahusen from State Archive of the Region of Khabarovsk, includes descriptions of photocopied documents. Photocopies of Azhaev's letter to P. Komarov, the Soviet Writers' Union minutes of meetings; Azhaev's autobiography and personal card; bibliography of Azhaev's works (1948); materials relating to expulsion of the poet Israel Emiot (Goldwasser) from the Soviet Writers' Union; newspaper articles about Azhaev literary work in the camp	1945-1994

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	(originals, 1989-1994); correspondence between T. Lahusen and M. Kuzmina	
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