

A Turning Point in the Soviet School: The Seventeenth Party Congress and the Teaching of History

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AT THE SEVENTEENTH PARTY CONGRESS in January 1934, Stalin appraised the world situation optimistically. For five years, he argued, the capitalist world had been at mortal grips with an incurable economic crisis, disrupting industrial and agricultural production and destroying all national and international trade and financing. (1) The capitalists sought salvation in preparation for a new imperialistic war. Hostility among capitalist countries was sharpening. The Sino-Japanese conflict and the occupation of Manchuria caused tensions in the Far East. In Europe the Nazi victory and rising *revanchisme* enhanced dangers. The Japanese and German departure from the League of Nations accelerated rearmament. (2)

Convinced that a "storm of world revolution" was gathering, Stalin saw "signs of the times" on all sides. The world proletariat was growing recalcitrant because of serious unemployment. Disturbances in various countries, such as the revolt in Austria, the general strike in France, and the intensification of activities by the German Communist party soon provided what seemed to him a confirmation of his views and expectations. (3)

Paradoxically Stalin viewed fascism and Nazism not as threats but as blessings in disguise. They were positive signs of the final stage of

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moribund capitalism. (4) At the same time, he believed the Soviet Union invulnerable to foreign aggression because, he reasoned, the world proletariat would rise in unison against their own governments if an attack on the "Fatherland of the Proletariat" was planned. (5)

The situation on the domestic front also looked rosy to the dictator. Successful fulfillment of the Five Year Plan had proved to him beyond doubt that socialism in one country serving as a basis for world revolution was fully feasible. (6) Internal unity had been achieved once the "leftist" and "rightist" oppositions within the party had been routed. Appropriately Stalin declared to the assembled delegates:

At the Fifteenth Party Congress, it was still necessary to attempt to prove the correctness of the Party line, and to fight certain anti-Leninist groups; at the Sixteenth Congress we had to deal final blows to the last adherents of these groups; *but at this Congress there is nothing to prove and really nobody to deal blows to.* (7)

He nevertheless cautioned his audience against premature optimism which might lull the party into complacency. Although the foreign situation was favourable, he argued, the open racist threats by some Nazi leaders against the USSR necessitated precautionary measures. (8) Consequently, a *rapprochement* with a number of capitalist countries had to be made, and the defence and economy of the Soviet Union further strengthened. These measures, he concluded, should be coupled with "ideological vigilance, state of battle-readiness and mobilization for the realization of the Second Five Year Plan," and, above all, by a relentless struggle against the "remnants of capitalism" in the minds of the people. (9)

Major speeches by Soviet leaders usually led to a revision of the party line, followed in turn by readjustments in all spheres of life. Stalin's speech to the Seventeenth Party Congress sparked zealous soul-searching in all sectors of administration, economy, and culture. On the ideological front, it was believed that final achievement of socialism in one country was impossible without the establishment of a classless society. (10) It was therefore necessary to complete the class struggle undertaken in the period of intensified industrialization and collectivization. (11) The views of the ideologists, however, were in reality merely a systematization of ideas Stalin had earlier stated in 1926: "To build Socialism in the USSR means to defeat our

own Soviet bourgeoisie by fighting it with our own power." (12) Nevertheless, all segments of society, above all the professions, re-examined their own fields and made new adjustments. (13)

The new Five Year Plan required rapid expansion of schools, improvement of knowledge about society, and intensification in ideological indoctrination of students. History had a very significant role to play. (14) *Istoriik-Marksist*, the official journal of the Society of Marxist Historians, published an editorial explaining the implications of Stalin's speech for the historians.

The historic decisions of the Seventeenth Party Congress placed before the Party and the country a task of the greatest significance, *i.e.*, reorganizing the work in all areas in agreement with the grandiose tasks and perspectives imposed by the Party Congress. . . .

Historical scholarship must become one of the most important, and politically most up-to-date and active sectors in the theoretical work of the Party, fulfilling the great decisions of its Congress. (15)

A "revolutionary revision of the historical inheritance of the past" was the new task of historians.

Emphasis on the study of the past, however, was a significant departure from former Marxist historiographical practices. (16) The education of "conscious builders of a classless socialist society," it was now believed, could be achieved through popularization of history and study of the "Ancient World, Middle Ages, Modern History, the history of the class struggle in Russia and in the countries enslaved by world imperialism." (17) The former policy, dictated by the party, of deliberately ignoring most of pre-1917 history and regarding as important only contemporary events was rejected as a "deeply rooted prejudice."

Interest in the more distant past was not, however, a signal for a return of serious scholarship. This was merely a "tactical" move; "strategy" was unchanged. History remained as before a political weapon in the hands of the party. Only the emphasis was different. From the service of ideology history moved into the service of the source of ideology, *i.e.*, the leaders of the party. Formerly history had been used as a means of indoctrination and education in communist and Marxist principles and outlook. Now that Stalin had become the unchallenged personal dictator, history was primarily to serve the interests of the party, that is, of its leaders, or, more precisely, of

Stalin himself, by explaining and justifying the ever-changing twists and turns of his party line.

Istoriik-Marksist urged the Bolshevik historians to prepare a series of new history books, which would alert the world proletariat to the impending danger from imperialism and fascism, and arouse it to "revolutionary vigilance" and readiness to defend the USSR, "the Fatherland of the toilers of the whole world." (18) The *History of Civil War, Factories and Mills*, the publication of which was decreed some time earlier, had to be completed with all urgency, to serve "as a school textbook, and as one of the most popular books for the broad masses of readers in the USSR and abroad." A variety of other books had to be urgently prepared dealing with the development of the Communist party, the Comintern, "Socialist Construction," the "First Socialist State," "Victorious Socialism in One Country," and of the "Imperialist War of 1914-1918." The editors of this journal demanded that "Every builder of socialism in the USSR and every fighter against capitalism in the bourgeois countries should become familiar with this history." (19)

The "History of the USSR" prescribed at this time was destined to become a road map of socialism. Its task was to illustrate the progress of the national republics in socialist construction and to serve as a blueprint for revolution and for building socialism. Historians had to show "in concrete terms," (20) and "using factual information," how the entire face of the USSR had changed and was still changing under the guidance of the party; how the economically, politically, and culturally backward "colonies of Czarist Russia" were being transformed into rapidly growing autonomous national republics, "liquidating their centuries-old backwardness only thanks to the dictatorship of the proletariat" (21); and to point out also that the new system worked equally well for all nationalities regardless of the former level of their development.

"Concrete study" of the development of individual nationalities under the former regime and under the new socialist system was intended to remove "the remnants of capitalism" in the national groups: "The tendency for nationalism, whether of the great power type or of a local nature, indicates a political departure from Leninist internationalism, and the attempts of the national bourgeoisie to undermine the Soviet system and re-establish capitalism." (22)

While these proposals show the party's interest in the indoctrination of adults in the USSR and outside, its main concern was for the school, where millions of future citizens were educated. History, being a highly political school subject, received the greatest attention.

Above all, historians must join the work in the changing of the teaching of history and the preparation and writing of new textbooks, in agreement with the new demands imposed on them and formulated in the directives of comrade Stalin. The historians—researchers must enter into direct cooperation with the practising-pedagogues and together with them compose model Bolshevik textbooks, school readers, teacher manuals and a school history library—in a word, that whole scientific-pedagogical arsenal of historical weapons with the aid of which historical science must penetrate the masses and educate new millions of conscious fighters and builders of socialism in our country. (23)

Objective justifications for the decision to change the history programme in the schools were, naturally, provided. During the school year 1933-1934, the Commissariat of Enlightenment (henceforth NKP) conducted a survey in one hundred twenty schools in fourteen regions and districts involving about one hundred thousand pupils. The report noted some progress over the earlier periods, but it also pointed out weaknesses in the teaching of history. It was discovered that students generally had scant knowledge of "historical facts," often confused actual events with pure schemes, and inadequately grasped various generalizations; their chronology was weak, and their familiarity with historical maps unsatisfactory; they had badly understood the relations of historical events, lacked historical perspective, and often mistook past events for contemporary ones. This claim, however, was at variance with the findings of some inspectors and foreign visitors, who were convinced that from the point of view of indoctrination the teaching of history and of social studies had been most effective. (24)

The Commissar of Education, A. S. Bubnov, on March 8, 1934, met with a group of historians and educators from the NKP to plan the preparation of "truly stable textbooks." (25) He hinted at the true reasons for changes in the teaching of history. History textbooks in the past, he alleged, did not provide students with a systematic exposition of historical developments, and he urged that the develop-

ment of socioeconomic structures, political events, and class struggle should be explained by "pragmatic history." (26)

Bubnov's request to have "pragmatic history" supplant the former ideologically orthodox method of indoctrination clearly indicates the extent of the conceptual change: Marxism, as formerly understood, was beating a retreat.

This rapid and radical alteration of approach may well have startled the assembled pedagogues. Certainly the debate that followed Bubnov's remarks suggests a state of confusion in the minds of some present. Krupskaya, for example, spoke in vague terms about a "most significant problem . . . *i.e.*, how to write textbooks . . . imposed by life itself. . . ." She suggested developing the individual capacities of children and training them in the *spirit* of Marxist ideology and internationalistic brotherhood. Her comments about the need for changes in history manuals obviously avoided political implications. She went through the motions of providing pedagogical arguments for a measure imposed from above.

We know that our children think in very concrete terms. If we supply them with abstract material, they will not acquire any historical perspectives. Lack of historical perspective is a characteristic in children. (27)

To provide a broader basis and further support for the new party policy, a conference of teachers of social studies was convened in April 1934, at which the pragmatic goals of the leaders of the party and the idealistic aims of many educators were to some extent subtly reconciled. Numerous examples of confusion among students through the teaching of "abstract" socioeconomic material, allegedly entirely unintelligible to them, were brought forth. Some delegates were particularly concerned that the age characteristics of children had hitherto been ignored and that even younger children were taught complex sociological and political problems. Social studies, others maintained, was not one course, but several simultaneous ones: "It is a veritable course in political economics in abbreviated form; a course of study of Communist Society, State, and Party, and so on." (28)

An intensive campaign was undertaken by the daily and periodical press to provide a popular basis for changes. Numerous letters to the editor criticised existing practices in the teaching of social studies. (29) Articles and editorials condemned the history textbooks in use

for giving "abstract descriptions" of the class struggle, without support of "concrete facts." On April 5, 1934, *Pravda* published an article under the provocative title "Skeletons in the School." It claimed that the school manuals in use gave "Only abstract formulae without faces. *These are decidedly textbooks without czars and kings. Only 'class struggle' and nothing else!*" (30)

One may wonder how many historians remembered Pokrovsky's emotional outburst in 1926, and the irony of his prediction that a history of "czars, ministers, reformers, etc. . . . will never be taught again." (31)

The former Marxist interpretation that modes of production, economy, and class struggle were the moving forces in history was rejected and replaced by "events, individuals and facts." On April 10, 1934, a leading educational journal commented on the new approach.

The task of teaching history is to pass in review before the eyes of children living and beautiful pictures of the past, pictures of basic political events, wars, revolutions, popular movements, familiarizing them with *political figures and with those who, through their class and social position, held in their hands the fate of peoples and states* and to show in their full diversity *those events, individuals and facts, which are the "moving force in history."* (32)

On April 24 an article in the same journal again attacked the textbooks for omitting living historical figures, ignoring concrete and clear facts, and venturing into the regions of some themes and problems beyond the realm of child comprehension. The author claimed to be "shocked by the naked truth of the state of teaching history." While blaming the writers who "speculated with wisdom, drew conclusions, and made generalizations . . . on the basis of abundant quotations from class warfare," the author was silent on the high authorities that gave not only their imprimatur on these works but also the strictest and most detailed instructions on how they were to be written. The pupils, the article went on, echoing Stalin's irony and biting sarcasm, had formerly been introduced to "higher" science, by being taught how to "solve problems of overgrowth," how to determine "the specific importance of every class," and how to discover "the role of moving forces in history." (33)

The party line openly shifted toward more practical lines and the leaders suddenly realized that the whole system of ideological indoc-

trination of the younger generation had been "incomprehensible," "abstract," and even "repulsive" to children because of "excessive use of clichés and other forms of impermissible training." Was this an admission of failure?

Until Stalin attained absolute personal power, the party had maintained that it was the "most important task" of the school to discuss ideological matters and to comment on all party congresses and their decisions. Political meetings were often called at the expense of regular class hours. Ideological and social training was also carried out through "socially useful work." Children "volunteered" for various projects involving physical effort, such as construction, work in factories, and harvesting; and they were often sent among adult citizens as agitators during economic or political campaigns. It was firmly believed that this "socially useful work" developed communist attitudes in children toward life and society. All this was now changed.

In the summer of 1933 the Central Committee "categorically" prohibited organization during class hours of political and ideological meetings. Serious study became the "most important social obligation." Professional, Komsomol, and party organizations were forbidden to call student political meetings and to overload them on holidays with "socially useful obligations." Soliciting the aid of individuals or groups of students for economic and political campaigns was permitted only when "explicit consent" was obtained from the principal and, even then, only outside the regular class hours. (34)

In April 1934, the party issued a decree "On Overwork of School Children and Pioneers Through Social-Political Tasks." Scant attention has been paid to this decree by Western scholars. In it the Central Committee demanded:

1. That the study of the decisions of the Seventeenth Party Congress and of the problems of Marxist-Leninist theory be immediately ended in the elementary schools.
2. That no further orders be given by the Central Bureau of the Young Pioneers for activities of Pioneers in the school without the sanction of the Commissariat of People's Education . . . and, in the schools themselves, without the consent of the principal, and
3. That in the secondary schools excessive overloading of children with social and political tasks not be permitted. (35)

This decree marked an end to the era of intensive indoctrination of schoolchildren which it was now found "had repelled them from all

interest even in phenomena of social life and Socialist Construction accessible to their level of understanding"; at the same time it inaugurated the final phase of the return to the traditional system of education, with its division into the elementary and the secondary schools. (36)

On May 14, Stalin and Molotov, on behalf of the party and the government, issued the well-known decree "On the Teaching of Civic History in Secondary Schools." This decree is regarded by most Western scholars as a turning point in Soviet historiography. Timashev saw in it the beginning of "The Great Retreat," (37) and Mehnert of the great "Betrayal of Marx." (38) Mazour regarded it as so important that he quoted it *in extenso* in his work on Russian historiography. (39)

Because of the importance of this decree the passage stating the new line to be followed in the teaching of history should be quoted.

Instead of [being taught] civic history in an animated and entertaining form with the exposition of the most important events and facts in their chronological sequence and with sketches of historical personages, the pupils are given abstract definitions of social and economic formations, which thus replace the consecutive exposition of civic history by abstract sociological schemes.

The decisive condition of the permanent mastery of history is the observance of historical and chronological sequence in the exposition of historical events, with a due emphasis in the memory of the pupils of important historical facts, the names of historical persons and chronological dates. Only such a course of historical teaching can assure the necessary understanding, fidelity of presentation and real use of historical material; correct analysis and correct presentation of historical events, leading pupils to the Marxist conception of history, are possible only on this basis. (40)

In comment on the immediate implications of the decree for the teachers of history, the official journal of the Marxist historians declared:

Facts, dates, personalities, this is what we want! We cannot put up with "reformers" who are trying to reduce history in our schools to the teaching of "illustrative episodes" set in a sea of arid abstractions. Our textbooks have only too frequently represented the revolutionary struggle of the masses as a struggle against capitalism in general, against autocracy in general; there hardly ever appears on the scene any living figure representing capitalists or Russian autocrats. Hence the indignant remark of a history teacher: "The textbook says this happened under Paul. Do I have to know who Paul

was?" Many young teachers sincerely hold this view; and they are not to blame; they have themselves been taught history with the *names of czars carefully excluded*. (41)

The party, it appears from the obviously derogatory use of the word "reformists," could no longer tolerate the orthodox Marxists, who, in their "reformist" zeal, had formerly totally rejected the Russian national tradition. Notwithstanding Stalin's demand for a full chronological treatment, with a vivid description of the reigns of various czars, the main stress, for some time, remained as before on the "proletarian epoch," *i.e.*, contemporary events, with main emphasis on the USSR. (42)

Wishing to assure "high scientific quality, ideological consistency, and pedagogical soundness," (43) Stalin listed a group of highly qualified scholars and active pedagogues to collaborate in the drafting of the new manuals. (44) After this, the Commissar of Education issued specific instructions for the fulfillment of Stalin's wishes. He drew the attention of all leaders of education, school principals, and their teaching staffs to the "exclusive significance" of the decree, which, he said, was the last in a series (45) constituting "a militant and concrete construction" of the Soviet school.

There cannot and must not be a single teacher or worker of enlightenment in the country who does not study these most important documents which give new evidence of the exclusive concern for, and attention to, the school shown by our Party and its leader, Comrade Stalin. (46)

Kamenev and Tsimkesh (47) of the School Direction (*Shkolnoe Upravlenie*) were directed to organize the groups of authors nominated by Stalin for the preparation of the textbooks by June 1935. Detailed summaries and outlines of the books had to be submitted to the Commissar of Education within three weeks. (48) At the same time new programmes of history were prescribed for the school year 1935-1936 and these to be drafted by the best qualified scholars of the Academy of Sciences, the Communist Academy, and the associated scientific research institutes. Kamenev was made responsible for the "most urgent" preparation of methodological directives on the use of permanent programmes and of textbooks for the forthcoming 1934-1935 school year so that all teachers must comply with the new directives even before the new textbook reached their classes.

To provide the classrooms with competent teachers, the faculties of history of the Universities of Moscow and Leningrad were reopened on September 1, 1934. (49) The Marxist historians were instructed to "mobilize the whole historical front and attract the attention of the better professional cadres." (50) This can be regarded as an open invitation for the return of men like Tarlé and other "bourgeois" professors who had been relieved of their duties when their departments were suspended in the early 1920's. *Uchpedgiz*, the teachers' publishing house, was ordered to begin the publication of a new methodological journal, *Istoriya v Shkole*, with an editorial board approved by the Commissar of Education. The director of teacher training, Orakhelashvili, was instructed to submit to Epshtein, the Deputy Commissar of Education, a detailed plan of a curriculum designed for the immediate raising of the qualifications of all teachers of history with courses to be given in 1934-1935 preferably by the history departments of the pedagogical institutes and of the faculties of history at the universities. (51) To bridge the gap until new textbooks were published, temporary teacher manuals and textbooks were published by the publishing houses Sotsekgiz and Partizdat. (52) On the pages of *Istoriya-Marksist* a new section devoted to the problems of teaching history appeared under the heading "Prepodavanie Istorii." (53) One of the first articles published in this section stated, "Without a special study of history, and without an historical approach to all phenomena of life there can be no Marxist education and instruction; briefly, there can be no Soviet school." (54) The subject is important only inasmuch as it is a tool in the hands of the Communist party, the author argued, and it must be used as an "explanation of the present through the study of the historical process as a whole." (55) It is for this reason, "and for this reason alone," that history is a compulsory subject on the curriculum in the Soviet school, stated Vershinskii, echoing the words of Mamet from the 1920's.

If it were proved that one could discharge the tasks of social-political education without knowledge of the past, regardless of all the love of historians for history, one would have to oppose the study of history in the school. (56)

The staggering rate of increase in school enrollment clearly suggested to the Soviet leaders the far-reaching significance of, and the need for, a controlled political indoctrination. Whereas before 1917

only five and a half million children attended secondary schools, by 1934 the number had grown to twenty-six and a half million, and by 1937 at least thirty-six million were expected to be enrolled. "The world outlook of these pupils must remain under the leadership of the Party," stated A. M. Pankratova, Stalin's preferred historian, in an article dealing with the "Bolshevik Teaching of History." (57) In the struggle for the control of the minds of these millions of young people, the textbook was called upon to play the role of a "most crucial book," the historian claimed.

There is no other single book, with the exception of the classics of Marxism-Leninism, which has such a large number of readers as the school textbooks. Millions of readers use [them]. . . . *The material in the textbook is accepted by children as an unquestionable source. This is why it is necessary to make the highest scientific, pedagogical and political demands for the textbook.* (58)

If Soviet historians had been confused by the decree of May 14, the party did not leave them in the dark for long. On June 9, a decree was issued for the introduction of an elementary course of general history of the USSR, for which both the content and the methods of teaching were determined from above. (59) Detailed instructions were given by the Commissar of Education, A. S. Bubnov, on July 9, and the historians Mints and Lozinsky were commissioned to prepare a manuscript.

Meanwhile, a number of other manuscripts were also prepared and submitted for examination to a special commission headed by Stalin and his close associates, Kirov and the notorious Zhdanov. On August 8, this commission brought forth its conclusions. The so-called *Remarks* on these manuscripts represent Stalin's second, and perhaps more important, intervention. They were not published, as far as can be ascertained, until 1936, when on January 27 they appeared in *Pravda* by explicit orders from the Central Committee. (60) Judging by the *Remarks*, the authors were utterly confused by the former decrees and instructions. Significantly, Vanag's manuscript was found the most unsatisfactory. Yet N. Vanag had been the most brilliant student of M. N. Prokrovsky, the dean of Marxist historians and a rising leader in the new generation of Soviet historians. Lack of intellectual capabilities or proper training cannot account for this confusion on the historical front. It is to be sought in the changing party line.

The scope of this article does not permit a detailed discussion and analysis of the crucial, and ideologically fundamental, change that was occurring in the party line between 1934 and 1936. Suffice it to say that in the face of the rising threat by a racially and nationally fanatical Germany, it was hardly possible to pursue a policy of internationalism and ideological as well as emotional tolerance and acceptance of all peoples indiscriminately. Internationalism had to make way for ardent nationalism capable of firing the hearts of the Soviet masses, especially of the largest national group, the great Russians.

Former heroes of Russian past, whose names alone made Russians vibrate with patriotic feelings and made them ready to die for their Motherland, had to be resurrected at all cost from oblivion, where they had been formerly relegated by the ideologically pure Marxist historians, Pokrovsky and his disciples.

What Vanag and all the other confused historians had forgotten was forcefully pointed out in October 1935, when a council of Teachers of the Institute of Red Professors was convened at the request of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda of the Central Committee. Shtetskii, the head of the *Agitprop*, having brought to the attention of the participants the importance of the series of decrees issued by Stalin on the teaching of history, concluded by stating that Marxist historians are not scholars but propagandists who have to play a specific and practical role: "The Red Professors are not 'academicians,' but fighting Communists." (61)

In the light of a national emergency, indicated at the Seventeenth Party Congress, the Soviet school had to be retooled to prepare not only skillful manpower for the increased tempo of the economy, but also, and perhaps above all, to prepare ardent patriots ready to defend their country from a racist onslaught. And in this, the teaching of history had the greatest role to play.

Notes

1. I. V. Stalin, "Dvizhenie ekonomicheskogo krizisa v kapitalisticheskikh stranakh," *Sochineniya* (Moscow, 1955), XIII, 284-91.
2. Stalin, "Obostrenie politicheskogo polozheniya v kapitalisticheskikh stranakh," *ibid.*, 291-99.
3. It is possible that Stalin may have had some prior information about the general strike and demonstrations in France, February 6-12, 1934,

- in which over four million people took part, and about the revolt in Austria against Dolfus, February 12-16, 1934.
4. Cf. Stalin, XIII, 293 ff.
 5. *Ibid.*, p. 297. The Fourth Congress of MOPR (International Organization for Aid to Fighters of the Revolution), held in March 1934, declared that "the name of Dimitrov has become a symbol of the growing might of international proletarian solidarity." *Internatsional'nyi Mayak*, VII (April 1937), 7, quoted in *Mezhdunarodnaya solidarnost' trudyashchikhsya v bor'be s fashizmom, protiv razvyazyvaniya vtoroi mirovoi voyny (1933-1937)* (Moscow, 1961), p. 9.
 6. Stalin, XIII, 348.
 7. *Ibid.*, p. 347 (italics mine).
 8. *History of the C.P.S.U.* (Moscow, 1960), p. 481.
 9. Stalin, XIII, 376.
 10. *I-M*, II (1934), 3.
 11. Yu. Bocharov, "Zadachi prepodavaniya istorii," *I-M*, III (1934), 86.
 12. Stalin, "Yeshche raz o sotsial-demokraticheskom uklone v nashei partii," IX, 21.
 13. For an example of how the field of history was affected, see A. Vershinskii, "Kakim dolzhen byt' proseminar po istoricheskim distsiplinam," *I-M*, V (1934), 56.
 14. L. P. Bushchik, *Ocherk razvitiya, shkol'nogo istoricheskogo obrazovaniya v SSSR* (Moscow, 1961), p. 259.
 15. "Istoricheskuyu nauku na unroven' velikikh zadach," *I-M*, II (1934), 3.
 16. *Ibid.* The study of the more distant past was formerly regarded as unimportant because of the tremendous significance attached to pure Marxist indoctrination and the explanation of current events. See D. Dorotich, "History in the Soviet School, 1917-1937" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 1964), p. 44.
 17. *I-M*, II (1934), 3.
 18. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
 19. *Ibid.*
 20. The use of the term "concrete" seems significant in view of the subsequent well-known attack on the "school of Pokrovsky" for its alleged and, by implication, self-styled use of "abstract socio-economic schemes." The repeated use of the term "concrete" by *Istoriik-Marksist* long before Stalin had used it in his condemnation of the "school of Pokrovsky" suggests that his decrees on the teaching of history might have been drafted by some historians connected with this journal.
 21. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
 22. *Ibid.*, p. 8.
 23. *Ibid.*, p. 9 (italics mine).
 24. Dorotich, pp. 103 ff., and Th. Woody, *New Minds: New Men?* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), *passim*.

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 24. Dorotich, pp. 103 ff., and Th. Woody, *New Minds: New Men?* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), *passim*.

25. For a more detailed description of the struggle for "stable textbooks" see Dorotich, "History Textbooks," pp. 89-118; and for an excellent account of the role of changing party policy in Soviet education, see R. L. Widmayer, "The Communist Party and the Soviet School, 1917-1937" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1952).
26. *Arkhiv Ministerstva prosveshcheniya RSFSR*, f. Upravleniya nachal'noi i srednei shkoly za 1932 g. op. No. 1, sv. 15, d. 112, 1. i. quoted by Bushchik, pp. 256 ff.
27. Cited in Bushchik, p. 257.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
29. According to testimonials of former Soviet citizens, there was a widespread popular dissatisfaction both with the former "progressive" methods of teaching and with social studies as a means of indoctrination. Desirous of knowledge, the Russian people wanted their children to be taught concrete facts and "real" knowledge. This may account for the fact that few of the letters were of the usual stereotyped form, obviously written by carefully instructed agents of agitation and propaganda, and by trustworthy party members.
30. "Skelety v shkole," *Pravda*, April 5, 1934 (italics mine).
31. *I-M*, IV (1927), 196. For more recent views on Pokrovsky see R. Szporluk, "Pokrovsky and Russian History," *The Survey* (October 1964), pp. 107-18, and Dorotich, "Disgrace and Rehabilitation of M. N. Pokrovsky," *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, VIII (1966), pp. 169-81.
32. "Za podlinnuyu istoriyu protiv skholastiki i abstraktsyi," *Za Kommunisticheskoye Prosveshcheniye*, April 10, 1934 (italics mine).
33. *Za Kommunisticheskoye Prosveshcheniye*, April 24, 1934.
34. "O uporyadochnenii obshchestvennykh nagruzok studentov," *KPSS o Komsomole i molodezhi* (Moscow, 1962), p. 216.
35. "O peregruzke shkol'nikov i pionerov obshchestvenno-politicheskimi zadaniyami," *ibid.*, p. 220.
36. On May 15, 1934, on orders from the Central Committee, the school system was reorganized. The former Seven Year and Ten Year Schools established only two years earlier were now transformed into the School of General Education consisting of:
 1. Elementary School (grades I-IV)
 2. Incomplete Secondary School (grades I-VII)
 3. Secondary School (grades I-X)
 "O strukture nachal'noi i srednei shkoly v SSSR," *Pravda*, May 16, 1934.
37. Cf. N. S. Timashev, *The Great Retreat* (New York: Dutton and Co., 1946).
38. Cf. K. Mehnert, *Stalin versus Marx* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1952).
39. A. G. Mazour, *Modern Russian Historiography* (2d ed.; New York: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1958), pp. 197 ff. Mazour omitted the list of the

authors charged with the writing of the new textbooks. This is most unfortunate since this list is invariably omitted from all current Soviet sources and even collections of documents. Cf. *Sbornik rukovodyashchikh materialov o shkole* (Moscow: APN RSFSR, 1952). It may be assumed that the reason for this systematic omission by Soviet sources is the fact that many of the scholars mentioned in the degree were basely disgraced a few months later.

40. "O prepodavanii grazhdanskoi istorii v shkolakh SSSR," *Direktivy VKP(b) i postanovleniya sovetskogo pravitel'stva o narodnom obrazovanii za 1917-1947 gg.* (Moscow, 1947), I, 170 ff. trans. in *Slavonic and East European Review*, XIII (July 1934), 204-5.
41. *I-M*, III (1934), 88 (italics mine).
42. *I-M*, III (1934), 88.
43. *Ibid.*, p. 89.
44. *Direktivy VKP(b)*, I, 186. A prominent role among these authors was given to scholars, like N. Vanag, who were later disgraced as members of the "anti-Marxist school of Pokrovsky." It seems, therefore, worthwhile citing the list of the authors and the areas in which each team cooperated.
Ancient History: Professor S. I. Kovalev (leader), Academician N. M. Nikol'skii, A. S. Svanidze, Professor A. V. Minulin; *Medieval History*: Professor E. A. Kos'minskii (leader), Professor A. I. Gukovskii, O. V. Trakhtenberg, A. V. Malyshev; *Modern History*: Academician N. M. Lukin (leader), Professor G. S. Fridlyand, Professor V. M. Dalin, Professor G. S. Zaidel', Dotsent A. V. Efimov; *History of USSR*: Professor N. Vanag (leader), Professor B. D. Grekov, Professor A. M. Pankratova, Professor S. A. Piontkovskii; *Modern History of Dependent and Colonial Countries*: R. B. Radek (leader), K. Z. Gabidulin, Professor S. A. Konrad, A. S. Mukhardzhi, M. S. Godes, M. D. Kokin, L. I. Mad'yar, P. A. Mifi, F. A. Rotshtein.
 This list was omitted from *Sbornik rukovodyashchikh materialov o shkole*, published in 1952.
45. The other decrees being those of September 5, 1931, July 25, 1932, and February 12, 1933.
46. "Prikaz po narkomprosu RSFSR," *Kommunisticheskoye Prosveshcheniye*, III (1934), 15.
47. Regretfully, the initials could not be secured by the author.
48. *Kommunisticheskoye Prosveshcheniye*, p. 18.
49. *Ibid.*
50. *I-M*, II (1934), 9.
51. *Direktivy VKP (b)*, I, 167.
52. Struve, *konspekt lektzii po istorii drevnego vostoka*; Piontkovskii, *Istoriya Rossii XIX-XX v.v.*; Preobrazhenskii, *Feodalizm v Zapadnoi Yevrope*; Socharov, *Istoriya Rossii i SSSR v materialakh i doku-*

- mentakh; Lukin, *Epokha imperializma v materialakh i documentakh*; Lukin, *Epokha promyshlennogo kapitalizma v materialakh i dokumentakh*; Udal'tsov, *Klassy i klassovaya bor'ba v antichnom i feodal'nom obshchestve*; Myklin (ed.), *Ocherki po istorii revolyutsionnogo dvizheniya*; Vantke, *Ocherki mezhdunarodnogo revolyutsionnogo dvizheniya (epokha dovoyennogo imperializma)*; Knorin, *Istoriya VKP (b)*; Yaroslavskii *Istoriya VKP(b)*.
53. Beginning with No. V (1934).
 54. Vershinskii, p. 60.
 55. *Ibid.*
 56. L. Mamet, "Istoriya i obshchestvenno-politicheskoye vospitaniye," *I-M*, XIV (1929), 169.
 57. "Za Bol'shevistskoye Prepodavanie Istorii," *Bolshevik* (December 15, 1934), p. 50.
 58. *Ibid.*, p. 35 (italics mine). Pankratova's argument is strikingly reminiscent of Pokrovsky's in 1927 that textbooks ought to be written by three people: a scholar, a political editor, and a pedagogue. Cf. Dorotich, *History*, pp. 95 ff.
 59. "O vvedenii i nachal'noi i nepolnoi srednei shkole elementarnogo kursa vseobshchei istorii i istorii SSSR," *Sbornik*, p. 76.
 60. Cf. "Na fronte istoricheskoi nauki," *ibid.*, p. 84.
 61. See M. Shestakov, "Soveshchanie prepodavatelei instituta krasnoi professury," *I-M*, II (1935), 123.