NUMBER 138

DISCONTINUITY IN THE SPREAD OF POPULAR PRINT CULTURE, 1917-1927

Jeffrey Brooks

Conference on

THE ORIGINS OF SOVIET CULTURE

Sponsored by

Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies
The Wilson Center

May 18-19, 1981

The spread of print culture in late imperial Russia depended on the functioning of a market economy.[1] Enterprising publishers, often of common origins, made fortunes satisfying the tastes of lower class readers, who, in turn, gradually discovered the printed word as a source of information and entertainment. A brisk commercial trade in books, pamphlets, and newspapers developed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in the cities, and, more importantly for the Russian development, in the countryside. The often crude commercial publications were supplemented by materials intended for the school system and also by a significant quantity of propagandistic state and Church publications, and by publicistic works from various other sources. Though some of these sponsored materials found a popular readership, many did not, and the experience of ordinary people with the printed word outside the school system depended largely upon the more numerous commerical publications, which educated Russians of various political

---

[1]I am grateful to the International Research and Exchanges Board, Fulbright-Hays, and the National Endowment for the Humanities for their support. I thank Jean Hellie, Arcadius Kahan, and Louise McReynolds for their helpful comments.

persuasions viewed with distaste.

In times of war, revolution, natural and economic calamity, people have a keener than usual desire to follow the events of the day. During the last decade and a half of the old regime, when the Russo-Japanese War, the 1905 Revolution the Stolypin reforms, World War I, and the February Revolution, came in rapid succession, ordinary people increasingly looked to the printed word to orient themselves in their rapidly changing environment. On the eve of the October revolution there was a substantial reading public of unsophisticated relatively new readers accustomed to seeking out newspapers, such as Gazeta kopekia (The Kopeck Newspaper) and Russkoe slovo (The Russian Word) and other printed materials for news, information, and entertainment. By purchasing printed material they, themselves, considered valuable, ordinary people acted first as consumers, but, to the extent that in doing so they gained useful knowledge, they also invested in their future, and, in a sense, in the modernization of Russia from the bottom up. In replacing the market with a command economy under conditions of wartime devastation, Bolshevik administrators swept away the consumer-oriented commerical publishing and distribution network. The result was a breakdown in the circulation of printed material in the popular milieux. For this reason, although the 1920s was an exciting period in the culture of the avant-garde, ordinary people's contact with the printed word

during this period was sharply curtailed.

The breakdown in print media had several dimensions and occurred for a number of reasons. Material and equipment shortages made production difficult in the first years of Soviet power. The book and newspaper industries suffered all of the familiar problems of retail trade after the revolution: the destruction of the old distribution system of shops and merchants, price and currency fluctuations, and the severing of the information flow between consumers and producers. The crisis in publishing had an additional ideological component; political priorities rather than consumer demand were the primary determinants of what was published. The effect of this multi-dimensional breakdown in the popular media was to exclude many people, particularly rural readers, from the flow of reliable information at a time when their need for it was heightened.

Crisis followed crisis in publishing during the period of War Communism and much of the New Economic Policy. Available figures suggest that production of books and pamphlets fell rapidly in 1918-1919, and continued to decline until 1922, rising to pre-war levels by 1924 or 1925, as indicated in table 1 in Appendix A. The fall in production was precipitious even considering the decreased size of the empire; only a quarter of the number of copies and titles produced in 1917 was issued in 1920 and 1921. Figures on newspaper production are less available and more difficult to interpret, since a variety of periodicals were considered

newspapers in the Soviet period. The figures shown in tables 2 and 3 suggest that newspaper production and circulation dropped considerably after the revolution. The lowest point with respect to the number of dailies in the three years for which figures are available is 1925, when there were only 107 compared with 836 in 1914, the peak year in the pre-revolutionary period. Even by 1928, the number of daily newspapers had not reached half that of 1914.

Data on the circulation of newspapers are incomplete and difficult to interpret. The pre-World War I figures used for comparison by contemporary Soviet specialists ranged from 2.7 to 3.7 million daily copies.[1] Figures given for the daily circulation of Soviet newspapers on Press Day in 1923 and 1924 were 1 million for 1922, 1.9 million for 1923, and 2.5 million for 1924, as shown in table 3. Available figures show a sharp rise in the number of copies to 6.7 million in 1925, but this seems to reflect a great expansion in publications other than dailies, as well as a new way of counting.[2] The pre-1925 figures represent a substantial drop not only from 1909, but also, more importantly, from the greatly expanded wartime production, when the circulation of Gazeta kopeika and Russkoe slovo approached and sometimes passed a million copies a day.[3] The

---

[1] Izvestiia, May 4, 1924; N. S. Vertinskii, Gazeta v Rossii, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1931), p. 139.

[2] Kniga v 1925 godu, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1927), pp. 84,97.

circulation of six of the largest Soviet newspapers for 1919 through 1924 did not rise above a peak of 1.3 million in 1924, as shown in table 3. Circulation of all newspapers dropped sharply with the institution of the NEP, when newspapers had to be sold, rather than given away. The circulation of the Bolshevik paper for the peasants, Bednota (The Poor), the cheapest and most widely distributed of the dailies, fell from 500,000 copies on January 10, 1922, when the New Economic Policy was apparently applied, to 200,000 on January 17, 1922, after which the editors ceased to provide this information.

The decline in production and circulation of newspapers and books was felt in the cities, but it was in the countryside, where 71 percent of the nearly 60 million literate people lived, according to the 1926 census, that the shortage was most acute.[1] A journalist traveling through the south reported in Pravda on August 11, 1923, that newspapers were not always available even at the largest city railroad stations. An investigator sent into Voronezh Province by the Press Section of the Party to evaluate the success of rural papers found whole areas, including a large trading village with an agronomy school, that had not received a paper for a month or more.[2] There were few books in the

---

[1]A. Z. Okorokov, Oktiabr' i krakh russkoi burzhuaznoi pressy, (Moscow, 1970), p. 55.

[2]Vsesoiuznaia perepis' naseleniia 1926 goda, volume 17, (Moscow, 1929), pp. 2-3, 48-49.

villages either, complained the author of the lead editorial in the journal Knigonosha (Book Carrier) on April 29th, 1923. An investigator sent to the province of Orel by the central state publishing house, Gosizdat, to see what peasants were reading reported in Pravda (July 26, 1923) that the few newspapers and magazines that reached the volost' level were read only by Komsomols and Party members; "the rest of the village lives by rumor."

Official awareness of these difficulties sharpened in the spring of 1924, and the subject was raised at the Thirteenth Party Congress, at which the slogan "face to the village" was proclaimed. Not only were there no newspapers in the countryside, complained Krupskaia, in a speech printed in Pravda (May 4, 1924), but in some cases it proved impossible for peasants to subscribe even when they wished to do so. Requests for papers went unanswered, and even those who succeeded in placing a subscription could not be assured of getting their paper. "The receipt of newspapers has been greatly reduced in comparison with pre-revolutionary times," she concluded. The problem Krupskaia identified was not solved in 1924 or 1925, despite the new attention to the need for books and newspapers in the countryside.

Problems of production were in part the result of a shortage of machines and paper. Machines wore out, and there

---

[2]Ia. Shafir, Gazeta i derevnia, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1924), pp. 94-98.

were difficulties producing and importing new ones. The number of rotary presses, flat-bed presses, and lithograph and typesetting machines in operation fell to roughly two-thirds of pre-war levels by 1924-26, as shown in table 4. Substantial numbers of smaller, more primitive machines, for which no pre-revolutionary figures are available, were functioning, but the numbers of these also fell between 1921 and 1926. Paper was always in short supply. The quantity of paper and cardboard produced fell to a low of less than 10 percent of 1913 levels during 1919-21, and the industry recovered only gradually,as shown in table 5. The problem was greatest during the period of War Communism (1918-21).[1] Expenditures on imports of paper were substantial, particularly after 1924.[2]

Production difficulties affected quality. The printers of Rabochaia Moskva , (Working Moscow), a paper with a circulation of 62,000 in 1923,[3] apologized to readers in the February 2, 1923, edition for the poor quality of the newspaper, and blamed the presses, typesetting machines, and inferior ink and paper. In the first anniversary issue, on February 7, 1923, workers complained that the paper was sometimes impossible to read because of smudged ink.

---

[1]G. Mezhericher, "Bumazhnaia promyshlennost'" Narodnoe khoziaistvo, Nos. 6-7 (1921), pp. 96-105.

[2]Piatiletnii plan khoziaistva pechati SSSR, (Moscow, 1929), p. 198.

[3]Rabochaia Moskva, February 7, 1923.

Newspapers often appeared late; street sales and distribution of Rabochaia Moskva did not begin until 9:00 a.m., after Moscow workers were already at work. As late as 1928, printing of some large morning papers was not finished until afternoon.[1]

While production difficulties reduced the flow of new material, the pre-revolutionary stocks of books and pamphlets were depleted either by direct destruction or disorganized distribution, which often had the same effect. Stocks of books held by capitalist enterprises were confiscated in 1918 and 1919, and in 1920 whatever remained was nationalized, along with many personal libraries.[2] Confiscated books were given away, sent to various institutions, and, during the civil war, to the army, or pulped. A great quantity of pre-revolutionary popular literature and religious works met the last fate.[3] Remaining stocks of pre-revolutionary books were sold off cheaply in 1924 in the major cities by state enterprises trying to improve their finances.[4]

The destruction of the pre-revolutionary distribution

---

[1]Ibid., p. 181.

[2]Izdatel'skoe delo v pervye gody Sovetskoi vlasti (1917-22), (Moscow, 1972), pp. 72-73, 128-129.

[3]V. Smushkov, "Raspredelenie proizvedenii pechati," Pechat' i revolutsiia, No. 1 (1921), pp. 38-39.

[4]Kniga v 1924 g. v SSSR, N.F. Ianitskii, ed., (Moscow, 1925?), p. 218.

system made it difficult to deliver to readers the newspapers and books that were produced. Pre-revolutionary commercial publications had been sold through a network of city bookstores and kiosks, railroad stands, rural general stores, and by hawkers and peddlars who visited fairs, markets and villages. Non-commercial distribution through schools, adult education institutions, churches, zemstvos, volost' centers, and the military was well developed. Soviet authorities initially relied on the administrative and propaganda apparatus, and on Tsentropechat' (Central Press), which took over the remnants of A.S. Suvorin's pre-revolutionary system of 1660 kiosks, 40 percent of which were in railroad stations. During the NEP, Tsentropechat' was replaced by Kontragentstvo pechati.[1] In Moscow in 1923, kontragentstvo pechati was operating 400 railroad kiosks and 200 other kiosks, according to Pravda (July 6, 1923). An example of the disorganization in newspaper distribution at this time was the running battle between the managers of Kontragentstvo and Izvestiia in 1922 and 1923, when Kontragentstvo disrupted the distribution of Izvestiia, and made it an "underground" publication, according to an official spokesman.[2]

Distribution of books, as well as newspapers, developed slowly. The number of Soviet bookstores rose from several

---

[1]A.I. Nazarov, Oktiabr' i kniga (Moscow, 1968) p. 227.

[2]Izvestiia July 3-7, 1923.

hundred in 1922 to nearly 1200 in 1924, compared with 2000 to 3000 pre-revolutionary shops.[1] Small private traders operated briefly in 1923, mostly in the used book trade, but by 1924 they were abandoning their shops and becoming street peddlars, as currency fluctuations and other unfavorable conditions made settled trade risky.[2] Early Soviet book distribution was almost exclusively urban. There were fewer than 400 retail book outlets outside provincial cities at the end of 1923, and about 1600 in 1928, compared with 1800 before the revolution.[3] Efforts to boost rural distribution were intensified after the Thirteenth Party Congress in 1924, through utilization of the postal system and consumer cooperatives. There were 6500 postal distribution points and 4000 consumer cooperatives with bookshelves by 1926, according to a commentator in the early 1930s.[4] The effectiveness of the postal and cooperative distribution system, however, must be questioned. Publishers had difficulty with the post before the 1924 congress. The editors of Bednota complained in an editorial on December 19, 1922 that the post was generally ineffective in distributing newspapers, and that it hardly functioned in the countryside. The

---

[1] Kniga v 1924, p. 210-11.

[2] Ibid., p. 210.

[3] G. I. Porshnev, Etiudy po knizhnomu delu, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929), pp. 33-34.

[4] Cited in A.A. Govorov, Istoriia knizhnoi torgovli v SSSR (Moscow, 1976), p. 93.

situation probably improved after 1924, but complaints continued. Postmen and cooperative employees were often uninterested in book distribution.[1] In the late 1920s peasants who wanted books and periodicals were often unable to get them, according to M.I. Slukhovskii, who used letters to Krest'ianskaia gazeta (The Peasant Newspaper) and other sources to study the peasant reader. Peasants either did not know how to order under the new system, or were discouraged by lack of cooperation on the part of sales personnel.[2] Attempts to develop a network of itinerant book peddlars similar to the pre-revolutionary one failed, since the traders were classified as members of the bourgeiosie, heavily taxed, and deprived of voting rights.[3]

With the chaotic distribution system of the early 1920s, publishers found it easier to deliver to institutions and groups rather than individuals. Newspaper distribution was based on "collective demand," and compulsory group subscription to newspapers was the general practice in 1923 and 1924.[4] A directive was issued against such subscriptions, but the practice remained widespread in the mid-1920s. Only

---

[1] Piatiletnii plan pp. 219-220, and M.I. Slukhovskii, Kniga i derevnia, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1928), pp. 148-51.

[2] Slukhovskii, pp. 150-51; and A. Meromskii and P. Putnik, Derevnia za knigoi (Moscow 1931), p. 31.

[3] Slukhovskii, p. 158.

[4] I. Vareikis, Zadachi Partii v oblasti pechati, Moscow, Leningrad, 1926), p. 8.

about 13 percent of the copies of workers' newspapers (including, one assumes, Pravda and Izvestiia) were distributed by direct subscription, according to a 1926 commentator, compared with about a third of the newspapers for peasants and members of national minorities.[1] Worker papers were distributed primarily through trade union and Party organizations, and peasant papers through paid agents, such as school teachers or rural newspaper correspondents. Distribution of periodicals by collective subscription had declined by fiscal year 1927/28, but nearly half of all book sales were to collective subscribers. Most of these sales were probably of propaganda and school and library books.[2]

Book and periodical trade suffered from the confusion of price changes and income redistribution in the twenties, as did all retail trade. A pood of grain was worth ten small booklets of the sort sold by colporteurs before the war, but only one in the fall of 1923.[3] Despite efforts to reduce the price of printed materials, prices remained high for the agricultural population throughout most of the 1920s,[4] and peasants, in the words of a Soviet investigator, dreamt of

---

[1]Ibid., p. 8.

[2]Piatiletnii plan, p. 229.

[3]Bolezni nashego pechatnogo delo, (Moscow, 1924), p. 12.

[4]Porshnev, p. 35.

[5]Slukhovskii, p.152.

the good old days when "people's books" sold for kopecks.[5]

During the NEP publishers were supposed to sell profitably what they produced, but with reduced demand and drastically curtailed distribution capability, profits proved illusive. Only slightly more than half of the 151 million rubles worth of books and pamphlets produced from 1921 through 1925 were sold.[1] The rest accumulated in warehouses until they were pulped at the end of the twenties.[2] Publishing losses declined in 1926 and 1927, but the industry did not begin to show a profit until 1928.[3] Difficulties in accounting and management continued throughout the decade, and currency fluctuations made financial accounting more complicated. The Worker-Peasant Inspectorate complained in 1924 that Gosizdat had no idea what was in stock, and often published works that were already oversupplied.[4] A number of firms went "bankrupt," including the anti-religious house, Bezbozhnik, and central publishers, such as Gosizdat, Priboi, and Molodaia gvardiia experienced serious difficulties.[5]

Newspapers were not expected to show a profit, but their managers were under pressure to minimize losses. Publishers

---

[1]Porshnev, pp. 44-45.

[2]Piatiletnii plan p. 222.

[3]Ibid., p. 277.

[4]Bolezni nashego pechatnogo delo, p. 5.

[5]Piatiletnii plan, p. 276.

lost .57 kopecks for each copy of a workers' paper printed, 1.83 kopecks for every copy of a peasant newspaper, and 6.45 kopecks per copy for newspapers for national minorities, according to I. Vareikis in 1926.[1] Pravda and Izvestiia sold for five kopecks a copy in 1926, Krest'ianskaia gazeta for three kopecks, and provincial papers for five to seven kopecks.[2] Some central newspapers, such as Pravda, Izvestiia, Gudok, Krest'ianskaia gazeta, and Rabochaia Moskva, were profitable in 1928, largely due to institutional advertisements and paid announcements.[3]

Simultaneous with the many difficulties in supply and distribution of printed materials throughout the decade was a significant drop in consumer demand. In part this was due to economic factors, such as the relative decline in agricultural incomes and the relative increase in the price of books. Much of the decline in demand, however, was a response to the decision on the part of the Soviet publishing monopoly not to print types of literature that had been popular before the revolution. What was produced by private publishers under Soviet authority (5 percent of all copies in 1925) was either insufficient or unsuitable for the mass of ordinary people.[4] In the pre-revolutionary period, belles

---

[1]Vareikis, p. 10.

[2]Ibid., p. 9.

[3]Piatiletnii plan, pp. 283-84.

[4]Kniga v 1925, p. 43.

lettres, light fiction, song books, almanacs, and religious works constituted the bulk of the commercially marketed materials for the common reader.[1] Reader reactions to early Soviet publications were noted in published studies of readers. The tradition of studying the reader was well established in the pre-revolutionary period, and was continued, in modified form, throughout the 1920s. M.A. Smushkova, who surveyed the reader studies published to 1926, commented that workers enjoyed belles lettres with social themes, but that peasants were, on the whole, dissatisfied with the reading material available to them.[2] The hostility and incomprehension of the peasants toward propagandistic works and speeches of Bolshevik leaders was reported in a variety of other studies.[3] M.I. Slukhovskii observed that these works appeared to be intended for village activists, and not ordinary readers.[4] Among the most successful propagandistic works for the peasants were historical stories based on the lives of revolutionary heroes. The peasants wanted to read something that engaged their emotions, as had the pre-revo-

---

[1]Vystavka proizvedenii pechati za 1909, (St. Petersburg, 1910), pp. 15-18.

[2]M.A. Smushkova, Pervye itogi izucheniia chitatelia, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1926), pp. 8-10, and Smushkova, Bibliotechnaia rabota v derevne (Moscow-Leningrad, 192?), p. 76.

[3]B. Bank and A. Vilenkin, Krest'ianskaia molodezh i kniga (Moscow-Leningrad, 1929), p. 210; and Meromskii and Putnik, p. 159.

[4]Slukhovskii, pp. 70-71.

lutionary tales and saints' lives. One reader wrote to Krest'ianskaia gazeta in the mid-1920s that the biographies of revolutionaries "acted on me more strongly than the suffering of the great martyr Saint George."[1]

The emphasis in Soviet book and pamphlet publishing was on political issues, propaganda, social commentary, and school books. The seven authors published in the largest number of copies by Gosizdat from 1919 to 1926 were Lenin (7.5 million), Stalin (2 million), Bukharin (1.2 million), Trotsky (1 million), Plekhanov (.6 million), and Marx and Engels (.5 million.)[2] These seven authors accounted for 6 percent of the copies published by Gosizdat, and probably a larger proportion of the production of the specialized political publishers. School books accounted for about two-fifths of Gosizdat's production, social science about a quarter, and publications for the peasants, including both propaganda and agronomy, about one-fifth. The remainder was composed of popular science, belles lettres, children's books, reference works, and books for the military.

Soviet publishing statistics have several peculiarities. In a command economy, changes in publishing policy could be abrupt, and the quantities of certain types of materials rose or fell sharply. Comparisons with pre-revolutionary figures are necessarily somewhat arbitrary, and it is

---

[1]Ibid., p. 81.

[2]Porshnev, p. 63.

important to remember that significant quantities of publicistic and propagandistic material were published before the revolution, particularly during World War I. Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9 show the relative quantities of works of different subjects published. Categorizations frequently overlapped; for example, social, economic, and political works, including Leninism, and Party literature comprised about a quarter of the titles from 1923-25, but political titles also appeared among the popular science and children's books. According to another categorization, between two and three-fifths of all titles published in 1921-27 were "social science," broadly defined to include school books.

As a result of changes in economic policies and political developments, much of the agitational material and topical social commentary became obsolete soon after it was published. Local Party and OGPU authorities received a directive in 1923, in which they were instructed to remove pre-NEP political and informational materials from small libraries.[1]

More than the presence of anti-religious books, the absence of religious books caused a serious break in the reading habits of many ordinary Russians. Anti-religious works comprised less than one percent of the number of copies of Soviet books published 1921-27. Slukhovskii

---

[1]E.H. Carr, Socialism in One Country, vol. 1, (Macmillan: N.Y., 1958), pp. 65-66.

reported that a number of investigators agreed that anti-religious works were poorly received in the villages.[1]

In the area of applied knowledge, which included industrial and technical information, agriculture, medicine, and other topics, reader interest coincided with the publishing monopoly's willingness to produce. Popular science and technology comprised a fifth of the titles published from 1921 to 1927, and a smaller proportion of the total number of copies. In 1925, after the Thirteenth Party Congress, twice as many copies of agricultural works (3.7 million) were issued as in 1910, though the number of titles was fewer.[2] Among the large circulation editions were titles such as Electricity and the Tractor in Agriculture, works to encourage the planting of clover and abandonment of the three field system, and books on bee keeping and hog raising. Reader studies indicated that peasants wanted books on agriculture.[3] In book requests to Krest'ianskaia gazeta in the mid-1920s, agriculture occupied first place.[4] Nevertheless, the peasants were not always satisfied with the agricultural literature provided, either because the instructions were not applicable to their region or because

---

[1]Slukhovskii, pp. 86-89.

[2]Compiled from Knizhnaia letopis'.

[3]Massovyi chitatel' i kniga, N.D. Rybnikov, ed., (Moscow, 1925), p. 39.

[4]Slukhovskii, p. 27.

information was lacking on how to put suggestions into practice and where to get the necessary tools and materials.[1]

Despite ideological approval of works on applied technique, Soviet publishers left unsatisfied demand for many works conveying practical knowledge. Peasants wrote to Krest'ianskaia gazeta in the mid-1920s requesting books on handicrafts and trades.[2] This interest was interpreted as a response to the falling agricultural prices and an effort on the part of many individual peasants to find alternative means of livelihood.[3] Publishers had difficulty keeping up with the demand for works in popular science. The works of the pre-revolutionary populizers were considered unsatisfactory by the end of the civil war, although those of N.A. Rubakin had been printed in large editions in 1919. Attempts to create a substitute for works like Rubakin's were not immediately successful.[4] The demand for printed information about laws, taxes, and the general economic and legal developments affecting rural Russia was also difficult for Soviet publishers to satisfy, since the rules were changing very rapidly. Peasants and peasant correspondents

---

[1]Meromskii and Putnik, p. 166; B. Bank and A. Vilenkin, Derevenskaia bednota i biblioteka, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1927), p. 79; Bank and Vilenkin, 1929, p. 177; Slukhovskii, pp. 64-66.

[2]Slukhovskii, p. 27.

[3]Bolezni nashego pechatnego dela, p. 11.

[4]Ibid., pp. 13-14; Slukhovskii, p. 67.

sent Krest'ianskaia gazeta many requests for information on land and forest use rules, credit, insurance, taxes, and other legal matters.[1] Such information had been provided in part by almanacs that were published in over ten million copies in 1910.[2]

The most dramatic departure from the pre-revolutionary publishing tradition came in the area of belles lettres and popular fiction. In 1910, 7.6 million copies of works of belles lettres were issued in Russian. Additional fiction was included among the nearly fifteen million copies of "people's books," and 2.6 million copies of detective stories also appeared.[3] In 1922, only 3.5 million copies of belles lettres were published, and the category "people's books" no longer existed. These works were about ten percent of the total number of copies issued in 1922, as shown in table 8. After 1922 a decision was made to increase substantially the publication of belles lettres, largely in response to growing inventories of unsold works. By 1925-26 about 30 million copies of belles lettres were printed, exceeding pre-revolutionary production.

Works of classical Russian authors dominated Soviet belles lettres from 1918-1923, and accounted for more than

---

[1]G. Kh. Ryklin, Kak sovetskaia pechat' pomogaet krest'ianinu, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1926) p. 31.

[2]Statistika proizvedenii pechat' vyshedshikh v 1910 godu (St. Petersburg, 1911), p. 2.

[3]Ibid., p. 2.

half of the copies of belles lettres printed.[4] The Russian classics were published in ever larger editions from 1924-29, but the publications of other works of belles lettres also increased, and the relative share of the classics declined. Many works of Russian classics had been issued in pre-revolutionary "people's editions," and the early Soviet emphasis was not a departure from earlier practices. The quantity of classical works available was probably no more than before the revolution. In 1909, the works of nine classical authors were issued in 1.7 million copies in "peoples' books" alone, in addition to regular belles lettres.[1] According to a 1928 study, only in 1926 and 1927 did works of classical authors begin to arrive at Moscow trade union libraries in adequate quantity.[2] Peasants wrote to Krest'ianskaia gazeta in the middle 1920s that they could not get copies of works by Nekrasov and Kol'tsov, as well as those of Soviet writers.[3]

Works by new Soviet writers and translations of certain foreign authors were also widely published in the 1920s.

---

[4]Maurice Friedberg, Russian Classics in Soviet Jackets, (Columbia Univ. Press: N.Y., 1962) p. 190-192.

[1]Vystavka proizvedenii pechati, p. 16.

[2]Chto chitaiut vzroslye rabochie i sluzhashchie po belletristike, Moscow, 1928), p. 20; G. Neradov, "Proizvodstvo klassikov," Biuleten Gosudarstvennogo izdatel'stva, Nos. 31-32, (23 August, 1928), p. 3.

[3]Slukhovskii, p. 16; see also Meromskii and Putnik, p. 149.

Among the new writers were proletarian and communist authors such as Gladkov, Neverov, Serafimovich, Furmanov, and also some fellow travelers, such as Seifullina and Romanov.[1] Works by Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and H.G. Wells were published in hundreds of thousands of copies in the 1920s. These Soviet and foreign works were reported to have been favorably received by workers, but less so in the village. According to many investigators, the peasants valued truth and realism, and had little tolerance for works that did not measure up to their criteria.[2] Idealistic works about the revolution, the civil war, and socialist construction did not find a friendly audience in the countryside. Nor did writers such as Sinclair and Wells. Peasants were confused by the futuristic works that were popular among some Bolsheviks, and often had difficulty knowing whether they were true or fiction. One rural correspondent wrote to Krest'ianskaia gazeta for more information on Wells' War of the Worlds. He explained that it was his understanding that the book was about Martian polyps who landed in England or France, were smothered by the air, and then preserved in alcohol in a zoo. His question was, "Is it true or not that this affair took place in the nineteenth century?"[3] This

---

[1]Chto chitaiut vzroslye rabochie, pp. 14-19; and B. Bank and A. Vilenkin, 1927, p. 39; Bank and Vilenkin, 1929, p. 35.

[2]Smushkova, Itogi, pp. 13-16; Slukhovskii, pp. 102-122.

[3]Slukhovskii, pp. 110-120.

reader expressed the confusion undoubtedly shared by many of his contemporaries in evaluating science fiction. The Soviet publishing monopoly produced revolutionary propaganda that told rural readers that many of the "facts" of their pre-revolutionary political and religious knowledge were fiction, and, at the same time, distributed imaginative works that only sophisticated readers could identify as fiction.

More than what they chose to publish, what authorities decided not to publish affected the reading of common people. Soviet publishers eschewed the boulevard novels, detective adventure stories, song books, and literature of the pre-revolutionary colporteur (lubochnaia literatura), as well as pre-revolutionary light literature by respected authors such as Mamin-Sibiriak, because they believed that such reading inhibited the enlightenment of the common people. Popular light literature became scarce and lubochnaia literatura vanished. A peasant wrote to Krest'ianskaia gazeta in the mid 1920s that the old chivalry tales, story books, pilgrimage accounts, and saints' lives had "all been smoked up, so that the trunks and shelves that earlier were filled with these books" were empty.[1] Though of questionable literary merit, these materials had served as a means for the common people to develop and confirm new values, ideas,

---

[1]Slukhovskii, p. 10.

and symbols in the rapidly modernizing environment.

Soviet investigators who studied reader tastes and responses reported a serious shortage of books suitable for the peasant reader. "The peasant reader, the principal purchaser of books in the present period, remains virtually inaccessible," I. Vareikis commented in 1926.[1] "Until recently there was no literature for the peasant at all," wrote Smushkova, also in 1926.[2] Slukhovskii commented in 1928 that urban warehouses bulged with unsold books, while there was nothing to read in the village.[3]

Newspapers, like books and pamphlets, changed in the post-revolutionary period, in accordance with the ideology, aesthetics and political strategies of Bolshevik planners. Journalism, more than books and pamphlets, was the medium for communicating the Bolshevik message to the common people. The pre-revolutionary big city dailies intended for diverse readership and more numerous smaller papers aimed at select audiences were replaced by central institutional organs, such as Pravda for the Party and Izvestiia for the government, and large papers for separate classes, such as Rabochaia gazeta (The Workers' Newspaper) and Krest'ianskaia gazeta. "Rabochaia Moskva is the real workers' newspaper, fully responsive to the interests of the Moscow workers,"

---

[1] I. Variekis, p. 26.

[2] Smushkova, Bibliotechnaia rabota, pp. 75-76.

[3] Slukhovskii, p. 41.

read an advertisement in that paper (December 27, 1923); The editors of Bednota promised that their readers would learn: 1) the laws about land, 2) how to increase the harvest, 3) where to get seeds and implements, 4) how to increase income from cattle, 5) how to cure cattle, 6) the decrees of the government, 7) all the laws about taxes, 8) all the most important news.[1] Peasant-oriented stories dominated the peasant papers, as shown in table 10. For example, Krest'ianskaia gazeta on February 9, 1926, carried the features: "How to Promote Peasant Goods," "What the Peasants Say," and "Soviet Construction in the Village."

Workers were expected to have wide interests. Stories about workers and the economy occupied much of the space in the workers' papers. Characteristic headlines in Rabochaia Moskva on February 3, 1923 were: "The Burning Question of the Alliance (smychka) between City and Village," "Workers' Insurance," and "The Workers Organize Their Cooperatives." According to a study of Rabochaia gazeta readers in the mid-1920s, workers read the "Worker Life" section of that paper, but were dissatisfied by the lack of critical coverage of subjects such as workers' rights, housing, and unemployment.[2]

Foreign affairs was emphasized in the Soviet press, as it

---

[1] Bednota, June 16, 1922.

[2] Ia. Shafir, Rabochaia gazeta i ee chitatel', (Moscow, 1926), pp. 143-53.

had been before the revolution. It was prominent in the first page of the three newspapers sampled in 1922-23 and 1926, as shown in table 10. Those who replied to the 1924 survey of Rabochaia gazeta indicated that they read the foreign affairs section first.[1] Ia. Shafir, who conducted the Rabochaia gazeta study, suggested that the predominant interest in foreign affairs could be explained by concern about war and hopes for revolution elsewhere.[2]

Domestic politics and Party affairs were problem areas for Soviet journalists, and coverage diverged sharply from pre-revolutionary practice. Despite threats of government retaliation, pre-revolutionary editors had included much information about government policy and politics in their papers. There was less intelligible coverage of domestic political issues in Soviet papers. Rabochaia Moskva contained articles about the government and about the Party, but these were either summaries of official announcements, speeches, or laudatory descriptions of local Party activity. The "Party Life" section of Rabochaia gazeta was sharply criticized by respondents to the 1924 survey as boring, uncritical and remiss in unmasking abuses, but the editors were unable to formulate a policy on how to present the Party to the satisfaction of readers.[3] Readers likewise

---

[1]Ibid., p. 100.

[2]Ibid., p. 108.

[3]Ibid., pp. 171-79.

criticized Rabochaia Moskva on the first anniversary of the paper, February 7, 1923, but in this case, too, the editors confessed themselves helpless to improve coverage.

Conspicuously absent from the Soviet papers were the human calamities, disasters, and crimes that were the focus of much reader attention in the pre-revolutionary popular press. Trotsky, writing in Pravda, July 1, 1923, complained of the general unwillingness of journalists to write about difficulties and the sensational events that were exciting much of the population. People were interested in the seamy side of life and because bourgeois papers used this material to stimulate "an unhealthy curiosity" and to play on "the worst instincts of man" was no reason for the Soviet press to ignore it, in his view. Such topics could be used to dispel superstition and show up bourgeois morality, Trotsky suggested, and if the Soviet press turned its back on the curiosity of the common people they would get their information from less reliable sources on the street.

The occasional journalistic foray into the realm of crime and disaster was always didactic, such as Rabochaia Moskva's coverage of a 1923 mass murder in Moscow. The subject was discussed in a single issue, after the miscreants had been sentenced and shot. The man was identified as a wife and child beater, a church goer who liked to get drunk with priests, and the woman as a glutton. Economic crimes loomed large in the Soviet press during the NEP, and the headline "Our Court: Sentence for Exploitation," which appeared in

Bednota on January 5, 1923, was not atypical.

Present only in greatly diminished form were the entertainment and light reading features that had brought many new readers to the pre-revolutionary dailies. The snappy feuilletons and serialized potboilers that were standard fare in Gazeta kopeika and some other popular papers seldom appeared in the Soviet press.[1] When such material was printed, it was usually political. Demian Bednyi's poems about foreign affairs and a novel about the Civil War, For Soviet Power, were published in Rabochaia Moskva in February, 1922. The peasant papers were almost devoid of such material, but what appeared sometimes represented an abrupt departure from the hard-headed emphasis of the rest of the newspaper. For example, in a short serial titled "Bread from the Air (In the Not too Distant Future)," the editors of Bednota regaled readers with the production of flour and meat by microbes, without human labor.[2]

The decision to exclude light fiction and amusing reportage from the newspapers was a conscious one. Newspapers were intended to provide serious information, and not to entertain readers, even though editors realized that entertaining material was in demand.[3] The Soviet papers did

---

[1]Jeffrey Brooks, "The Kopeck Novels of Early Twentieth Century Russia," Journal of Popular Culture, vol. xiii, No. 1 (Summer, 1979), pp. 85-97.

[2]Bednota, February 6, 13, 17, 1923.

[3]Shafir, Rabochaia gazeta, p. 196.

include reports on cultural subjects, book reviews, and articles on theater and schools, as had the pre-revolutionary papers.

An important difference between the pre and post-revolutionary papers was the lack of advertising. There was some private advertising during the NEP, but most of the space alloted to advertisements in the Soviet newspapers was used for announcements of state institutions and firms.

Post-revolutionary print culture differed from its antecedents in language, as well as content. The language of successful pre-revolutionary publications developed gradually over decades. Soviet publishing officials jettisoned this language, partly because they were unfamiliar with it, and partly because they wanted new words for the novelties of revolutionary life. As a consequence, the Bolsheviks presented the common reader with a confusing array of unfamiliar words, phrases, and neologisms. Readers of Rabochaia gazeta complained in 1924 that they needed "ten dictionaries" to understand the paper, and that explanations for "scientific" and "foreign" words were needed.[1] When the paper was read at factories, listeners were confused by the most common Soviet abbreviations and acronyms. Readings of Krest'ianskaia gazeta to soldiers stationed in Moscow in November, 1923, revealed similar linguistic incomprehension.[2] A speaker at a Leningrad conference of propagandists

---

[1]Shafir, Rabochaia gazeta, p. 221.

urged his listeners to translate the peasant newspapers into more familiar speech before reading them aloud to villagers.[1]

Several lists of words not understood by the common people were compiled at trial readings of popular publications, usually in Moscow, or from letters to newspapers.[2] The different lists hardly overlap, suggesting that the words included were chosen from a much larger pool of unfamiliar words. Words relating to politics, agriculture, science, and industry, as well as literary expressions appeared frequently. Words essential to the Bolshevik world view, such as 'democracy,' 'imperialism,' 'dialectic,' 'class enemy,' and 'socialism' were reported to be unfamiliar to readers or listeners. Political and economic terms, such as 'trust,' 'syndicate,' 'blockade,' 'SSSR,' 'budget,' 'deficit,' and 'balance' were not understood. Abbreviations for organizations such as 'Komsomol,' and scientific terms, such as 'nitrogen,' and 'microbe' left readers puzzled. In many cases, the concepts communicated by these words were unfamiliar to common readers, and the words themselves were often Russifications of foreign terms, making them appear doubly

---

[2]Shafir, Gazeta i derevnia, pp. 75-89.

[1]Derevenskaia politprosvetrabota, (Leningrad, 1926), pp. 220-21.

[2]Smushkova, Itogi, pp. 37-39; Ia. Shafir, Gazeta i derevnia, pp. 71-72, 75-82.; Slukhovskii, pp. 119-21; and Meromskii and Putnik, pp. 170-71.

strange. A peasant from Vladimir wrote to Krest'ianskaia gazeta in the mid-1920s to complain that books were written "not in peasant language, and, it is possible to say, not in Russian, but in political language."[1] In addition to its initial unfamiliarity, the language of the revolution changed rapidly as new words were used to describe policies and campaigns.

According to the 1926 census, there were nearly sixty million literate people in the Soviet Union.[2] One million copies of daily newspapers were published in 1922, and 2.5 million in 1924. Those among the common people who read the newspapers and other publications in the first decade of Soviet power were probably those with both special interest and opportunity. Party members and others in responsible positions were told to subscribe to newspapers, and there were over a million party members and candidates in 1926.[3] There were almost two million Komsomols at the end of 1925.[4] There was also a large number of worker-peasant correspondents who were supposed to investigate local abuses, and were paid for their submissions to the press. Their numbers

---

[1]Meromskii and Putnik, p. 169.

[2]Vsesoiuznaia perepis', pp. 48-49.

[3]Pravda, May 22, 1924; and Istoriia kommunisticheskoi partii sovetskogo soiuza, vol. 4, part 1, (Moscow, 1970), p. 480.

[4]Ralph T. Fisher, Pattern for Soviet Youth, (Columbia Univ. Press: NY, 1959), appendix B.

increased from 50,000 in 1923 to 250,000 in 1926, and roughly half of these were in the countryside.[1] The small number of newspapers relative to the numbers of correspondents and people affiliated with party organizations suggests that these readers probably accounted for many of the subscriptions to Soviet newspapers. Whether the news went beyond this circle of readers depended largely on the relations between non-party common people and the representatives of officialdom.

Because of the limited quantity of popular printed material, its difficult language, and, for most readers, its lack of appeal, it is most likely that common Russians read less in the decade after the revolution than they had in the decade before. The reduction in the role of the written word in people's lives was greatest in the countryside, where the modernizing potential of print culture was most needed. In this respect the first decade of Soviet power was a reversal of pre-revolutionary trends, and a heightening of cultural differences between country and city. A number of investigators reported an increase in superstition among rural people, outbreaks of wild rumors, and confusion about who ruled the country.[2] Literacy itself may have lost

---

[1] Sovetskaia demokratiia, ed., Iu. M. Steklov, (Moscow, 1929), p. 203; A. Glebov, Pamiatka sel'kora, (Moscow, 1925), p. 5.

[2] Slukhovskii, pp. 93-95; Shafir, Gazeta i derevnia, pp. 113-28.

some value to people who could find nothing they wanted to read.

The Soviet publishing industry recovered from the physical dislocation of the revolution, civil war, and the economic reorganization under Soviet power by the late 1920s. At that time the printed material being produced differed in form, content, and vocabulary from the pre-revolutionary popular publications. The cost of the transformation was the loss of reading experience on the part of the common people who, according to contemporary accounts, had little contact with the print media.

APPENDIX A

TABLE 1

Quantity of Books and Pamphlets, 1912-1927 (in thousands)

	All Titles (in Russian)	All Copies (in Russian)
1912	34.6 (27.4)	133,562 (111.6)
1917	13.1	140,000
1918	6.1*	77,700
1919	3.7*	54,600
1920	3.3*	33,900
1921	4.1*	28,300
1922	7.8*	34,000
1923	10.8*	68,000
1924	13.1*	110,000
1925	26.3	278,000
1926	28.4	206,000
1927	27.7	212,000

Sources: G.I Porshnev, Etiudy po knizhnomu delu, (Moscow-Leningrad,1924), pp. 31-35, N.F. Ianitskii, ed., Kniga v 1924 g. v SSSR, (Moscow, 1925), pp. 16,18,57, Statistika proizvedenii pechati vyshedshikh v Rossii v 1912 r. (St. Petersburg, 1913).

*I used figures given in Porshnev for these years, but Ianitskii gives higher figures, particularly for 1923 and 1924. He lists 18.6 and 29.1 thousand titles for these years. I have no explanation for the discrepancy. Porshnev's figures are closer to those available by subject. See table 7.

TABLE 2

Newspapers and Periodicals Published in the Russian Empire and Soviet Union

	Twice Daily	Daily	2,3,4 Times Weekly	Weekly	Total
1910	6	506	202	633	1347
1914	12	824	240	691	1767
1915	10	584	176	512	1282
1924		151	150	348	649
1925		107	129	221	457
1928		201	254	137	594

Sources: Statistika proizvedenii pechati v Rossii v 1910 g., 1914, 1915, (St. Petersburg, 1911, 1915, 1916), pp. 111,113,99, Kniga v 1924 g. v SSSR, (Moscow, 1925?), pp. 75, 83, Kniga v 1915 g., (Moscow-Leningrad, 1927), p. 95, 97, Piatiletnii plan khoziastva pechati SSSR, (Moscow, 1929), p. 102.

TABLE 3

Number of Daily* Copies of Soviet Newspapers (in thousands)

	1917	1918	1919	1920	1921(end)	1922	1923	1924
Pravda	30	80	138	250	265(250)		80	400
Izvestiia	35		452	350	350(275)		180	350
Bednota	50		240	570	350(275)		49	55
Rabochaia Gazeta				33	30		150	200
Krestianskaia Gazeta							50	124
Gudok						60	100	190
Total Copies			830	1203	975(800)	60	609	1319
Copies of All Soviet Papers						993**	1960	2520

*Except for Krest'ianskaia gazeta, which was published weekly.

Blank spaces indicate figures were unavailable.

Sources: Vertinskii, Gazeta v Rossii i SSSR, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1931), pp. 135-39, 148-150, V. Molotov Politika Partiia v derevne, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1926), p. 24, Izvestiia, May 4, 1924, Rabochaia Moskva, April 20, 1922 and Feb. 7, 1923.

**This figure from Rabochaia Moskva may represent the low point in the conversion to NEP conditions. Izvestiia (May 4, 1924) gives 2.7 million copies for January, 1922 and 1.4 million for December 1922.

TABLE 4

Number of Printing Machines, 1912-1927

	Type-Setting Machines	Rotary Presses	Flat-bed Presses	Litho-graphies	Ameri-kanki*	Other
1912	560	182	5340	640		
1921	411	147	4270	570	1987	3689
1924	348	135	3378	531	1140	3658
1926	407	119		420	945	3607
1927	493		3522		1174	4405

*("Amerikanki" were small typographical machines invented in the middle of the nineteenth century and widely used then.)

Source: Piatiletnii plan khoziaistva pechati SSSR, (Moscow, 1928), p. 174.

TABLE 5

Paper and Cardboard Production 1913 through Fiscal Year 1928/1929

	Tons	As a Percent of 1913
1913	392,000	100
1918	70,100	17.9
1919	29,700	7.6
1920	34,700	8.9
1921	30,900	7.9
1921/22	34,200	8.7
1922/23	71,400	18.2
1923/24	126,300	32.2
1924/25	233,000	59.4
1925/26	263,000	67.1
1926/27	300,400	76.6
1927/28	321,500	82.0
1928/29	405,000	103.3

Source: Piatiletnii plan khoziaistva pechati SSSR, (Moscow, 1929), p. 197.

TABLE 6

Subjects of Soviet Books as a Percent of All Titles

	1923	1924	1925
Social, Economic, Political (Including Leninism and party literature)	20.5	30.0	23.6
Scientific and Popular Scientific (except exact sciences)	14.9	22.0*	14.0
Exact Sciences	10.1		6.3
Children and Youth	3.5	5.5	6.9
School and Pedagogical	9.9	9.8	10.3
Bibliography and Reference	6.3	6.3	7.4
Belles Lettres	13.0	9.7	9.1
Departmental (Vedomstvennaia literatura)	15.0	10.3	11.7
Other	3.0	5.0	9.6

*In 1924, this number includes the exact sciences, too.

Source: Kniga v 1925, (Moscow-Leningrad, 1927), p. 62, and material from table 7.

TABLE 7

Subjects of Books and Pamphlets, 1912-1927

Subject Code	Number of Titles 1912(Russian)	1915(Russian)	1921	1922	1923	1925	1926	1927
0	2266 (1547)	1561(1270)	71	217	365	1018	1134	1071
I	353 (261)	105 (97)	22	76	79	147	142	139
II	3659 (2169)	2216 (1519)	14	68	136	192	149	133
III	10423 (9195)	9360 (8567)	2465	4871	3389	10512	11220	10381
IV	1154 (958)	937 (769)	41	148	206	453	493	563
V	1548 (1265)	1333 (1158)	184	589	913	1462	1499	1519
VI	3286 (2876)	2253 (2084)	845	1794	1653	4952	5297	4720
VII	1689 (1511)	1422 (1316)	78	213	222	494	653	782
VIII	7317 (5210)	4895 (4011)	308	1038	1567	2607	2485	3602
IX	2936 (2407)	1961 (1771)	102	328	470	1430	1100	1208
Totals	34631(27399)	26043(22562)	4130	9342	9000	23267	24672	24118

0 General: books, libraries, bibliographies, almanacs, encyclopedias, dictionaries.
I Philosophy: philosophy, psychology, logic, ethics.
II Religion: religion and atheism.
III Soc. Science: sociology, historical materialism, statistics, politics, economics, finance, government, law, army-navy, insurance, education, transport,metrology.
IV Philology: linguistics, foreign languages, Russian language.
V Exact Science: natural science, mathematics, astronomy, physics, chemistry, geology, biology, botany, zoology.
VI Applied Science: medicine, veterinary science, engineering, mining, transport technology, agriculture, printing, accounting, trades, crafts, building.
VII Art: art, architecture, music, theater, sculpture, games, sports.
VIII Belles Lettres: theory and history of literature, criticism, foreign and Russian literature.
IX History: history, geography, biography.

Childrens' stories and popular songs were usually included in subject VIII in the Soviet period, and school books were allocated by subject. I have re-classified pre-revolutionary headings as follows: school materials (II=15%, IV=45%, V=20%, VI=10%, IX=10%), childrens' books (II=20%, VIII=80%), and "people's publications" (II=35%, III=5%, V=5%, VI=5%, VIII=50%).

Sources: Statistika proizvedenii pechati, vyshedshikh v Rossii v 1912 godu, (St. Petersburg, 1913), pp. 2-5, Statistika proizvedenii pechati, vyshedshikh v Rossii v 1915 godu, (Petrograd, 1916), pp. 4-9, N.F. Ianitskii, Knizhnaia statistika sovetskoi Rossii, 1918-1923, (Moscow, 192?), p. 35, Piatiletnii plan khoziaistva pechati SSSR, (Mosocw, 1928), p. 67.

TABLE 8

Subjects of Books and Pamphlets, 1912-1927 (in millions of copies)

Subject*	1912	(Russian)	1915	(Russian)	1922	1925	1926	1927
General	22.3	(17.6)	11.7	(9.3)	1.6	16.4	11.6	14.7
Philosophy	.8	(.6)	.2	(.2)	.2	.9	.7	.8
Religion	22.4	(16.2)	14.6	(11.3)	.2	2.8	.9	.6
Social Sciences	14.1	(12.4)	31.2	(29.6)	12.1	94.6	68.8	75.7
Philology	9.2	(8.3)	8.8	(8.0)	3.0	19.5	12.9	12.5
Exact Sciences	6.6	(5.9)	5.5	(5.0)	3.4	12.7	10.9	8.9
Applied Sciences	13.3	(12.1)	6.1	(5.6)	7.7	40.1	31.7	21.3
Art	2.1	(1.9)	1.8	(1.7)	.4	3.2	4.0	4.6
Belles Lettres	33.4	(28.1)	22.2	(19.5)	3.5	30.3	30.1	46.4
History and Geography	9.5	(8.3)	5.9	(5.4)	1.9	21.5	7.6	9.0
Totals	133.7	(111.4)	108.0	(95.6)	34.0	242.0	179.2	194.5

*See table 7 for an explanation of subject categories. Slight differences between these totals and those in other tables are due to rounding. Substantial differences between the totals for 1925-27 and those given in table 1 are apparently due to the quality of the data.

Sources: Statistika proizvedenii pechati, vyshedshikh v Rossii v 1912 godu, (St. Petersburg, 1913), pp. 2-5, Statistika proizvedenii pechati, vyshedshikh v Rossii v 1915 godu, (St. Petersburg, 1916), pp. 4-9, Pechat' RSFSR v 1922 godu, (Moscow, 192?), p. 27, Piatiletnii plan khoziaistva pechati SSSR, (Moscow, 1929), p. 67.

TABLE 9

Subjects of Soviet Books in Percent of Printers Sheets

	1925	1926	1927
General	7.4	8.2	9.2
Philosophy		1.0	
Religion	1.0	1.0	
Social Science	35.7	36.5	33.7
Philology	12.9	13.9	13.6
Exact Sciences	7.0	8.9	8.3
Applied Sciences	9.8	13.6	11.2
Art	1.0	1.1	13.6
Belles Lettres	8.0	11.4	16.7
History and Geography	9.5	5.3	5.3

Source: Piatiletnii plan khoziaistva pechati SSSR, (Moscow, 1929), p. 67.

TABLE 10

Newspaper Content (In Percent of Total Space)

	Gazeta kopeika	Rabochaia Moskva		Bednota		Kres'ianskaia Gazeta	
	1913	1917	1922	1923	1922	1923	1926
Foreign affairs	12.	10.	10.	20.	15.	18.	12.
Domestic politics	4.	8.	5.	2.	5.	0.	0.
Urban life (Workers)	5.	9.	20.	21.	0.	0.	2.
Rural life (Peasants)	1.	0.	7.	1.	30.	19.	35.
Economy	0.	1.	3.	7.	6.	19.	16.
"Party life"	0.	0.	9.	7.	1.	3.	5.
Culture and education	5.	5.	10.	7.	1.	2.	4.
Entertainment/ fiction	11.	13.	5.	2.	10.	2.	4.
Police and law	8.	3.	1.	3.	5.	4.	0.
Happenings and news briefs	9.	9.	3.	7.	2.	0.	2.
Agronomy and science	0.	0.	1.	1.	17.	14.	4.
Religion	1.	1.	3.	2.	5.	3.	0.
Army/WWI	0.	17.	5.	2.	2.	3.	5.
Headlines	1.	0.	0.	0.	0.	4.	0.
Ads	43.	24.	18.	16.	0.	4.	4.
Other	0.	0.	0.	0.	0.	4.	4.
Total*	100.	100.	100.	98.	99.	99.	99.

*Total may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Sources: Gazeta kopeika, January 4-10 1913 and 1917, Rabochaia Moskva, Feb. 17, 19, 21-26, 1922 and Feb. 2-4, 6-10, 1923, Bednota, Jan. 3, 5-6, 10, 12, 13, 15, 1922 and Jan. 4-5, 10-14, 1923, Krest'ianskaia gazeta, Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23, March 2, 9, 16, 1926.