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PREFACE

This report is one of 13 separate papers by different authors which, assembled, will constitute the chapters of a Festschrift volume in honor of Professor Vera S. Dunham, to be published by Westview Press. The papers will be distributed individually to government readers by the Council in advance of editing and publication by the Press, and therefore, may not be identical to the versions ultimately published.

The Contents for the entire series appears immediately following this Preface.

As distributed by the Council, each individual report will contain this Preface, the Contents, the Editor's Introduction for the pertinent division (I, II, or III) of the volume, and the separate paper itself.
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I. Trends in Soviet Society

The non-coercive aspects of social control in the Soviet Union have comprised a very strong leitmotif in Vera Dunham's work throughout her career. Most evident in her pioneering work, In Stalin's Time, her focus on state-society interaction has also been apparent in numerous scholarly articles and lectures. Professor Dunham has used the phrase "Big Deal" to describe one important use of positive social control under Stalin.

The Big Deal refers to the Soviet regime's tacit alliance with the new "middle class" of engineers, administrators, and managers who were vital to the rebuilding effort after World War II. Rather than relying on coercion, as might be expected in the aftermath of the Great Purges of the 1930s, the regime tried a new tack. This amounted to an accommodation of the personal, materialistic longings of this group of people whose expertise and skills were in critical demand. The goal of the Big Deal was to garner support of these experts and administrators by offering the incentives they wanted most: housing, consumer goods, and leisure time. The conversion of these private aspirations to acceptable public values was the key component of the Big Deal.

While Professor Dunham's analysis of the Big Deal has been confined to the postwar period, the use of accommodation by the regime to deal with the middle class was evident already in the mid-late 1930s and extended well beyond the immediate postwar years. This characteristic of the Soviet system tends to go unnoticed, however, especially in studies of the Stalinist era. Recent refer-
ences to the Soviet Union as the "Evil Empire" have also clouded the existence of other than the negative aspects of social control. However, as the revolutionary ethos recedes further into the background, the use of positive levers to attain many economic and social goals has become more important. Paradoxically, positive, materialistic levers have been used to bolster the political stability of a political system whose very legitimacy is based upon a radical restructuring of society. A thorough examination of the implications of this paradox, an examination continued in the essays that follow, is Professor Dunham's primary contribution to the study of Soviet society.
This paper is descriptive rather than analytical, of the value system, actual as well as prescriptive, that emerged in the USSR in the 1930s as the Soviet society restablized following the turmoil and dissolution of the revolution and civil war, their fervors and early aftermath.

Based on her analysis of contemporary Soviet literature, it is Professor Dunham's hypothesis that, as Stalin's regime moved away from its revolutionary origins, it sought a stabilizing accommodation with the newly emerging Soviet middle class of white-collar administrators and professionals. In exchange for the political loyalty of this group, the regime accepted and endorsed "middleclass values." Her emphasis on negotiation rather than imposition of values, added a new dimension to our understanding of Stalinist culture and society.

Using non-literary sources of the 1930s, especially provincial newspapers, this paper describes the consumerist and

*Prepared by the staff of the National Council
cultural aspirations of the period in its first two sections, that is: "life as it is" (short on consumer goods and culture), and "life as it is becoming" (didactic and propagandistic portents of future abundance in the context of new social values). The later sections of this essay deal with the new privileged elite of the period and its place in the emerging value system. The focus is on the problems of accommodating elite privilege and status, which were particularly troublesome with regard to men as the normal holders of authority; and the process of assimilating "middleclass values" particularly associated with women as the family's natural consumers and culture-bearers.

For readers unfamiliar with that formative time, or for those who may have forgotten, the illustrative materials from the press presented in this paper are vivid and evocative.
Great revolutions overturn values as well as political systems and dissolve the cement that holds societies together. In due course, however, the revolutionary impulse subsides, the society moves towards restabilization, and a new system of post-revolutionary values and norms emerges. In the case of the Russian Revolution, the consolidation of a new political and social order occurred under Stalin; and the values that cemented it are the main subject of Vera Dunham's scholarly work. Her book, *In Stalin's Time: Middle-class Values in Soviet Fiction*, examines the social values and norms of Stalin's Russia through the medium of contemporary Soviet literature. Dunham's hypothesis is that, as Stalin's regime moved away from its revolutionary origins, it sought a stabilizing accommodation with the newly emerging Soviet middle class of white-collar administrators and professionals. In exchange for the political loyalty of this group, the regime accepted and endorsed "middleclass values". That was "the Big Deal" on which the post-revolutionary stabilization of Soviet society was based.

The Dunham argument, with its emphasis on negotiation rather than imposition of values, added a new dimension to our understanding of Stalinist culture and society. But, as we all know, there is more to Vera Dunham than a mere intellectual hypothesis. There is the Dunham method of using literary sources to illuminate society - a kind of alchemy which produces gold out of the dross of Socialist Realism. There is the Dunham style, an inimitable blend of irony, discursiveness and passion which, from the purely literary standpoint, makes her work remarkably more distinguished than the literary works on which it draws. Finally, there are traits in Soviet life which we immediately recognize as "Dunham phenomena", like the "scalloped doilies,"
orange lampshades, and petunias" that she uses as illustration of the lifestyle to which Soviet citizens aspired. Kul'turnost', which implies concern for "cultured" or socially-correct behavior in everyday life as well as demonstrative, socially-motivated appreciation of high culture, is a major Stalinist value in Dunham's analysis. Eager consumerism, which Dunham links with the insecure, status-conscious vulgarity of meshchanstvo, is another. My category of "Dunham phenomena" includes all manifestations of the Soviet kul'turnost' and meshchanstvo that Dunham has so vividly described.

This essay, which is intended as an affectionate tribute to Vera Dunham and the particular insights into Stalinist society we owe her, begins with a survey of "Dunham phenomena" as they appear in non-literary sources of the 1930s, especially provincial newspapers. Consumerist and cultural aspirations in the 1930s are the main focus of the first two sections of the essay. My sources, unlike Dunham's, are not fictional. As sources, however, they have some of the same characteristics as the Socialist-Realist fiction of the Stalin period. To the extent that the newspapers perform a straightforward reporting function, they provide a large amount of data on byt, everyday life. To the extent that (like Stalinist fiction) their function is didactic and propagandistic, they portray life as it ought to be or, in the Socialist-Realist formula, life as it is becoming. With a bow to the common "Socialist-Realist" characteristics of our sources, I present the newspaper data under the headings of "life as it is" (short on consumer goods and culture) and "life as it is becoming" (portents of future abundance, presented in the context of new social values).

The later sections of the essay deal with the new privileged elite of the Stalin period - Dunham's "middle class" and Djilas' "new class" - and
its place in the emerging Soviet value system. The focus here is on the problems of accommodating elite privilege and status within a Soviet framework, which were particularly troublesome with regard to men as the normal holders of authority; and the process of assimilating "middleclass values", which were peculiarly associated with women as the family's natural consumers and culture-bearers.

Life as it is: everyday life reported in the newspapers

Particularly in the early 1930s, life is dominated by shortages. The shortages of food, clothing and housing are the most basic; but from the consumer's point of view, almost everything is дефицитное. Women suffer particularly from the shortages, because they are the main family shoppers and organizers of domestic life. Rationing is in force from 1929 to 1935, and some groups (both blue- and white-collar, in this transitional period of Soviet values) have higher ration priority than others. The newspapers give detailed information on the rationing system and the various categories of ration cards, since this is of vital importance to their urban readers. They also provide extensive coverage on the availability and non-availability of consumer goods - perhaps, since the journalists are men, giving slightly undue emphasis to male consumer items like махорка - and deal intermittently with the black market.
In the Voronezh paper, we find a characteristic report of shortages in the countryside in the summer of 1933. The general store attached to the "Red Partisan" kolkhoz has not had sugar for a year, and it also lacks household items like cups and glasses. Kerosene and soap, if available at all, are in extremely short supply. But at the end of the sowing, tobacco (makhorka) and matches are sent; salt arrives a month or so later.

The towns are generally better supplied than the countryside, but they too experience acute shortages. In Iaroslavl, a week before the opening of the 1935-6 school year, none of the stores have any children's shoes at all. Although bread rationing has been lifted by this time, this industrial town far from the main grain-growing regions still goes short, and moreover prices are higher than in other areas (prompting local dissatisfaction, which the newspaper addresses in a short explanation of Soviet pricing policy). An outraged worker reports his efforts to buy bread in Iaroslavl on one particularly bad day:

On 6 July, I sent my wife, son and daughter in search of bread, and went looking for it myself. We went round the shops and stalls of our ORS for three hours. We were unable to buy any bread. In store No. 10, I stood in line for three hours and reached the front of the queue. I was already getting out my money to pay for two kilograms, when the

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* The Department of Worker Supply (otdel rabochego snabzheniia) in an industrial plant. The ORSy were part of the closed distribution system set up under rationing, but many continued to function after rationing was lifted in 1935.
shop assistant said: "We're out of bread, citizen." My wife went into town. She left at one in the afternoon and returned at five, having finally bought two kilograms of black bread.

The shortages are often attributed in the press to distribution problems. This is at least partly true, for at the end of the 1920s the state had liquidated private trade without adequate replacements in place; and the cooperative and state trading networks functioned very poorly, especially at the beginning of the 1930s. A recurring difficulty is the shortage of packing and wrapping materials: makhorka lies in warehouses because there are no boxes to ship it in, although this consumer item is of particular importance to the working masses; bottled beer disappears from the market in the Caucasus town of Ordzhonikidze because the beer plant has no bottles.

But theft is an even larger part of the problem of shortages. At every point in the state distribution chain, employees are funneling off the goods for their own use or for resale on the black market. Ordzhonikidze's beer-bottle crisis, for example, is the result of systematic theft over a long period by one of the plant warehousemen, who stole a total of 24,000 bottles. In Moscow, deficit goods like suits, woolen cloth and gramophones disappear from the regular stores and turn up in commission (secondhand) stores at vastly inflated prices. When the goods come into the state stores, ordinary customers often have little chance of buying them. When galoshes appeared in Kazan's main department store, "speculators crowded out honest buyers from the counters". When forty bicycles came in, the store manager
kept them in the warehouse and sold them quietly (for a consideration) to friends and black-market operators. Thus, "honest buyers" often have no choice but to buy on the black market. An enquiry among unmarried workers of the Cheliabinsk Tractor Plant in 1935 reveals that 72% bought their last pair of shoes on the black market. (For married workers, the percentage is considerably lower: they had wives to wait in line.)

When goods are obtained, the quality is often appalling. This applies particularly to clothes and shoes, since private tailors, dressmakers and bootmakers were forced out of business during the First Five-Year Plan. The shoe question is extremely sensitive, since the shortage of leather is related to mass slaughter of livestock during the first years of collectivization; and the newspapers handle it with caution. But poor-quality tailoring by the state-sponsored tailors' cooperatives is a subject dear to the hearts of Soviet journalists. "You often see lopsided passers-by on the streets," writes Moscow's evening newspaper in jocular vein. "Who are they? Invalids? No, customers of [the Moscow Sewing Cooperative]. Unwittingly, there are playing the role of living models advertising botched-up suits and overcoats."

In a more serious attack on the same subject, the Leningrad newspaper reports various abuses in the local garment industry, including the fact that the finished products are apt to lack sleeves, collars or linings because someone at the plant has cut them out for resale. The old private tailor would never have dared offer such low-quality goods as are routinely sold by state

* Private tailoring and dressmaking (but not bootmaking) became legal again in 1935, but garments could only be made for a specific customer, and the customer had to provide the materials.
industry and the cooperatives, the newspaper comments. However, if things are bad in Leningrad, they are bound to be worse in Ufa. In 1938, three local party and soviet leaders are so incensed by the grotesquely ill-fitting suits delivered to them by the "Sixteenth Party Congress" tailoring artel that they parade them before a meeting of the Bahkir Soviet, provoking general hilarity and public censure of the tailors.

The housing problem is reflected in many sad stories of overcrowding and sub-standard living conditions, and reports of legal suits relating to contested living space. In one Iaroslavl hostel, flies and bedbugs are so bad that "workers are obliged to take their beds out on to the street at night and sleep in the open". Urban living space is at such a premium that a government resolution on the care of homeless children includes a special warning against foster-parents "who use their guardianship for profit (occupying living space and using property remaining after the death of the parents, and so on)".

Homeless children are not only potential victims of exploitation but also actual disturbers of the peace. The problem appears to be worse in the outlying regions than in central Russia. In Tomsk, the schools are plagued by gangs of besprizorniki who hang around for days on end, using foul language, fighting, and harassing pupils and teachers (one day they "caught passing girls with a rope lasso"); and the local newspaper puts part of the blame on state stores which "freely sell tobacco products and alcoholic liquor to children, even those who are too small to be seen over the counter".

Education is a growth industry in the Soviet Union, and the newspapers give extensive coverage to the problems of school overcrowding (many urban schools are working two or three shifts) and shortage of textbooks, as well
as positive achievements like workers passing their Technical Minimum and peasants learning to read. The back page of all provincial as well as national newspapers carries announcements from local teachers' training colleges and engineering schools calling for applications.

As for cultural opportunities, few provincial centers can match the sophistication of Moscow, where the Hotel Metropole advertises not only dancing and dzhaz but also (in English) "FIVE O'CLOCK TEA". However, movies, including some foreign films, are widely advertised and shown. A survey of young workers reveals that in the last quarter of 1935, 90% went to the cinema at least once, and 70% went to theaters or concerts. Kolkhoz youth cannot quite match this, according to a similar survey a few years later, but 90% went to the cinema at least once in 1937; and, in addition, 37% of the young kolkhozniki say that they own a clock and 24% a radio.

A poignant example of the struggle for kul'turnost' comes from Khabarovsk, a city notable for its high crime rate and the shortage of women. On 12 May 1937, Khabarovsk has a gala opening of its new Park of Culture and Rest: Orchestras played, flags blew in the wind, jazz summoned young people to the dance floor. City dwellers went to the park hoping to relax and have a good time.

While it was light, everything went perfectly. But when evening came, the park began to be flooded with hooligans appearing from nowhere. Taking advantage of the fact that the park is poorly lit and completely dark in some alleys, the hooligans began "doing the rounds"... [They] bumped women unceremoniously from behind, knocked
off their hats, used foul language and started fights on the dance
floor and in the alleys.

While the Park shows Khabarovsk citizens what life is becoming, the hooligans
serve as a reminder that Culture and Rest are still scarce commodities in
life as it is.

Life as it is becoming: the emergence of "middleclass values"

The newspapers point out the deficiencies of the present, but they are
also diligent in drawing public attention to portents of a future when goods
will be abundant and cultured behavior the norm. In Moscow, a luxury foodstore
opens on Gorky Street in 1934 (it is the old Eliseev store, now called
"Grocery No. 1"), and the evening newspaper lists its wonders:

The new store will sell more than 1,200 foodstuffs ... In the grocery
department, there are 38 types of sausage, including 20 new types that
have not been sold anywhere before. This department will also sell
three types of cheese - Camembert, Brie and Limburg - made for the
store by special order. In the confectionery department, there are 200
types of candies and pastries ... The bread department has up to 50
kinds of bread ...

Meat is kept in refrigerated glass cases. In the fish department,
there are tanks with live carp, mirror carp, bream and pike. When the
customers choose their fish, they are scooped out of the tank with the
aid of nets ...
The day after this announcement, 75,000 people visit the store; but it is reported that there are no lines "since there are a lot of cash-registers". High prices are another possible reason for cautious buying. A few years later, this same store is selling hothouse strawberries from the old Marfino estate (now a state farm) at 100 roubles a kilo.

As better quality goods appear (for a price) in Moscow stores in the mid 1930s, a new type of discerning customer also makes his appearance:

This morning, reporter Avdeev bought a present for his wife in Mostorg [department store] - teaspoons. He spent a long time at the counter choosing them, comparing shape, lustre and design. Recently he has been particularly drawn to simple, attractive and well-made things. Earlier, he somehow did not notice crude spoons and bowls in the dining rooms, torn or dirty jackets, ugly ties ...

Reporter Avdeev is clearly a model that others are expected to emulate. It is fortunate that he lives in Moscow, however, since the opportunities for discerning consumerism remain rather limited elsewhere. It is true that even in Tomsk he could buy an artificial palm to decorate the office; and there is a new women's magazine to tell his wife how to knit (if she can find the wool) and make lampshades which are "useful, attractive and rational, and give a soft light in the room". But in the provinces, luxury goods are generally only available by mail-order, to judge from the newspaper advertisements. In 1937, the Irkutsk branch of the state mail-order company offers gramophones at 367 roubles and reconditioned wrist-watches at prices ranging from 280 to 500 roubles.
Nevertheless, in the second half of the 1930s even provincial stores can be relied on to stock some seasonal luxury goods, namely decorations for the New Year elka (fir-tree). "Elka" is officially designated as a children's festival for the winter holidays. Decorations and toys start coming into the stores in late December, and the newspapers give this big coverage. In Tomsk, for example,

Unusual excitement reigned yesterday in the "Children's World" section of the Department Store. Dozens of childish hands stretched towards the counter with its alluring display of New Year (elochnye) toys - beautiful shining balls, fish, pop-guns, little baskets, artificial candy, ribbons, candles and so on.

The Siberian Trading Company (Sibtorg) has already sold more than 130,000 roubles worth of New Year decorations in Tomsk, and is expecting another consignment of toys and decorations from Moscow. One New Year specialty - fruit made out of cottonwool glazed with parafin - is even made locally at the Tomsk Cultural Goods Plant.

Culture in the narrower sense is also available to the population. Large editions of the nineteenth-century Russian literary classics are published: in 1935, 1,200,000 copies of works by Pushkin are issued, 695,000 by Saltykov-Shchedrin, 550,000 by Tolstoy, 515,000 by Nekrasov. Cultural milestones like the Pushkin centenary in February 1937 are generously celebrated in the daily newspapers as well as the literary journals; David Oistrakh is front-page news when he wins first prize at the International Competition for Violinists in Brussels. Asked to name their ideal men
(or women), young workers at the Stalin Auto Plant in Moscow list Leonardo da Vinci, Maxim Gorky and the actor Moskvin along with Stalin and Stakhanov. Education is an even more pervasive theme than artistic culture. "To study" and "to build" are the ubiquitous verbs of the 1930s: they indicate the means by which life is becoming what it will and must be. Kolkhozniki are learning to be tractor-drivers. Workers are studying to go to technical school. Teachers are raising their qualifications by taking courses. Even factory directors go to evening classes. Out of 865 young Stalin Auto workers, 405 state that "continuing my education" is the main personal objective in the next two or three years. Education is a challenge, an opportunity and a reward for achievement. Maria Demchenko, Stakhanovite field-team leader on a Ukrainian sugarbeet kolkhoz, receives her mission to study from Stalin himself:

I said: "Comrade Stalin, I have done what I undertook to do. I want you to give me some new task."

He thought for a moment, and said: "Do you want to study?"

"I want that more than I can tell you."

He turned to his companions and said: "Do you know what, comrades, Demchenko is going to study. She will become an agronomist."

But Russia is still a backward country: there is not yet enough culture to go round, just as there are not enough consumer goods. Inevitably, in a world of shortages, some people have priority access to the supply of material and cultural goods. There are different kinds of priority access,
some highly publicized, others discreetly ignored in the newspapers. The most publicized priority is that given to ordinary people—individual udarniki and Stakhanovites in the factories and collective farms—as a reward for outstanding achievement. The newspapers report this frequently, often in the same story that describes severe shortages for the public as a whole. For example, at the "Red Partisan" kolkhoz, whose store lacks many of the basic necessities of life in 1933 (see above, p. 4), F. Ia. Samsonov is rewarded for working 104 labor days by June 1 with the following special-issue goods: a peasant blouse (tolstovka), 3 metres of sateen for a shirt and a pair of galoshes.

The theme of material rewards looms very large at the widely-publicized national meetings of Stakhanovites held in the mid 1930s. At these meetings, Stakhanovite workers and peasants report their achievements, plans and prizes, while government and party leaders applaud and make jocular interjections. Peasant women, in particular, are encouraged to gloat over their prizes, as the following excerpts illustrate:

Everything that I am wearing, I got as a prize for good work in the kolkhoz. As well as the dress and shoes, I got a sewing machine in Nalchik.

For the harvest, I got a prize of a silk dress worth 250 roubles (Applause).

I got 500 roubles from the Ukrainian Commissariat of Agriculture, and a certificate and pass to a health resort from the regional agriculture department. From the Food Industry Commissariat I got
Sometimes Politburo members press for further details, as in this exchange between Mikoian and the Stakhanovite worker Slavnikova, who operates as a team with her friend Makarova and earned 886 roubles in one month.

Mikoian. And how much did your friend earn?

Slavnikova. My friend earned 1,336 roubles in October.

Mikoian. What does she do with the money?

Slavnikova. I also wondered what she would do with the money. I asked my friend: "Marusia, what are you going to do with the money?" She said: "I am buying myself ivory-colored shoes for 180 roubles, a crepe-de-chine dress for 200 roubles and a coat for 700 roubles."

Material rewards, like culture, are still only available to a few. But they can be won by hard work; and one day, when the building of socialism is completed, there will be abundance for all to share.

Reticence about privileges and rewards

In the real world, not all the crepe-de-chine dresses go to Stakhanovites. A system of priority access to consumer goods also develops for the new middle class of administrators, professionals, military officers, NKVD personnel and members of the creative intelligentsia. This group has a disproportionate share of the society's culture and education, since these are concomitants of elite jobs, as well as a disproportionate share of its material goods. But it is rewarded discreetly for its achievements. The privileges of the elite - high salaries, good apartments, exclusive resorts, servants, access to chauffeured limousines and special stores - are only dimly reflected in the newspapers.
Take, for example, the network of closed or restricted stores that comes into existence along with rationing during the First Five-Year Plan and lasts until the mid 1930s. These are of various types: some cater to workers in factories, some to white-collar employees in government offices, and a third category serves the specialists and administrators attached to different government bureaucracies. The workers' stores (ORSy), though closed to the general public, are often discussed in the newspapers. But the stores for white-collar personnel are invisible (that is, invisible to newspaper readers) as long as they remain part of the closed distribution network. They reappear only after their conversion into commercial stores like "Grocery No. 1" (see above, p. 9) which use the price mechanism to restrict access.

There is less reticence about the Torgsin stores, which sell goods unavailable elsewhere for gold and foreign currency in the years 1930-36.

The Voronezh "Torgsin" brings to general attention that it has opened a department store at 197 Bolshaia Petrovskaia (B.Chizhevka) Street. For sale without restriction [of quantity] for gold, silver, jewelry, coin (old mint coins) and coupons are these goods: textiles, knitteds, perfume and haberdashery, shoes, ready-made dresses, furs, FOOD AND BREAD.

Unlike the later valiuta stores, the Torgsins have display windows in which

* A partial exception is the OGPU Cooperative on Kuznetskii Most in Moscow, serving OGPU employees and members of the OGPU armed forces. The OGPU Cooperative does not advertise in the newspaper, but for some reason it listed itself in the 1930 Moscow City Directory, Vsia Moskva.
scarce goods are temptingly arrayed: foreigners like Malcolm Muggeridge are offended by the unfairness of it, when much of the population goes hungry; and even a Soviet memoirist subsequently recalls his distress looking from outside at "oranges, lemons and mandarins arranged in a big pyramid" and knowing that "for me they were absolutely inaccessible".

But the Torgsins are not visible in order to drive home a point about elite privilege, even though they do serve elite members who receive coupons as part of their salaries. Their visibility is meant to encourage ordinary, coupon-less Soviet citizens to bring out the gold watches and family silver hidden under the bed, so that the state can buy foreign machinery and pay foreign specialists in hard currency.

From time to time, the newspapers report construction of special housing for engineers and other professional groups, but they are generally silent about similar housing provided for high officials. Another topic on which reticence is appropriate is the employment of domestic servants. Servants were a permissible topic and recognized occupational category as long as there was a capitalist bourgeoisie to employ them, that is, until the end of NEP. In the 1930s, they disappear from the occupational statistics and, in general, from public discussion. But the ban is not complete: local newspapers still carry small advertisements on the back page, and these include notices from job-seekers as well as potential employers. Thus, in Iaroslavl in 1935, "middle-aged housekeeper (domrabortnitsa)" seeks work; in Tomsk, "nanny, housekeeper, seeks position"; and in Moscow's evening newspaper, "experienced housekeeper, able to cook, required".
Mixed signals about the New Class

Although Stalin denounced "vulgar egalitarianism" in 1931, this is by no means the same thing as acknowledging the emergence of a new privileged class comparable in position and lifestyle to the hated capitalist bourgeoisie. Nor does the acceptance of "middleclass values" mean the acceptance, in terms of public discourse, of a middle class, since these are regarded as the values of all civilized and cultured people. It is true that the group that Stalin calls "the intelligentsia" resembles the group that Vera Dunham calls "the middle class"; but Stalin's term suggests only a cultural elite, not necessarily a materially-privileged class. The newspapers are reticent, as we have seen, about elite privileges. They exist in the society, but their existence is not unambiguously legitimate.

This becomes evident during the Great Purge, when the newspapers report the downfall of former bosses in a distinctly anti-elitist, populist vein. The tone of 1937 reporting is not new; but it is half a dozen years since the Cultural Revolution, when it was last in vogue; and this is the first detailed expose of Communist (as opposed to professional) elite privileges that has ever been offered to the general Soviet public. Of course, the "enemies of the people" are accused of treason, sabotage and spying, not the possession or even the abuse of privilege. They had privilege, nevertheless; and the Purge commentaries offer a lot of incidental information, usually presented with lively malice, about the luxurious lifestyle of enemies of the people. The director of the publishing house Molodaia gvardiia, for example, not only had connections with spies and traitors, according to newspaper reports, but
also degenerated in terms of his everyday life - he ripped off the state shamelessly. In the rest-house which the publishing firm is building, a luxurious apartment has been equipped for Leshchintser [the director]. Furniture of Karelian birch has been bought for that apartment. He is a bourgeois degenerate.

At Makeevka Metallurgical Plant, the top brass - now found to be enemies of the people - flaunted their power and privilege in a totally unacceptable way:

There was the notorious occasion at the plant when Ivanov [the deputy director] called in a responsible executive, the head of the administrative-economic department, and said: "Call a doctor to my home - the dog has fallen ill."

In Kazan, the former heads of the City Soviet wasted 225,000 roubles of state money maintaining dachas, where they entertained their families, friends and various "suspicious characters" in style:

Here, beneath the canopy of firs and pines, nobody bothered about accounts and accountability ... Lunches, dinners, suppers, snacks and drinks, bed linen - everything was given out free; and the generous hosts, hospitable at the state's expense, paid not the slightest attention to material considerations ...

Bosses are also criticized for their eagerness to get their hands on private cars, a major status symbol in the 1930s:
There is an experimental shop in the Stalin Auto Plant. More than twenty foreign cars were bought for experimental purposes. But many of those cars have been missing from the experimental shop for a long time. Plant administrators and officials from various People's Commissariats are riding round in them.

As the old bosses disappear, a new generation makes its debut. The newspapers publish an extraordinarily large number of biographical sketches of the new men in late 1937 and 1938, and these almost invariably emphasize two factors: their educational qualifications and their humble origins. The typical new man is from a poor working-class or peasant family - though some, of unknown social origin, were orphans brought up in state children's homes - and embarked early on a laboring career, only later and by dint of struggle acquiring an education and moving up in the world to their present eminence. It is clearly implied that these new men are a different breed from the old bosses. As "sons of the working class", how could they succumb to bourgeois degeneracy and abuse power like their predecessors?

This is not a period when reporter Avdeev's appreciation of the finer things in life (see above, p. 10) would be likely to receive favorable mention in the press. However, kul'turnost' is still a value; and a similar story published in 1937 would be likely just to substitute Avdeeva for Avdeev as a connoisseur of teaspoons. Even in 1935, Avdeev was something of an anomaly, because men should not generally concern themselves with the consumer aspect of kul'turnost', which is primarily the business of women. The difference in the rules for New Class men and New Class women becomes more marked during the Great Purges. Education is an advantage for both
sexes, though more important for men because of their responsible jobs. However, a man who rides around in a foreign car and entertains lavishly at the dacha may always be a target of criticism, while a woman who keeps a comfortable home and has a good tailor to make her husband's blue serge suits is just doing her duty as the wife of an otvetrabotnik.

It is generally acknowledged in the 1930s that women have a right and even an obligation to value material possessions, because they are the keepers of the family hearth. They should be shrewd bargainers at the market and connoisseurs at the department store, whereas men should normally be innocent of commercial instincts. Women, moreover, are depicted as the natural bearers of culture within the family. While a successful man may be something of a rough diamond, as befits his proletarian origins, his wife should exert a civilizing influence and make him accompany her from time to time to the ballet.

These womanly qualities are discussed not only in the newspapers but also in the women's journal Obshchestvennitsa, which begins publication in 1936 and continues until the war. Obshchestvennitsa is not really aimed at all women, since journals for working-class and peasant women (Rabotnitsa and Krest'ianka) already exist. It is aimed at middleclass women, and specifically middleclass wives. The obshchestvennitsa is a public-spirited woman (but probably not a party member) who is married to a successful man (probably a Communist) in the administrative-professional class. She does not hold a paid job, but has the time to take on voluntary work that enables her to use her cultural and practical skills for the public benefit.

The women's volunteer movement receives great publicity in the press in May 1936, when an All-Union Meeting of Wives of Industrialists and Engineering-Technical Personnel in Heavy Industry is held in the Kremlin,
with Stalin and other Politburo members in attendance. A similar meeting of wives of military officers is held the following year. The volunteers' role is to improve living conditions and bring culture to their husbands' factories and regiments. At the 1936 Meeting, the industrialists' wives describe how they supervise cooks in the factory kitchens so that the food will be eatable and hygienically prepared, put up curtains and arrange for the installation of bathtubs in the workers' hostels, advise young girls on morals and personal hygiene, plant trees and organize creches, drama groups and study circles.

The women's volunteer movement can be seen, in one light, as a revival of the old tradition whereby upper-class wives saved themselves from boredom by doing voluntary charitable work. Its "bourgeois" character disturbs Krupskaia, Lenin's widow, though her objections sound anachronistic in 1936. However, the movement also has considerable practical utility, as is recognized by the down-to-earth Commissar for Heavy Industry, Sergo Ordzhonikidze, who sees it as a way of circumventing his managers' natural tendency to use the funds allocated for social and cultural needs for purposes more directly related to production. The wives of the nachal'stvo, Ordzhonikidze reasons, can break the bottleneck because they have special leverage, not only over their husbands but also over their husbands' subordinates.

Women and values: the factor of class differentiation

The volunteers' movement is notable as the first occasion since the Revolution when wives (as distinct from women) were treated as a category worthy of respect and capable of performing a useful function. Housewives had previously had very low status in Soviet eyes: they were held to be both
non-emancipated and non-productive. The change in Soviet attitudes to wives is part of the broader readjustment of values in the 1930s that Timasheff labelled "the Great Retreat". Nevertheless, the process is more complicated than Timasheff suggested. The "middleclass values" of the Great Retreat do not apply equally to all sections of society. Specifically, the norms emerging for middleclass wives are different from the norms for lower-class working women, particularly peasant women.

For leisured, middleclass women, obligations to husband and family clearly have first priority. Volunteer work does not take precedence over family obligations. The model to emulate is Professor Iakunin's wife, who joined the volunteers during a boring stint in the provinces and later became a prominent organizer of the movement in Moscow:

But neither ... the bulging briefcase nor the innumerable telephone calls [associated with Iakunina's voluntary work] give occasion to Professor Iakunina to complain that his wife neglects the home. In her room there is exemplary order and warm, feminine comfort. As before, she herself does all the housework without [domestic] help. As before, when her husband comes home he finds a welcoming, attentive wife ...

Volunteers may be encouraged by their successful emergence into the public world to further their education or take paid professional jobs. But, in the opinion of Obshchestvennitsa and its readers, the wife of a responsible professional or administrator should not take paid employment if her husband disapproves, despite the high value generally put on women's employment in the 1930s.
Working-class women, by contrast, are expected to work for wages. It is important to draw them into the labor force, and their husbands have no right to forbid it. Nevertheless, the husband's work is probably more important than the wife's, and she should help him to do it well. When a brigade of middleclass women volunteers visited the homes of skilled railroad workers who were performing poorly on the job, they found cases where "the wife was also responsible to some degree for the poor work [of the husband]" because she nagged him or made scenes.

In such cases, the brigades gently but insistently tried to convince the wife how important it is for an engine-driver to be in a calm and harmonious frame of mind.

"What about him?" responds the wife. "Is he allowed to abuse me?"

The middleclass volunteers "delicately unravelled these complex issues"; but actually the question exposes a contradiction in their own and society's attitudes. For all their family values, they are still very sympathetic to lower-class women abused by their husbands. Engine-drivers, to be sure, are upper working-class, and ought to be capable of rising to middleclass norms. But it would clearly be unreasonable to apply those norms to the lower working class, culturally so close to the peasantry.

The norms for peasant women in the 1930s provide a striking contrast to those for the middle class. Peasant women, like those of backward non-Russian nationalities, still need to be liberated from the oppression of the patriarchal family. Nobody suggests that their first obligation is to husband and children. They should see themselves as producers, persons of importance in their own right who are fully-fledged members of the kolkhoz
as individuals, not just subordinate members of households as they had been in the old village community. The modern kolkhoznitsa should strive to be a Stakhanovite, even if her husband disapproves. The message of women's liberation is strongly emphasized in the speeches of peasant women at the Stakhanovite meetings of the 1930s:

Comrade Stalin very correctly said that woman was earlier oppressed. That was particularly clear in our Armenian village, where woman was a real slave [reports an Armenian woman who has become a kolkhoz brigade leader]. Now our kolkhoz women have become free, now they sometimes earn more than their husbands. And when you earn more than your husband, how can he oppress you? That makes him curb his tongue.

If peasant husbands stand in the path of their wives' progress, the wives are justified in divorcing them, though divorce in higher strata of Soviet society is already frowned upon. Peasant women Stakhanovites can refer proudly to divorce as an episode in their emancipation:

They married me off [at 16]. I was married against my will, according to the old custom that still survived then [in Bashkoria]. After living with my husband for a year and a half, I separated from him and began to work independently in the kolkhoz. There I got the opportunity for a good life.

They may also speak patronizingly of their husbands in public, if the husbands' consciousness lagged behind their own:

When I joined the kolkhoz in 1929, I had to struggle not only with backward kolkhozniki but also with someone very close to me - my husband. But I overcame him. My husband has now joined the kolkhoz
and is already doing pretty well. In 1935, he became a shock-worker, won several awards and received good prizes.

These same peasant women Stakhanovites eagerly embrace other "middleclass values" like acquisitive consumerism and kul'turnost' (see above, pp. 13-14); and are applauded for doing so. But "middleclass" family values are only appropriate for the upper strata of society - the cultural vanguard that has already modernized and is ready, in the formula of the time, to go forward into socialism. For the lower strata, tradition-bound and culturally backward, the liberationist values of the 1920s are still regarded as relevant even in the post-revolutionary climate of the 1930s.

When Vera Dunham wrote of the "middleclass values" of the 1930s, she emphasized two characteristics in particular: meshchanstvo and kul'turnost'. These, of course, are loaded, pejorative terms (Dunham, being the Carlyle of Russian post-revolutionary historians, is never more memorable and vivid than when writing of what she dislikes), but they suggest some very interesting lines of analysis. As Dunham points out, her new middle class is not only new as a class, but also new in the sense that many of its members are "arrivistes", upwardly mobile from the lower classes and attempting to disengage from their social roots. Meshchanstvo is a middleclass mentality that is insecure and imitative. Kul'turnost' is a striving to acquire culture appropriate to social status. Thus, Dunham's "middleclass values" are those attractive to an insecure, arriviste elite whose members are trying to learn the mores appropriate to their new social position.
However, the New Class of Soviet administrators and professionals that emerged in the 1930s did not consist solely of arrivistes from lower-class backgrounds. This new elite—in contemporary Soviet terminology, "the new Soviet intelligentsia"—was a mixture of arrivistes (vydvizhentsy) and members of the old "bourgeois" intelligentsia. The arrivistes were learning cultural values, not imparting them; and the models available for them to emulate were transplants from Russia's pre-revolutionary educated classes, now members of the new Soviet intelligentsia. From this perspective, the "Big Deal" of which Dunham writes was not just a two-sided agreement between the regime and the new elite. It was closer to a three-way deal, in which the regime endorsed the arrivistes' efforts to acquire (and in the process, no doubt, debase) the culture of the old "bourgeois" intelligentsia.

In some respects, the existence of a privileged new elite was an embarrassment and anomaly in Soviet terms, even given the readjustment of values in the post-revolutionary 1930s. However, seen from within the society, the embarrassment was much less than it seemed to outside Marxist observers like Trotsky and Djilas. In the first place, the prominent presence of arrivistes ("sons of the working class") in the new elite served to legitimate it as a product of the Revolution. In the second place, the new social hierarchy was conceptualized as a cultural hierarchy, headed by those who stood highest in cultural achievements (the new Soviet intelligentsia) and open to ascent by all who acquired the necessary educational qualifications.

In Socialist-Realist terms, the true image of the society was to be found not in "life as it is" but in "life as it is becoming". If "life as it is" lacked culture and consumer goods, the socialist future promised both
to all Soviet citizens. In the meantime ("life as it is becoming"), some deserving groups like Stakhanovites and the new Soviet intelligentsia had priority access: their example served as an incentive to the rest as well as a portent of the universal benefits to come. Seen in this light, Soviet society did not have a new privileged elite: it had a new vanguard, and the vanguard's proudly-displayed kul'turnost' pointed the way to socialism.
NOTES

2. See Dunham, op.cit., ch. 1.
3. Ibid., p. 245.
4. For Dunham's discussion of this term, see ibid., pp. 22-3.
5. Dunham describes meshchanstvo as a "middleclass mentality that is vulgar, imitative, greedy and ridden with prejudice". See ibid., pp. 19-21.
7. Kommuna (Voronezh), 6 July 1933, p. 3.
9. Ibid., 2 January 1935, p. 3.
10. Ibid., 9 July 1935, p. 4.
11. Kommuna, 6 May 1933, p. 3.
12. Sotsialisticheskaia Osetiia (Ordzhonikidze), 24 December 1937, p. 3.
13. Ibid.
15. Krasniaa Tatarsiia (Kazan), 4 April 1938, p. 4.
16. Ibid., 9 April 1938, p. 4.
17. Za industrializatsiiu, 27 May 1935, p. 3.
18. Vecherniaia Moskva, 10 February 1934, p. 3.
19. Leningradskiaia pravda, 8 April 1937, p. 3.
23. Krasnoe znamia (Tomsk), 29 December 1936, p. 3.


27. Tikhookeanskaia zvezda (Khabarovsk), 14 May 1937, p. 4.


29. Ibid., 7 October 1934, p. 2.


33. Obshchestvennitsa, 1937 no. 6, p. 31.

34. Tikhookeanskaia zvezda, 15 October 1937, p. 4.


37. Izvestiia, 5 May 1936, p. 3.


40. Ibid.


42. Kommuna, 6 July 1933, p. 3.

43. Geroini, p. 71.

44. Ibid., pp. 54-5.

45. Ibid., p. 102.

46. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

48. Kommuna, 8 May 1933, p. 4.

49. Vsia Moskva. Adresno-spravochnaia kniga za 1930 g. (listed under "Torgovo-vye predpriiatia").


52. See, for example, Za industrializatsiiu, 26 March 1932, p. 1.


55. Vecherniaia Moskva. 8 January 1936, p. 4.

56. Pravda, 25 July 1937, p. 3.

57. Za industrializatsiiu, 8 April 1937, p. 2.

58. Krasnaia Tararilia, 21 April 1938, p. 4.

59. Pravda, 19 May 1937, p. 4.


61. The national newspapers carry particularly large numbers of these biographies during Supreme Soviet elections in November-December 1937 and June 1938.


63. Vsesoiuznoe soveshchanie zhen khoziaistvennikov i inzhenerno-tekhnichekikh rabotnikov tiazhelei promyshlennosti. Stenograficheskii otchet (Moscow, 1936), p. 130.
64. See Ordzhonikidze’s interjection when Poberezhskaya, wife of the director of the Stalin Plant in Perm, complains of shortage of funds: "Put the squeeze on comrade Poberezhskii" (Vsesoiuznoe soveshchanie, p. 194).


67. See discussion in Obshchestvennitsa, 1939 no. 6, p. 46, and no. 9, pp. 25-6.

68. Obshchestvennitsa, 1939 no. 4, p. 10.

69. See, for example, case histories in Obshchestvennitsa, 1937 no. 3, p. 27, and 1937 no. 9-10, p. 28.

70. Geroini sotsialisticheskogo truda, p. 59.

71. Ibid., p. 87.

72. Ibid., pp. 92-3.

73. Dunham, In Stalin’s Time, pp. 16-17.
