

that it has reason to hope, from unmistakable signs that the more ludicrous extremes of "anti-formalism" in music and the theatre are already being quietly abandoned) that there will be an increasingly wide application of Stalin's final words on the subject:

The pedants and Talmudists view Marxism and its individual conclusions and formulas as a collection of dogmas which 'never' change, in spite of the changed conditions of society's development. They think that if they learn these conclusions and formulas by heart and begin to quote them here and there, then they will be able to solve any questions whatsoever, figuring that the memorized conclusions and formulas suit them for all times and countries, for all of life's contingencies. But only those people can think this way who see the letter of Marxism but not its essence, who memorize the texts of Marxist conclusions and formulas but do not understand their content.

Marxism is a science of the laws of the development of nature and society, a science of the revolution of the oppressed and exploited masses, a science of the victory of socialism in all countries, a science of the building of communist society. Marxism, as a science, cannot stand still; it develops and perfects itself. In the course of its development Marxism cannot help but be enriched by new experience, by new knowledge; consequently, its individual formulas and conclusions must change with the passing of time, must be replaced by new formulas and conclusions corresponding to new historical tasks. Marxism does not recognize immutable conclusions and formulas obligatory for all epochs and periods. Marxism is the enemy of all kinds of dogmatism.

It would be rash to conclude that this is a call for a free and fearless give and take of ideas in Soviet intellectual life, and Soviet readers would probably not interpret it in this way. The Marxist view on a particular subject may be changed to suit new conditions, but this is for the Party or Stalin himself to decide. When the Party decision is made, the new interpretation is imposed no less dogmatically than was the old. Stalin's words are perhaps a warning to the Party itself to avoid pedantry and dogmatism, which give rise to errors in judgment harmful to Soviet society because there is no escape from them until a new Party pronouncement is issued.