

Putin Opponents Omitted From New State Textbooks

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Jailed former Yukos owner Mikhail Khodorkovsky and late oligarch Boris Berezovsky were among the names left out of the draft outline for new standardized Russian history textbooks to be taught in schools.

The unified textbooks, proposed by President Vladimir Putin in February, are expected to replace a diversity of alternative editions that are currently used in schools. Critics have argued that the proposal would lead to a single Kremlin-approved version of events similar to ideology-laden Soviet textbooks.

Anti-Kremlin tycoons Khodorkovsky and Berezovsky were expected by many to be mentioned in the section covering the post-Soviet period, but they failed to make the cut in the 80-page draft that will be submitted to Putin for approval Thursday, RIA Novosti reported Wednesday.

Berezovsky, a powerful “grey cardinal” who controlled much of Russia's economy in the 1990s, is believed by some analysts to have helped bring Putin to power in 1999 but later fell out with him and emigrated to Britain in 2000.

Another influential tycoon, Khodorkovsky, controlled Yukos, once Russia's largest oil company, in the early 2000s. He has been in prison for alleged tax evasion and embezzlement since 2003 in connection with two cases that many observers believe to have been caused by his political conflict with Putin.

In September, Vedomosti reported another case of the authors of the draft textbooks purportedly overlooking the opposition. Citing a draft of the new textbooks, the newspaper reported at the time that they would not mention protests against purported fraud in parliamentary elections that drew tens of thousands of people into the streets in 2011–12.

Sergei Zhuravlyov, a deputy head of the Russian History Institute, told Izvestia on Wednesday that the textbooks could say that rallies both for and against the elections took place.

Though many opposition figures were not mentioned in the draft, it did include plenty of other people who were in the public eye between 1991 and 2012, such as sculptor Zurab Tsereteli, Liberal Democratic Party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, musician Yury Shevchuk, and Chechnya's first president, Akhmat Kadyrov.

Sergei Naryshkin, the State Duma speaker and head of the Russian Historical Society, said the outline's completion does not mean that the debate about Russian history is at an end. The authorities intend to write more textbooks and methodologies for teachers in the future, he said.

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