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Russian Education in Transition Towards Democracy – Future Teachers’ Perspective

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**Thesis abstract**

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**Abstract**
This thesis is a qualitative crossdisciplinary study of Russian education since the break-up of the USSR. Its purpose is to examine the role of education and teachers in the process of transformation towards democracy and civil society in Russia. The country, as well as its people and all governmental and societal institutions have been deeply influenced by changes of the past decade. Education as well is going through transformation as both an institution that is being transformed and an institution that should foster changes in the rest of society.

The methodological approach applied in the research is a combination of moderate hermeneutics and critical hermeneutics. Hermeneutics has been chosen since my research task is to study the meaning of education and teachers' role in the process of transformation in Russia, as well as to make interpretations of questionnaires, other texts and social processes in the context of continuous economical, political and social changes in the country.

The theoretical framework is built from the areas of many disciplines including education, politics, history and sociology. The main concepts of the study are transformation, transformation, democracy, state and civil society. As the main interest has been to discuss teachers' role as reformers the educational perspective is based on critical and transformative pedagogy, Leo Vygotsky's writings on children's social experiences and learning, as well as contemporary Russian educators' views on the relationship between education, society and freedom.

The research aims at exploring three research questions. The first one is concerned with the challenges brought by political, social and economic changes to teachers' work. It is obvious that teachers' work in the new Russia is very much different from what it used to be like in the Soviet times. The change in the value hierarchy as well as the economical and political instability cause conflicts within school, as well as in the relationship between teachers, school and society. In addition, the educational paradigm is now different, and teachers are expected to pay more attention to each child's individuality, as well as to participate widely in various educational activities. This constitutes a great challenge for contemporary teachers, who have not been given enough support and training to teach in such a new environment.

The second research question discusses the role of education and particularly of teachers in the transition process towards democratic civil society in Russia. The discussion of this question is based on both western and Russian literary sources, as well as discoveries of my field work and discussions with a Russian teacher educator. As a result, it becomes clear that in the situation of transformation, decentralisation and institutional inconsistency, it is increasingly important to examine teachers' work in order to gain a real picture of educational transformation. More so, teachers can become the true facilitators of change by fostering democratic values, attitudes and behaviour in their students.

Finally, the answer on the third research question is based on the theoretical framework and the empirical data of the study and its aim is to show how student teachers view their role in the middle of change in school, in education system and in Russian society. The data was collected through questionnaire from the students of the Petrozavodsk Pedagogical University in Autumn 2001. The empirical data reveals that young student teachers are not motivated to work in schools. The important conclusion of the analysis of the empirical data is that student teachers show a clear understanding of the importance of teachers for the development of Russia. In addition, they want to pass values which are significant for democratic citizens, but feel they have no possibilities for it. They are dissatisfied with the current situation and the relationship between teachers and government, and feel that the low social status of Russian teachers limits their influence on Russia's future development.

**Keywords**
Russia, transformation, democracy, teachers, critical pedagogy, Vygotsky, Freire, hermeneutics.
You will not grasp her with your mind
Or cover her with a common label
For Russia is one of a kind
Believe in her, if you are able

Tyutchev (1866)
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1. INTRODUCTION

"Few things tell us so much about a country as its schools. In them we can see one of the most important processes of any nation - yesterday's traditions and today's policies moulding and developing the citizens of tomorrow."
- Nigel Grant (1964, 15)

This thesis is a qualitative multidisciplinary study of Russian education since the break-up of the USSR. Its purpose is to examine the role of education and teachers in the process of transformation towards democracy and civil society in Russia. The recent changes in economical, political and social spheres have changed the country enormously. It is a well-known fact that educational systems are linked to and dependent on different institutions that determine the present and the future of the country. For this reason, education has been deeply influenced by the developments of the past decades.

Since the break-up of the USSR, Russian schools and teachers have been given greater autonomy to work independently, teaching materials and methods have become more liberal and put greater emphasis on children's individuality and personal growth. The curriculum itself has become less centralised and local authorities can add regional features to it. At the same time, economical instability has radically decreased state's expenditure on education. So, schools and teachers have to strive to fulfil new demands with scarce resources.

Education has always served the needs of the state, especially in the Russian case. Now, after Russian constitution has announced that the country is looking forward to democracy and market economy, the state has revised its vision of the Russian education system. Russian schools are now expected to prepare citizens of the "free democratic state". I am convinced that in the situation of instability and uncertainty, as well as increased autonomy of the educational system, it is inevitable that teachers would become one of the most important actors of the educational process, as they are the ones who prepare new Russian citizens behind the closed doors of the classrooms.
The five central concepts for the theme of my research are transformation vs. transition, democracy, civil society and state. A broad analysis of these concepts in the context of economical, political and social changes is presented in the thesis. It is not only each concept separately that matters, it is also the close relationship between all of them that should be kept in mind throughout the study. As far as I can see, education is a political field and a middle ground for governmental and societal actions.

The purpose of my study is three-fold. First, it is important to examine the challenges education and teachers face in Russia in the context of political, economical and social instability. For this reason, I pay a great deal of attention to the analysis of the legacy of the USSR, as well as the current situation in the country itself. All these issues have a direct effect on the system of education and especially its ability to act as a facilitator of change.

The assessment of the contemporary situation in Russia would not be sound enough without primary sources, such as official documents. For this reason, the examination of current conditions in the country is based on both Russian and western literary sources, as well as Russian official documentation. These documents were all read in the original language, Russian, and I have myself translated quotations to be used in the paper into English. This applies to all Russian language literature used in the study. In addition to textual sources, a valuable amount of information on the current situation in Russian education was obtained through an interview with an active teacher educator working in Petrozavodsk, the Republic of Karelia, Russia. Her views are presented throughout the study and in particular when analysing current conditions in Russia and Russian schools.

Second, I examine the role of education and teachers in the process of democratisation. This discussion is mainly theoretical and is based on both Russian and western literary sources as well as discussions with a Russian teacher expert. I have chosen such thinkers as American critical pedagogues Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren, Brazilian transform pedagogue Paolo Freire and Russian psychologist Leo Vygotsky to examine the role of education and teachers for a democratic society. For this reason, theories developed by these educators, e.g. critical pedagogy, transform pedagogy and Vygotsky's writings on children's social experience and learning will be presented and
analysed in the study. In addition, articles of less known Russian contemporary educators Alexander Bermus and Boris Bim-Bad were studied to find out how education and teachers' role are seen among Russian contemporary educators themselves.

Third, I was curious to find out how Russian student teachers see their future role in the process of transformation towards democracy in Russia. The empirical part of my study intends to answer this question with the help of the questionnaire survey conducted at the Pedagogical University of Petrozavodsk. These answers are interpreted in the framework of critical and transform pedagogues like Giroux, McLaren, Freire and Vygotsky. I try to identify and reflect possible reasons for students' views and discuss the question whether we can expect future Russian teachers to act as facilitators of change, i.e. intellectual transformers – as the critical pedagogues would call them.

The methodological approach applied in the research is a combination of moderate hermeneutics and critical hermeneutics. Hermeneutics has been chosen since my research task is to study the meaning of education and teachers' role in the process of transformation in Russia, as well as to make interpretations of questionnaires, other texts and social processes in the context of continuous economical, political and social changes in the country. The research on Russia's today and tomorrow would not be sound without taking the past into account. Hermeneutics is an approach that emphasises the relationship between the research subject and the past.

Furthermore, moderate and critical hermeneutical approaches were chosen for the following reasons. Hans-Georg Gadamer, the founder of the moderate hermeneutics, developed a useful concept of the merging of horizons, which means that the researcher and his/her material are undergoing a continuous negotiation with each other. This type of dialogue is exactly what I have experienced when working on the study. Critical hermeneutics underlines the effect of outside agents because researcher as well as his/her research subject are never surrounded by vacuum, but are in continuous interaction with the outer world. That is why critical hermeneutics calls for critical reflection of the results of interpretation. These ideas are inline with those of critical and transform pedagogy.
The research is a multidisciplinary study involving several fields. The study analyses questions that belong to the area of education. The research is also about politics in general and politics of education in particular, as it concentrates on the interaction between education, society and state. Educational policies are especially important as they uncover the attitude and aims of the state in educational issues.

History is also an essential area for my work because the heritage of the Soviet education system is still echoing in today's practices and minds. Had Russia's past been another, this study would have turned out completely different or would perhaps not exist at all. Finally, sociology is a part of my research fields because the study examines the relationship between school and society, talks about ordinary Russian people and discusses teachers as a professional group. In addition, some sociological statistics has been used. However, I do not consider the study fields as separate entities but closely interlinked. For this reason, the research cannot only be called multidisciplinary, but is also crossdisciplinary.

The structure of the thesis is such that the research questions are presented in the next chapter. The reasons for studying Russian education and teachers as well as previous studies on this theme are discussed in section 3. This is followed by the introduction to the methodological framework of the study, as well as the research data in sections 4 and 5. The main concepts are presented in section 6, followed by the analysis of current conditions in Russia in section 7. The pedagogical frames are introduced in section 8. The empirical data collected in Petrozavodsk is described and analysed in section 9. Finally, chapter 10 concludes the study.

I got interested in the topic of educational transformation in Russia for several reasons. I spent 15 years of my life in Petrozavodsk before coming to study in Finland. My family is still in Russia, therefore current conditions in the country are more than familiar to me. Due to my university major subject, education has always preoccupied my mind. That is why, I started thinking about the link between education and Russia's future development. It is my belief that education should and could help Russia on its way to democracy. This idea lies in the very heart of this study, in which I examine the
relationship between education and transformation towards democracy from various perspectives.
2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this study my aim is to discuss three research themes with the help of different literature (both western and Russian), as well as official documents (Russian Constitution, the Law on Education and the Doctrine of Education) and discoveries of my fieldwork. The empirical part itself will not occupy the main position in my research, but will take the discussion begun by the literary sources further. After identifying current economical, political and social conditions and their impact on educational transformation in Russia, and discussing the role of education and teachers in the transformation period, the analysis of the empirical data aims at finding out how teacher students, the future teachers of Russia, view their role amidst change in school, in education system and in Russian society. The research questions are:

1. How do economical, political and societal changes as complex and multidimensional processes influence education and teachers' work in present day Russia?
2. What is the role of education in general and teachers in particular in the transformation process towards democratic civil society in Russia?
3. How do student teachers view their role in relation to change in school, in education system and in Russian society?

The first research question is examined both theoretically and on the basis of the expert interview. The second question is answered theoretically and empirically using Russian and western literature, as well as official Russian documents. The final question is mainly answered through analysing the questionnaire conducted in the Petrozavodsk Pedagogical University in autumn 2001.
3. THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING RUSSIAN EDUCATION AND TEACHERS

3.1. PREVIOUS STUDIES AND LITERARY SOURCES

Russian education in transition has not been widely discussed in the western literature although a few interesting, recently published books can be found, e.g. Webber 1999, Webber & Liikanen 2001. Most books on Russia are concerned with political, economical and social developments during the past decade. In addition, a fair amount of material on crisis in education in the western countries is available, as well as some literature on education in transition in different ex-communist countries and the former Soviet republics. There is also literature concerned with theory and praxis of education for democracy and equality such as books written by numerous critical pedagogues.

In addition, there are some reports by various international organisations on Russian education. The OECD report, for example, is more of a descriptive policy level document. It identifies “key directions for the reinforcement of the reforms in the light of the challenges faced by officials, communities, enterprises, educators, parents and students under very dynamic and uncertain conditions. Recommendations are offered.” (OECD 1998, 3.) As the OECD report concentrates on national policies, it pays less attention to their implementation and effects in practice. Furthermore, the OECD is an organisation of economic co-operation and therefore focuses more on the relationship between educational changes, economic growth and development of the free market.

Soviet education, on the contrary, has been discussed in a more extensive manner. This is most probably due to the fact that some great achievements of the Soviet education fascinated western educators for decades and have still remained an unresolved mystery. In addition, there has naturally been more time to study the phenomenon of Soviet education that lasted for 70 years.
Though I did not manage to find many books on Russian education, I studied several articles on the topic in various journals, particularly in *Comparative Education, Comparative Education Review, Education and Society, Soviet Education and Society, International Review of Education* and *Studies in Philosophy and Education*.

It is obvious that the research on such a delicate topic as Russian education cannot be done well without "locally" published materials. Fortunately, the number of Russian books on education and educational sciences has been rising in the last decade. New authors are appearing as well as the ones forbidden in the earlier times. Of course, the publishing of educational literature is in some way suffering from the lack of funds, as this literature is not as popular as books on economics or law. Russia has also been quite efficient in entering the Internet. Many official documents and articles used in my study were easy to access through the worldwide web.

The Russian journals, which turned out to be useful for the study include *Pedagogika (Pedagogy), Obchestvennye Nauki i Sovremennost' (The Social Sciences and Modernity), Sociologicheskiye Issledovaniya (The Sociological Research)*, as well as national and regional newspapers that I was able to follow via free e-mails sent out by the press digest of the Russian Ministry of Education.

The subject of education has, in general, tended to be afforded relatively little attention by Western specialists on post-communist countries, with the focus instead lying on the outcomes of political struggles and marketisation policies, armed conflicts and the more obvious social problems such as crime and mass destitution (Webber & Liikanen 2001, 2). Webber (1999, 1) has also pointed out the relative neglect of the subject of Russian education in recent years by the academic community in English-speaking countries, which has preferred to concentrate on matters of politics and economic reform in Russia. A possible reason for this trend could be the association of the term "transition" with economical and political matters, rather than educational sphere. However, in my opinion transition does not only involve the above-mentioned fields. When a country is undergoing a process of transition/transformation, it does involve every institution, every field and every citizen of this country.
As Sirkka Laihiala-Kankainen (1999, 77) writes, we are relatively well informed about the political decisions and structural changes educational institutions have gone through in Russia and Eastern Europe during the past fifteen years, whereas our knowledge about cultural transformations in education in these countries is very limited. Education has been better examined on the macro level, whereas changes on the micro level as well as influences of micro and macro levels on each other has been left unattended.

Nevertheless, journals such as *Comparative Education*, *Comparative Education Review* and *Education and Society* have presented articles on Russian education. These, however, have mostly concentrated on specific topics, such as private schools, textbooks, history teaching etc. Therefore, more holistic approaches towards the developments taking place in Russian education have been rare. In addition, Russian teachers have been given little attention. Among the few recent Finnish publications on Russian teachers one can mention Markku Lonkila's *Social Networks in Post-Soviet Russia: Continuity and Change in the Everyday Life of St. Petersburg Teachers* (1999), which concentrates on social networks and their role in the adaptation of an individual to the new social order, as well as stability and change in social networks during the period of transition. In Lonkila's study, teachers were chosen to be studied because, as a social group, they are in many ways similar to those in other countries.

Sari Pöyhönen is working on her doctoral thesis called *The identity at work. The professional identity of Finnish language teachers during the radical change in Russia's education and teaching* (Identiteetti työssä. Suomen kielen opettajien ammatti-identiteetti Venäjän koulutuksen ja opetuksen murroksessa). This work describes teachers' professional identity in the middle ground of old and new and during social, cultural and educational changes. This study has a dialogical approach, e.g. considering both individual and contextual components influencing the formation of the professional identity. That is why more emphasis will naturally be given to social factors influencing teachers' identity, rather than teachers' influence on the social environment.
As a conclusion from the above analysis of previous studies and ongoing research, teachers' role in the transition process towards democracy and its influence on the creation of civil society in Russia has not been studied more profoundly, which makes the topic of my research new, as well as important.

Russian journals have concentrated on educational issues primarily because schools influence the future of the newly "emancipated" state and are considered to be in great need of structural and contextual change. Special journals for educators touch on different matters. However, in my opinion most of them present education's role for the future of Russia in a declarative and partly even rhetoric form.

3.2. THE BENEFIT OF THE STUDY FOR OTHER COUNTRIES

The issues dealt with in the present study do not only involve Russia; there are many countries facing similar transition processes in education. These are the ex-communist countries of Eastern Europe, as well as many countries in Africa and Latin America. Of course, each country is unique and no policy/practice successful in one country could be expected to work equally well in another. However, every country that has to transform its economic, legal and political system to a market economy, democracy and the rule of law, faces similar problems (Nystén-Haarala 2001, 5). There are, for example, problems of values, contents and methods of education; allocation of resources and legislative acts. My suggestion is that countries should not work alone on these complicated issues. Instead, they should share and exchange experiences, try to solve problems together. After all, in the world of ongoing globalisation most of the countries become closer connected to each other.

However, my research work should not only be thought of as valid for the so called "new democracies". The recent developments in European politics made me conclude that democracy is more or less in crisis everywhere. The participation rates in elections are low, as was recently proved by the French presidential elections (2002). Sadly, people with extreme and undemocratic views have been conquering peoples' attention and are in leading political positions. This situation makes me think that democratic values are at stake and therefore something should be done to change the situation,
otherwise some countries could be coming closer to the Weimer scenario\(^1\) than Russia was at the beginning of the 1990's. That is why I ask if education could solve the problem of dissolution of democracy in Europe.

When exploring the topic of education in transition/transformation, we inevitably have to try to answer the question of the role of education in society. This study focuses on the question in the Russian context. However, I suggest the reader to analyse the role of education in his/her own society, and the link between education and society in particular. In this way, the present study will not only be of interest to those concerned with educational transformation; what I hope is that readers from the so called stable democracies will equally benefit from my research work.

3.3. THE NEED FOR THE STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF POLITICAL, ECONOMICAL AND SOCIAL CHANGES IN RUSSIA

As for the current situation in Russia, the topic of my research is urgent. The transition process has already changed the country in many ways and there is certainly more to come. The future of the country is widely and eagerly discussed. As has been stated by Russian government officials, Russia is on her way towards democracy, even if it is not yet certain which kind of democracy it will be. Democracy presupposes certain liberally developed institutions, e.g. legislation, party system, etc. One of the vital requirements is the civil society. Even though the role of the civil society in Russia has not yet been determined, it should be developed to its full capacity and maintained, because without the active participation of Russian citizens, there is a danger of power getting consolidated into the hands of the elite. More so, I would argue that the consolidation of power has already begun. Russia is a country with small middle class, the gap between the rich and the poor is huge, and it is not a secret that the country is largely controlled by powerful oil oligarchs.

In my opinion, the future of the Russian Federation is very much dependent on teachers and teacher education. As Donald Amstine (2000, 235) puts it:

\(^1\) Weimer scenario refers to the time when Hitler was legitimately elected to rule Germany in the time of great social and economical instability.
The people with whom we associate have a powerful effect on the way we think and feel. They shape our values and our attitudes; they stimulate us to think or discourage us from thinking.

Everything in education reflects attitudes and values. Things like contents, methods, atmosphere and structure bear a certain way of thinking. Teachers always, either consciously or unconsciously transmit values, attitudes, behaviour patterns etc. In addition, schooling is a long process. For example, formal education in Russia could soon take up to 12 years if the 12-year school system is approved, which means that the impact teachers have on students' development is, undeniably, extensive and continues for many years.

It is clear, however, that socialisation and every day interactions are not enough to prepare people for democracy. This is especially true for Russia where inequality, poverty, instability and human rights violations can disrupt whatever democratic values school is trying to put forward. Therefore, school and education are crucial, as long as teachers, educational authorities and policy makers realise that education has a much wider role than teaching reading, writing and counting skills. There is no doubt that school's social and political role has been well understood by those in power. Therefore, it is now time for teachers to understand their social position and influence on students.

However, in Russia the democratic society that teachers should prepare their students for does not yet exist - it is the future goal. John Dewey once said that to answer the question of what education should be for the society, we should have "a definable notion of a desirable society" (see Dewey 1985). If the desirable society for Russia is based on democratic values and practices, education's task should be to transmit and support them.
4. METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

4.1. QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

I consider my research as a qualitative study because I am searching for meanings and understanding of certain historical and present-day phenomena. Furthermore, I examine issues concerned with human life. Renata Tesch (1990, 2) writes that when we ask questions about human affairs, the response comes in sentences, not numbers. We collect as "data" narratives, or stories. Likewise, observations result in notes; again we deal with stories. As far as I can see, one of the most important things for the qualitative research is the quality of stories or narratives, but not their quantity. Tesch claims that there is no one definition of qualitative research. However, the only agreement we would find among qualitative researchers is that analysis is the process of making sense of narrative data. (ibid. 4.) On the basis of this I define my study as qualitative: I study narratives produced by students and one teacher educator, as well as other texts important for the topic of my research.

More so, I call my research a qualitative holistic one because I aim at presenting a broad picture of Russian education and teachers. In addition, this picture is not solely based on primary and secondary sources. This picture is rather a product of my reflection on texts and narratives, the merger of my personal past and present knowledge with information gathered in the process of working on this study. Those types of research that rely mostly on scholarly reflection treat the data holistically, allowing the analysis to build on intuition and on insight that are achieved through deep immersion in and dwelling with the data (ibid. 60).

According to Tesch (ibid. 98-99), two central groups of research types exist. These are structural analysis and interpretational analysis. My research is clearly an interpretational one because instead of interest in some kind of regularity in the organisation of the phenomenon under study as in structural analysis, I am more
concerned with the "meaning" of education and teachers for the future of Russia. When the researcher is mostly interested in "meaning" he/she interprets and looks for "themes", some of which might not be directly expressed in the data, but emerge from them upon intensive analysis. Rather than searching for relationships, the researcher looks for commonalities across and uniqueness within the themes. The result is usually a succinct description on a somewhat abstract and therefore general level that highlights the essential constituents of the phenomenon studied. (Tesch 1990, 60.)

4.2. HERMENEUTICS

Choosing the suitable approach and the right method for my research was not an easy task. For some time, it was unclear whether the results of the questionnaire would play a primary or a secondary role in my thesis. I also started thinking that research methods used in education have all been developed some time ago and therefore may not necessarily reflect the situations in reality today. The world is changing so fast that perhaps it is not possible to update the research methods that are supposed to help when examining the world changing so rapidly. Therefore, I came to the conclusion that choosing too rigorous a method could limit my capacity of exploring the topic from different angles. Finally, hermeneutics, although being one of the oldest research methods, provided a flexible framework with certain basic assumptions; it clearly was the most suitable paradigm for my research work.

In the quotation at the start of the paper borrowed from Nigel Grant there is an indirect indication of hermeneutics that defines my approach to the research topic. Unlike most qualitative researchers, hermeneutic researchers make sure to include in their considerations the historical context which every experience is "part of" (Rowan & Reason 1981 in ibid. 68). As explained in the previous chapter, my research is interpretational. The hermeneutic approach seeks to elucidate and make explicit our practical understanding of human actions by providing interpretation of them (Packer 1985 in ibid. 37). More so, it takes action as an access through which to interpret the larger social context of meaning within which it is embedded (Aanstoos 1987 in ibid. 37). Therefore, hermeneutics represents a suitable approach to my research topic, allowing me to interpret the meaning of education and teachers in the process of
democratisation, and analyse this in the context of greater social, political and economical transformation.

However, if we characterise hermeneutics as a study of theory of interpretation, we should also note that the paradigm of textual interpretation dominates hermeneutical studies. Nevertheless, hermeneutics has moved beyond its concern with the written text and spoken word to a more universal conception. Hermeneutics also deals with non-textual phenomena such as social processes, human existence and the Being itself. (Gallagher 1992, 4,6.)

Gallagher (ibid. 9-11) maps out the field of hermeneutics by distinguishing four contemporary but different hermeneutical approaches. He terms these approaches as conservative, moderate (Gadamer's), critical and radical hermeneutics. For my research, I decided to include the ideas of moderate hermeneutics of Gadamer who, in the words of Gallagher (ibid. 12): "more than anyone else on the contemporary philosophical scene, has attempted to work out the universal hermeneutics...". Another equally important hermeneutical approach used in my study is critical hermeneutics. I employed the most appropriate ideas for my research from both approaches.

4.2.1. Hans-Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics

Gadamer's hermeneutics does not offer us an individual method, but a holistic, creative and self-critical model of thinking and working (Koski 1995, 28). It does not primarily aim at objective knowledge using different methods, nor does it believe in the existence of such knowledge as the conservative hermeneutics does. Gadamer's hermeneutics comes from a belief that the interpreter and the object of interpretation are in relation with each other through the context of tradition. For this reason, the interpreter can never begin the interpretation from a completely neutral position. (ibid. 35.) Gadamer's hermeneutics puts emphasis on the dialogue, on the creative conversation, on the communication between the text and the reader, where the merging of horizons is taking place (Gallagher 1992 in Koski 1995, 35). For this reason, the interpretation always contains a new creative element (Koski 1995, 35).
The ideas of Gadamer come close to the way I started working on my research. First, realising and reflecting on my personal knowledge of the topic. Later, finding materials on the topic and looking at what my sources tell me, both primary sources (Constitution, Doctrine of Education, Law on Education, questionnaire) and secondary sources (books and articles). The third step was trying to combine my previous knowledge and the new ideas found in my sources. The final step was to apply this knowledge and answer the research questions concerning teachers' role in the making of the future of Russia. These four steps come close to Gadamer's theory of hermeneutic experience.

4.2.2. Critical hermeneutics

The aim of my research is to take up a critical perspective on the topic. The critical branch of hermeneutics, mostly influenced by Habermas and Apel, gives me a possibility to look critically at the result of my interpretation, e.g. the result of the merging of horizons. If Gadamer is mainly concerned with the language, critical hermeneutics tries to take into account the outside agents as well, such as the economical foundations of the society and other power relations. Critical hermeneutics aims at exposing the "wrong" consciousness and the ideological nature of our systems of beliefs. The goal is individual and social emancipation from the hegemony of political and economical class society. (Koski 1995, 37.) The ideas of critical hermeneutics are, therefore, very close to the ones of critical pedagogues, e.g. Giroux, McLaren, Freire, who also believe that knowledge and language are distorted and influenced by the ruling powers.

4.2.3. The synthesis of moderate and critical hermeneutical approaches

One big difference between moderate and critical hermeneutics is their response to the tradition. Gadamer with his moderate hermeneutics looks at tradition to find something useful, valuable, something to integrate into the present; Habermas's critical hermeneutics looks at the tradition to uncover something to criticise, distorted by power, and something to get emancipated from. (ibid. 220.) However, in my research neither Gadamer's nor Habermas's view on their own would be appropriate. In my opinion, we could look at the past with criticism and admiration at the same time. I am convinced
that there is something distorted and something to get emancipated from in both Soviet and Russian tradition, as well as something to preserve.

For this reason, both Gadamer's and Habermas's views are important and I use them interchangeably - bearing in mind that language, knowledge and history are always somebody's knowledge and therefore never value-free, as advocated by critical hermeneutics. Habermas' critical hermeneutics is very important because its ideas are connected to those of critical pedagogy and therefore build a clear link between the methodological and theoretical foundations of my study. In addition, I believe that tradition is not necessarily a negative thing and old beliefs should not be automatically rejected in order to preserve the best cultural features of the country. I am certain that if Russian educators and especially policy makers would not have been so extremely keen on trying to destroy everything that was created in Soviet education, but would have rather tried to choose the positive elements to keep and cultivate, Russian education would now have a more stable basis to build upon.
5. THE INTRODUCTION OF THE DATA

The research material of my thesis is three-fold. First, it consists of *official documents* that were published separately or quoted in newspapers and media. Second, the answers to the *questionnaire* by 72 Russian students in November 2001 in Petrozavodsk. Third, an *interview* with a teacher educator was conducted in November 2001 before the data collection through questionnaire took place.

In spite of the fact that my questionnaire and interview data were collected only in Petrozavodsk, the Republic of Karelia, I consider my study to be valid for other parts of Russia as well. The process of transformation that Russia is currently undergoing has affected the whole country in a colossal way. Of course, some areas, mostly the ones with rich natural resources or well developed industries, managed to avoid some painful consequences of political and economical changes. Nevertheless, the past 10 years have changed the entire country enormously.

The data collection with the questionnaire was carried out at the Pedagogical University. In Russia, the curricula for the institutions of higher education are mostly determined federally and therefore pedagogical universities all over the country possess a lot of similarities in their curricula, teaching materials and methods. More so, the russification policies of the Soviet period managed to delete regional features and cultural differences that the residents of various territories used to possess in the former times. In Karelia, the majority of inhabitants today are of Russian origin. Though regions belonging to the Russian Federation (Russia) are now allowed to re-develop the lost cultural identity, I believe it will take years if not decades to rebuild something that was so carefully and deliberately destroyed.

Furthermore, the statistical surveys that I use in my study (Smirnova & al. 1995, Ziyatdinova, 1992) did not detect any major discrepancies of opinions on questions concerning education and teachers' profession in different areas of the country. That is
why I believe that the findings of my questionnaire at least to some extent represent Russia in general.

5.1. OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

The empirical part of the research consists of a number of primary sources, such as *Russian constitution, Law on Education* (1992), *National Doctrine of Education* (1999) and reports and documents from official sources as well as speeches of government representatives mainly published or referred to in newspapers and media. In addition, a book called *Obrazovanie - Shag v Buduchee* (Education - a Step into the Future) is widely used in this piece of research. It was published in Petrozavodsk in 2001 and includes the main points of recent modernisation plans of Russian education, as well as reports and comments by Russian government officials on them.

5.2. QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire for teacher students was delivered in Autumn 2001. I chose teachers to be my research subjects for several reasons. First, teachers in Russia have now been given the right to work autonomously. Though the Law on Education does establish certain rules and frames for a teacher's work, it still offers much more liberty than teachers experienced in the Soviet times. Second, when teacher closes the door of his/her classroom, there is nobody between him/her and the students. Therefore, teachers' potential influence is enormous. This influence does not only extend to the mastery of different school subjects, but to students' attitudes, values and behaviour as well; this way teachers on their own behalf shape future Russian citizens and therefore the future Russian society.

To make the empirical data more manageable for interpretation, I decided to concentrate on student teachers rather than in-service teachers. Understandably, older in-service teachers have much more experience and have most probably worked in both Soviet and Russian schools. Therefore, they have more "baggage" and each should be treated as an individual whose previous experiences are examined carefully before making any conclusions and generalisations. I thought that by choosing students in a teacher training
Institution, the findings of my empirical data would be more reliable with less intervening variables, as the students have all gone through more or less similar school system and university programme even though they have chosen different major subjects. This, however, does not put any less value on their personal experiences, which are certainly important and have an effect on their interpretation of Russia's educational ethos. In addition, for me being a young teacher student myself, it is easier to understand and relate to people of the same age.

The questionnaire (see Appendices, both original Russian version and English translation available) was handed out to the students of the Petrozavodsk Pedagogical University in Karelia, Russia in November 2001. The questions were sent via e-mail and distributed during a lecture by a teacher educator. As a result, I received 72 students' answers personally from the teacher educator on my trip to Petrozavodsk in December 2001. Out of 72 questionnaires, only 2 were returned almost empty. The rest 70 were answered well enough to give me some idea on how teacher students view their role amidst change.

The questionnaire was answered by 3rd and 5th year students. Students from the 3rd year of study will be awarded a diploma in technology and entrepreneurship. The diploma should allow them to work either as technology (handicraft) teachers in schools or engage in small business. The main idea behind such a new programme is to attract more young people to the field of handicrafts and on the other hand, offer them a wider choice of professions after graduation. However, I have doubts if such a solution will be able to cure the current shortage of handicraft teachers in the long run if most of them choose this degree in order to engage in small enterprises.

The 5th year students study physics and mathematics as their major subject, which means that these are the subjects they will teach later in schools. Though students who answered the questionnaire represented two different years of study (3rd and 5th), they are all more or less of the same age (20-22) because students of the faculty of technology (3rd year) entered university after a vocational school and therefore already
possess a profession (mainly as managers in tourism)². In both programmes, i.e. technology and mathematics/physics, the number of study hours in educational sciences is the same.

Students were asked questions on various subjects. First of all, knowing the low interest in school work among contemporary young people, I wanted to find out whether the students who answered my questionnaire want to work as teachers. This question is important as it shows students' attitude towards the teaching profession in general. Furthermore, I found it necessary to know what is the value basis of future teachers. In particular, I aimed at discovering whether future teachers would mention values significant for civil society and active citizenry. Another important subject was education's and teachers' possibilities and role in the process of transformation. The few questions that concentrated on these issues aimed at finding out whether student teachers see education and themselves as significant in the great educational change in Russia. Finally, I wanted to understand how students describe the present situation in the country in comparison to the Soviet times. This question helped me to see what changes brought by transformation are important for teacher students.

5.3. INTERVIEW

One staff member was interviewed before the questionnaire was handed out to students (transcription available in Russian only, not attached to the research paper). She is a female teacher in her early 40's who works at the Pedagogical University of Petrozavodsk as well as the Centre for Teachers' Qualification Improvement, which organises in-service teacher training. The purpose of the interview was to get a professional teacher educator's perspective on the current situation in Russian education and on the changes that were taking place at the Petrozavodsk Pedagogical University. Her personal views on teachers' role in the process of transformation were considered

² In Russia, higher education is divided into 5 study years and usually students in one year are of the same age because it is not possible to take courses from other study years. In addition, it is not yet popular to receive a second higher education degree or enter university at an older age as in Finland, for example. Therefore, usually students of the 3rd year would be 2 years younger than those from the 5th year. However, in this case 3rd
valuable, her being an expert of teacher education in Russia. Throughout the study I refer to this expert interview.

The open expert interview was carried out in November 2001 at the interviewee's place in Petrozavodsk. The whole conversation was taped and transcribed upon my return to Oulu. The Russian language transcription consists of 13 pages. I prepared a preliminary list of questions beforehand. As the interview took place at the beginning of the work on the study, I wanted it to be very open and aimed at discussing various important subjects in Russian education. Among the discussed issues were changes in the system of education since the break-up of the USSR, the value basis and teaching methods of contemporary Russian education and the decentralisation of education. More so, the teacher expert provided me with valuable knowledge on the division of responsibilities between federal government, local authorities and schools.

In addition to the information on Russian education in general, my interviewee told me about recent changes at the Pedagogical University. We discussed the new curricula context, the autonomy of the university and the environment within and outside the university, and in particular students' attitudes. Finally, we concentrated on education's and teachers' role in the process of transformation. We discussed whether teachers can influence the future development in Russia, as well as the link between education, state and society.

I found this interview very useful for my study. My interviewee was very open and presented different views on the subjects we discussed. I felt that she represents the so called new teacher generation, who is looking forward to innovations and development. She also expressed a critical attitude throughout the discussion, which helped me to find out both positive and negative sides of the ongoing change.

...year students entered the university a few years later and are therefore of the same age as students from the 5th year, around 20 years old.
6. THE MAIN CONCEPTS IN THE CONTEXT OF TRANSFORMATION IN RUSSIA

Five concepts are of major importance to my study. These are transition vs. transformation, democracy, civil society and state. The discussion of these concepts will follow below. The purpose of the discussion is not, however, to simply offer definitions of the concepts. My intention is to examine and analyse different meanings of these concepts as well as the processes they bring about. More so, I see a strong link between them, as Russia is undergoing a process of transition towards democracy, democratic state and civil society.

6.1. TRANSITION AND TRANSFORMATION

One of the most important phenomena that has influenced my research work is the process of change. Change has many definitions and forms. In the Russian context, changes that have been going on in society and education system since the end of the 1980's are usually described by terms transition or transformation. Due to the complex nature of these concepts, I had to stop and take time to think what they actually mean and how they are used nowadays. More so, I had to make a decision of how to use these complicated terms in my research. The discussion below describes my thinking process and its results.

We often hear debates concerning transition and transformation in society in general and in education in particular. The terms are frequently used when referring to ex-Communist countries that are currently undergoing change towards democracy, market economy and the rule of law. However, it is not that easy to go deeper and try to define these concepts. On the other hand, one might wonder if it is even necessary to clarify them. I have read many articles where transition or transformation were used without any explanation given of their meaning. Therefore, at least to some extent these terms have become axioms.
When considering thoroughly the problem of terminology I came up with an idea that transition can also be described as a chain of phases that precede or end with complete transformation. Therefore, transition is certainly a process, but not a final result; just like in the common language the word "transit" means a passing point on the way to final destination. If this argument is relevant, then transformation as a term cannot be applied to the current situation in Russia, as it is obvious that the country is still far from being transformed. On the other hand, it will be hard to detect when exactly total transformation will be accomplished.

6.1.1. Do transition and transformation refer to the same phenomena?

First of all, should changes that are currently taking place in Russia be called transition (tranziciya/perehod) or transformation (transformaciya/prevrachenie)? I have often noticed that these terms are used as synonyms. For example, "after the collapse of communism, Russia has been in a process of fundamental socio-economic transformation, which can be described as transition to market economy, democracy and the rule of law" (Nystén-Haarala 2001, 1). Or, "During the past ten years, the transition period in Russia and East-European countries has been widely described and analysed ... whereas our knowledge about cultural transformations in education in these countries is very limited" (Laihiala-Kankainen 1999, 77). As we can see, in these quotations transition and transformation seem to be used interchangeably. On the other hand, one may conclude, on the basis of these two examples, that transformation is being used to refer to social or cultural change, whereas transition is used to describe changes in economical, political and legislative structures.

Furthermore, I have detected that the word "transition" is used more often and might be called an "official" term to describe change. It was brought to the research on education from economics, politics and sociology. The concept is used to describe a process of change from socialistic or communistic social order towards democratic or capitalistic one. Transition has often been thought of as a linear process. However, this view has recently been criticised. According to the criticism, transition is not linear but rather consists of waves, or both progressive and regressive processes. (See Burawoy & Verdery 1999.)
We can easily find traces of both progressive and regressive processes when looking at the transition process in Russian education. After the break-up of the USSR the first democratic law was on education (Law on Education from 1992). The main objective of the Law on Education was to democratise the system of education. However, after the economic crisis of 1998 this process was reversed in order to make the governance of education more centralised.

A good example of such a change of attitude is described by Laihiala-Kankainen (2000). She writes about a collaborative project on the foundation of a Russian-Finnish department in a school in St. Petersburg. Before 1997 the project accomplished its aims well, for instance, personalised studying and modularised curriculum were adopted. However, in the academic year 1997-98, the implementation of the modular curriculum was partly restricted by new demands and regulations from the educational authorities. The new curricula strictly define the maximum school hours per week (35-37 hours), of which more than 90 per cent are used for teaching subjects compulsory for all students. (Laihiala-Kankainen 2000, 114.)

Laihiala-Kankainen (2000) is referring to Dneprov (1998) by saying that this chain of events well illustrates the problems in the reform process of Russian education encountered in the transition period. On the one hand, the new demands and regulations can be understood as a sensible and well-founded effort to standardise the educational network of Russia, which has become too heterogeneous due to reforms, and to introduce some basic standards to guarantee the content and high level of education. However, in this case standardisation, especially of the strictly defined subjects compulsory for all students, is in contradiction with the principles of the individualisation of education. The standardisation can also be seen as a counter-reformers' attempt to return to the centralised educational system and old educational paradigms.

Therefore, with the argument illustrated above and many others, we can see the waves of democratisation interwoven with the ones of centralisation of education in the period after the break-up of the USSR. In addition, my personal view is that it is to be expected that president Putin and his command will try to strengthen state's influence in
educational matters. This trend can partly be seen in his policies in other fields, such as politics or economy, where his intention is to strengthen the "vertical" of power. Concerning education, president Putin has been actively involved in the recent modernisation plans thus insuring that state is involved or has at least tangible control over such an important sphere.

Coming back to the question of transition vs. transformation, does it really matter which term is used? I find this question difficult as there seems to be individual variation in the use of these terms. Some people claim that to them transformation means a process which is more hectic and multidimensional than transition. In addition, transformation has a notion of irreversibility and totality. This means that the transformation process involves every aspect of the object of transformation and in this way assures irreversibility of the process. I agree with this statement.

Another, in my opinion, interesting issue to consider when talking about transition or transformation is time. Do these processes have a definable beginning and an end? On the one hand, it seems clear that transition (or transformation) appears when a communist/socialist system collapses, and the process naturally ends when democracy/capitalism is reached. However, is it possible to know exactly when the Soviet system and therefore communism started to shake, and changes began to emerge?

A tantalising and possibly unanswerable question is whether the Soviet Union was ineluctably on such path [careering towards terminal crisis] when Gorbachev assumed the leadership, or whether he and his associates set it on the path (Saikal & Maley 1995, 2).

Furthermore, how shall we know when the transition is over? This question is even harder to explore, as there are no doubts that the transition process in Russia is far from being over. It is obvious that at this stage transition is taking an explicit form bringing up visible structural, political and economical changes. I would suggest that later on transition will assume a less tangible form. Such implicit transition will take place at the micro level and will therefore be harder to detect.

The question concerning the starting point of the transition process is relevant to this study because it determines the time frame of my research. Though we can easily argue
that the transition process started before the break-up of the USSR, my study will only take account of changes starting from the official collapse of the Communist Empire; 1991 is thus the year when the democratisation process - though uncertain and often threatened - took its official face. Nevertheless, this thesis would be incomplete without a brief summary of the events preceding 1991. This summary is to be found later in chapter 6.1.3. on page 28 ("The pre-phase of transition").

6.1.2. Educational Transition

Educational transition can be defined ... as the more or less simultaneous collapse ... and then reconstruction of state apparatus, political visions of the future, economic and social stratification systems and the deliberate incorporation of the education system, as an active agency and as a message system into this social transition. In the context of such social drama, the educational system itself is redefined ... The education system is both changed by the broader transition and (after rapid redefinition) contributes to the social transition. (Cowen 2000, 6-7.)

The definition above offers an interesting view on educational transition. However, as transition is a concept that was not originally used in education, it is important to clarify its meaning in a broader perspective. A useful framework for the study of the process of educational transition in the general context of political democratisation has been presented by Elizabeth McLeish (1998) and used by Elena Lisovskaya and Vyacheslav Karpov (2001). In this model the following transition phases are detected:

1. The emerging anti-authoritarian climate threatens the prevailing authoritarian ideology and eventually causes ideological collapse of the old regime - pre-phase of transition.
3. National policies are formulated and the nature of the future educational system is clarified as a result of national and local elections - phases 2 and 3.
4. Successful macro-level transition is reached when political consolidation results in the emergence of educational legislation - phase 4.
5. Macro-level transition results in micro-level changes and new laws and policies are therefore implemented at the school level - phase 5.
At first glance, this model seems to reflect perfectly the transition process that Russian education system is going through. However, as pointed out by Lisovskya and Karpov (2001, 45), the explanatory power of this "phased" model appears to depend on a number of circumstances.

It is relevant in the cases where (1) the period of ideological uncertainty is relatively short and does not cause long-term institutional indeterminacy and instability in political and educational spheres; (2) political changes at national and local levels are congruent and do not cause major political and legislative discrepancies and conflicts; (3) political change is relatively rapid and results in the emergence of adequate legislation suitable for implementation at the school level; (4) the economic climate is relatively favourable for political reform, and sufficient resources exist for implementation of educational reform at the micro-level. Under such circumstances, micro level educational transition is induced relatively rapidly by macro-level transformations resulting from congruent political changes at national and local levels. (ibid. 45-46.)

I conclude, on the basis of Lisovskaya and Karpov that the 4 necessary conditions for rapid transformation can be shortly specified as (1) ideological, (2) political, (3) legislative and (4) economical. Though each of these represents an important and complicated field of its own, they should not only be viewed as separate entities. In my opinion, it is possible to construct a step-by-step model, which may also lead to a vicious circle where failure of one element has a negative effect on the rest. For this reason, it is also important to acknowledge the impact of each of these components on one another, as well as on the entire course of transition in order to gain deeper understanding of the complexity of the transition process.

It is logical to assume that if any of the points mentioned above are not followed, educational changes at the micro-level take place in an uncertain institutional and ideological framework. The outcomes of these changes depend on the specific strategies adopted by particular schools and their leaders, no less (and probably more) than on the reforms proclaimed by national and local political authorities. (ibid.). As an extension to this model I therefore suggest that the outcomes of changes also and equally importantly depend on teachers' work besides schools and their leaders. In the context of increased
autonomy, teachers are able to alter the macro-level policies and even recommendations given by the school administration. For this reason, teachers become important actors of educational transformation and are therefore responsible for its final result. As the final result of the ongoing general transition is expected to be total democratisation of society, teachers' role in the democratisation process of Russia is evident.

Let me now examine the notions mentioned above in the Russian context, e.g. whether macro- and micro-level policies complement each other therefore, according to the model, causing a rapid and efficient educational transformation; or whether the inconsistency between macro- and micro-level changes make the latter more important in finding out the real course of transition/transformation.

6.1.3. The pre-phase of transition – the legacy of the USSR

When planning to analyse the educational system according to the above-presented model of educational transition, it is important to start by looking at the pre-phase of transition, where the emerging anti-authoritarian climate is expected to threaten the prevailing authoritarian ideology and eventually cause ideological collapse of the old regime. In particular what I intend to look into here is not the reasons for the collapse of the USSR, but rather to what extent the anti-authoritarian climate was spread on the grassroots' level, therefore pushing forward ideological collapse and democratic changes. Was the democratisation process determined and supported among the "common people", and educators in particular? This is a very important question to ask, as it will help to clarify the extent of cohesion between macro and micro-level policies. Thus, in this chapter I will look at the transition process from a historical point of view.

6.1.3.1. The political control

The Communist Party of the Soviet Union was the only organised force in official political life during the Soviet regime. This ensured political control over all levels of society and the spread and duplication of commands were issued from the single centre. (Obolonsky 1995, 12.) This control was naturally spread over all institutions and education system in particular. Such historically predetermined pattern of ruling the
country also defined the manner in which new policies were adopted in the 1980's - top-down.

The driving forces of political change under Gorbachev came from groups within the Party political leadership of which a critical mass believed that the Soviet system was fundamentally flawed. While social forces may have been underlying causes, they remained latent and do not appear to have been directly influential. (Lane 1996, 6, 18.)

The control exercised by the Party system was obvious. While it is true that policies and changes were largely initiated from above, the grassroots managed to "control" the way policies were actually implemented below.

Policy, then, was subject to the influence of the population. However, that influence was reactive in nature. The CPSU [The Communist Party of the Soviet Union] introduced a measure, and the people passed judgement on it; if it was not accepted, the State would have to respond, sooner or later. (Webber 1999, 21.)

Such grassroots' reaction among educational establishment and society's low enthusiasm at large was the reason for the sabotage of educational reforms in 1984 (see Webber 1999, Chapter 2). This example also provides us with a proof that in order to have real knowledge of an educational reform it is not enough to look into official documents; the reform has to be examined from below and eventually we might find out that the reform at the grassroots' level does not reinforce the official policies coming from above.

6.1.3.2. The grassroots' activity

It was the advent of perestroika that was to allow real change: the grassroots' activity of the late 1980's was able to make the impact it did because of the parallel, revolutionary developments in Soviet society itself (Webber 1999, 23). By the mid 1980's it was already clear to most involved in Soviet education that serious changes would be required not only to meet the social and economic demands of perestroika, but also simply to keep the educational system functioning as a social institution (Kerr 1995). Gorbachev's ideas of educational reform were close to the post revolutionist ones in the 1920's, e.g. education serving the needs of economy, individualistic approach and personality development, teachers' access to policy and decision making.
In the middle of the 1980's, "teacher-innovators" managed to finally attract a good deal of attention from both within and outside the teaching profession. Later, the Soviet public took a closer interest in the issues of education. (Webber 1999, 24.) This was a very important development for the Soviet society, which was not usually permitted a public discussion over educational issues. Further, events at the centre began to follow, rather than dictate, the development at the grassroots' level. This development was reinforced by the appointment of educational experts to leading positions, therefore insuring that innovators' initiatives would be understood by their leaders, who would support them rather than try to halt. Therefore, some signs of plurality in policy making emerged and it seemed like finally macro- and micro levels could work together for the good of the school and the children.

However, the break-up of the USSR, struggles for power, general uncertainty and socio-economical deterioration undermined this glimmer of hope for a constructive reform. People became more preoccupied with everyday changes and survival. The social debate on education in general lost its momentum: fresh political movements were more interested in insuring their position in the new political life, business community was also too busy following new economical developments, parents' unions did not even exist. Meanwhile, in the absence of a healthy civil society and the safety net that this provides to the school system, it was demonstrated to the Russian school system just how vulnerable its position was, as the Ministry of Education entered into a bitter struggle for a control of the reform agenda with the legislature. (ibid. 29.)

At the same time, when teachers were trying to cope with the school reality, the radically determined leaders of the educational reform were preparing huge programmes designed to ensure the irreversibility of the process of the reform. Somewhat surprisingly, they expected the results in two years. Making such demands on the schools placed an unfair burden on them, at a time when they needed support and guidance more than ever (ibid. 30).
6.1.3.3. The problems of the democratisation process

With the help of the analysis above we come back to the initial question of this part of the research, i.e. was the democratisation process determined and supported among the "common people" and educators in particular? The answer is that people generally were in favour of the reform, they were willing to participate and showed interest in discussions concerning educational changes. Though changes were initiated from above, there were educators to follow them below. One of the biggest problems were too big expectations for a too short period, huge modern programmes on the ministerial level but no guidelines and sufficient finances to implement them in schools. Therefore, it is not surprising that in such a confusion accompanied with economical crisis, the micro-level was far from following the macro-level. Instead, schools adopted a policy of coping rather than reforming, which was to continue all throughout the 1990's.

6.1.4. Educational transition model - the Russian context

In this chapter, conditions for stable and rapid transition in Russia will be examined, as suggested by two contemporary educational theorists Elena Lisovskaya and Vyacheslav Kupov (2001).

6.1.4.1. Institutional indeterminacy

First of all, the period of instability can still be said to continue and the whole decade after the collapse of the USSR was full of political struggles: calls for impeachment of Boris Yeltsin (1993 and 1999), the president's dissolution of the Congress of People's Deputies and Supreme Soviet of Russian Federation (1993), short in-office terms of prime ministers (Chernomyrdin, Kirienko, Chernomyrdin again, Primakov, Stepashin, Putin), president's dissolution of the entire government (1998), struggles among proponents of democracy and their procommunist opponents (Yeltsin and Zyuganov [Communist Party] both won the presidential primaries in 1996) etc. Therefore, institutional indeterminacy and instability in political and educational spheres is obviously longer than as expected by the "phased" model.
6.1.4.2. Political changes at national and local levels

The political changes at national and local levels were not congruent and caused political and legislative discrepancies and conflicts. Right after the break-up of the Soviet Union the central government was in a hurry to proceed with the policies of decentralisation and to extend the decision-making process to the local authorities. One might of course question the real intention behind such a move and ask if the government was genuinely willing to share its powers or was the reason simply economical - to remove the burden of financing onto local shoulders. In any case, local authorities were far too unprepared to take care of such new responsibilities thus causing great variations in how state policies were put into practice in different regions.

Political change was not rapid and did not result in the emergence of adequate legislation suitable for implementation at the school level. As pointed out by Nystén-Haarala (2001, 112): "Decentralisation, which does not find enough support from the constitution, is developed through the back door with the help of treaties between federal and regional state authorities. These treaties, unfortunately, rest on a vague legal foundation since they often contradict with the constitution and contain secret provisions. Therefore, federalism is not developed openly". In addition, educational legislation could not help but be affected by the nature of societal change itself, and reflect any of the tensions, uncertainties and contradictions apparent in Russia in the early 1990's (Webber 1999, 33).

6.1.4.3. The economic situation

The economic climate was not favourable for political reform, and sufficient resources were not provided for the implementation of educational reform at the micro-level. In trying to attain these ambitious goals, e.g. the processes of democratisation, schools have to contend not only with the usual problems which accompany such processes of reform in any country, but also with a funding crises that has denied the school system the resources it desperately requires, causing fears over its very survival as a viable entity (ibid. 1). For example, necessary in-service training for teachers was not always arranged. Such a development means that teachers were often unaware of the new-
In many schools physical conditions were and continue to be hard including such things as lack of central heating, electricity or necessary teaching equipment. In addition, economic instability simply means that people have to concentrate on their daily survival rather than engage in societal transformation. The state often does not have sufficient resources to enforce and finance important new laws. As a result, these laws, even if democratic in nature, can have little impact on the local educational policies and practices. (Lisovskaya & Karpov 2001, 46.)

6.1.5. Conclusion on the analysis of the transition process in Russia

From the analysis above it becomes obvious that the transition process in Russia has been covered with thorns. The necessary environment for rapid and efficient transition was not provided therefore making the whole process much more complicated and bringing up results that were not necessarily hoped for. Under these circumstances, the micro-level educational transformations can hardly be interpreted as direct and immediate repercussions of consistent macro-level transitions. The micro-level educational entrepreneurs are trying to transform the schools amidst, and in response to, the persistent ideological uncertainty and institutional indeterminacy at the macro-level.

By institutional indeterminacy Lisovskaya and Karpov (2001) understand a situation when dominant old norms collapse, and new ones are yet to consolidate. However, there are still some institutions that structure social interaction and organisation patterns. Specifically, the absence of new official norms increases the importance of various unofficial and informal social norms and rules, some of which have originated in the past, while others have emerged more recently. Therefore, institutional indeterminacy does not equal to institutional vacuum, but is rather a situation where both old and new co-exist, and compensate for uncertain official with unofficial and informal.

The institutional indeterminacy at the macro-level may well have a lasting formative influence on the future of Russian schools, especially it is likely to accompany Russia's
transition in the near future (ibid. 46-47). As micro-level implementations do not often reflect the policies of the macro-level, there is an increased need to investigate into activities at the grassroots' level.

6.1.6. Finally ... Transition or Transformation?

All the analyses mentioned above made me conclude that it should not be of primary importance which term is used, i.e. whether transition and transformation are understood as synonyms, or as consequences of one another. It is the meaning of the terms given by the user that matters, and as both refer to a major change with an enormous impact on the whole society and institutions it consists of, I believe they can both be used. It is nevertheless important to understand the different notions these terms can have in order to have a more comprehensive understanding of all the processes they bring about in Russian society.

However, in my study I shall use the term transformation instead of transition primarily because, just as critical pedagogues, I see teachers as intellectual transformers; giving teachers such a name shows how important and influential their role is if understood and used appropriately by teachers themselves and society that surrounds them. Talking about transformation and transformers implies that teachers do not only reach out to students they work with, but through teaching and learning processes the whole society can be gradually changed, transformed.

6.2. DEMOCRACY

Democracy is a very important concept for my work because it has been stated on different levels that Russia is on her way towards democracy. It has been interesting to notice the frequent use of the term in official documents, speeches, press, literature etc. At the same time, I had difficulties in finding out what kind of democracy is advocated in the Russian constitution and other official documents that use the concept. Of course, I could have examined definitions given to democracy by different eastern and western political movements or political theories, but as I am focusing on Russia, I considered it relevant just to find out how democracy is defined in the Russian case.
The problem of defining democracy in Russia is deepened by the fact that there is yet no certainty of which kind of democracy Russia will choose. To me it often seems that for Russian officials democracy is synonymous to market economy. We should also bear in mind that democratic changes were initiated from above in the first place and democratic practices are still not solid in Russian politics, society and economy. For me, democracy should not and cannot be imposed from above, but is rather demonstrated in the way people interact with each other according to the values of equity, tolerance, human rights and the rule of law. That is why in this work I emphasise the civil society that consists of common people and is therefore determined by the way people interact with each other and the state.

I understand that values such as equity, tolerance and human rights are extremely hard to define and the definition will slightly change with every definer. One might also ask: Whose rule of law? Who gets the right to make the law? What kinds of laws are democratic? These questions are difficult to answer, but it is not the final answers that matter most. It is the discussion itself that is very important especially for Russia where there is a lot of uncertainty in the air and at the same time concepts of democracy or equality are often taken for granted. It is hard to talk about the role of schooling in society and in the country if there is no common discussion of the values and attitudes schooling should nurture.

I have no doubt that communists were initially aiming at democracy too and wanted to make people equal and empower them. In some ways they even managed to reach it if we think of their achievements in schooling and literacy rates. As for the recent situation in Russia, to what extent can it be called democracy if we consider, for example, the increasing inequality that has been brought by economic crisis and is easy to detect, for instance, through the birth of private schools? In fact, Russian education cannot anymore be considered as free: educational establishments either take tuition fees or ask for some donations from parents to renovate school buildings or simply buy text books for children. In the Soviet Union, there was no choice in education, but there were more equal opportunities to access it.
Concerning the definition of democracy in Russia, I decided to take a closer look at the Russian constitution that defines Russia as a democratic state. Though the constitution does not give a straight definition of democracy, I could make some conclusions by reading the first Chapter called *The basis of the constitutional structure*. The chapter states that a human being and his/her rights and liberties are the highest value. Further, the recognition, observance and protection of human rights and liberties is the duty of the state. (Article 2) The bearer of the sovereignty and the sole source of power in the Russian Federation are her multinational people. People put their power into effect directly, as well as through organs of state authority and local administration. The highest direct expression of people's power are referendum and free elections. (Article 3.)

In addition, Chapter 2 *The freedoms and liberties of a human being and a citizen* guarantees everyone freedom of thought and expression (Article 29). Article 32 states that the citizens of the Russian federation have a right to take part in the administration of state affairs directly or through their representatives. Therefore, in my opinion Russian Constitution has certain democratic features common with other western democracies. The most important point for the topic of my thesis is that Russian Constitution names people as the sole origin of power and expects them to participate in the management of the state.

Nevertheless, one interesting observation lies in the statement that the highest direct expression of people's power are referendum and free elections. In my opinion, participation in elections is not sufficient to ensure the consolidation of true participatory democracy. More importantly, citizens should exercise their power via various associations, civil organisations, as well as critically follow developments in political, economical and social life on daily basis rather than only in the advent of elections. I will discuss the role of citizens more thoroughly in the next chapter. An important question to consider is whether Russian people know and are ready to fulfil their rights and duties as democratic citizens and if the state gives them an opportunity and encouragement to do so.
6.3. CIVIL SOCIETY

Apart from the concepts of democracy and transformation, the concept of civil society is of outmost importance to the topic of my research. Doing research on Russian society in transformation requires a brief presentation of different models of civil society, which is hopefully the goal of the recent process of democratisiation. In particular, the meaning of the concept in the Russian context will be examined, as well as the relationship between civil society and education. With the following arguments I will also try to justify the promotion and support of the development of civil society and therefore democracy in Russia especially with the help of the system of education.

Risto Alapuro (1993, 194) writes that the concept of civil society is more useful than "democracy" only, because it refers to the social conditions that must be fulfilled for a democracy to prevail, that is, for people to be able to act independently of or in opposition to the state authority in a sustained way. For this reason, I tend to believe that civil society forms a strong link with the education system, as it prepares people to be a part of society - hopefully a democratic civil society. On the other hand, civil society influences education by setting its demands and spreading its values in schools, therefore the influence is mutual and most probably, complex and multidimensional.

6.3.1. Civil society in the Western context

By its origin, the concept of "civil society" is western, coming from the Greek politike iainonia, translated into Latin as societas civillis³. The term acquired its modern meaning in the course of the development of the modern sovereign state in Europe. Therefore, the concept describes the socially constructed realities in western countries. (Patomäki & Pursiainen 1998, 2.) According to Patomäki and Pursiainen (ibid. 3), Hegel was the pivotal figure in theorising civil society in the modernising (western) Europe. They refer to Cohen and Arato (1994) saying, "no contemporary discourse of civil society has managed to add even a single category to Hegel's categories of legality,

³This could be literally translated into English as "society belonging to citizens" (see Patomäki & Pursiainen 1998).
privacy, plurality, association, publicity and mediation". In Hegel's theory, the state and its legal system, in terms of certain rights, duties and related institutions, also constitute entities of civil society. The state is thus constitutive of civil society. This Hegelian conceptualisation is reminiscent of many Russian conceptions. (Patomäki & Pursiainen 1998, 4.)

In their book, *Against the State, With(in) the State or a Transnational Creation: Russian Civil Society in the Making?* (1998) Patomäki and Pursiainen present a very comprehensive model of western discourses on civil society after Hegel. This model will be presented and shortly described below, as it gives us a framework to examine the possibilities of creating a civil society in Russia.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Procedural democracy (liberalism)</th>
<th>Focus on property rights and market economy</th>
<th>Focus on political civil society</th>
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<td>1.Lockean-Schumpeterian approach</td>
<td>2.Millian-Rawlsian approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participatory democracy (republicanism)</td>
<td>3.The idea of participatory democratised, economic organisations</td>
<td>4.Dissident ideas and &quot;Green&quot; political theory; the New Left; &quot;post-material values&quot;</td>
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1. The name for *Lockean-Schumpeterian* approach comes from the names of two theorists, whose ideas are summarised here. Political civil society does not have any value in itself. In this understanding, civil society consists mainly of the private actors of the market place, although families and households are understood to be the basic social units of an otherwise atomistic society. The meaning and significance of democracy is in the guarantee that the ruling elite can be replaced via elections. In this view, the only way we can talk about the problems in the development of civil society is in terms of capitalist, market-based economic development, including transition, privatisation etc. in the new restored democracies, such as Russia.

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The name for Millian-Rawlsian approach also comes from the names of its main ideologists. They advocated universal suffrage for men and women, as well as the principles of freedom of opinion and public expressions, and freedom to unite. The model also required citizens to have an equal right to take part in and determine the outcome of the constitutional processes that establish the laws with which they are to comply. Therefore, the participation of citizens and the viability of civil society is justified as important means towards sustainable constitutional democracy, based on political liberty and the principles of fairness and justice. Widespread participation is particularly important because otherwise an escalation of the concentration of privileges and power might happen, leading to unjust society and eventually to an undemocratic one as well. Here participation has a wider meaning in comparison to model 1. In this model, it is understood as participation in elections and political parties, as well as political associations and movements.

The next two models belong to the so-called participatory democracy models or the republican tradition. The republican tradition is often said to form the participatory theory of democracy. The emphasis on the idea that the key to preserving liberty lies in keeping up the quality of civic virtues in the citizen body as a whole, makes republicanism distinct in its theorising of the installation, cultivation and preservation of civic virtues and citizens' commitment to politics. In general, participatory theories of democracy are suspicious of the idea of representation and see many virtues in active political participation in itself. However, the line between the Millian-Rawlsian theory and the more participatory accounts is thin and vague.

In the third model, participation and democratic, communitarian associations are valued in themselves, but the attention is turned to the social relations within the economic system and organisation. This causes the problem of democratising the economic organisations. This argument is based on the belief that national politics in modern societies involves too many people to provide an occasion for participatory self-realisation. Therefore, most promising arenas for this form are local government, economic democracy and democracy within organisations more generally.
4. The name for this model (Dissident ideas and "Green" political theory; the New Left; "post-material" values) comes from political movements that have accepted these ideas. They argue that more participatory political civil society is an end in itself and a mean to guarantee democratic developments within a state. Often it is also stated that civil society should be distinguished from the party-system of a constitutional liberal democracy.

The four civil society models mentioned above provide us with an interesting and complicated framework to proceed with the discussion on civil society in Russia. Interestingly, Patomäki and Pursiainen (1998, 10) write that choices must be made between the types of civil society to be supported, although the categories are not totally exclusive, and that different combinations of these models can also be constructed. This makes the discussion even more complicated bearing in mind the general lack of consensus on the role and form of civil society in Russia.

I give my support for participatory categories of civil society, as they argue for greater power distribution and therefore make the possibilities of power centralisation in the hands of the few less possible. In addition, participatory (republican) models emphasise the importance of civic virtues in people. As virtues are something that I believe come from education (both formal and informal), the participatory type of civil society establishes an important link with the education system and is therefore extremely important for the research topic of my study.

To conclude, I quote Pursiainen (2000, 20): "there exist many rival meanings about the nature, role and value of civil society". He continues by referring to Harbeson: "However, civil society does not have to refer to any particular kind of organisation, rather the question is that civil society's role is to determine purposes and rules of the political game without assuming any definition of those purposes and rules". As in the quotation above, I see civil society as an open concept, which, in the Russian context, is especially hard to define and will most probably be influenced by both western ideas and Russian traditions.
6.3.2. Civil society in the Russian context

The question to be explored in this chapter can be put as does civil society form a valid conceptual frame to suit the Russian context?

As noticed by Webber and Liikanen (2001, 1), in the study of post-communist societies among researchers in the West, at least - the concept of civic culture has grown in prominence in recent years. This can be seen as an indication of the significance placed on searching for signs of the development of "civil society" in these countries, but perhaps even more so as a reflection of the criticism levelled at approaches that have measured the development of post-communist societies against simplified western models of "civil society".

Such criticism brought two major modifications in approach that elaborate further or go beyond the civil society debate. First, civic activity and civic culture are increasingly examined in relation to the state, and politics is seen as a mediating field between state and society, and national variations of its forms are studied against the background of national history, earlier experience of nation building and the traditions of social and political mobilisation. Second, instead of searching for signs of western models of organisation, there is a growing number of studies examining the particular preconditions for collective actions in post-communist societies. (Webber and Liikanen 2001, 1.)

One can easily name the major constitutive elements or institutions of civil society common to the western political history: free associations of citizenry, economic market, and the public sphere. But a great deal of confusion arises when the concept of civil society is projected onto East European and Russian political realm in the hope of discovering similar elements. The problem of civil society as grazhdansko obchestvo (society of citizens) when applied to Russian political context turns near empty and devoid of history behind it. (Volkov 1996, 90.)

I find it therefore interesting why a concept almost alien to Russia has been adopted so easily and is used almost as an axiom in political rhetoric. However, this is not the first
time that I notice this, as I call it, false belief in the power of new concepts. In the educational reform it was expected that its underlying principles of democracy, freedom and pluralism would find an agreement on the large scale on the values and goals in education, and that the new view would take root in the Russian public mentality (see Laihiala-Kankainen 2000, 118). Surprisingly enough it is believed that just by renaming old or borrowing new concepts a bright democratic future can be achieved. However, how can people act upon virtues the contents of which are alien to them? Volkov (1996, 90) claims that to translate a concept across cultural boundaries would require a search for an indigenous concept of equal historical and practical significance.

For this reason, Volkov (ibid) suggests a different concept to be used in the Russian context. It is the concept of obchestvennost, the term whose meaning combines both social solidarity and the public or socially active groups of people. This is the term that Volkov claims has both conceptual history of its own, is a part of everyday usage and is embedded in a certain form of life. Volkov’s ideas on civil society are presented below.

As many concepts obchestvennost (translated into English as community, public, people) also underwent a transformation of its own (see Volkov 1996). In the 19th century this term meant social solidarity and was opposed to the idea of state service. It also had a second meaning, the progressive intelligentsia who wanted to be separated from the aristocratic high society concerned only with superficial issues of social behaviour, preferred to be referred to as obchestvennost. Later on the idea of obchestvennost became firmly associated with public opinion. In addition, the formation of zemstva or local governments accumulated an experience for independent organisation of social life, the second key element and practice of civil society. With this development obchestvennost also became more and more distinct from the state. By the beginning of the 20th century it was associated with critical public opinion and the groups of people concerned with public duties outside or above their state-service ones.

After the revolution, there was an attempt to revive obchestvennost, as it was believed it would later turn into a new form of government that would gradually supersede proletarian dictatorship. Thus, in the 1920's it became associated with two main roles: it was responsible for the formation of a popular democratic basis for local government,
and it had to become the subject of everyday surveillance, monitoring public order and combating deviant behaviour. These ideas were not, of course, put into practice during Stalin. But they were again resurrected during Krushchev when a special decree *On the participation of the working population in the protection of public order* was issued. Of course, such development only brought a division of labour between the state and the society, in addition it was not political and was not meant to influence the state, but rather to control the society itself. After Krushchev, the significance of *obchestvennost* declined again. (see Volkov 1996.)

More so, the activities of the civil society in the 20th century cannot be called independent. It was rather the state that gave an impulse for the civil society to act. It was the state that determined the activities and responsibilities of the civil society. Here, the Hegelian notion of the state as a constitutive of civil society is obvious. However, if we believe that civil society should form a counter balance to the state, it should then learn to become independent of the state's initiatives.

We can conclude that it is possible to find two basic elements or preconditions for civil society in the Russian context, e.g. free associations of citizens and the public sphere. Therefore, Russia does have some historical background for the development of this institution. However, the third element is missing, the free market. In the west, civil society initially developed from the birth of the market economy, therefore some believe that Russia will only become a true democratic country with a sound civil society when the economy is stable and free. For example, Alapuro (1993, 196) quotes David W. Lovell saying that separating economy from the state is perhaps the most important step in the revival of civil society and a prerequisite to the establishment of genuine political freedoms.

However, I believe that adopting a ready established model from the west will not bring good results. As was presented in the previous chapter, even in the west there exist many models of civil society, therefore which one should be chosen? Free market can only work in a society of free market oriented citizens or civil society. If people do not possess certain beliefs and values to support the market, it will not last. These, I believe, can be acquired through formal and informal education. Alapuro (ibid. 195) refers to...
Starr (1988), who argues that civil society is emerging in Russia and calls education another crucial factor in this process. However, the discussion on the emergence of civil society should not be limited to market economy. Civil society is a much broader concept, and the responsibilities of the civil society should equally concern political and social life as well as free market economy.

Obviously, it is difficult to determine the role of civil society in Russia, as it is yet to be seen which direction the country will assume in the future. However, for the topic of this research it is not as important to try to define the Russian model of civil society, as it is to name the values each member of the civil society should believe in and act upon in order to help Russia to transform towards democracy. Consequently, the impact teachers have on the future generations becomes of primary importance.

As I see it, members of a democratic civil society should be morally committed to the main values of democracy – freedom, equality and justice. One of the main features of a working civil society is its participation in and influence on political processes. Members of the society should be involved in the political and economical life not only through elections and consumption, but it should be a matter of everyday life. Society should not blindly follow the orders from above, but should be involved in the initiation of reforms, as well as form a counterbalance to the activities of the government. Could civil society become state’s consciousness? This duty would require critical thinking ability and pluralism. Civil society consists of individuals on the one hand, and individuals united into organisations on the other hand. The organisations outside governmental control are often called the third sector or non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Therefore, both individual and community skills are required. Civil society, in my opinion, is stronger when it consists of self-confident autonomous people.

6.4. STATE

State is a concept that will be often used throughout this study. It is the relationship between state, democracy, civil society and education that makes it important to devote some space and thought to this concept. In this research, without underestimating the whole complexity of the concept, state is defined as the totality of the political authority
In a given society, Russian society in this particular case. State is, therefore, equivalent to power holders. It is, as a concept, a difficult one to define, and there exist many meanings to it. However, the purpose of this part of the research is not to go through all the different definitions, but rather to clarify how it is understood in my thesis and especially and more importantly the connection between state and education. The discussion of the concept of state is based on the critical ideas of Carlos Alberto Torres in *Democracy, Education, and Multiculturalism* (1998).

Though state, in its simple understanding, is seen as an overwhelming system of control over a homogeneous culture within a certain geographical territory, the critical modernist view finds two outstanding problems in defining state power from functional, legal and institutional standpoint. Firstly, from the historical point it is not the state that controls civil society, national boundaries, and markets. There are institutions within the state that can exercise control over certain areas of life or deviate the state policies (economical organisations, criminal groups etc). In addition, imperialism and international institutions (e.g. multinational corporations) can influence the state from outside. (See Torres 1998.)

I find it obvious that in the process of transformation - especially as painful and thorough as in the Russian case, control is distributed among many different groups, where the black market and criminal forces hold an important position. Russia is now representing a new market possibility for foreign business, and it is a common fact that foreign companies possess a significant position especially in the big cities. The same is true for international organisations, like the World Bank, which offer loans on certain political and economical conditions and therefore possess a certain amount of control over life in the country. Therefore, the definition of state in the contemporary Russia becomes much more complicated if compared to the monolithic and centralised Soviet state.

Secondly, state is rarely homogeneous, but rather consists of many cultures and subcultures. This is especially evident in such a multinational country as Russia. Therefore, one should be careful not to under- or overestimate the influence of state on different institutions. It is, without a doubt, one of the crucial forces behind such
institutions as education. However, in order to acquire a deeper understanding of the system called education, one should also investigate into other influential parties. This issue, however, lies outside the purpose of my thesis, but would certainly be an interesting research topic for future studies.

Why is state important in investigating education? Educators have tried to place the world of politics and the state strictly outside the realm of education and schools (Torres 1998, 13). However, Torres (ibid) talks about the triple context of education in its relationships to government, economy and citizenship building. First of all, education has increasingly become a function of the state, where educational practices are sponsored, mandated, organised and certified by it. Even in the situation of decentralisation, which is more or less the case in Russia, government can exercise its influence through requirements for degrees, teachers' qualifications, mandated text books, minimum requirements for main subjects in the curriculum etc. For example, in Russia the number of text books allowed to be used in teaching has been decreased recently, and text books have to go through ministerial expertise. This is, on the one hand, a positive development, as free market has given birth to many publishing agencies with suspicious quality. On the other hand, such moves might be interpreted as the government's attempt to control the teaching contents.

In fact, the term of governmental/state order *gosudarstvenniy zakaz* can be often met in official papers on education. The state order means that government/state can decide, for example, how many places of different specialities to allow in different institutions of higher education. The government, therefore, determines which specialists are needed most for the country. One of the recent state orders has been to increase the number of people in teaching, medical and agrarian professions. For this reason, state universities will educate students of the above-mentioned fields, who have not passed entrance examination for budgetary (state sponsored) places for free, but will expect the

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5 It is difficult to offer a clear translation of the term, as *gosudarstvenniy* can be translated into English as both governmental (the cabinet) and/or state. In addition, *zakaz* (order), as used in this context, is more a requisition rather than an instruction or dictation. Nevertheless, both translations refer to the institutions above or in control of education, and this is the meaning that matters most. The choice of the word is indeed very interesting.
judges to work within this profession for a certain period. Otherwise, a graduate will
have to pay back the money state has spent on his/her higher education.

This is a good example of the mechanical approach towards educational problems.
Instead of looking into the reasons why the above-mentioned specialities are not
attractive the government has decided to implement the "carrot and stick" manner to
deal with the issue. In my opinion, such a way of solving the problem is only a short
line solution, as people will stay in the field only for as long as required after the
graduation. Even if such measures will increase the number of students in the
professions with staff shortages, I ask myself if these people will be genuinely
committed to their work. Critical pedagogues, for example, see the problem of the
attractiveness of teaching profession as an expression of social crisis of inequality.

As one solution, equality empowers people and raises aspirations in
school and society. Power and hope are sources of motivation to learn
and do. Motivation produces student involvement and involvement
produces learning and literacy. Student participation also supports
teacher morale, making the hard work of teaching attractive and
rewarding, lessening burnout. Teacher and student morale from the joy
of learning will inspire more people to choose teaching as a career,
and to stay in teaching once there, easing the teacher shortage. (Shor
1987, 13.)

Another fresh educational development is the common state exam edinij
sredarstvenni ekzamen for graduates of high schools, which is already taking place in
many regions as an experiment. The exam will become part of the school routine in a
few years (by 2005). With the common exam the state can apply equal evaluation
policies for different territories and influence and standardise teaching content, as
schools will try to "train" students to do well in the exam because it will be counted as
their entrance examination for further education. The standardisation of education is a
cause of recently accepted corrections to the Law on Education. Among them there are
regulations for the state educational standards, i.e. for primary comprehensive, basic
comprehensive and secondary comprehensive that will be determined by the federal
legislation (Farizova 2002). This new development marks a turning point in the process
of rapid decentralisation of the 1990's. The common standards will naturally unify
teaching contents in different regions, and cause the elimination of the so called author's
schools (educational institutions with alternative teaching methods and contents) (Sergeev 2002).

The linkages between education and economy are also clear. Economy as part of the state machine influences education through public expenditure. In the situation of economical slowdown or crisis, education inevitably experiences lack of finances. Moreover, economy determines the number of places to be allocated for higher and vocational training. A good example of such a trend is an overwhelming increase in the number of newly established faculties of economics and law in the new Russia aiming at "free market" and the "rule of law". Just as the human capital theory argues that school expansion fosters economic growth (Torres 1998, 14), Russian government has finally realised the impact of the brain drain that can soon leave the ex super-academic country without intelligentsia. If the brain drain continues in this tempo, Russia will loose its techno-scientific potential by the year 2010. (Mackyavichene 2002.) For this reason, there have been discussions on how to improve living standards for young scientists and researchers in order to keep them in the country.

Finally, educational institutions are said to socialise individuals in peculiar ways, creating specific political orientations towards democratic or non-democratic structures. Whether pursuing explicit corporatist goals or seeking to develop a political culture based on the modern creed of democracy, the state is said to play a major role in providing for the socialisation of the citizenry and in creating the appropriate symbolic conditions for nurturing the political culture of the people. (Torres 1998, 15.) Therefore, education becomes a political field where state is deliberately putting forward desired policies.

The importance of education for the Russian state is easy to detect through the National Doctrine of Education (1999), where among other strategic plans of education are the overcoming of the socio-economical and spiritual crisis, the restoration of the status of Russia in the world association as a great power in education, culture, science, high technologies and economy, the education of patriots and citizens of legal, democratic, social state.
I. THE ANALYSIS OF POLITICAL, ECONOMICAL AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS IN RUSSIA

Since the collapse of the USSR many researchers have been trying to predict the future development of the Russian state. These predictions have spanned from optimistic talks about a western type of democracy to open talk of a Weimar scenario for Russia, when ineffective government and economic crisis which prevailed in Germany in the early 1930's was widely blamed for permitting the rise of Adolf Hitler. Some saw in the votes of Zherinovski a similar phenomenon. (Saikal & Maley 1995, 1.)

Much has changed since 1991 and there is, as far as I can see, no risk of the past making a comeback. That is why in recent publications on Russia we can no more observe the original fears of the old communist regime return. The researchers have now moved into discussing the future of Russia in democratic terms. The steady advance of democracy over the past ten years is not subject to doubt, even though it may be proceeding slowly and very often, with great difficulty (Tangian 2001, 65). Chapter 1 of the Russian Constitution says that Russian Federation - Russia, is a democratic federative legal state with a republican form of governance. However, these democratic terms are not yet defined. To put it simply, the fortune-tellers are now trying to predict whether Russia will follow a western type of democracy or choose her own "Russian" way, whatever that might be. In either case, transformation towards democracy certainly represents a great challenge for the whole Russian society.

It has also been emphasised in the Law on Education from 1992 that Russian educational system is now based on democratic values, e.g. autonomy, decentralisation, humanisation etc. Considering this new approach to education in Russia, I want to ask, what are the main features of democracy? Justice, freedom, equality - and what else? In addition, one of the most important features of the democratic regime is civil society, which respects and is willing to maintain democratic values. I quote Pursiainen and Pitomäki (1998, 10) to illustrate this claim:
It is our contention that the development of civil society is an essential part of Russia's democratisation. As Rawls claims, political power accumulates and becomes unequal easily, and the inequities in the economic and social system may soon undermine whatever political equality might have existed under more fortunate historical condition. To avoid these outcomes, there must be an active participation on the side of citizenry.

Russia has never been a democratic country. Neither have the Russian people ever experienced real freedom, justice or equality; they never had a chance to fully and openly participate in the political or social life. Now, after a long period of state manipulation, the situation is supposed to have changed. Nevertheless, I cannot help asking if the manipulation is still continuing, but have just changed its shape. No doubt, this change was more determined by the ruling elite, top-down. Saikal and Maley (1995, 8) quote Rigby (1995):

... Russia's transformation process was essentially negative, with a telos defined in a derivative terms, and inaugurated from above, although it then triggered lower-level chaos. By supplying a constitution, president, and parliament endorsed by popular vote, the December 1993 elections marked a great step forward in Russia's political development, ending the transition period between the Soviet and the post-Soviet phases of Russian history.

Therefore, in a situation where changes were rapid and were not originally initiated on a mass grassroots' level, it takes time for the society to accept changes and prepare for the new role; people's minds and attitudes are the slowest ones to change.

Taking into account the "open" situation concerning the future of the country and the fact that transformation is still going on, the topic of my study naturally bears a trace of prediction. This piece of research should therefore be put in a certain timeframe. The critical test of the time factor is something many scientific works have to go through. Some of them might not be anymore valid within months, years or decades after publishing. That is why I look forward to see if views presented in this study will stand the time test and whether they will ever become part of Russia's reality.

Another issue to bear in mind is the uniqueness of the country due to its historical, social and cultural background. Is it therefore even possible to present an objective view
on its current situation? As Huttunen & al (1999, 30) so accurately point out, "Understanding Russia requires an understanding of its self-understanding, and this is the crux of the problem. All efforts to make sense of Russia are doomed to fail, if one does not know how it makes sense of itself, how it defines itself". I believe that this statement is also true of examining Russian education and its influence on the Russian society. For this reason an insider's view is valuable. However, an insider can easily become blind to his/her own culture and society, therefore an outsider's view becomes also important.

On the other hand, the validity of the quotation mentioned above can be challenged. Recent talks on the crisis of Russian identity and the reshaping of the Russian idea brought by the collapse of the USSR and the need to establish a new identity turn the task of knowing how Russia defines herself into a complicated issue, as she simply does not seem to know it herself. The traces of these developments can be detected in the strategic aims of education that include "the restoration of Russia's status in the world as a great power in the spheres of education, culture, science, higher technologies and economy" (National Doctrine of Education 1999).

Furthermore, democratisation has brought a possibility of pluralism of opinions therefore allowing different views to co-exist. For this reason, it is important to present different visions of Russia and its institutions. It is crucial to take into account both insiders' and outsiders' positions. This task represents a big challenge to my study. However, I think that I have a potential of more objective and multifaceted way of looking at the topic of this study, as a person who was brought up in Russia, but has already got distanced from it while living abroad for nearly a decade. Nevertheless, the question of Russia's future is very complicated. That is why Christer Pursiainen (1998, 1993) writes: "the question of Russia's direction can be repeated when we get to the end of our book, and left for the next century to answer".

The different views on the role and type of democracy in Russia extend to the role of the civil society. In addition, there are different opinions on the recent situation of the civil society and its strength. Some see the development of the civil society more optimistically than others. There are also statistical problems involved, for instance,
controversial views have been presented on the number of NGOs established within the country (Zdravomyslova & Chernysh 2002).

The role of education in Russia is also very uncertain. The developments of the past 12 years have changed education enormously. Russia is now a country where almost any kind of school can be found. And yet, education is in crisis. The financial needs are high, some schools are lacking even basic equipment, not mentioning the shortage of teachers especially in rural and remote areas. At the same time, education has become very popular, even a hot issue due to the recent process of modernisation. Political parties present different views on how education should be reshaped and the disputes cause difficulties in finding a compromise.

Nevertheless, education has been announced the priority area of the Russian government. But according to Ziyatdinova (1992, 3), the slogans of teachers' special mission have little effect on reality. The representatives of this truly special and socially valuable profession have turned into incompetent, socially unprotected white-collar workers. While demanding a quality fulfilment of societal order of education and upbringing of the growing generation, authorities have not tried to understand if these people, dissatisfied with their working and life conditions, socially humiliated, who know of their secondary position and societal attitude wish and are able to fulfil this order.

In this study, teachers' role is examined within a certain framework. On the one hand, I argue that education and teachers in particular play a crucial role in the transition process by bringing up "new" Russian citizens and therefore have an important position in creating new democratic civil society in Russia. This discussion is supported by several arguments. Importantly, the legitimacy of the Soviet era means that there is already a strong bond between education, state and society: "Russian policy makers and educators, particularly during the Soviet period, have made very effective use of education as an agent of political and social transformation" (Zajda 1999, 151). Zajda finds support for this claim in Karl Mannheim's work, whose ideas King (1968) used in stressing the importance of social institutions in transforming education and society:
The communication of ideas does not simply happen. One of Karl Mannheim's most important contributions to sociological thought was his insistence that ideas take shape and are fostered only in appropriate institutions (King, 1968 in Zajda 1999, 152).

Therefore, it can be assumed that education plays a central role in the formation of a new civil society in Russia.

Understandably, the rapid changes that are taking place in every sphere of life have a continuous influence on society. This is not only true of Russia, but is rather a common phenomenon for all countries undergoing transition from industrialism to information society. For this reason, we can expect the bond between the society and education to only strengthen. The society becomes rapidly based on knowledge. This progress means that people have to renew their knowledge more efficiently, therefore the idea of lifelong learning has become an important topic in education. This is due to the fact that information society needs human capital that is capable of new scientific developments. The competitiveness of a country and therefore its well-being depend on education.

In addition, the whole structure of the employment sphere is changing, e.g. new professions are arising, while others cease to exist. That is why education will be expected to follow social developments closely and to be able to anticipate and react flexibly to societal needs. As society sets its demands on education and the educational sector is expected to predict them, it is also hoped that education will be able to direct the needs and aspirations of individuals, and in this way influence social development. Therefore the relationship between education and society is a two-way one.

However, the question to be considered in relation to what was said above is that of the idea and mission of education. Should education follow, support and strengthen the changes that are taking place in society and people's minds, or should it develop a critical attitude towards these issues? The critical attitude should allow people to first analyse changes and then decide whether they should be followed as such or changed.

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For the account of the changes happening in the global society as well as their influence on higher education in Russia, see Tangian, S.A. Higher Education in the
for the better. In many ways Russia is now keen on absorbing the western way of life. Russia, on her way towards market economy, is quickly adopting western values. As democracy and market economy are strongly linked to each other, and Russia needs people capable of building the country within new frames, the government is reshaping education. After all, Marx may have been right saying that economic conditions determine social relations, and therefore the society.

While looking at some legal papers that shape Russian education it becomes clear that the state has continued using education as a tool to shape Russian society. The National Doctrine of Education of the Russian Federation (1999) states that strategic aims of education are strongly linked to the problems of development of the Russian society. One of the main objectives of education is raising patriots of Russia, citizens of a legal, democratic, social state, who respect rights and liberties of an individual and who possess a high morality. The difficulty is that the Doctrine does not provide us with any definition of what "democratic", "liberties" or "high morality" are.

7.1. THE ROLE OF STATE IN EDUCATIONAL TRANSFORMATION

In Russia - as in so many other countries today - teachers' work is under criticism and the society's demands and expectations are high. Teachers are no more expected to be passive messengers of government's orders. They are expected to be active and creative. Due to the decentralisation of education, they have now been given autonomy to decide independently and/or with the help of their colleagues on their school practices. They can decide on the methods and textbooks to be used in the classroom. On the other hand, in comparison to the beginning of the transformation process in education, the amount of freedom has been decreased, for example, the number of books to choose from has been cut and textbooks should have a stamp of ministerial approval. Teachers are expected to participate in the curricular development and initiate new educational policies. In my opinion, these expectations should be examined against the commonly known conservatism and inertia of education.
Russian authorities have a long tradition of manipulating education and using it for their own purposes. Does this manipulation still continue? At least some researchers claim that states always aim at manipulating education.

The purpose of education is not to transmit knowledge, traditional wisdom and the ways devised by a society for attending to the common concern; its purpose rather is wholly political, to bend the will of the young people to the will of the nation. Schools are instruments of the state policy, like the army, police and the exchequer (Kedourie 1966 in Nagy 1997, 29).

Flower (1995, 13) writes that one of Marxism's most important contributions has been to highlight the fact that knowledge itself is not "disinterested": it is linked to the interests of those who produce and disseminate it - the dominant social class in society.

Then, what is the dominant social class in Russia at the moment? Who is behind the initiation of educational policies? How independently can teachers act? Holmes in his book The Kremlin and the School House (1991) says that revolutions have a tendency to take their colour from the powers they overthrow. How much of the Communist colour has new democratic regime taken? And how much of the Western capitalism and free-market economy does the new regime have? These questions should also be answered in order to make the discussion on education and teachers' role in transformation more realistic - if not thoroughly in this paper then somewhere else.

An example of how education is used for state goals is the recent promotion of information technology, the Internet. One of the state goals is to modernise Russia and therefore decrease the gap between Russia and other western countries. The society of the 21st century is the information society with a wide access to the Internet. That is why Russian government has invested a big amount of money on promoting the Internet even in the most far-away places. Of course, the Internet can also advance democracy by giving people access to wider information sources. Admittedly, if evenly spread among all social classes, the Internet may possibly decrease the gap between the rich and the poor.

However, Russia is not yet even close to providing access to the Internet for all. It is true that the Internet and especially distance-learning can become an alternative cure for the lack of teachers in remote and rural areas. At the moment these big sums of money
would be more needed for such simple matters as renovating school buildings and investing more into school meals and healthcare provision for children. According to Irina Krasnopol'skaya (2002) every Russian school child suffers from at least two or three diseases, which are often chronic, only 10 per cent of school graduates could be considered healthy.

At least partly, the reasons for such poor health are too long school days, especially so as in Russia many children take extra after-school private classes in order to gain necessary knowledge to pass entrance exams to the university. The curriculum is often too complex and does not correspond to the natural age capabilities. Other problematic issues are school meals, which do not contain all necessary vitamins needed for healthy growth of a child, whose parents cannot afford to enrich meals at home either. In addition, as higher education is fast becoming the privilege of the rich, money invested into the Internet could be distributed as scholarships for university entrants from less wealthy families.

The state has certainly lost some of its control over education after the break-up of the USSR. This was partly due to the principle of decentralisation of education when local and regional authorities as well as schools were given more say in educational matters. In addition, severe economical crisis shifted the government's interest away from educational issues. However, since the end of the 1990's when the threat of the loss of cohesion in education as well as apparent failures in providing education for every Russian citizen, as guaranteed by the Russian Constitution became clear, the Russian state started reversing the decentralisation trend of the 1990's. When summarising the meeting of the educational board of the Ministry of Education, which discussed the achievements of the year 2001, Tatiana Afanas'yeva (2002) wrote: "the state is coming back to the system of education". By this she referred to the decision of the government and the Russian president to resume the responsibility for public education.

Much depends on the educational authorities; not just on the extent to which decision making process is decentralised, but also on whether the development work of teachers on the grassroots' level is supported. As Tangian (2001, 68) has remarked, "... higher education is going to have to undergo serious transformations, and to do this it will need
help from all of society, and broader support as well, in particular from the state". Consequently, the authorities have to realise and accept that teachers are the experts of their work and that in order to make educational policies efficient, they should allow and encourage teachers to participate actively in the initiatives. A positive development has, in fact, taken place in relation to this matter. The Social Expertise Council on Education has been established and it involves many honoured educators.

In addition to such innovations on the governmental level, a lot depends on the allocation of resources - more money is needed to organise proper pre- and in-service training to equip teachers with necessary knowledge and skills. Apart from professional support, teachers should also be rewarded fairly for the work they do. Low payments have made most of them concentrate on the daily survival and have restricted the energy, motivation and interest in extra curricular activities and developmental work.

7.2. EDUCATION AND CIVIL SOCIETY

I am convinced that education plays a crucial role in transmitting new democratic values and norms. For example, Rawls (in Patomäki & Pursiainen 1998, 9) warns that without education to public spirit and civic sentiments people become estranged and isolated in their smaller associations and affective ties may not extend outside the family or a narrow circle of friends. Therefore, one of the main features of the civil society - active participation - could not be fulfilled.

Furthermore, democracy presupposes a critically thinking citizen. Puolimatka (1995, 14) argues that without education it is not possible to realise the democratic ideal of a community in which each member is both sovereign and subject. He continues that the function of education is to strengthen the critical powers in the mind and capacity for independent inquiry, engage its human sympathies and illuminate its moral and practical choices.

Since the break-up of the USSR the value hierarchy has been challenged. Earlier, virtues were dictated from above and the notion of what is good and bad was more or less clear. It would be wrong to say that all Soviet people acted upon the imposed values. Many
followed them in public, but did not believe in them and tried to preserve the "old" values within the family. This is how we did it in my family. And this is how, in my opinion, Russia managed to preserve its old traditions - through hidden activities on the micro level. Now, the official line of norms has been destroyed. The old, "Soviet" values have been found inadequate, but what are the new values to replace the old ones?

According to a comparative sociological survey, which first took place in 1982 and was repeated again in 1997, money as the main life problem was mentioned four times more in the 1997 survey. The importance of financial resources increased by four times, while the share of moral qualities decreased by seven times. The community values have been replaced by more emphasis on individuality - the "I". (Ol'shansky & al. 1999.) In addition, family values seem to be shaky. The rate of divorce is high. More so, according to the opinion of my interviewee, parents of this decade have not themselves experienced genuine family upbringing (vospitanie) due to the communist belief that upbringing is the task of the Party and the education system.

Such a value change and uncertainty influence the whole society and teacher's work in particular:

For many years I had been sure that I was doing exactly what was needed. And I was horrified when I saw all the ideals that I trusted and all the ideals that I was conveying to young kids breaking down. And I was honestly sure that our society was the very best and the most just ... Suddenly, everything was turned upside down. It was a shock, a personal tragedy for me, when all the ideals of my whole life were destroyed. (from an interview with a teacher, Glanzer 2001.)

As I see it, the question is whether school should support the values prevailing in the society - whatever they are, or should it teach values considered democratic and humane, like respect to others, tolerance, forgiveness etc. In either case, the link between education, society and values is always intimate.

Society in general should participate more in discussions and measures involving education. It was stated by the Minister of Education during the conference on "Societal resources of education" that by the end of the year 2002 every school will have its own guardian council. The council will have to search for extra financial resources for the
school, as well as supervise the quality of education and extra curriculum work with the school children. However, some participants of the conference had doubts about the number of guardians willing to become involved in such councils (see Barshev 2002). Hopefully, the duties of the guardian council will be much broader than attracting finances from outer sources. Otherwise, there is a danger of schools becoming a small enterprise, which sacrifices its mission for monetary gains. In my opinion, schools' role in attracting interested guardians among both parents and other societal actors will be crucial. Parents should have a say in their children's education, but to what extent will schools be prepared to share the control over the quality of education with them? Nevertheless, such initiation at least proves that the government is more or less serious about bringing education closer to the "end user" and the society. But the crucial question is, how can this be achieved?

7.3. TEACHERS AND EDUCATION IN THE ERA OF CHANGE

The transition process has been accompanied by social changes and instability. These have made teachers' work more challenging. The economical instability has caused unemployment and social unrest. The standard of living has rapidly decreased; the delay of salary payments still happens from time to time. More and more children are coming from so-called socially unstable families. The crime rates are high. Teenage pregnancies become more and more widespread. There is a high rate of uncertainty in the air. The promises of the government that democratisation will bring better life to all Russian people have not come true. In fact, many feel like a carpet has been pulled underneath their feet.

Teachers' role in education has certainly become more valuable after new democratic principles were introduced to Russian education already during perestroika in the 1980's. The emphasis on individuality and child-centred approach naturally requires teachers to become more active, creative and enthusiastic. The legal autonomy given to schools, as well as teachers' freedom in choosing materials, textbooks and teaching methods make them actors of education who cannot be ignored anymore. Of course, one might argue that autonomy does not necessarily bring change, as it gives a person or an institution a right to choose whether to change or not. However, in a process of
transformation teachers and institutions cannot afford staying the same. More so, I do not even think it is possible.

School, as a social institution, does not exist in a vacuum. It constantly interacts with other spheres of life, other institutions and social actors. Neither is school solely influencing the ones it is educating. Students bring their personal views to school, which are influenced by family up-bringing, peers, hobbies, travelling etc. Therefore, when the school environment is surrounded with changes, schools and teachers are forced to change as well. For example, my interviewee told me that teachers coming to in-service training courses say: "We cannot work, old methods do not suit for contemporary children. We have never had so many conflicts". Therefore, teachers are forced to act, forced to deal with the conflicting situation. Thus, tension brings change.

On the other hand, the contribution of education and teachers to social change is limited. Schools' and teachers' ability to pass on democratic values and develop civil society in Russia should be examined within the framework of today's reality. Unfortunately, the ideal notion of education as the transformer of society has many factors that undermine its possibilities to act as a facilitator of change. First of all, the system of education is well known for its conservatism and inertia. It is a worldwide phenomenon that in a process of change education tends to stick to the old values. However, this feature does not only have a negative connotation. It should be realised that "new" does not always equal to "good". Therefore, it is often necessary to have an institution slowing down rapid modernisation. This way, hopefully, changes and reforms are considered more carefully before being implemented.

In Russia, the conservatism of education is also supported by the age factor; the percentage of older teachers who have received their teacher training and professional experience during communism is high. Besides, their possibilities to receive in-service training have been poor. In the late 1980's new alternatives for in-service training in addition to the traditional Institute for Teacher Improvement and Institute for Qualification Raising started to emerge. Primary among these were private consultants and experimental training groups of several sorts (Kerr 1995).
The poor condition of the national economy, however, easily affected these courses. They turned out to be very expensive if not subsidised by the local authorities: “a three-day seminar could easily cost a teacher the equivalent of a month’s salary, and this does not even include the cost of airfare” (Kerr 1995). In addition, the content of the courses for teachers influenced the number of participants. Teachers felt that courses placed too much emphasis on theory and failed to give the help required in providing access to new developments in education (Webber & Webber 1994).

Nevertheless, we should not regard the older generation as an eternal obstacle. Alapuro (1993, 204) refers to Oleg Yanitsky, who has examined environmental movements of the 1980’s. According to Yanitsky, many initiatives of the 1980’s had roots in the previous decades. Zirul’nikov (2000, 198) also noticed that almost all remarkable teachers of the 1980’s, the innovator pedagogues, came from the period of thaw "stepel’".7

I learned from my interviewee that in spite of the strict governmental control some people understood that there is still freedom: they became dissidents, freely thinking people in a totalitarian state. Many authors have also pointed out that even during the Soviet times some teachers developed their own methodological approaches, even created teaching materials themselves, despite the restrictions imposed by the authorities (see Webber 2000, 22). Therefore, it would be unfair to generalise and say that the older generation cannot engage or does not have a potential for a reform. However, undertaking reforms might be more difficult for them than for the younger ones. Ironically, today’s schools are not attracting enough young people to work in. The low social status, poor material benefits and hard working conditions in schools do not naturally draw fresh work force. Therefore, the process of professional regeneration in schools is going on a slow pace.

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7 This term is commonly used in Russian history to describe the period when Nikita Khrushchev held the position of the first secretary of the Communist Party when despotism of the state was decreased and Stalin’s brutalities were uncovered.
8. TRANSFORMATION IN THE PEDAGOGICAL FRAMEWORK

8.1. CRITICAL AND TRANSFORMATIVE PEDAGOGY

Critical pedagogy is what happens when critical theory meets education. It is based on liberation theology, Freirean pedagogy, the sociology of knowledge, the Frankfurt school of critical theory, feminist theory, neo-Marxist cultural criticism and, more recently, postmodern social theory. (Morgan 2000, 274.) In this paper, special attention will be given to the works of American critical pedagogues Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren and Brazilian transform educator Paolo Freire, as they did not only discuss the link between education, society and politics, but took a closer look at teachers' role in social transformation. Unfortunately, the work of this size allows me to concentrate on a few persons only. More so, my goal is not to examine all points of critical and transform pedagogy, but rather to consider and analyse those ideas that could be relevant in the Russian context.

Critical and transform pedagogues examine school and education from the socio-theoretical point of view and highlight the pedagogical action that is linked to the world outside of school (Giroux & McLaren 2001, 9). On the one hand, such critical pedagogues as Giroux have effectively challenged the dominant assumption that schools function as one of the major mechanisms for the development of the democratic and egalitarian social order (Peter McLaren 1988 in Giroux 1988, x). At the same time, McLaren claims that the project of Giroux's work can be summarised as an attempt to formulate a critical pedagogy committed to the imperatives of empowering students and transforming the larger social order in the interests of a more just and equitable democracy (ibid. xi). Therefore, critical pedagogy does not only aim at detecting the "wrongs" of today's schooling, but it also attempts to cure the misgivings of contemporary education. In order to do that, we should "take as the point of departure the real, concrete problems students and teachers are facing today" (ibid. xiii).
John Morgan (2000, 275) reminds us of the applicability of critical education to other contexts. He writes that "critical pedagogy must be seen as a product of United States universities and its theoretical language does not rest easily with other contexts", such as the Russian one. For this reason, while examining the ideas of critical pedagogy, I try to look at them from the point of view of the current situation in Russia. This is where Gadamer's idea of merging horizons is relevant: merging horizons of critical pedagogy and my views of Russian reality. In addition, the assumptions of critical hermeneutics have helped me to take up a closer and more critical view on the result of this merging. Despite of the fact that critical pedagogy was more or less "born" in the States, problems emphasised by critical educators can, in my opinion, be detected in any society today.

One interesting point comes from the very claim of critical pedagogues that school culture "functions not only to confirm and privilege students from the dominant class, but also through exclusion and insult to disconfirm the histories, experiences, and dreams of subordinate groups" (Peter McLaren 1988 in Giroux 1988, xxx-xxxii). Therefore, in the United States education, according to critical educators, works to keep people "where they belong". Now I examine this claim against the background of the Soviet Union. Officially, the Soviet state was advocating equality and the division into social classes was to vanish with the progress towards communism. Soviet education did not allow any streaming in schools either. There was a certain average amount of knowledge that students had to possess, but to know more than the average would already pose a threat to the official ideology of "equality".

However, talented children were frequently sought for and put into special schools in mathematics, arts or ballet. More so, we now know of the existence of the corrupted Party elite especially in the time of Leonid Brezhnev that was powerful enough to ensure their own children stable high-class positions. This makes me believe that even in the communist times schooling was in one way or another privileging some and ignoring others, therefore creating and maintaining "unofficial" social hierarchy.

In this matter, Russian situation looks now even more similar to the American one than before. Elite private schools have been established all around Russia allowing better education for the ones who can afford it. Almost all universities have both budgetary
and commercial places. There is a very high competition for budgetary places, so it is easier to access a commercial study place if one can pay for it. However, the best Russian universities situated in Moscow or St. Petersburg are almost impossible to get admitted to without a considerable fee or tuition. Therefore, in my opinion good education is now more and more becoming the privilege of the wealthy.

Critical pedagogy is difficult to define. Instead, it is possible to present the whole group of its specific features. One of them is the rhetoric of imperative, i.e. things should happen in a defined way in order to make the social change come true. The core concepts of critical pedagogy are politics, culture and economics. Politics does not only include the politics of political parties, but also cultural, social and community action. Furthermore, critical pedagogy examines the relationship between knowledge and power, and states that knowledge is always somebody's knowledge and is, therefore, presented from a certain point of view. For Giroux, if knowledge and experience are socially constructed, then a pedagogy of possibility is truly possible because a socially constructed world can likewise be dismantled, underdone and critically remade (Roger I. Simon in Peter McLaren 1988 in Giroux 1988, xix). In addition, knowledge in schools is usually determined by the ruling class, e.g. politicians and the wealthy (Giroux & McLaren 2001, 12-14). Therefore, critical pedagogy constructs a clear link between knowledge, education, society, state, politics and economics.

The main relations pointed out by critical pedagogy are also true for Russia. It is not difficult to discover that changes in education were determined by economical needs of the country. To quote Russian president Vladimir Putin, "... in the world economy, education is taking one of the leading positions. It has long ago become the most expensive and dear good" (Education - Step into the Future, 7). Furthermore, Vice Chairwoman of the Russian Federation Government Matvienko V.I. stated in her report: "... the competitiveness of the country will be determined by the quality of human capital. The cardinal changes of the past years in economical and socio-political systems of the country demand the so-called modernisation that would correspond to the adaptation of education to new goals ...“ (ibid. 9-10).
From the quotation above we can not only detect true reasons behind modernisation plans but also discover the way government officials view schooling. Giroux (1988b, 2-30) discusses schooling defining two ways of seeing it. In short, the traditional way takes the society as given and the task of the school is to equip students with all necessary skills and knowledge to operate in the existing society and therefore reproduce it. In this view schools are seen as merely instructional institutions. The alternative way analyses schools as sites that, while basically reproducing the dominant society, also contain possibilities for educating students to become active, critical citizens. Therefore, students will not only be taught to manage in the given society, but will also think critically of it and attempt to change it. In the alternative view, schools are not only instructional but also cultural sights because they acknowledge the complex cultural character of the dominant society that is present within school environment.

The alternative way of examining schooling is crucial to the topic of my thesis. If I would have assumed the traditional position, I would have no ground to suggest that Russian schools could change Russian society. I would rather examine the ways new educational reforms from above should be initiated in order to change schools and adjust them to the changing needs of the society. By taking up the alternative position, I acknowledge the influence schools have on the society and their potential to improve it. More so, putting schooling in the position of such importance also means giving much more credit to the work of teachers.

8.1.1. Teachers as transformative intellectuals

Despite their apparent address to teachers, the critical pedagogues have consistently refused to consider the ways in which their theoretical perspectives might be implemented, or to clarify their notoriously opaque style of writing ... (Buckingham 1998 in Morgan 2000, 275).

Henry Giroux also agrees that radical educational theory suffers from some serious flaws, the most serious being its failure to move beyond the language of critique and domination (Giroux 1988a in Giroux 1988, xxxi). To put it simply, critical pedagogues have done little to bring their ideas into reality, e.g. help schools, teachers and students transform their practices. Radical educators have focused on the language of
domination to such a degree that it undercuts any viable hope for developing a progressive political educational strategy (Giroux 1988a in Giroux 1988, xxxi). For radical pedagogy to become a viable political project, it has to develop a discourse that combines the language of critique with the language of possibility. In doing so, it has to:

1. provide analysis that reveals the opportunities for democratic struggles and reforms within the day-to-day workings of schools;
2. provide the theoretical basis for teachers and others to view and experience the nature of teacher work in a critical and potentially transformative way. (ibid. xxxii.)

Two elements of such a discourse are very important. These are the definition of schools as democratic public spheres and the definition of teachers as transformative intellectuals. (ibid.) However, we should not expect critical and transformative pedagogues to provide teachers with ready material packages on how to transform their classroom and teaching methods. On the contrary, Giroux sees these instructions as devaluing and deskilling teachers' work (see Giroux 1988c in Giroux 1988, 122-125). More so, Morgan (2000, 275) quotes Macedo (1994) that critical pedagogy is always an "anti-method" pedagogy in that it provides no specific advice as to the way that a teacher must teach or a student must learn. For this reason I think that critical pedagogy can only encourage teachers to use the resources it offers to evaluate their local school practices and introduce changes that would suit their context best.

Viewing schools as democratic public spheres provides a rational for defending them along with progressive forms of pedagogy and teacher work as essential institutions and practices in the performance of an important public service (Giroux 1988a in Giroux 1988, xxxii). According to Giroux, the role of teachers is to develop counter hegemonic pedagogies that not only empower students by giving them the knowledge and social skills they need to be able to function in the larger society as critical agents, but also educate them for transformative action. Furthermore, teachers should educate students to take risks, to struggle for institutional change and to fight both against oppression and for democracy outside schools. In this way, teachers will be involved in a dual struggle, they will empower students within the school and therefore engage in pedagogical transformation in the wider society. (ibid. xxxiii.)
The way to restructure and rethink the nature of teacher work is to view teachers as transformative intellectuals. The category intellectual provides a theoretical basis for examining teacher work as a form of intellectual labour, as opposed to defining it in a purely instrumental or technical terms. Second, it clarifies the kinds of ideological and practical conditions necessary for teachers to function as intellectuals. Third, it helps to make clear the role teachers play in producing and legitimating various political, economic and social interests through the pedagogies they endorse and utilise. (Giroux 1988c in Giroux 1988, 125.)

Therefore, thinking and practice cannot be separated, no activity can be abstracted from mind. That is why, teachers must be involved in and reflect on the conceptualisation, planning and design of curricula, as well as "take active responsibility for raising serious questions about what they teach, how they are to teach and what the larger goals are for which they are striving" (ibid. 126). This means that gradually teachers will take a responsible role in shaping the purposes and conditions of schooling. In this case, the category of intellectuals becomes a way of linking the purpose of teacher education, public schooling and in-service training to the very principles necessary for developing a democratic order and society (ibid).

More so, it is important not only to view teachers as intellectuals, e.g. active, reflective scholars and practitioners, but also to contextualise in political and normative terms the concrete social functions that teachers perform (ibid). As has been argued earlier, schools are not neutral sites, therefore teachers cannot assume being neutral either. For Giroux, central to the category of transformative intellectual is the necessity of making the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical. Making the pedagogical more political means inserting schooling directly into the political sphere by arguing that schooling represents both a struggle to define meaning and a struggle over power relations. (ibid. 127.) In this case, critical reflection and action on behalf of teachers are fundamental qualities.

Making the political more pedagogical means utilising forms of pedagogy that embody political interests that are emancipatory in nature. That is, using forms of pedagogy that treat students as critical agents; make knowledge problematic; utilise critical and
affirming dialogue; and make the case for struggling for a qualitatively better world for
all people. These forms of pedagogy require that transformative intellectuals take active
voices of their students seriously. (Giroux 1988c in Giroux 1988, 127.) In addition, this
means widening the scope of teaching to everyday life because individuals and groups
are parts of their various cultures, classes, histories etc. Finally, the combination of the
language of critique with the language of possibility will help educators to realise that
they can make changes and become social change agents.

8.1.2. Freirean Agenda on teachers as social transformers.

Shor (1987, 14, 23-26) offers a Freirean agenda for learning process in teacher
education in order to de-socialise students, i.e. to prevent the confirmation of student
rejection of critical thinking - the curriculum disempowerment of their intelligence. By
this Shor acknowledges the fact that traditionally schooling intends to prepare students
to live in the existing society rather than tries to change it and see it from a critical
perspective. More so, when students are encouraged and rewarded for repeating
somebody's truth and assuming existing values, their intelligence is not only
undermined, but it is gradually disempowered. In the situation of social reproduction
and disempowerment of human intelligence, it is hard to talk of rearing active, critically
thinking democratic citizens. However, if education is believed to be capable of social
transformation, teaching and schooling must be seen from a different perspective.

From Shor's (1987) work, I collected qualities necessary for teachers to possess and be
committed to in order to perform the transformative task. He or she should be:

- dialogic: show students that their participation is expected and needed. The trained
  intellectual does not silence the verbal styles of students;
- critically literate person: teacher who goes beneath the surface to understand the
  origin, structure, and consequences of any body of knowledge, technical process, or
  object under study; problematises all subjects of study and understands that existing
  knowledge is a historical product deeply invested with values of those who
  developed such knowledge;
ethnographer and cross-cultural communicator: teacher who locates critical literacy and dialogue inside the language, themes, and cognitive levels of the students, teacher who studies the population he/she is teaching for;
change-agent: teacher who communicates with and is involved in the community therefore influencing social development through education, takes community into account when planning the class instruction; teacher who is also aware of and involved in school organisation, school-based curriculum design, legislative environment and professional politics;
equal: aware and combating existing inequalities based on race, sex and class;
creative artist: teacher who is an exciting instructor capable of engaging students in provocative dialogue.

The Freirean teacher qualities found in Shor's (1987) book clearly show that a teacher, who wants to become a change agent and extend his/her role to social transformation should see him/herself in a much wider perspective. In this perspective, subject knowledge is only one limited side of teachers' duties among other important responsibilities. Russian teacher education should aim at promoting such qualities in young teacher students in order to engage them in social transformation.

8.2. LEO VYGOTSKY'S IDEAS IN THE CONTEXT OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

In my research work, the ideas of Leo Vygotsky represent the Russian component of the theoretical approach towards teachers' role in transformation towards democracy. Talking about Russia only in the context of the Western developed critical pedagogy is not enough; it would neglect the cultural and historical features of the country in question. In addition, it would show disrespect towards the cultural and educational heritage of Russia that has a number of great educators and philosophers whose theories are known world-wide. Unfortunately, Vygotsky's name and books are almost more popular abroad than in Russia (Frumin 1997, 98).

Vygotsky (1896-1934) read widely in the field of linguistics, social science, psychology, philosophy and the arts. He wrote on the relationship of children's social experiences
and learning. For a number of American psychologists, Vygotsky’s works, when first translated into English, represented a fresh perspective that emphasised the vital connection between the social and the psychological worlds of people, especially children. (Bigge 1999, 124.)

I chose Vygotsky because he is one of the first Russian pedagogues who acknowledged the influence of social and cultural environment on children and education. One of his most celebrated theories is the cultural-historical theory of psychological development of a human being (Davydov, year of publishing not known). Of course, Vygotsky lived almost a century ago and some might doubt the validity of his ideas for contemporary education. However, I must remind that his ideas are being used in the new conception of education in Russia and are getting more and more popular among Russian educators. Also abroad, in Quebec for example, Vygotsky’s theories are used to develop new ways of language teaching.  

In other words, Vygotsky’s theories are making a comeback to education, and more importantly Russian education, through his students and followers. An example of such development in Russia is Daniil El’konin’s and Vassily Davydov’s developmental school razvivayuchee obuchenie. Therefore, Vygotsky’s ideas have not lost their soundness. On the contrary, after years of being kept on the shelf, they are getting more appreciated than ever before.

In this study, Vygotsky’s ideas are presented together with critical pedagogy. Though understanding that they come from very different backgrounds and time periods; knowing that critical pedagogy was developed by pedagogues while Vygotsky is considered a psychologist, I wanted to examine Vygotsky’s theory and critical pedagogy together and search for both similarities and differences among his thoughts and critical pedagogy.

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8 Intensive French learning project by Claude Germain and Joan Netten, Université du Québec à Montreal. For more detail consult, http://www.unb.ca/slec/about/events/content/netten_germain.html (Accessed on 08.01.2003)

9 For more information on developmental learning, consult http://www.maro.newmail.ru/
pedagogy. The book that turned most helpful in examining Vygotsky's ideas is Pedagogicheskaya Psihologiya 1999 (The Pedagogical Psychology). Therefore, the discussion presented below is mainly based on the ideas collected from this piece of literature.

Due to the topic of my research, I looked especially at Vygotsky's ideas on teachers' role. However, it should be remembered that Vygotsky did not write much about teachers' role in comparison to the amount of material on other topics. He pointed out that science has not reached those details and discoveries that would give keys to the psychology of the teacher (Vygotsky 1999, 305). Nevertheless, I managed to find some interesting ideas on teachers' role in Vygotsky's writings that are related to the thoughts of critical pedagogues.

First of all, the theory of Vygotsky, just as that of critical pedagogy, has a deep connection to Marxism, to the desire for fair and humane life system, to the vision of a "good society", as a sphere for free development and discovery of the creative powers of human beings. Vygotsky looked with optimism at the role and ability of education in individual development and improvement of society. Therefore, his works can be most actively used by reformers who see school as the most important institution of social and cultural progress. (Frumin 1997, 98.) Vygotsky (1999, 54) wrote that the aim of upbringing is not only the adaptation to the existing environment, which can be done by life itself. I assume that in this statement Vygotsky acknowledged the importance of school in social transformation and also expressed his belief in education as a change agent.

Vygotsky, just as the critical pedagogues, admitted that education has always and everywhere a class character meaning that education is influenced by the social class in

(Accessed on 08.01.2003)

power. He said that up-bringing in the human society has a clear social function that has always been influenced by interests of the ruling class. Freedom and independence of the small artificial up-bringing environment [school] from the great social environment is relative and conventional within certain narrow limitations and borders (ibid. 59).

Before discussing more profoundly Vygotsky's ideas on the role of the teacher, it is important to clarify the concept of vospitatel'nyi process or up-bringing process often used by the author. It is essential to discuss this term because it is not known in the western educational literature. In the west, the term "education" includes all processes taking place in school, e.g. learning of different subjects and social education or up-bringing. In the Soviet Union, teachers' work was divided into instructive work in subjects and up-bringing work that was usually carried out as extracurricular activities. Of course, some up-bringing work was also done during classes, e.g. vospitatel'naya rabota po predmetu up-bringing work carried out during a lesson. For example, literature classes could have been used to develop some moral qualities by reading biographies of famous people.

The situation with the up-bringing function of schools has changed. The statistics show that teachers are less and less interested in extracurricular/up-bringing activities. Many of them think that the process of up-bringing should be managed by the family (Smirnova 1995, 21). In addition, there seems to be a tendency of more indifferent behaviour of teachers in school and in relation to their classes, children and some forms of work with them (ibid. 20). The analysis of the documents of educational administration shows that the term "up-bringing" is hardly ever mentioned these days. Therefore, it seems that fading of the up-bringing function of schools is taking place, which I find unfortunate. One of the possible causes of this phenomenon could be the inability of pedagogues to take a direction in the world of the new up-bringing values. (See Schnekendorf 1997, 46.)

It seems that teachers in Russia see themselves more as subject instructors and some also become passive in their work. This may be a temporary phenomenon caused by the transformation process, which influences and changes the value hierarchy. It might also indicate a new way of looking at teachers' profession. Probably, this development will proceed unless pre-and in-service training institutions, as well as the whole Russian
society will try to influence it. However, when school curriculum is heavily overburdened and many teachers take extra hours because of their low salaries, it is not hard to understand their insufficient interest in any extra duties.

In the context of my research tasks, this situation is especially interesting because one of the most important ideas behind my thesis is the firm belief that teacher is never only an instructor, but his/her role is much broader. More so, only a teacher who sees him/herself in a wider perspective can become a transformer. How can we talk about a teacher's role in Russia's democratisation when teachers see themselves as those who only give knowledge of their subject? Teachers should understand that even without organising extracurricular activities they always have a deep impact on the students just by standing in front of the classroom, treating students in a particular way, explaining their subject in a certain manner, by choosing a certain real-life example to illustrate their point and giving students freedom or restricting it.

Vygotsky criticised the expected passiveness in students and saw both students and teachers as active participants of the up-bringing process. The most important matter in this process is the personal experience of the student and reflection on personal experiences. By giving such a great value to students' experiences Vygotsky acknowledged the value of the student's personality, as an individual and as an active participant of the educational process. This is, in my opinion, a very important issue for the development of self-confidence and reflective thinking in students. We know that the encouraged passiveness in students in the USSR gradually developed into uncritical citizenry and therefore ensured further marginalisation of the Soviet society. Therefore, a real teacher should possess a democratic, e.g. equal and open attitude towards his/her pupils.

Teachers' role is extremely important. Vygotsky wrote that a student's experience and the establishment of conditional reflexes is totally determined by the surrounding environment. The teacher is the organiser of the up-bringing environment, the regulator and the controller of its interaction with the student. (Vygotsky 1999, 52.) If a teacher is powerless in the immediate interaction with the student, he/she is powerful in influencing the student through social environment. The social environment is the true
lever of the up-bringing process, and the entire role of a teacher is based on monitoring this lever. (ibid.) The teacher has an active role in the process of up-bringing - to model, include and exclude various environmental elements, to combine them in various ways, to make them accomplish an educational goal. This is why up-bringing becomes active in three dimensions: the activity of the teacher encourages students' activity and therefore the environment between them becomes active (Vygotsky 1999, 57).

It is interesting to notice that already almost 100 years ago Vygotsky wrote that it is not so important to give a certain amount of knowledge, as it is to teach to acquire and use this knowledge (ibid. 307). However, some teachers get lost behind the facts they are lecturing about. Therefore, one of the main demands is to reject the pure facts and to develop all character sides. Vygotsky (ibid. 308) quotes Munsterberg (1910):

The teacher who does not feel the beauty and sanctity of his/her calling, who came to school to have a job and not because his/her heart is full of desire to teach the young, this kind of teacher is harming the students and more so him/herself.

Therefore, Vygotsky advocates the commitment of teachers to their work.

Teachers should also be competent. They can only present information in an interesting manner when they could give 100 times more than they are giving in reality. In order to teach, one can know little, but clearly and distinctly. But in order to direct the knowledge of students, one should know much more. (Vygotsky 1999, 308.) In addition, a teacher should possess the knowledge of the laws of up-bringing in order to know how to prompt inspiration for learning in students. Such a teacher should be a scientifically educated professional. (ibid. 311.)

Vygotsky claimed, that in the end it is life that educates. One of the biggest sins of school has been it being separated from life. A pedagogue's up-bringing work should be connected to his/her creative and social work. He/she should always connect school with life through his/her subject. (ibid. 312-313.) The school of today is also often blamed for being too remote from the reality. How can children learn something that they cannot relate to? School, as I see it, should prepare children for real life and also help them to understand it and therefore be ready to fight in order to change something for better.
Concerning life, Vygotsky wrote that it contains different skills; we cannot have an indifferent and similar relation to all of these elements and cannot absolutely agree with them only because they exist in life (ibid. 54). Therefore, Vygotsky also expected a critical attitude from teachers towards the surrounding environment.

In his thinking, Vygotsky goes as far as to connect school and up-bringing to politics. A sociologist, e.g. tutor, is always a politician. The up-bringing of "social reflexes" is the up-bringing of social behaviour; therefore up-bringing cannot be non-political. More so, pedagogy has never been non-political because the work on psychology and social reflexes is always, consciously or unconsciously, based on a certain social and political line. This line is determined by interests of the dominant social class. (Zalkind 1930 in Vygotsky 1999, 315.) Vygotsky, as a Marxist, wanted to make clear that education is never value-free. However, I did not manage to find out if Vygotsky, like critical pedagogues, thought that it is a teacher's duty to help students uncover this hidden influence.

Pedagogy is connected to the creative work; therefore a teacher is a creator. The feeling of social discomfort causes changes in emotional apparatus. Discomfort results in creative work. The more tense the discomfort and the more complicated the emotional mechanism of a human being, the more natural and irresistible are his/her pedagogical impulses and with the more energy these impulses appear on the surface. Childhood is the time of great social discomfort and tragedy. The up-bringing should not aim at totally avoiding the features of discomfort of the childhood, but it should be possible to make a child face the discomfort and defeat it. (ibid. 316.)

With time, Vygotsky believed, human life would turn into continuous creative work. Infinite creative possibilities of life would be opened for tutors. They would become the creators of the future. Vygotsky quoted the words of the great Russian revolutionary Leo Trotsky that pedagogy will become the queen of social thought. (ibid. 317.) In such a grandiose and partly utopian way Vygotsky believed that one day teachers and their work could change the world for the better.
8.3. OTHER RUSSIAN EDUCATORS ON THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN TRANSFORMATION

8.3.1. Aleksandr Bermus on the relationship between education, society and change

Aleksandr Bermus\textsuperscript{11} (1998) presents an interesting critical view on the possibilities of Russian education to change the society. On one hand, he talks about the society as being transformed via education because he sees education as the only tool to achieve societal development. On the other hand, he does not present education as a panacea. He understands that education, as a part of society, is in crisis itself and therefore should also be changed. Therefore, for Bermus education has a great potential to facilitate change, but cannot do it without society's support and progress along the same lines.

Bermus gives reasons why education seems to form the only basis for the formation of open society and effective state. He claims that nothing could reform Russia externally (Bermus 1998, 34). Therefore, something within the country should facilitate change. The two elements of the humanitarian triad capable of change, i.e. science and arts, have almost stopped to exist. Therefore, only education is left to assume such a difficult task of transformation.(ibid.) However, education is in crisis because society itself is in crisis. Seen from this point of view, the situation turns into a vicious circle where society reproduces the system of education where people, in the words of Bermus (ibid), are not free but humiliated.

Bermus asks, why does education in Russia offer such controversial means for changing the society? On the one hand, very little finances have been invested into education to make change possible. Besides, there is a socio-cultural crisis of the educational establishment, as well as dramatic rethinking of the role of education as a generally civilising process, and finally the inadequate level of pronunciation of the government's policies. For these reasons, education cannot be seen as a real agent of change, but rather as a unique system with great potential to restore as an important institution and develop
society on its pillars. Therefore, if education is progressive, it can reinforce
development.

Aleksandr Bermus's reasons for seeing education in these terms are clear. In his opinion,
education is, first of all, the leading element of social humane practices. School has
remained a socio-governmental institution, which therefore forms a socio-cultural
common ground for constructive co-operation of both governmental and self-
administrative organs. At all times school has had a tendency towards uncertainty and
change from within. It is a part of diverse systems, relations and forms, therefore, it is
poly-cultural, i.e. consists of people of different ages, nationalities, subcultures etc. In
his way, school is always pluralistic, even when it is under tight control of an
authoritative regime. And finally in the last years, school has taken up a new function of
cultural and leisure organisation, when traditional institutions of cultural inheritance
have disintegrated and education became regionalised.

Here, Bermus comes to an important and interesting question of co-operation between
society and the system of education. He calls the education system both society's
father and mother (Bermus 1998, 36). In addition, he makes an important conclusion
on this mutual relationship saying that in order to make the process of social reformation
a real phenomenon with internal logic and foundation, it should be based on internal
needs and resources of society (ibid). Shortly, the possible ways of interaction between
schools and society are:

1. The elaboration of normative conceptual basis for the development of educational
   institutions and local education systems.

In my opinion, this means that schools and local authorities could and should work in a
dialogue on, for instance, curricula development to integrate local and regional features
in it. In addition, only when local authorities are working closely with schools, the
satisfactory distribution of resources is possible to achieve. Finally, when teachers
would see real interest in their work on behalf of the authorities, they would themselves
become more motivated to work with new methods and attitudes, and more importantly

Aleksand Bermus is the head teacher at the department of pedagogy at the Rostov
they would become agents of change not only within their classrooms, but in a wider social context.

2. Both governmental and societal evaluation of educational institutions.
When schools are evaluated by both government and society members, education can address social changes and demands faster. More importantly, while working closer with society the system of education itself would have a greater influence on this society, reinforcing their intimate link. Furthermore, societal evaluation of education could decrease governmental control over these issues therefore making education more decentralised and hopefully more democratic.

3. The support of socio-cultural initiatives on behalf of schools, which could act as accumulators of citizens' activity in regions.
When schools work in co-operation with local authorities, they could together initiate projects involving different societal groups, organisations, as well as individual citizens. Children involved in such events could bring in their parents, friends and relatives.

4. The change of the status of schools and the formation of a common educational and socio-cultural space.
The status of schools should change from mere educational institutions to respected socio-educational establishments. When schools and teachers will be treated as professionals and experts of their work, their potential to educate democratic citizens and change the society would increase. The creation of a common cultural, social and educational space means, in my opinion, that these three spheres should work according to similar lines and support each other, rather than contradict.

8.3.2. Boris Bim Bad's views about education for freedom
A prominent contemporary Russian educator Boris Bim-Bad\textsuperscript{12} writes that though Russia has acknowledged the respect and importance of freedom in its Constitution and by adopting the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, freedom does not yet form a

\textsuperscript{12} Boris Bim-Bad is the author of the alternative project of modernisation of pedagogical education and the head of the University of the Russian Academy of Education.
Freedom has been given, but it does not yet belong to everybody. People should learn to possess and value freedom. The totalitarian state is over, but it is more difficult to give up one's mental slavery. This is the task of education, up-bringing and teaching, as Bim-Bad puts it.

The author states that people who are not accustomed to freedom can easily turn to violence.

Those who did not learn to create values truly necessary for those surrounding them, to understand themselves and the world, those not prepared to mutually beneficial combination of powers and productive division of labour, organisation and self-governance, those people have only one way to survive - violence (ibid).

He also claims that for people with hatred of freedom, frustration and lost confidence in tomorrow, it is easy to turn to despotism. Already Fedor Dostoevsky in The Great Inquisitor talked about the torturing anxiety among people to find somebody to pass the gift of freedom to. People who have not had freedom would rather give it up in order to have someone to take care of them and someone to make important independent decisions for them. Again, education becomes crucial in learning to be free.

According to Bim-Bad (ibid. 5), the restoration of totalitarianism is still possible for two reasons: the socio-psychological seizure of freedom and the lack of education for freedom, which is based on real and adequate understanding of the very human nature. However, the contemporary Russian power holders do not understand that education goes ahead economy, as it determines the very existence, that only education is able to neutralise the possible negative consequences of freedom, such as violence. Only the school of feeling, Bim Bad says, the school of will and the school of thought can give humans the real power to carry the burden of freedom.

The pedagogical paradox, however, lies in the problem of combining voluntary obedience with the ability to exercise freedom. Bim-Bad offers the following means to accomplish education for freedom, taking into account the problematic co-existence of obedience and freedom:
A child should be given freedom always and everywhere starting at a very early age if his/her freedom is not in controversy with somebody else's freedom and safety.

A child should be given a possibility to discover that he/she can reach his/her aims by letting others reach theirs. This can be accomplished by, for example, not giving any favours unless he/she has fulfilled his/her duties.

A child must understand that only by limiting his/her freedom he/she can exercise it, that by developing self-limitation he/she can become free, e.g. free from somebody else's guardianship.

As early as possible a child should learn to understand and respect rights and interests of other people.

The main aim of education for freedom is, consequently, to equip people with the power of self-determination. Education should discover a creator of goodness in every human being. In order to live according to the laws of goodness, one should possess intellectual courage, honesty of the world view and moral powers. Bim-Bad also advocates critical thinking and the pleasure of thought. For this reason, he talks about the importance of teaching logic and psychology. Education for freedom is also the formation of the system of values, wishes and expectations, feelings and relations. That is why Bim-Bad supports teaching philosophy in school. It is not the basics of sciences, nor their sub-product that give humans freedom, it is the philosophy of sciences in combination with the method of cognition. Finally, Bim-Bad claims that the experience of co-operation comes from project work, where every student is able to find his/her place and role and share it with others.

Bim-Bad's message is, therefore, clear - it is not enough to proclaim democracy and freedom, these virtues should be learned in school, the school that is democratic and free in its very nature. In my view, even if people do not start abusing freedom and turn to violence, they might still get easily frustrated and lost in the new situation of having to make independent decisions. Just like a child who has suddenly got freedom can easily do silly things unless he/she is taught to take responsibility for being free. Of course, one should not think that Russian people have never had to make decisions in their lives before. However, I think everyone will agree with me that the range of decisions is now
such wider. In addition, people in the new Russia are no more responsible only for themselves. In a true democracy, they should also take part in public life and influence the very course their country is taking.

I find Bim-Bad’s ideas sound. However, to me they seem a little bit too idealistic. Education is thought of as a panacea and the one and only means of making Russia and Russian people free. I will argue that though the importance of education is enormous, it should not be forgotten that the system of education is a part of a bigger system, society. Education, by promoting certain values, can of course influence the acceptance and internalisation of freedom, but this can only be achieved if the society in general treats freedom as important and supports and reinforces democratic values and methods promoted in school.

In addition, Bim-Bad’s article is full of good ideas, but of little help when you try to put them into practice. We should not forget that teachers cannot only work with abstract ideas, they also need practical advice to reinforce certain values. I am more than certain that in the past 10 years pedagogical literature has been full of publications on the great role of education and school in general, but ideas are not enough. For teachers, who have worked in a very centralised system of education for years, it is not easy to accept vague notions of democracy. They need practice and training. Otherwise, they may only get more frustrated and will choose to carry on with the old, but safe and familiar models of teaching.

8.4. CONCLUSION ON THE TEACHERS’ ROLE

The purpose of this chapter is to summarise and compare views on teachers’ role found in critical and transform pedagogy, Vygotsky’s works and in the writings of Russian contemporary educators Bermus and Bim-Bad. Critical pedagogues pay more attention to the relationship between education, teachers and the outer world. They acknowledge the influence of economy, politics and state on education. In addition, they argue that schools do not automatically possess democratic environments and pass on democratic values. On the contrary, the existing school system is reproductive rather than transformative or liberating in its nature. That is why critical pedagogues call for an
alternative way of viewing schools and teachers. In this view, schools are seen as democratic public spheres and teachers are called transformative intellectuals. The transformative intellectuals are capable of social change and are critically thinking social change agents, scholars and practitioners, who take action in order to improve the existing society. Freire's transform pedagogy provides us with qualities of a transformer-educator, who is a critically literate creative person, working on dialogic and equal basis with his/her students, and who is taking into consideration students' cultural backgrounds and acts as a change agent.

Leo Vygotsky also describes teachers. For him, teacher is an active participant of the educational process. He/she is a competent professional, equal and open with students, committed to his/her work. In addition, Vygotsky emphasises such qualities as critical attitude and creativity. Furthermore, teacher is a politician presenting a certain social and political attitude.

The contemporary Russian educator Aleksander Bermus focuses on the close relationship between education and society. For him, their relationship is mutual because without consensus and development on similar lines education cannot reinforce change. Therefore, in his article Bermus acknowledges that the system of education does have a great potential to facilitate transformation, but can only do it with support from other social and governmental institutions. Bim-Bad, on the other hand, concentrates more on education for freedom because in democracy people need to learn to value and exercise it. In this content, the main aim of education is to teach the power of self-determination, moral values, intellectual courage and critical thinking. In addition, in order to teach freedom, schools have to be free and democratic in their very nature.

The above summary on the educational theorists forms a comprehensive framework for the analysis of the empirical data. Importantly, one can see how much in common critical and transform pedagogy have with Vygotsky, Bermus and Bim-Bad. In my opinion, their views represent an alternative way of looking at education and they all acknowledge the great influence education has on social development. These ideas can be well combined to form a framework of looking at teachers' work and schooling in the Russian context. This alternative framework would help teachers to consider themselves
as transformative intellectuals and change schools into democratic public spheres. However, the construction of such a comprehensive framework lies outside the limited size and purpose of this study.

9. STUDENT TEACHERS' VIEWS OF THEIR FUTURE ROLE

In my study, the empirical data represents a supportive resource and takes the discussion on the role of education and teachers started in earlier sections of the research further. The purpose of the data is to shed some light on how student teachers view their role in relation to change in school, in education system and in Russian society. The empirical data was obtained through the questionnaire conducted in Petrozavodsk in Autumn 2001 (see Chapter 5.2.). The following analysis is arranged on the question basis (see Appendices). All 72 answers were read thoroughly and examined one question at a time. After that, a summary was produced on every question presenting students' answers and views. These summaries are presented below.

9.1. PLANS AFTER EDUCATION

Most of the students who answered the questionnaire are not planning to work in schools. The most frequent argument was the low social status and inadequate salary. Some students wrote that teachers' work demands "a lot of nerves" because today's youth is very difficult to communicate with. Others referred to their lack of teaching talent or too high level of responsibility. Only a few students want and will work in schools because they like children. A female student teacher wrote: "I want to teach better than I was taught to make children interested in school".

9.2. EXPECTATIONS AND WORRIES

All students expressed concern about their future life and career. They are worried that as young inexperienced professionals their skills and education will not be needed. A small number of students were also concerned about their legal protection, some even wrote that the state does not care about its citizens and will use them for its own
purposes. The most common expectation was that something in the country will change for the better.

In spite of the fact that most students are not planning to work in schools, many of them wrote about wishes for the teachers' work. For example, they hope for the work to become more prestigious. They are worried how they will help the "little people" to grow up, how to find the right method of teaching, how to combine parents' demands and students' low interest in studying. To quote one male student: "The process of education is different from the process of making nails because one cannot send people to revision like defective nails".

I think that this question was problematic and did not fully serve the initial purpose of finding out about students' professional expectations and concerns. Instead, most of the students expressed their "human" misgivings, such as concern for the wellbeing of their family and relatives and fear of unemployment. On the other hand, this is a proof that personal and professional life cannot be separated, especially in teachers' profession. I am certain that students have good reasons for worrying about the well-being in their personal lives. The economical instability still continues. Teachers' salaries have been increased recently, but they are still too low for a young professional to guarantee decent living conditions.

**9.3. THE VALUE BASIS OF TEACHING**

The question "What values would you like to pass on to your future students, how?" revealed that teacher students mostly want to pass on universal human values rather than those especially related to democracy and civil society. The values most frequently mentioned are kindness, understanding, respect of other people, diligence, fairness, some even mentioned patriotism. A few noted values which I consider as being related to those needed for democracy such as fairness, tolerance, solidarity, responsibility. However, these qualities were only mentioned by a limited number of students. I could also clearly see in the answers the shift from collective to individual way of thinking, as some students mentioned the importance of understanding one's own uniqueness and
individuality. In relation to this, collective values were mentioned very rarely. This certainly reflects the changing value basis in Russian society.

Only a small number of students explained how to pass values on to students. Those who answered the second part of the question wrote that they will pass values via conversations, the teacher's personal example and through life examples of other people. This makes me conclude that teacher-students were mostly thinking of verbal transmission of values. Nevertheless, I must emphasise that some students mentioned the importance of the teacher's own example. Therefore, they realise that teachers, consciously or unconsciously, pass on certain values, attitudes and behaviour.

9.4. THE POSSIBILITIES TO INFLUENCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF RUSSIA

Consider this question (Is it possible for a teacher to influence the development of Russia? If yes, how? If no, why?) as one of the most significant for the topic of my study. The majority of the students thought that teachers have an effect on Russia's development because they influence personal qualities of children, their world view and opinions. As most students pointed out, teachers are responsible for bringing up future Russian citizens. In addition, some students emphasised that all children go to school, and education takes years. Therefore, teachers' influence is certain and long-lasting. In addition to moral qualities, some students wrote that teachers are also responsible for giving students knowledge, because without knowledge it would be impossible to foster Russia's growth.

A small number of students looked at this question from a slightly different perspective. Instead of discussing teachers and individual students, they reflected on teachers' role in society. These students answered that a teacher can influence Russia only if his/her actions are supported by parents and society because teacher alone cannot do much. In addition, one male student proposed that in order to change something "teachers should establish a serious movement, like a party of teachers that would mean something for Russia".
The majority of students who thought that teachers cannot influence Russia based their answer on the idea that Russian teachers have a very low social status and therefore limited possibilities. These students blamed the government for such a situation. One student remarked that it is the government that influences teachers and not the other way round. As one male student wrote: "In order for Russian teachers to help Russia's development the attitude towards teachers should be changed first. Today our teachers are one of the poorest social layers". More so, a few students wrote of the need to unite teachers, media, institutions of out-school activities and educational policy of the state in order to influence Russia because one person cannot achieve anything.

9.5. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AUTHORITIES AND THE TEACHER

Every single student was dissatisfied with the relationship between authorities and teachers today. Most students wrote about low financial support, which is the reason why many teachers leave school and young ones search for employment somewhere else. Half of the students saw the relationship as top-down, where authorities are controlling teachers' work and limiting their autonomy. Others remarked that the government has simply turned its back on teachers. Most students thought that the relationship should be based on mutual understanding and respect. In addition, government should provide teachers with necessary resources and increase their salaries. When government will improve its attitude towards teachers, their social status will rise respectively and as a result teachers will have more influence on Russian society.

9.6. TEACHERS' ROLE IN THE CLASS, IN THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION AND IN THE WHOLE SOCIETY

This question was not answered thoroughly by most of the students. In my opinion, this was caused by the structure of the questionnaire and therefore it was my fault. Previous questions were quite demanding and students were probably already tired when coming to the sixth question. On the other hand, this question is in many ways related to two previous ones and therefore many students simply wrote "see 4 and 5". The majority of students concentrated only on teachers' role in the classroom, which they described as
important because teacher is in charge of the class and is influencing students' personal growth. Those who answered the rest of the question saw teachers' role in society and educational system as insignificant. I found it surprising that even those students who thought that teachers can influence Russia's development (Question 4), in this question clearly stated that teachers play no role in society and system of education. Some wrote that though teacher does play an important role, no one has realised it yet.

However, there were a few students who saw teachers as important in all three categories. One female student wrote: "In class, teacher is a leader and an example, in the system of education, teacher is an instrument (!) of education, in the country, the carrier of knowledge, intelligentsia, the cultural potential of the country". I put exclamation mark after "instrument" because such a use of the word echoes the Soviet times when teacher was just a technician fulfilling government's educational orders. However, I also noticed a different attitude towards teachers. One male student wrote that teacher is like a road sign, who shows all possible roads, their plusses and minuses. A few other students called teacher a "tutor" or an "enlightener".

9.7. THE NEW ELEMENTS IN TEACHERS' ROLE/WORK COMPARED TO THE COMMUNIST PAST

Almost all students answered this last question. The most frequently noted new element was freedom. Teachers' freedom was described as the ability to choose from various teaching methods and materials. Students' freedom was mentioned in the sense of freedom of expression, having a right for personal opinion even if it differs from the teacher's. For students, freedom also meant an opportunity to express personal initiative, ability to freely choose future profession and fate - free choice. Another important element was equality in teacher-student relationship, "a child should not be afraid of his/her teacher". Finally, individuality was often mentioned. Children are now able to grow at their own pace and teachers are no more trying to "push a child into a common frame". If earlier education was to serve communism, nowadays it has become freer of frames and stereotypes. One person stated that though education has become more democratic, it does not always bring positive outcomes. In addition, another student
wrote that though there are new democratic features in education, they are still lying under a strict control of the centre.

**9.8. CONCLUSION ON THE FINDINGS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Sadly, the results of the questionnaire are not too optimistic. First of all, students are not motivated to work in schools. Only with the improvement in teachers' social status would they change their mind about the teaching profession. The second question revealed that most young teacher students are concerned about their future. Their worries and expectations are rather personal and human than related to school work. Those who wrote about professional worries and expectations, showed concern in how to do the job well, i.e. find the right methods, deal with parents etc. In addition, students' answers indicated their mistrust in state and Russian authorities.

Concerning values, it is clear that students want to pass on both universal values and those that I could see as related to democracy, such as respect, tolerance, fairness and solidarity. An important finding of this question was students' belief in the importance of teachers' personal example. This view comes close to what critical pedagogy says about teachers' role. Importantly for my study, question 4 indicated that students acknowledge teachers' influence on Russia's future. But they think that teachers influence through pupils rather than being active in a wider social perspective, which is a significant part of transformative educators' mission according to critical and transform pedagogy. However, not all students saw teachers' primary role in developing personal student qualities, but also in relation to society and state. Some brought up the fact that teachers should be united with other social actors to make their work even more important.

Everyone was dissatisfied with the current relationship between teachers and authorities. The relationship is mostly described as top-down and power holders do not seem to realise teachers' expertise in educational matters. According to students, such an attitude towards teachers is reflected in the way society treats teachers. Teachers' role is still mainly seen within the frame of his/her classroom as a person responsible for a child's
growth. Teachers' importance in educational system and society is considered almost insignificant.

Finally, every student remarked that society has changed towards a freer one because both teachers and students experience wider choice and can act on equal basis. One possible explanation of the importance of freedom for students could be in the legitimacy of the past. In the Soviet times, people were longing for freedom. That is why in the recent transformation to democracy students value freedom most. However, teacher students only mentioned personal freedom, like free choice and equal possibilities. But what about freedom of expression and freedom to influence their country's development?

It seems that economic instability as well as continuous uncertainty make people focus on their personal lives and close family. The old mentality is, therefore, still present. By this I refer to the Soviet times, when the marginalisation of the Soviet society was manifested in people concentrating and bearing responsibilities only for their close circle of friends and relatives. Though everyone was responsible for "building the communism", this responsibility was in most cases imposed from above rather than came from people's true belief in communism. Citizens' limited possibilities to influence the macro level made them focus on the micro level, which is still very much the case in contemporary Russia. However, now this situation is not caused by political ideology, but by instability and uncertainty, as well as low trust in the government.

In this respect, I would emphasis the importance of education and especially teacher training to influence future generations. As Giroux pointed out, education should prepare for transformative action. Teachers should educate students to take risks, to struggle for institutional change and to fight both against oppression and for democracy outside schools. In this way, teachers will be involved in a dual struggle, they will empower students within the school and therefore engage in pedagogical transformation in the wider society. (Giroux 1988a in Giroux 1988, xxxiii.)
10. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this work was to examine educational transformation in Russia amidst political, economical and social changes. The focus in the research was on the role of education in general and teachers in particular in the middle of transformation. In the study I argue that in the situation of transformation, decentralisation and institutional inconsistency, it becomes increasingly important to examine teachers' work in order to gain a more accurate picture of educational transformation. More so, teachers can become the true facilitators of change by fostering democratic values, attitudes and behaviour in their students.

The methodological approach applied in the research was a combination of moderate and critical hermeneutics. Hermeneutics was chosen since my research task was to study the meaning of education and teachers' role in the process of transformation in Russia, as well as to make interpretations of questionnaires, other texts and social processes in the context of continuous economical, political and social changes in the country.

The theoretical framework was built from the areas of many disciplines including education, politics, history and sociology. The main concepts of the study were transition, transformation, democracy, state and civil society. These concepts were thoroughly discussed in the beginning of the paper because they form an intimate relationship with education and teachers in Russia. As the main interest was to discuss teachers' role as reformers the educational perspective was based on critical and transformative pedagogy, Leo Vygotsky's writings on children's social experiences and learning, as well as the views of contemporary Russian educators Aleksandr Bermus and Boris Bim-Bad on the relationship between education, society and freedom.

I think that I have a potential of more objective and multifaceted way of looking at the topic of this study because I could assume both insider's and outsider's positions. On the one hand, I was brought up in Russia and therefore I am familiar with its culture, traditions, way of life etc. On the other hand, I already got distanced from the country...
while living abroad for several years. Therefore, it is easier to take up a more neutral point and make explicit my personal assumption about the country and its people.

The choices concerning the theoretical and empirical parts of the study were influenced by the overall approach employed in the thesis, e.g. critical and transform pedagogy. For this reason the works of Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Ira Shor and Paolo Freire were selected. The study of Russian education would not be accurate without Russian sources. Leo Vygotsky's writings were chosen because he was the first Russian psychologist and educator to talk of the significance of the relationship between child's growth and the environment around him/her. In addition, Vygotsky's works are making a comeback to Russian education and form a solid basis for new educational approaches. The works of contemporary educators Aleksand Bermus and Boris Bim-Bad caught my attention due to their new and critical approach towards the relationship between education, society and freedom.

The research aimed at exploring three research questions. The first one discussed the challenges brought by political, social and economic changes to teachers' work. It is obvious that teachers' work in the new Russia is very much different from what it used to be like in the Soviet times. The change in the value hierarchy as well as the economical and political instability cause conflicts within school, as well as in the relationship between teachers, school and society. In addition, the educational paradigm is now different, and teachers are expected to pay more attention to each child's individuality, as well as to participate widely in various educational activities. This constitutes a great challenge for contemporary teachers, who have not been given enough support and training to teach in such a new environment.

The second research question was concerned with the role of education in general and teachers in particular in the transformation process towards democratic civil society in Russia. The discussion of this question was based on both western and Russian literary sources, as well as discoveries of my field work and expert interview with a Russian teacher educator. As a result, it became clear that in the situation of transformation, decentralisation and institutional inconsistency, it is increasingly important to examine teachers' work in order to gain a real picture of educational transformation.
The influence of economy, politics and state on education in Russia was easily detected by analysing the official documents and the speeches of Russian political leaders. As critical pedagogues argue, schools do not automatically possess democratic environments and pass on democratic values. This is especially true for Russian education, which operated in a strictly centralised country for 70 years. That is why in my thesis I took up an alternative way of viewing schools and teachers. In this view, critical pedagogue see schools as democratic public spheres and teachers as transformative intellectuals. Viewing schools as democratic public spheres provided a rational for defending them along with progressive forms of pedagogy and teachers' work as essential institutions and practices in the performance of an important public service. In this way, teachers were argued to be involved in a dual struggle, e.g. empower students within the school and therefore engage in pedagogical transformation in the wider society.

The contemporary Russian educators Aleksander Bermus and Boris Bim-Bad have similar ideas to critical and transform pedagogy as they focus on the close relationship between education, society and freedom. While Bermus acknowledges that the system of education has a great potential to facilitate transformation, but can only do it with support from other social and governmental institutions, which is not yet the case in Russia, Bim-Bad concentrates more on education for freedom because in democracy people need to learn to value and exercise it.

Importantly, I found out how much in common critical and transform pedagogy have with Vygotsky, Bermus and Bim-Bad. In my opinion, their views represent an alternative way of looking at education and they all acknowledge the great influence education has on social development. For critical and transform pedagogues as well as Leo Vygotsky teachers are important actors of the educational process. They are competent professionals, equal and open with students, committed to their work. In addition, they possess a critical attitude and creativity, and act as social change agents.

The last research question was analysed on the basis of literature and the empirical data of the study and it aimed to discuss how student teachers view their role in the middle of change in school, in education system and in Russian society. The data was collected...
through questionnaire from the students of the Petrozavodsk Pedagogical University in autumn 2001. I believe that the results of the questionnaire can be considered relevant for other parts of Russia, although the data collection was carried out in Petrozavodsk.

Russian teacher training institutions are controlled by federal authorities, therefore curricula and teaching methods are quite similar no matter which city the university is located in. Furthermore, the statistical surveys that I used in my study (Smirnova & al. 1995, Ziyatdinova, 1992) did not detect any major discrepancies of opinions on questions concerning education and teachers' profession in different areas of the country.

The empirical data revealed that young student teachers are not motivated to work in schools. Teacher students are far from satisfied with the relationship between teachers, schools and the outer world. Teachers have a low social status, which limits their possibilities to foster social change. However, teachers' role is seen as important because teacher is responsible for children's development, for bringing up future Russian generations. That is why teacher students hope for Russian authorities to realise how valuable teachers are for Russia.

The most important conclusion of the analysis of the empirical data is that student teachers show a clear understanding of the significance of teachers' role for the development of Russia. In addition, they want to pass values which are necessary for democratic citizens, but feel they have no possibilities for it. They are dissatisfied with the current situation and the relationship between teachers and government, and feel that the low social status of Russian teachers limits their influence on Russia's future development.

The discussion shows that there are possibilities, but there are also difficulties and limiting factors to the ability of Russian education and teachers to influence change. As an institution, education does not exist in vacuum, but is rather closely related to other social and governmental institutions. The relationship between school and the outer world is mutually influential. That is why, schools and teachers need all possible support from the entire society to facilitate change. Otherwise, other factors in society can disrupt any democratic thinking school might be trying to promote in students.
At the end of the study I want to discuss the question whether we can expect future Russian teachers to act as facilitators of change, i.e. *intellectual transformers* – as the critical pedagogues would call them. In my opinion, student teachers do have the potential to become transformative intellectuals because they understand the importance of teachers' role, acknowledge the relationship between education and society and want to pass on values significant for democratic civil society. However, although students are conscious of structural influences, they do not believe or strive to change them.

The problem lies in students' motivation to work in schools. It is also possible that the current teacher education is, as critical pedagogues claim, disempowering students' intelligence (see Shor 1987). This means that teacher students are not encouraged to think critically and engage in wider social change. I believe that if teacher training would not only emphasise the importance of subject knowledge and correct teaching methods (this attitude can be detected in students' answers), but would motivate students to assume responsibility for curriculum and content development as well as the critical examination of the current education system, students would realise their possibilities to make Russia a better country. As Shor (1987, 13) put it, teacher and student morale from the joy of learning will inspire more people to choose teaching as a career, and to stay in teaching once there.

Very importantly this research was about teachers and for teachers, no matter where they live or work. I wish that teachers who read this paper would stop and think of their role in their classroom and their society. By emphasising the importance of education and teachers' role is social transformation, I wanted to convince the ones in doubt that their practices do matter even if they do not always see it in the eyes of the recipients of their work and the outer society. Furthermore, educators' influence is so enormous that they can almost call themselves creators of the future society if the society itself is supporting education and the values and attitudes it strives to pass on to students. Through this work I wanted to encourage teachers to respect themselves and to value their special profession. Finally, I am sure that teachers can see the wrongs of today's life, so I hope that this paper will help them to do something about it. Critical and transform pedagogy, as well as the works of Leo Vygotsky could form a basis for teachers to extend their work to social transformation.
As to further studies, the topic of teachers' role in transformation can be explored in various interesting ways. For example, it would be useful to analyse the relationship between social and governmental institutions and the system of education. More so, Russia is now a pluralistic country with a mixture of western values and Russian traditions. For this reason, I suggest a research on the value basis of Russian education through the examination of Russian school books, educational legislative acts, newly published literature for teachers and teacher educators. Lastly, in this study I suggested that an alternative framework might be constructed on the basis of ideas of critical pedagogues, Paolo Freire and Leo Vygotsky. The alternative framework could act as both theoretical and practical foundation for viewing Russian teachers as transformative intellectuals. In this thesis I have made theoretical suggestions for the construction of the framework, the next step would be to make it more practical and useful for teachers and teacher educators to implement in their work.
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APPENDICES

The original Russian version of the questionnaire.

Уважаемые студенты!
Прошу Вас ответить на вопросы этой анкеты. Полагайтесь на свое личное мнение. Ваши ответы будут рассматриваться в строгой конфиденциальности. Вы можете подписывать анкету или просто указать свой пол и возраст, оставляю это на Ваше усмотрение. Эта анкета является практической частью моей дипломной работы для факультета образования при университете г. Оулу, Финляндия. Используйте оборотную часть листа или любую другую бумагу, если предоставленного для ответов места не хватит или у Вас возникнут какие-то дополнительные комментарии по теме этой анкеты.
Большое спасибо!
С уважением,
Нелли Пяттоева (e-mail: npiattoe@paju.oulu.fi)

1. Собираетесь ли Вы работать учителем? Почему?
2. Каковы Ваши ожидания и опасения на пороге вступления в профессиональную жизнь?
3. Какие ценностии Вы хотели бы передать своим будущим ученикам? Каким образом?
4. Может ли учитель повлиять на развитие России? Если да, то каким образом? Если нет, то почему?
5. Какими должны быть отношения властей и учителя? Отличается ли сегодняшняя ситуация от желаемой?
6. Какую роль играет учитель в классе, в системе образования и в обществе в целом в современной России?
7. Назовите новые элементы (если есть) в роли/работе учителя в сравнении с коммунистическим прошлым. Хотели бы Вы добавить какие-то новые или старые элементы к уже присутствующим?
The translated English version of the questionnaire.

Dear students,

Please, answer the following questionnaire. Use your personal opinion. Your answers will be treated in strict confidentiality. You can sign the questionnaire or only indicate your sex and age, this is for you to decide. This questionnaire belongs to the empirical part of my Master's thesis at the Faculty of Education, University of Oulu, Finland. Feel free to use the back of the page or any extra paper if you run out of space or you come up with additional comments on the topic of the questionnaire.

Thank you very much!

Sincerely,

Nelli Piattoeva (e-mail: npiattoe@paju.oulu.fi)

1. Are you planning to work as a teacher? Why?
2. What are your expectations and worries at the start of your professional life?
3. What values would you like to pass on to your future pupils? How?
4. Is it possible for a teacher to influence the development of Russia? If yes, how? If no, why?
5. What should be the relationship between the authorities and the teacher? Does current situation differ from what you would like it to be?
6. What is the teacher’s role in the class, in the system of education and in the whole society in contemporary Russia?
7. Name the new elements (if any) in teacher's role/work if compared to the communist past. Would you like to add some new or old elements to the existing ones?