Introduction

On a sunny day in May of 2012, I made my way to one of the top teacher preparation institutions in Russia—Ognensk State Pedagogical University.[1] Located in a historic downtown area, OSPU occupied a block of ornate buildings inherited from Russia's imperial past. I was there for an education conference that brought together teacher educators, principals, teachers, and educational researchers from around the country. Marble statues, oil paintings, and red carpets adorning the interior of the main administration building where the conference took place impressed visitors with the institution's status as one of the oldest pedagogical universities in the country. Balloons hanging along the hallways created a festive atmosphere; professionally designed posters and banners informed participants about the main developments in Russian education. As I walked to the opening plenary, I watched men and women shaking hands, embracing, kissing each other on both cheeks, and laughing about how much they had changed since they last saw one another.

With velvet seats facing a stage draped in dark pleated curtains, the large plenary auditorium resembled a theater. Half of the seats were reserved for esteemed visitors: university rectors, school principals, members of the Scientific Council, and others. In the balconies above the auditorium sat students who appeared to be in awe of what they saw in front of them. Large TV screens displayed announcements, graduation pictures, and images of books published by OSPU's professors. Music from old Soviet school films played in the background. Forty-five minutes after the scheduled start, someone stood up, motioning others to follow suit in order to greet the governor.

The governor's speech was short. He noted that it was important to carry out the tasks set by the country's leaders. Even though education was a conservative field, it had to be reformed to initiate change in other sectors of

the economy and society. With that, the governor called for implementation of Our New School, a policy issued in 2010, stating that it served as "the starting point for the modernization of the nation's education." The governor also congratulated the university on its two-hundred-year anniversary and praised it for supplying high-quality teachers for the city's schools, saying that half of the city's sixty thousand teachers were graduates of the university.

The irony of the governor's speech was that Our New School argued for a complete elimination of pedagogical universities—a point that concerned many in the educational community. In the plenaries and sessions that followed, organizers and speakers from OSPU emphasized the need for participants to consider the points laid out in the conference resolution. The four-page document distributed among the participants highlighted both the achievements of Russian pedagogical education and the challenges it was facing. Its conclusion stated:

> Concerned with the emerging practice of transforming pedagogical universities into general higher education institutions, the assembly participants underscore the necessity of preserving and strengthening the national tradition of preparing teachers in pedagogical universities. (Resolution 2012, 3)[2]

The despair veiled by the bureaucratese of the resolution became most tangible during the closing plenary when one of the conference organizers pleaded with the audience: "Colleagues, I just want to remind you. We have to sign this resolution as soon as possible and direct it to the powers above. If we don't do it, if we don't act soon, there might be no pedagogical education left in Russia in several years' time." When I heard those words, I froze in my seat. I became familiar with the attacks on university-based teacher education in the United States, United Kingdom, and other international contexts when I embarked on my multi-sited ethnography of Russian educational reforms. Hearing this story of attacks echoed in a country with a distinct educational history, far removed from the troubles of American or British politics and seemingly untouched by the rise of corporate control of education, was, to put it mildly, unsettling. The festive atmosphere of the conference, I came to realize, had a dark underside. Among other things, it was pedagogical universities' desperate attempt to survive in the onslaught of globally circulated neoliberal reforms. To tackle these challenges, the organizers tried to mobilize participants to create networks, working groups, and partnerships to counteract the changes that were coming from "above."

When I returned to Russia in August 2013, I learned that one such change from "above" was the Concept of Support for the Development of Teacher Education[3]—also called the Concept of Teacher Education Modernization (referred to as the Concept throughout this text and summarized in appendix A). According to its creators, the Concept sought to improve the quality of teacher education. This improvement was to be accomplished by creating multiple paths into the teaching profession, increasing practical preparation in teacher education programs, making preparation competency based, and introducing a certification exam for those who wanted to teach. Even though many of these measures resembled proposals promoted by reformers in other countries (Darling-Hammond and Lieberman 2012; Furlong, Cochran-Smith, and Brennan 2009; Trippestad, Swennen, and Werler 2017), there were no references to international experiences in the official text. It only stated that the introduction of new standards for K–12 schooling and new teachers' professional standards in Russia necessitated teacher education reforms. As I came to realize later, working in tandem, the new standards and the Concept significantly changed the purposes of schooling, deprofessionalized teaching, and radically redesigned teacher education. These changes came to naturalize social inequality and depoliticize education. This reorientation of an educational system is noteworthy because of Russia's socialist past as well as its prior commitments to educational equity (Zajda 2003) and to a professionalized teaching force (Counts 1961) that was trained predominantly in pedagogical universities or stand-alone teacher education institutions.

In order to understand these changes, I focused on the Concept and followed the work of reformers who orchestrated its development and implementation. During my ethnographic fieldwork, I encountered discrepancies between reformers' public and private justifications for this reform; mimicry, masking, double-talk around this policy across various sites; as well as creative forms of coercion deployed to induce educators to accept reform ideology. Throughout my research, I often encountered participants who described what was happening in Russian education through the metaphor of theater. Thus, this book draws on the construct of political theater to reveal and disrupt the dramas unfolding in the world of educational policymaking in Russia and across the globe.

Drawing on several years of ethnographic research in Russia, I argue that teacher education reforms work as political theater that uses ideas of higher quality to disguise the sociocultural change pursued by reformers and mystifies policy processes so that the audience would accept this change.

Throughout the book, I analyze the dramas that unfolded in Russia as an observer who seeks to understand how reformers deploy dramaturgical techniques to introduce globally circulated policy scripts for educational reforms into national and subnational spaces despite opposition from educators and the public. The globally interconnected processes and transnational flows of ideologies I describe have a bearing not only for the future of Russia but also for other countries around the world. In what follows, I discuss global transformations in education and what the Russian context can offer for extending our understanding of these processes. I then discuss the conceptual framework of political theater used in this book and anthropology of policy as the methodological approach of this study. In the final section, I provide an overview of the book.

Teacher Education Reforms
in the Global Neoliberal Context

In many ways, this book is about a small group of Russian reformers who pursued educational modernization under the influence of the global neoliberal imaginary (Rizvi and Lingard 2010). In conceptualizing neoliberalism, I draw on Wacquant (2012), who approaches it as a political project that reengineers the state to serve markets and to produce new subjectivities through disciplinary policies. The prevalence of market thinking means that education around the world is framed in terms of its significance for economic competitiveness and efficiency rather than social cohesiveness, cultural continuity, or democratic equality (Rizvi and Lingard 2010). Reformers identify accountability, efficiency, and cost-benefit analyses as key priority areas. The production of new subjectivities (Davies and Bansel 2007), on the other hand, reflects a turn toward a conservative modernization (Apple 2006), which creates flexible, responsibilized subjects (Ong 2006), consumers (Ward 2012), or workers who imagine themselves as "bundles of skills" (Urciuoli 2010, 162).

In the changing relationships between the state and the private sector, teachers are increasingly positioned as strategic resources for achieving national economic competitiveness on the global stage (Maguire 2002, 2010) and as managers of human capital (Ellis and McNicholl 2015; Smyth 2006). These transformations lead to the construction of a "global teacher" with "the emphasis . . . on compliance with competencies rather than thinking critically about practice; focusing on teaching rather than learning; doing rather than thinking; skills rather than values" (Maguire 2010, 61).

The repositioning of teachers in national or global agendas has immediate implications for teacher education (Maguire 2010). Approaching teacher education as "a public policy problem," policymakers try to identify "which of its broad parameters . . . can be controlled . . . to enhance teacher quality and thus have a positive impact on desired school outcomes" (Cochran-Smith 2005, 4). This framing of teacher education as a policy problem occurs both in the United States and around the world, often with references to globalization, economic competition, and rapid change (Darling-Hammond and Lieberman 2012; Earley, Imig, and Michelli 2011; Furlong, Cochran-Smith, and Brennan 2009; Paine, Blömeke, and Aydarova 2016; Trippestad, Swennen, and Werler 2017; Zeichner 2010). Yet the pursuit of teacher quality is wrought with contradictions. Some policy actors advocate for complete elimination of university-based preparation (Hanushek and Rivkin 2004) or opening routes into teaching to those who were trained for other jobs (Gladwell 2009; Hess 2002). Others argue that teacher education programs should be held responsible for their graduates' job placement (DeStefano 2013) and for academic achievement of their graduates' students through value-added measures (Hanushek and Rivkin 2010). Less radical but much more common proposals include increasing teachers' practical preparation through partnerships with schools (Beauchamp et al. 2016; Ellis and McNicholl 2015; Zeichner 2017), making teacher education more outcome-oriented and competency-based (Darling-Hammond 2010; Darling-Hammond and Lieberman 2012; Sälzer and Prenzel 2018), and using tests to determine who can gain entry into the profession (Darling-Hammond 2010; Kobakhidze 2013). In the struggle over which parameters will improve teacher quality, private sector actors and alternative providers exercise greater power both over the direction of new policies and over actual preparation of teachers (Chudgar 2013; Kumashiro 2010; Zeichner and Peña-Sandoval 2015; Zeichner and Conklin 2016). Crisscrossing the globe, most of these measures appeared in one way or the other in the proposals of Russian reformers.

The fields of comparative and international education as well as global policy offer three perspectives on how and why globally circulated policies made their way to Russia. On the one hand, world culture theorists argue that shared beliefs about the role of education in nation building drive governments around the world to adopt similar educational approaches (Baker and LeTendre 2005; Boli 2005; Boli, Ramirez, and Meyer 1985). Policymakers choose Western models as more efficient or rational solutions to the problems at hand. In a similar vein, world society theory suggests

that global circulation of myths about individuals and nation-states explains the growing homogenization of education worldwide (Ramirez 2012). Noting increased similarities in how government officials prioritize educational quality and equity, theorists working in this paradigm argue that loose coupling explains variation in how these policies manifest themselves on the ground. These macro-level approaches, however, have recently come under significant scrutiny. Critics contend that world culture theory assumes homogeneity where there might be none, overlooks conflict and coercion that accompany educational standardization, and ignores participants' lived experiences in different corners of the world (Anderson-Levitt 2003, 2012; Carney, Rappleye, and Silova 2012; Caruso 2008; Griffiths and Arnove 2015; Rappleye 2015; Silova and Brehm 2015; Takayama 2015).

Theories of educational borrowing and lending, also known as educational transfer (Rappleye 2012) or policy recontextualization (Verger, Novelli, and Altinyelken 2012), provide an alternative explanation. Steiner-Khamsi (2004, 2010) argues that in cases of apparent similarities between different policies, it is only discourses that end up being borrowed. Governments often use references to global models or international "best practices" to justify and legitimize contentious policies at home, evoking "external authority for implementing reforms that otherwise would have been resisted" (Steiner-Khamsi 2004, 203). Referencing other countries helps policymakers build coalitions among otherwise dissenting groups and build momentum for large-scale systemic changes (Rappleye 2012; Takayama 2008, 2010). But with Russia's long-standing struggle between those who look to the West for modernization designs and those who vehemently oppose the introduction of foreign ideas, referencing external forms only intensifies conflicts around controversial reforms. While transformations in Russian education can perhaps be seen as "silent borrowing" of international forms (Waldow 2009), this explains neither how the process of engaging with global forms unfolds in such a politically charged context nor what the ultimate goal in engaging these policies might be.

Most recently, scholars attending to the global circulation of educational policies shifted the focus of their explorations from governments to governance (S. Ball and Junemann 2012; Rizvi and Lingard 2010), highlighting "the different forms of individual and institutional agency that play a role in constructing a nascent global policy" (Mundy, Green, Lingard, and Verger 2016, 8). These studies examine how international organizations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (Morgan and Shahjahan 2014; Sellar and Lingard 2013), the World Bank (Mundy

and Verger 2015; Zapp 2017), UNESCO (Edwards, Okitsu, da Costa, and Kitamura 2017), and WTO (Robertson, Bonal and Dale 2002; Sidhu 2007; Verger 2009) engage in normative and epistemic governance. They do so by circulating knowledge and policy prescriptions through monitoring reports (Read 2019), technical assistance (Klees, Samoff, and Stromquist 2012), and sponsored projects (Rappleye and Un 2018). In other words, international organizations "exert influence through their governance instruments, which range from norm setting, opinion formation, financial means, coordinative activities to consulting services" (Bieber 2010, 106; see also Martens, Nagel, Windzio, and Weymann 2010).

International assessments, such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) administered by the OECD, constitute an important mechanism in global governance (Sellar and Lingard 2013, 2014), because the benchmarking they produce influences national decisions to adopt global policy scripts (Meyer and Benavot 2013). Other assessments such as TALIS[4] and policy evaluation procedures such as SABER[5] work to streamline policies targeting teachers, thus placing them in the center of global neoliberal governance (Robertson 2012, 2013, 2016). Corporate actors are another force to reckon with, as they seek to shape policies that would either facilitate the expansion of educational markets or produce a workforce they can employ (S. Ball 2007; Menashy 2016; Spring 2015a, 2015b; Steiner-Khamsi 2018).

Building on the observations of global governance scholarship, this book explores how multiple positions that Russian reformers occupied in international organizations' epistemic communities, global policy networks, as well as national policymaking circles provided them with resources to conceptualize and enact a controversial reform of teacher education. Reformers deployed these resources as much to accomplish global agendas of creating a knowledge economy as to introduce a conservative modernization that would purportedly restore Russia's greatness on the global stage. To untangle the complexities of reformers' engagement with global policies and national scripts, this book departs from rationalist macro-level examination of nation-states predominant in the study of global policies. Instead, it focuses on the micro-politics of policy actors' activities in order to analyze the discrepancies, mismatches, and ruptures between the public appearances of teacher education reform and reformers' backstage discussions of its conceptualization, implementation, and consequences. Political constructions of global education policies in the Russian context make this study relevant to audiences in other countries, which I will discuss next.

Research Context: Educational Change in Russia

While global transformations in teacher education and in educational policymaking have received some attention, particularly in the Anglo-Saxon world, perspectives from postsocialist contexts have been uncommon (for exceptions see D. Johnson 2010; Niyozov, 2008; Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe 2006; Webster, Silova, Moyer, and McAllister 2011). A lack of attention to developments in Russian education can partly be explained by the assumptions of its uniqueness, difference, and divergence from the West (Alexander 2000). Yet sometimes this emphasis treads on the verge of exoticizing, Orientalizing, and Othering Russia in ways that are reminiscent of the Cold War era (Aydarova, Millei, Piattoeva, and Silova 2016; Chatterjee 2015). Even though there was a historical moment of Russia's limited participation in transnational educational flows (Schriewer and Martinez 2004), Russia's involvement with international influences and global policies was strong before the formation of the Soviet Union and since its collapse in 1991 (Alexander 2009; Gounko 2008; Gounko and Smale 2007; Timoshenko 2011). Exchanges between Russia and different parts of the world continued even during the Soviet era: Dewey influenced the early Soviet school (Mchitarjan 2000); Vygotsky and Bakhtin had a significant impact on educational philosophies in the West (Wertsch 1998).

Despite cultural differences, the ongoing policy dialogues between Russia and the West created many commonalities. The fact that school vouchers were tested in Russia before they were introduced in the United States (M. Johnson 1997) demonstrates that old assumptions about other nations' present being advanced nations' past no longer hold in the era of networked globalization. Vying to restore its position of power on the global stage, Russia also actively engages in the efforts to outdo and outperform the Western world even in the Western world's creations, such as neoliberalism and market mechanisms across the social sector (Hemment 2009; Matza 2010). For this reason, research in postsocialist contexts such as Russia can extend our understandings of how global neoliberal policies traverse the globe.

Despite prior attempts at decentralization, Russia continues to run a relatively centralized system of education headed by the Ministry of Education (MOE). The ministry is in charge of issuing directives that regulate the functioning of the educational system, which include standards for general education (K–12), professional preparation, and the teaching profession. A World Bank study of Russian education (Nikolaev and Chugunov 2012)

stated that in the last ten to fifteen years there were several programs of modernization targeting different levels of education. Ongoing modernization efforts allow globally circulated ideas to cut through Russia's centralized educational system with incredible speed, making visible the processes that could take much longer to trace in more decentralized systems.

According to the OECD's *Education at a Glance* (2016), Russia has one of the highest levels of higher education attainment among OECD countries. Based on the national statistics from 2015 (*Indikatory Obrazovaniia* 2017), at 54.4 percent, education had the highest proportion of employees with higher education degrees compared to 33 percent in the economy overall. By 2015, 82.7 percent of Russian teachers had higher education degrees and 77.5 percent were graduates of pedagogical universities. Only 16.2 percent of teachers held secondary vocational degrees. The proportion of teachers with secondary vocational degrees depends on the level of schooling. In early childhood education, 50.7 percent of teachers had higher education and 47.7 percent had secondary vocational education. Among teachers for grades 1 through 4, 74.3 percent had higher education degrees and 24.7 percent had secondary vocational education. For grades 5 to 9, the proportion of teachers with higher education degrees hovers around 90 percent. The preponderance of teachers with higher education degrees, particularly from pedagogical universities, raises an important question about reforms that seek to eliminate or radically transform higher education institutions dedicated to teacher education—how and why do the institutions that prepare most of the country's teachers become the target of such drastic reforms?

Of great significance for this book are the blurred lines between reality and fiction that characterize much of Russian politics and life. Peter Pomerantsev in *Nothing Is True and Everything Is Possible* explores the life of Russian politics and society where nothing is what it seems. The surreal nature of interactions between politicians, oligarchs, opposition, and society implode the traditional notions of linearity and rationality. In this situation, realistic accounts so common in policy research run the danger of misrepresenting people's lives and state-level decision-making processes (Pisano 2014). But these blurred lines no longer characterize lives in the postsocialist world only. The rise of the audit culture (S. Ball 2003; Shore and Wright 1999; Strathern 2000), neoliberal governmentality (Ferguson and Gupta 2002), and corporate involvement in policymaking (S. Ball 2007, 2012) facilitates the spread of these surreal arrangements around the globe (Amann 2003; Aydarova, Millei, Piattoeva, and Silova 2016; Brandist 2014, 2016). The Russian case, in this situation, is helpful for understanding the processes

that surface around the globe with growing regularity, particularly if viewed through the lens of political theater, which I describe next.

Political Theater as a Conceptual Framework

There are two distinct approaches to political theater. One uses theater as a conceptual lens for exploring the blurry lines between truth and fiction in social lives, politics, and policies (Edelman 1988; Goffman 1974; Scott 1990; Turner 1975). The other focuses on the liberating potential of theater that draws the audience's attention to the injustices and inequalities around them (Boal 1979; Conquergood and Johnson 2013; Kushner 1997; Willett 1964). This book straddles the divide between these approaches by examining the theatricality of policymaking and the dramas of educational reforms in order to suggest potential emancipatory paths out of the deadlock of global neoliberal transformations in education.

By attending to the blurry lines between reality and fiction, the first approach echoes the notion of political spectacle (Edelman 1988). Policymaking viewed from this lens "resemble[s] theater, complete with directors, stages, casts of actors, narrative plots, and (most importantly) a curtain that separates the action onstage (what the audience has access to) from the backstage, where 'real allocation of values' takes place" (Smith et al. 2004, 11). The power of political spectacle is particularly striking in the differences between what actors perform onstage and how they interpret that performance backstage. Different actors perform for different audiences: reformers arguing for the necessity of school accountability to improve educational quality (Smith et al. 2004), students in an urban setting performing the role of destitute but deserving children for school funders (Brown 2015), or principals evoking global competitiveness to justify high-stakes testing (Koyama 2013).

According to Edelman (1988), policy problems are constructed in ways that allow political elites to advance their agendas. The reformers' goal then is to convince the audience of their definition of the problem and get them to accept the reform proposal as the only way to address that problem (Anderson 2005; Granger 2008; Smyth 2006). For example, in the United States reformers such as Ron Unz argued that Spanish-speaking children show low academic achievement because of bilingual education and the only way to address this problem was through English only policies (Wright 2005). These arguments were touted as based on the best scientific evidence even

though they ran counter to well-documented research findings (Hakuta 2011). Wright (2005) argued that "the use of symbolic language, the use of plots and story lines, the creation of leaders (heroes) and enemies, [and] the evoking of symbols of rationality" evident in the introduction and implementation of English only policies in Arizona revealed the political spectacle of these reforms. Adamson, Forestier, Morris, and Han (2017) observed a similar trend in Britain where reformers constructed a crisis around low PISA scores, presenting members of the educational establishment as villains responsible for the educational failure and themselves as heroes able to fix it.

Spectacle and theater as analytical frames reveal how some ideas are disguised, other ideas are modified, and still others remain completely invisible to the audience. Central in this analysis is the role of shadows that obscure the involvement of actors that are not ordinarily imagined as participants in educational policies in democratic societies. Largely invisible to the general public remains the presence of philanthropic foundations using grant funding to advance their agendas (Tompkins-Stange 2016), corporations venturing into the educational sector to increase their market value (Gunter, Hall, and Apple 2017), and private companies profiting from schools' failure to meet adequate yearly progress under the No Child Left Behind Act (Koyama 2010). It is not only the presence of other actors that is obscured in the political spectacle. Arguments about educational quality, choice, and opportunity similarly disguise the growing disparities among privileged and underprivileged groups. By extension, this disguise normalizes and naturalizes social inequality (Koyama and Bartlett 2011), placing the responsibility for low achievement on individual students, their communities, or their schools rather than structural inequalities (Koyama and Cofield 2013).

Modernization dramas common around the world seek to destroy political possibilities of addressing these structural inequalities and attempt to create economic utopias most conducive to corporate and oligarchic prosperity. The processes of introducing educational reforms that retrench inequality, introduce conservative values, and reengineer societies unfold in ways that create an illusion of democratic participation (Smith et al. 2004). These reforms appear to be open to debate, but reformers and policymakers adopt a monologic position and rarely take opposition to them seriously. Consider, for example, the opt-out movement in the United States. Even though families in different communities around the country began to raise serious objections to the testing their children are subjected to, their resistance is coopted into the political spectacle as yet another oppositional force

that hero-reformers have to combat (Szolowicz 2017). Diverse voices that question, challenge, or critique the direction of change chosen by political elites are often silenced or drowned out as irrelevant, uninformed, misguided, and detrimental for the nation's future (Smith et al. 2004).

What can be done in such a challenging political moment is the prerogative of the second approach to political theater. Brecht (Willett 1964) and Boal (1979) argued that Greek tragedies are staged in ways that coerce the audience to empathize with the characters onstage and experience catharsis at the end of the performance. This way tragedies mold the audience into accepting the status quo. Modernization dramas and reformers' justifications for neoliberal policies similarly seek to mold the audience into accepting their version of reality and into maintaining the status quo that upholds injustice and inequality. Brecht argued that alienation from the act onstage is necessary to distance the audience from the fiction of the play to propel them to action (Willett 1964). Seen from this perspective, a book that tells the story of neoliberal reforms in another country could serve as a potential catalyst to stop taking neoliberalization and marketization of education in one's own context for granted. Building on Brecht's observations, Boal (1979) developed the Theater of the Oppressed "to change the people—'spectators,' passive beings in the theatrical phenomenon—into subjects, into actors, transformers of the dramatic action" (122). I draw on the framework of political theater in the hope of not only critiquing but also imagining possibilities for praxis.

The focus on political theater as an art form also allows me to bring together politics, ethics, and aesthetics into my policy analysis. Bakhtin (1990, 1993) writes of authors' aesthetic responsibility that any product that an artist creates bears his or her signature that testifies to its authorship. In networked states, where responsibility for policies is increasingly dissolved, a lack of policymakers' accountability and responsibility for changes is paralyzing to those who become the target of reforms. In presenting my analysis through the lens of theater, I explore how the process of diffusing responsibility is accomplished. By focusing on individual actors involved in reforms, I also seek to make visible the roles played by actual people behind seemingly impersonal modernization reforms. While my analysis will not lead to specific individuals being held accountable for their roles (I use pseudonyms throughout the text), it nevertheless affords opportunities to reexamine how policy analysis can be carried out in ways that will keep playwrights, directors, and actors of reform aesthetically, ethically, and politically responsible for their productions.

Finally, the framework of political theater puts the ethnographer who enters spaces of struggle and contestation in a unique position like that of the fool, the joker, or the clown in Bakhtin's (1981) account of the "theatrical trappings of the public square" (159). These figures question and challenge authority. As outsiders, they create opportunities to scrutinize the duplicity, banality, and hypocrisy of those who currently hold power (Aydarova "Jokers"). In an ethnographic context, an outsider, such as myself, can perform the role of a fool who observes and analyzes events, and who may be particularly well poised to do so if insiders are under the threat of repercussion for speaking out.

Building on these two approaches, I conceptualize political theater as a multifaceted process, in which reformers stage performances that create an imaginary world dedicated to the orchestration of conservative social change through modernization reforms. To demystify policymaking processes and reformers' performances, I use dramaturgical components and techniques, including masks (chapter 2), event sequence in theatrical productions (chapter 3), selective focus accomplished through the use of light and shadows (chapter 4), props and scripts (chapter 5), and actor training (chapter 6) as tools for policy analysis. In offering this analysis, I also explore possibilities of alternative constructions and integrate multiple participants' perspectives on the issues entangled in or obscured by the political theater of teacher education reforms. Connecting a diversity of perspectives on the performances onstage allows me to disrupt the monologic unitary construction of problems and solutions that reformers advocate and offer insights into alternative paths of change. I share Boal's hope that readers of this book would consider active positions available to them to respond to the policy dramas they are observing. A more detailed explanation of this work's theoretical foundations is provided in appendix B.

Anthropology of Policy as the Methodological Approach

It is common for global education policy studies to trace processes from policy formation to policy implementation. In addition to constructing policy processes in a linear fashion, there is a common tendency to ascribe authorship for the changes to the visible actors—international organizations, national governments, ministries of education, or expert communities (see Martens et al. 2010; Verger, Novelli, and Altinyelken 2012). Occasionally, the presence of other actors is recognized (see S. Ball 2007, 2012; Menashy

2016; Spring 2015a, 2015b; Gunter, Hall, and Apple 2017; Hursh 2016; Kovacs 2011; Tompkins-Stange 2016), but their activities are often approached in a rational manner. The guiding assumption for analyzing those actors' words and works is that they do what they say they do. Finally, studies in global governance tend to deal with final products—reports or policies that have been proposed or implemented, leaving the processes of arriving at those products largely unattended. While this approach is helpful for shedding light on possible movements in the field, it remains insufficient for capturing the inner workings of power and for attending to how some voices drown out others in national and subnational debates on global policies. To address these gaps, I turn to the methodological approaches of anthropology of policy to make visible the inconsistencies in policy actors' performances, to disrupt certainties about policy formation processes, and to reconsider ethical and aesthetic responsibilities in policymaking in the age of spectacle.

Anthropology of policy departs from a linear construction of policy formation and policy implementation. Associated closely with the interpretive policy analysis (Yanow 2000), it instead attends to the messy, contested, and contingent nature of policies that work as instruments of governing and power (Shore, Wright, and Però 2011; Sutton and Levinson 2001). Moving away from the realist rational frame, anthropology of policy expands the notion of how policies can be studied as "contested narratives which define the problems of the present in such a way as to either condemn or condone the past, and project only one viable pathway to its resolution" (Shore, Wright, and Però 2011, 13). For an ethnographer to study a contested narrative means that she must give credence to multiple voices in policy debates and attend to the fragmentations within the policy (Shore and Wright 1997). Apart from a distinct conceptual focus, anthropology of policy reconsiders ethnography's "geographic coherence" (Hamann and Rosen 2011, 466) and expands an anthropologist's use of evidence. Site ethnography in policy research may not always be accessible, but rich insights into unfolding processes can be gained through the use of published and unpublished reports, newspaper accounts, memos, and public interviews. In drawing on this approach, I similarly incorporate different types of evidence into my account.

Research Sites and Data Sources

My research journey in Russia began in 2011. I did not go there to study the dismantling of teacher education. I went with questions about educational

reforms imbued with global neoliberal discourses, the budding effects of which I began to observe in government reports and policy briefs. I started with an ethnographic study of changes at Dobrolyubov State Pedagogical University in Siberia in 2011. Constant talk of the Bologna Process and modernization policies made me wonder how the story of reforms would unfold over time. I thought I knew the answer. I imagined that with strong academic traditions, resistance against globally circulated reforms would prevail. When I returned in 2012, I added fieldwork at Ognensk State Pedagogical University—located centrally both geographically and politically—planning to observe how that resistance would unfold. That summer, a colleague put me in contact with a collaborator who quite fortuitously was connected to the reformers' networks. Because of my interest in educational reforms, she recommended that I connect with the folks from Lyutvino Economics University (LEU) as they were now running much of the show. She put me in touch with a couple of people working there who I managed to interview at that time. Those interviews had a strong global and neoliberal flavor, with references to problem constructions and analyses of educational trends reminiscent of US and UK reform discourses.

When I returned to Russia in 2013, I decided to incorporate all three sites into a critical multi-sited ethnography: Ognensk and Dobrolyubov State Pedagogical Universities to capture the variation in how pedagogical universities were dealing with reforms and LEU to understand how these reforms came to acquire so much of the global flavor. Research at the pedagogical universities could help me "study through" the policies (Wedel et al. 2005), whereas LEU would offer an opportunity to "study up" (Nader 1972).

I spent several months conducting ethnographic research at foreign languages and pedagogy departments at Ognensk and Dobrolyubov State Pedagogical Universities. Life at pedagogical universities generally rotated around classes, breaks between classes in the offices shared by as many as fifteen or twenty faculty, and occasional faculty meetings. I spent most of my time "hanging out" in shared faculty offices, in classrooms, and in the hallways where students waited for their classes. I participated in university conferences, department events, and conducted classroom observations. When students were on their teaching practicums, I traveled to the schools where they were placed and spent time observing their teaching and their interactions with K–12 teachers and students. In my observations, I focused on how teaching and learning proceeded in teacher education, paying particular attention to how different participants made sense of reforms associated with educational modernization.

I conducted focus groups with students and interviewed faculty, administrators, and educational researchers to learn about their perspectives on and experiences with educational modernization. OSPU was actively engaged in contesting teacher education modernization, so the university leadership put together a working group that was preparing an alternative policy proposal. I interviewed members of the working group and included the publications and presentations of this group's members in my analysis. Many of my participants knew about the developments in teacher education modernization and repeatedly gave me two or three names of reformers who worked for the LEU as the people I should definitely interview for my project. These people subsequently became key characters in this text. Due to Dobrolyubov's remote location, there was less awareness of the specifics of modernization policies when I was collecting data. There was, however, a general sense among faculty members of being overwhelmed with the onslaught of reforms and constantly changing expectations (Aydarova "Fiction-Making").

I first traveled to Lyutvino to attend a conference organized by LEU and to meet with the secretary of the working group that developed the Concept. I followed some of the developments around the policy through webinars, media interviews, and public announcements remotely. When I returned to Lyutvino in January of 2014, I was assigned a desk in an office shared with the working group secretary. I do not know if I was placed there so that I could learn what I needed or so she could keep an eye on me. Both are equally possible.

Life at LEU did not have a familiar flow. Because the Education Department did not serve any undergraduate classes and most of their master's programs did not have a residential requirement, it did not have a regular rhythm of classes, with students' voices filling the hallways during breaks. Faculty shared offices, but they had only two or three people in each. Most of what was happening occurred behind closed doors in offices or in conference rooms. There were no communal spaces where people congregated, so I had to find new ways to "hang out." I attended weekly seminars open to the public and separate seminars for the employees and affiliates of the Education Department. I still observed different classes and gained valuable insights since there was a significant variation in ideological orientations within LEU, with the least visible faculty being most opposed to reforms.

Early on, I learned about an official working group of twenty-two people that the Ministry of Education allegedly created to draft the Concept.

The working group secretary promised to ask the members of that group for an interview on my behalf. After waiting for two weeks, I learned that only two people agreed to do an interview with me. After another two weeks, I learned that my request for an interview never went out to the group as a whole and was only discussed in the reformers' inner circle. This experience was indicative of the challenges I had to navigate at other sites where my presence was carefully managed to contain what I could learn. To work my way through these challenges at LEU, I started with the two interviews I was offered but used every imaginable opportunity to ask others for an interview or for a conversation. I approached folks during seminars at LEU, during educational and noneducational conferences, and even during an educational Olympiad—a competition organized to identify the best among teacher education students. During each interview, I also asked my interviewees for recommendations about who I should interview next. Through this reputational sampling (Farquharson 2005), useful for studying policy elites and for tracing their networks, I was able to conduct close to forty interviews, incorporating the perspectives of those who belonged to the reformers' networks and those who worked outside of them.

During my time in Lyutvino, my interviews were spread throughout the city. Those interviews took me to university buildings constructed during imperial times, to the offices in the buildings where famous Soviet chocolates used to be made, to research institutes speckled around different neighborhoods, to recently built high-rises of presidential academies. Every time I had an interview, I would get lost. I eventually accepted this as an inalienable part of a multi-sited ethnography of policy in a large metropolitan area. In the apartment I rented in the outskirts of Lyutvino, I created detailed observation narratives from the jottings I took during the day, wrote interview summaries, and meticulously mapped out reformers' networks, trying to figure out who knew whom, for how long, and through what channels. In the summer of 2014, I came back to Lyutvino to collect more interviews and observations and to conduct archival research for the historical background of these reforms.

From the time of fieldwork to the follow-up trips in November and December 2015, I followed reform developments online and through personal contacts. I went back for a conference in Lyutvino in November 2015 to learn that my assumptions about resistance were too simplistic. Despite the foreignness of reform ideas, representatives of pedagogical universities continued to struggle with what they meant for their practice but appeared to embrace change. I also conducted follow-up interviews with faculty and

administrators in Dobrolyubov and reformers in Lyutvino, trying to understand how this change was accomplished.

On my last night in Lyutvino in December 2015, a colleague took me for a drive around the city. The landmarks I saw during my fieldwork, the large and small streets where I got lost, all of a sudden came together. I realized how interconnected everything was in the city: international organizations' offices stood close to embassies and consulates, research institutes circled academies, and LEU buildings were not far from ministry offices. It also dawned on me then that I no longer got lost on my excursions to conduct final interviews. That final drive through Lyutvino streets—unusually rainy for December—made that strange city finally familiar. My study was brought full circle.

Overall, I was able to conduct eighty interviews with reformers, teacher education faculty, pedagogical university administrators, as well as educational researchers, in addition to fifteen focus groups with teacher education students. Following the methodological approach of anthropology of policy, I incorporated into my analysis policy texts, background reports, academic publications, media reports, video recordings of reformers' presentations, and archival materials (more on methodology in appendix C).

The Researcher as Intern

In different contexts, I was called Olena, Helen, or Elena and was often asked where I was from. "I was born in Russia but grew up in Ukraine," became my standard, polished response. "I am working on a research project focusing on teacher education modernization in Russia," I would add right away. As someone with a native Russian-language proficiency, I often got a more intimate side of the story. Some people occasionally commented that I sounded like an American. The more time I spent in the field, the less frequent those comments became. Those I interacted with for my research often asked if I graduated from a pedagogical university. I did not. I graduated from a state (also known as classical) university, which made my degree more legitimate in reformers' eyes but put a distance between me and my participants from the teacher education community.

At some point, I had to ask myself what was it that got me into researching teacher education. What possessed me to choose that path after degrees in philology and linguistics? One of the reformers nudged me, "I also was young once and cared deeply about politics." He was right. I had cared about politics since high school. This interest was deepened by the

influence of the years spent teaching at teacher training colleges in China and the United Arab Emirates. The educational modernization reforms that those countries were introducing cut straight to the heart of communities where I was working, raising difficult questions concerning values, priorities, and beliefs. Because of these experiences, I came to Russia trying to understand what happens to teachers, teaching, and teacher education in the context of those reforms.

I grew up in poverty and attended school in Odessa, Ukraine, in the nineties when the rapid introduction of a market economy destroyed industries and decimated livelihoods. In reading about alternative routes into teacher education in the United States and the United Kingdom, such as Teach For America, I wrote on the margins about my memories of being taught by people who were never trained to be teachers. A math teacher in the seventh grade came to work at my school because she lost her job as an engineer at a factory. She would silently write solutions to algebraic equations on the board to punish the class for their misbehavior. Those who did not care continued misbehaving. Those who did care copied those equations from the board trying in utter desperation to understand what they actually meant. At the end of the year, everyone failed the math exam. The next year, the math teacher was gone and the class was turned over to the strictest but also the strongest mathematician of the school. It took her fifteen seconds to get the class quiet. She caught the class up on the lost grade and moved us significantly ahead. Whatever was taught that year became my ticket to graduate school in the United States: there were no GRE prep schools in Ukraine at that time and I could only rely on the math I learned in school to pass that exam. This was not an isolated experience. I had other unpleasant encounters with teachers who walked into teaching after losing employment elsewhere. These experiences as well as my own professional path in teacher education made me rather skeptical of reformers' proposals when I first encountered them.

At all three sites, I was officially or unofficially labeled an intern—or *stazher*. This helped justify taking notes in a notebook during classes and asking what seemed like naive questions. During fieldwork, particularly in Lyutvino, I was acutely aware of my age and gender. Most of the people I interacted with for my research were older, and most were men. Being a young woman created certain barriers: my interactions with the reformers occurred mostly within the formal settings of workplaces, conferences, or academic events. That clearly shaped the stories that were shared with me. It is likely that a man would have had greater freedom in accessing reformers

in more informal contexts, but alas, you do what you can with the body you are given. However, there were moments when forms of protectorate and paternal benevolence were extended to me—in helping arrange interviews with other people in the network or in getting access to relevant materials. This was tremendously helpful. The use of the first name and patronymic for most of the participants in this text, however, is a clear sign of the position from which I as a researcher saw these performances—as a younger woman, generally of a lower socioeconomic status, and certainly in a position with no power, in a distant semi-professional relationship with the participants. Only with students and some faculty at pedagogical universities I was able to develop warm and caring friendships.

My association with an American university provided some prestige in the reformers' networks but was not universally welcome in other contexts. Older academics labeled me "a spy"[6] or chided me for a lack of patriotism for leaving my country and for betraying my Motherland. That often hurt, particularly because returning to do this research in Russia was about giving back to the Motherland—the Motherland that actually did not care much either for me or for them, for that matter. Eavan Boland's poem in *A Woman Without a Country* expressed it best, "What troubled me was not whether she included her country in her short life. But whether that country included her."

Overview

This text consists of an introduction, a historical overview, an ethnography, and an epilogue. I have labeled the historical overview part 1 and the ethnography part 2 because they use different analytical approaches and genres. Part 1 uses historical evidence to report on the transformations in Russian teacher education that took place in the past and is written in a more traditional style. Part 2, on the other hand, subjects various sources to scrutiny to uncover hidden agendas, origins, or implications and is written in the style of a narrative ethnography (Stoller 2007; Narayan 2012). The stylistic and methodological differences between the two parts stem from the exigencies of the context—fiction-making that takes place in the present is more accessible to critical analysis than what took place in a more or less distant past.

In part 1, I explore the historical and sociopolitical context of teacher education reforms in Russia to situate the events and perceptions that emerge