‘Soviet’ in teachers’ memories and professional beliefs in Kazakhstan: points for reflection for reformers, international consultants and practitioners

Olena Fimyar\textsuperscript{a*} and Kairat Kurakbayev\textsuperscript{b}

\textsuperscript{a}Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, UK; \textsuperscript{b}Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University, Astana, Kazakhstan

(Received 18 May 2013; accepted 15 December 2014)

This paper is a part of a three-year study, ‘Internationalisation and reform of secondary schooling in Kazakhstan’, jointly conducted by an international team of UK- and Kazakhstan-based researchers in 2012–2014. The study was conceived as a mechanism to support education reform in the country. This was achieved through reconstructing the education policy narrative of the last two decades and understanding the effects of the newly established Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools and the Centres of Excellence in-service professional development programme on the larger system. While the focus of the study was on Kazakhstan’s educational present, the references to the previous system of education, which was often referred to as Soviet, traditional, but also successful, fundamental and the best in the world, were numerous. These continuous references to the past prompted the authors of this paper to address the questions: What memories and practices of Soviet education are still dominant in the field of education in Kazakhstan? How do these beliefs continue to shape educational debate in the country? In support of its argument, the paper draws on the literature on Soviet schooling and contemporary education reform, interview data with national and international teachers in Kazakhstan, and field observations. The resultant narrative, which brings together the analysis of educational change and changes in teachers’ beliefs, may appeal to many involved in the construction of the contemporary reform agenda.

Keywords: education reform; Soviet legacies; Soviet education; Kazakhstan

Why focus on the ‘Soviet’ ... now?

Do you have any questions?
[we asked the participants of an ‘Action Research’ workshop in one of the Kazakhstan secondary schools]

Yes, why do you think the Soviet Union collapsed?
(Field note, March 2013)

This paper is a part of a three-year study, ‘Internationalisation and reform of secondary schooling in Kazakhstan’, jointly conducted by the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge and the Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University (NU), Kazakhstan (Bridges, 2014). The study was conceived as a mechanism of supporting educational reform in the country. This was achieved through

*Corresponding author. Email: ohf21@cam.ac.uk

© 2015 Taylor & Francis
reconstructing the education policy narrative of the last two decades of reform in the country and documenting the changes in contemporary educational policy and practice. The study spanned 6 geographical regions in Kazakhstan and included 262 recorded interviews with national and international teachers, 11 of whom were included in the study in 2014, as well as students, administrators, governors and inspectors of all types of educational organisations from pre-school to higher education.

In the course of the study, we were particularly interested in understanding the impact of post-2010 educational initiatives, including the creation of the highly resourced and highly selective NU and Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools (NIS) – each of which employs significant numbers of international staff – on the wider system. We also traced the evolution of the Centre of (Pedagogical) Excellence (CoE) initiative – a large-scale teacher professional development programme, which is designed as one of the mechanisms for translating the NIS experiences into the mainstream schools (MOES, 2012; NIS & CoE, 2012a, 2012b, 2012c; Turner et al., 2014).

Being part of a larger governmental strategy of accelerated ‘internationalisation at home’, the post-2010 initiatives have received close attention from local and international observers (for a comprehensive overview see Bridges, 2014). The reforms have been labelled a ‘radical change’ (Shamshidinova, Ayubayeva, & Bridges, 2014); ‘reform by example’ (governmental official, cited in Yakavets, 2012, p. 71); ‘policy cherry picking’ (international observer); ‘globalisation on the margins’ (Silova, 2011); ‘sites of beta testing’ (Ruby & McLaughlin, 2013); ‘points of growth’ (the logos of the NIS and the Centre of Excellence); and, most expressively, ‘viruses’ (a metaphor often used by both local and international observers). Despite some obvious differences, all these definitions capture the idea of ‘radical’ and ‘rapid’ change. This sense of urgency, among other drivers, is fuelled by the political rationalities of ‘catching up’ modernisation, which in the case of Kazakhstan is expressed in the ambitious goals of its political leadership to see the country entering the list of the 30 most competitive world economies (cf. the ‘catching up Europeanisation’ argument in Fimyar, 2010).

Amid such fast-paced critical turns in education policy in Kazakhstan, focussing on the ‘Soviet’ may seem somewhat misplaced. However, as we argue in this paper, a proper engagement with the history of educational thought in the country is what is missing in the current education debate. At a time when the official policy discourses are primarily concerned with raising the economic competitiveness of the country through continuous comparison between Kazakhstan and the world’s best-performing economies, many practitioners are still coming to terms with the break-up of the Soviet Union. Caught between conflicting calls for more student autonomy on the one hand, and pressures to teach to the test on the other, many practitioners are reverting to the practices of teacher-centred education, which the current reform strategy frames as ‘outdated’ and ‘resistant to change’.

Acknowledging the complexities of contemporary educational reform in Kazakhstan, and recognising the importance of practitioners’ beliefs in understanding the process of educational change, this paper aims to bring the concerns of the practitioners to the attention of policymakers and other actors involved in the construction of the educational reform agenda. This paper is also written with the intention to challenge an established approach in international and comparative education in following spatial rather than temporal lines of inquiry. By responding
to the calls to learn from countries’ own histories (e.g. Steiner-Khamsi, 2013) rather than the pervasive global ‘East’–‘West’ comparisons, this paper seeks to ground our understanding of educational change in the local context and connect the analysis of policy change with changes in teachers’ beliefs.

We begin our discussion by introducing two groups of research participants, national and international, and outline their general attitudes to the practices of Soviet schooling. These general attitudes are then analysed more fully in the discussion of four inter-related themes: (1) starting a debate about the ‘Soviet’; (2) ‘Soviet’ in the view of knowledge and the curriculum; (3) ‘Soviet’ in teaching methodology; and (4) ‘Soviet’ in punitive function of assessment. We conclude by reflecting on the relationships between memory, history, identity and politics of knowledge production in a government-commissioned research which does not place topics related to the past, in this case the ‘Soviet’, high on the research agenda. The knowledge which is sought by governmental agencies in Kazakhstan and elsewhere is applied, easy to implement research, aimed at raising a country’s rating in international comparative tests. By writing this paper, we step outside of this regime of knowledge and together with our research participants are engaging in the act of remembrance which we strongly believe should accompany any attempt to bring genuine educational change.

**By way of introduction: ‘Soviet professionals’ facing the ‘Western system of education’ and ‘Western professionals’ facing the ‘Soviet’**

You as a former Soviet person, you should remember this…
(Interviewee A, NIS managing company, October 2012)

I felt as if I had returned to Soviet times:
We do not make comments, we do not discuss,
we do what you [school administration] say.
(Interviewee B, International teacher, NIS School A, May 2014)

There are a growing number of studies which offer insightful analyses of the ‘Soviet’, its legacies, paradoxes and inherent tensions in the educational and social settings in the former USSR and the former Soviet satellite countries (see Fimyar, 2014a; Aydarova, 2013; Charon-Cardona, 2013; Griffiths & Millei, 2013; Koshmanova & Ravchyna, 2008; Silova, 2010; Todorova & Gille, 2012; Yurchak, 2005). This paper aims to contribute to this emerging scholarship. Unlike those studies, researching the ‘Soviet’ was not a part of our initial task. Neither methodologically was the study conceived as an oral history or memory research (cf. Kightley, 2010). The key objective of the study was to support educational reform and capture educational change ‘in motion’. However, references to the ‘Soviet’ were so pervasive in the interview data that they necessitated the exploration of this concept in more detail.

Looking at 262 interview transcripts now, we can conclude that the references to the ‘Soviet’ are present in the accounts of all interviewees, national and international, of all ages and at every career stage. The presence of international staff who are working as consultants, school and university teachers in NU and NIS is what sets Kazakhstan apart from other countries in the region (Fimyar, 2014d). By these two groups of practitioners, ‘Soviet’ was used in relation to two opposing terms: ‘legacies’ and ‘achievements’. Despite this binary logic and historical positioning of
‘Soviet’, in the majority of cases, the term was utilised as a subtle critique of the current reform efforts. By drawing parallels with the past, interviewees channelled their concerns about the pace of reform, an anticipated revision of the curriculum, growing disparities between schools and regions, and the lack of a support framework for proposed changes.

More specifically in relation to the accounts given by the national teachers, ‘Soviet’ was used as part of identity work, which allowed participants to pronounce alliances while drawing boundaries between ‘Soviet’ and ‘Western’ approaches to teaching, learning and governance of education. For example, the national teachers, especially those completing the CoE training (an initiative implemented through the involvement of Cambridge International Examinations and University of Cambridge Faculty of Education), described themselves as professionals ‘with the classical Soviet secondary and higher education who have a unique opportunity to look with a critical eye at the Western system of education which is being introduced in our country’ (Interviewee C, Teachers focus group, CoE training, October 2012).

Another research participant explains: ‘We are all a bit conservative, we are still members of the Soviet school, which brought us a lot of good results in good times’ (Interviewee D, Mainstream School A, March 2013).

As part of the identity work by the national teachers, the Russian-speaking members of the research team (three from Kazakhstan, one from Belarus and one from Ukraine) were included in the category of ‘Soviet’. Partly for the purpose of adding validity to their accounts, partly to raise their confidence in the presence of the UK-based researchers, the participants would use the following type of expression in addressing the Russian-speaking members of the research team: ‘You as a former Soviet person, you should remember this…’ (Interviewee A, NIS managing company, October 2012). This forced remembering was then often followed by an extended explanation aimed at deepening the UK-based researchers’ understanding of the contemporary educational realities within Kazakhstan. The following interview excerpt provides an example of such explanation:

I was born in 1981 and our generation was the last to study under the Soviet education system. In the Soviet system, we had the upbringing (Rus. vospitaniye) component and I even was an Oktiabrienok [a first level of socialisation into communist ideology followed by Pioneer, Komsomol and Communist Party membership]. I was also a Pioneer but did not achieve the Komsomol level [because the Soviet Union collapsed].
(Interviewee E, NIS managing company, October 2012)

In the accounts of international teachers, the use of ‘Soviet’ performed a different function. First and foremost, it was mobilised as a critique of the system of governance of education, often referred to as ‘system’ or ‘the way things are done here’. To minimise the critical nature of their responses, many interviewees prefixed their comments with a disclaimer: ‘this is not a criticism, it is an observation’ (Interviewee F, International teacher, NIS School B, May 2014). For example, in describing his first encounter with the ‘system’, one international teacher, who had lived in the Soviet Union, observed:

I felt as if I had returned to Soviet times. The relationship of power remained the same. You are the administration and whatever you say, we [local teachers] have to do it. We do not make comments, we do not discuss, we do what you say. (Interviewee B, International teacher, NIS School B, May 2014)
Interesting in this statement is the use of ‘we’, which refers to the local teachers, but is mobilised as a critique, articulated by the international teachers, of the current situation in educational governance in Kazakhstan. In providing further examples of practices which echo the ways things were done in Soviet schools, another international teacher named ‘bureaucracy’, which he admitted ‘exists in any framework’ (Interviewee F, International teacher, NIS School C, February 2014). In his opinion:

There are many cultural things, e.g. timing of things. Bureaucracy is still a problem. Things do not move here sometimes. It is not because they do not want to; it is the system that does not allow them to solve problems. In the end you can get used to it. You ask things in advance knowing it will take time. (Interviewee B, International teacher, NIS School B, May 2014)

To sum up this introductory section, ‘Soviet’ appeared in the accounts of both national and international teachers. The reasons for using the term were, however, different. While the national teachers employed it as a subtle critique of the current reform strategy and for the purposes of self-identification, international teachers used it for raising concerns about the existing power balance and practices of governance of education. The following four sections trace the references to ‘Soviet’ in the discussion about the losses and achievements of Soviet education within the domains of curriculum, teaching methodology and assessment.

Starting the debate: losses, achievements and ‘products’ of Soviet education

We had Sputnik, … but we lost our language. (Interviewee G, NIS managing company, October 2012)

From the 1980s, the Kazakh language, was taught until the 8th form. Beyond the 8th form it was not taught at all. (Interviewee A, NIS managing company, October 2012)

Often prefaced with ‘You know, during the Soviet times…’, in the accounts of national teachers, or ‘From what I know about the Soviet system’, in the accounts of international teachers, the use of ‘Soviet’ worked as a balancing act aimed at reconciling arguments about the achievements and losses of Soviet education. The participants would normally start by acknowledging the achievements of Soviet education. Among these were named its mass character, a near universal literacy rate (in Russian), free access to all levels of education, provision of pre-school and out-of-school education and rates of participation in higher education. An example of such an opening statement would be:

Soviet education, I think, is one of the best in the world, at least as far as Natural Sciences and Mathematics are concerned. I am convinced it is. (Interviewee H, Mainstream School B, March 2013)

These positive opening statements would be followed by a more revealing account about the inadequacies and failings of the Soviet system. Even though none of the respondents openly mentioned the atrocities of the Soviet regime, there was a silent acknowledgement of the darker side of Soviet history which can be counted in the lives of the millions persecuted by the regime and the millions of others who learnt to adapt to the regime and are consequently still coping with its many legacies.

As Yurchak explains, the ambivalent attitudes towards the Soviet past are rooted in the paradoxes of a system which combined ‘tremendous suffering, repression, fear
and lack of freedom’ with genuine humane concern for ‘equality, community, selflessness, altruism, friendship, ethical relations, education, work, creativity, and concern for the future’ (Yurchak, 2005, p. 8). In our interviews, the ambivalence towards the past is very well captured by the phrase, ‘we had Sputnik, Soviet education was successful’, but ‘we lost our [Kazakh] language’ (Interviewee G, NIS managing company, October 2012). Indeed, during Soviet times, the official policy of granting Russian the status of the language of rapprochement (Rus. sblizheniye) for the many nationalities inhabiting the former USSR (Fierman, 2006, p. 98) came at the expense of neglect and stalled development of the titular languages (Fierman, 1998; Mitter, 1986; Shturman, 1988, pp. 211–212).

In Kazakhstan, the language situation was severely unbalanced throughout the post-war period because Russians significantly outnumbered Kazakhs. This demographic trend made Kazakhstan the only Soviet republic where the titular group was a minority in their native land (Matuszkiewicz, 2010, p. 214). More specifically, the proportion of the ethnic Russians out of the total population constituted 42.7% in 1959, 42.4% in 1970 and 40.8% in 1989. In comparison, the proportion of ethnic Kazakhs constituted 30.0%, 32.0% and 36.0% in the same years (Dave, 2003, p. 5).

The national interviewees provided further examples of the totalising effects of the Russification policies in Kazakhstan during the Soviet era. ‘We all became Russian-speaking. You finished a Kazakh school, but all that was required for work was in Russian’ (Interviewee A, NIS managing company, October 2012). Similarly, ‘if you didn’t know Russian then you would not have a career at that time’ (Interviewee I, International organisation, October 2012). Interviewees acknowledged that there was an overwhelming sense of ‘stagnation’ and stalled development of the Kazakh language, which ‘was not developing as an academic discipline’ (Interviewee A, NIS managing company, October 2012). In the sphere of higher education, as the same interviewee confirmed, Kazakh was only used at the Faculty of Kazakh Language and History; all other departments used Russian as the medium of instruction.

In the years following independence, the schools with the Kazakh language of instruction experienced particular challenges given the lack of Kazakh-language resources, textbooks and teachers:

And this problem of closeness and isolation [of the language] … it manifested itself in everything once we became independent. We had no textbooks written in our language, we did not have any teaching methods. (Interviewee A, NIS managing company, October 2012)

Some interviewees viewed not only the lack of Kazakh-language resources in schools but their own degree of proficiency in their native language as the ‘product’, and the lasting legacy, of Soviet education:

Unfortunately, I am not able to read or write in Kazakh. So you can see me as the ‘outcome’ of the Soviet education. (Interviewee I, International organisation, October 2012)

And this interviewee is not alone: Fierman (1998, p. 174) uses the 1989 census to illustrate the legacies of linguistic Russification of Kazakhs, especially in urban areas. According to the census data, over 80% of Kazakhstan’s population reported native or close to native fluency in Russian. Yet these numbers do not imply bilingualism, because while over 60% of ethnic Kazakhs claimed fluency in Russian, less
than 1% of Russians claimed fluency in Kazakh (Fierman, 1998, p. 174). More recent research by the same author found that Kazakh literacy in the general population at the time of the census was under 35% (Fierman, 2006).

During the years of independence, parity between the Russian and Kazakh languages has been partially restored. In 1999, as a result of the outflow of Russians back to Russia and the inflow of ethnic Kazakhs (oralmans) from the neighbouring Central Asian republics, China and Mongolia, the proportion of ethnic Kazakhs and Russians changed to 53.4% and 29.9%, respectively (Bokayev et al., 2012; Dave, 2003, p. 5). Nowadays Kazakh as a state language enjoys a similar or wider use ‘on a par’ with the Russian language, which received official status as the language of inter-ethnic communication (Fierman, 1998, pp. 175–185; Matuszkiewicz, 2010, pp. 215–226). Recently, the importance of English as a language of international competitiveness and global mobility has captured policymakers’ attention. The importance of all three languages for increasing the economic competitiveness of the country was embraced in the model of trilingual education that is now being piloted in the newly established NIS, with a view to it being implemented across the whole country (Mehisto, Kambatyrova, & Nurseitova, 2014).

Yet the stalled development of the Kazakh language was not the only tragic legacy of Soviet education. There were a number of even greater losses. As one interviewee reveals, Soviet ideology as an indispensable part of Soviet education affected the ability to think critically, construct arguments and reason about one’s actions:

During Soviet times it was not possible to cultivate moral values and principles. People were indoctrinated. We never cared for arguments, we just used that [approach] in line with the decisions of the twentieth or nineteenth Congress of the Communist Party. We, we didn’t care about any argument: why is it good or bad? Is our school good or bad? And we never had access to information. (Interviewee I, International organisation, October 2012)

Such habits of thought are not easily cast off. People who went through Soviet schooling, and who are still participating in various sectors of the economy in great numbers, are still experiencing, particularly in the field of education, the limitations and constraints they internalised during those years (cf. Burkhalter & Shegebayev, 2010, 2012).

‘Soviet’ in the view of knowledge and the curriculum

Without teaching there is no knowledge,
and without knowledge there is no Communism.
(Lenin, cited in Grant, 1964, p. 25)

The knowledge-based curriculum was the second area most commonly cited in interviewees’ accounts as one of the lasting legacies of Soviet education. Deeply rooted in Marxist–Leninist ideology, Soviet education prided itself on its use of dialectic theory and a systematic approach in all areas, from curriculum, assessment and pedagogy to the organisation of extra-curricular activities and school timetables. In line with Marxist–Leninist ideology, education was subordinated to the political aims of advancing Communism as the only legitimate worldview, and educating Soviet citizens to be compliant to the authority of the state. Knowledge production in all spheres of social life was strictly controlled. In the school curriculum, an
ideologically ‘correct’ approach to every field of knowledge was maintained and closely supervised (Grant, 1964, p. 28).

Control over the political message, delivered through the curriculum, was exercised through meticulous planning and standardisation of the form, content, delivery and organisation of education across the large territory of the Soviet Union. As one interviewee observed: ‘In Soviet times, everything was pre-planned and the school director had almost no say. He [sic] was given everything – furniture, everything – as per the national plan’ (Interviewee J, Mainstream School C, March 2013).

Another mechanism for exercising control over knowledge and curriculum was through the conception of knowledge as finite, hierarchical and fixed in time. This view manifested itself in the selection of curriculum content, which abounded with classical texts, formulae and algorithms. The success of the Soviet Union in mathematics and sciences, often referenced in research interviews and studies of Soviet education (Dunstan, 1987; Glowka, 1987; Grant, 1964; Muckle, 1988; Ross, 1960; Shturman, 1988), was partly due to the emphasis on ‘scientific’ knowledge as the only valid knowledge, which minimised the space for personal interpretation.

As one interviewee recalls, given the nature of the curriculum, the content was scaffolded through a series of repetitive exercises and recall techniques aimed at automatic reproduction of the material: ‘In the Soviet system all you do is zareshivanie [Rus. cramming]. This does not make any sense, because you solve one similar problem 10–20 times – it becomes automatic, it does not involve thinking’ (Interviewee E, NIS managing company, October 2012).

Another interviewee recalls a similar situation from the trigonometry class in high school:

In high school there were forty-two trigonometry formulas. We learned and knew all of them including the double angle sine, cosine double angle, triple angle cosine, or tangent representation by half-angle, etc. Forty-two formulas. We were forced to learn those. And now is the question: ‘Who of us remembers these formulas now?’ (Interviewee K, NIS School C, May 2014)

A comment from the audience following one of the Kazakhstan seminars at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge (http://sms.cam.ac.uk/collection/1356919), highlights the difference between understanding and knowledge, a distinction which was missing in the philosophy and practices of Soviet schooling:

We never asked the questions of why, how, why do you think like that. In [Soviet] school we were reciting everything and were assessed based on the fact you have learned it by heart with commas, with full stops; and teachers were happy. (A comment during the Q&A session following the ‘Reflecting on reflection’ seminar, part of the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, Kazakhstan open seminar series, 27 November 2014, http://sms.cam.ac.uk/media/1882693?format=mp3&quality=high, 1:17:29–1:17:47)

Today, the legacies of this knowledge-based approach are still at the forefront of the discussion about the purposes of education in Kazakhstan. One interviewee confirms:

Twenty years ago we were deeply convinced that the priority should be given to the content of each subject, and we believed that if we provided students with systematic, fundamental knowledge in every subject, then our educational objectives would be achieved. (Interviewee A, NIS managing company, October 2012)
What is interesting in the above response is that even though it positions the belief to ‘twenty years ago’, through interviews and field trip observations, we can conclude that Kazakhstani teachers still experience difficulties in departing from the strong embrace of the knowledge-based curriculum. More than that, for many, this belief is not the legacy of the past, but their current practice reinforced by the existing accountability regime, particularly the National Unified Test, which makes it difficult for alternative practices to emerge in Kazakhstani classrooms. However, there are forces outside school, in particular technological progress, which challenge the dominance of the knowledge-based curriculum. One interviewee observes:

The situation has changed. One does not need to know that much. If you go around the school [now], you will see how many children are walking around with mobile phones or tablets. They can bring you any information, including those forty-two [trigonometry formulas referred to in the earlier quote] as well as forty-two additional formulas. Therefore, the need to know everything does not exist anymore. (Interviewee K, NIS School C, May 2014)

The above quote brings us closer to the question of how educational change is conceptualised and enacted in Kazakhstan and the wider region, and this will be the subject of the next section.

‘Soviet’ in teaching methodology

The teacher tries to fill students with all this knowledge, practically, by chewing it for them. (Interviewee L, Teachers focus group, CoE training, October 2012)

Previously we, teachers, used to give the truth. (Interviewee M, Mainstream School D, March 2013)

The studies on educational change in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) fall into two strands. The first traces the turns in education policies and changing priorities of education reform in the region (Bridges, 2014; Fimyar, 2010, 2014b; Silova, 2005; Yakavets, 2012, 2014). The second analyses the changes in the discourse of teacher professionalism in the countries of the former Soviet Union (DeYoung, 2006, 2008; Fimyar, 2014c; Niyozov, 2011; Niyozov & Shamatov, 2010; Silova, 2009, 2011). Studies which combine the two strands, by keeping a simultaneous focus on the changes in ‘policy rationalities’ (Fimyar, 2010) and on the enactment of these changes in classroom practice, are limited (McLaughlin, McLellan, Fordham, Chandler-Greveatt, & Daubney, 2014; Silova, 2011; Umetbaeva, 2015). Drawing on the interview accounts and field trip observations, we will attempt to bring the two strands of the argument – changes in policy and classroom practice – together.

Accounts of educational developments in Kazakhstan are commonly articulated in terms of observable changes as a result of the introduction of new pedagogical technologies (from Rus. pedagogicheskaia technologia). One interviewee explains:

Previously, we worked on the teacher-and-student technology. That is, the teacher gave the finished material and the students had only to memorise it. Now we use a totally different technology. A student must be engaged in self-education, self-appraisal, use a computer [to do research]. The student must discover the truth himself [sic], while previously we, teachers, used to give the truth. (Interviewee M, Mainstream School D, March 2013)
Given the mass character of Soviet education and the need to control the ideological content of the curriculum (Muckle, 1988, p. 188), a teacher-centred approach was established as the most effective way, which ensured ‘spectacular advances’ in Soviet education (Grant, 1964, p. 24). The changes in socio-political circumstances following the breakup of the Soviet Union necessitated the revision of teaching methods, which reforms framed as ‘inadequate’ and ‘out of date’. Policymakers, researchers and practitioners engaged in the process of rationalising and enacting these new approaches.

In the literature on education reform in CIS countries (Bridges, 2014; Fimyar, 2010, 2014b; Silova, 2005; Yakavets, 2012, 2014) and the wider region (Cheng, 2008; Schweisfurth, 2013), several attempts have been made to grasp conceptually the shift from the traditional teacher-centred view of education to the more innovative, inquiry-driven, student-centred approaches. For example, Fimyar (2010) puts forward the term ‘changing rationalities’ of post-communist education reform, while Cheng (2008, pp. 14–15) uses the concept of ‘paradigm shift towards the third wave’, by which he means the advance of world-class standards in education. Drawing on the Russian context, Borytko (2005, pp. 38–39) conceptualises educational change as the move from a teacher-centred to a student-centred paradigm.

Despite containing useful insights, there are some apparent problems in conceptualising a student-centred approach as a move towards a new, socially desired teaching methodology. The first problem in such a conceptualisation is that it disparages all areas of teacher professionalism established during Soviet times, including whole-class teaching, lecturing or viva examination. Viewing a student-centred approach as a new method, rather than as one of many approaches in the repertoire of teacher professionalism, conflicts with what teachers believe is possible and needed in their own classrooms. The second problem with such a conceptualisation is more disturbing as it puts pressure on practitioners in Kazakhstan and elsewhere to perform ‘change’ by reproducing the required activities without understanding the rationale behind them (Fimyar, 2014c, 2014e). The difference between the levels of internalisation of change can be explained through the distinction between action as a result of ‘mimicry’ and action as a result of ‘epistemological transfer’, whereby participants understand the ‘socially desirable end’ of proposed change and engage with the question of ‘why’ they are doing something rather than merely ‘what’ they are doing (Bennis, 1963, p. 134, cited in Ruby & McLaughlin, 2014, p. 296).

In interview accounts, international teachers raised similar concerns about allowing ‘true change’ rather than continuing to operate at a disjuncture between ‘what is said’ and ‘what is practiced’, which is apparent in the Kazakhstani context (Interviewee N, International teacher, NIS School C, May 2014). Noticing the difference between the imitation of change – which can be observed in all settings where reform is timed and linked to particular political goals of, for example, raising competitiveness or PISA, TIMSS, etc., national scores – and ‘true change’ – which is a slow change aimed at raising teachers’ professionalism – one international teacher observed: ‘If you want to have true change you need time for reflection, you need time for people to think about what it is they are doing, to actually learn, not just do’ (Interviewee N, International teacher, NIS School C, May 2014).

Another interviewee raised concerns about the pace of reform, noting that ‘everything happens tomorrow’, ‘they do not phase things out’, ‘they do not put in place support structures which allow them to succeed’ (Interviewee O, International teacher, NIS School B, May 2014). As a result ‘things succeed and things happen,
but not necessarily for the best, and that’s a culture shock here’ (Interviewee O, International teacher, NIS School B, May 2014). More examples of an instrumental manner in enacting educational change in Kazakhstan were observed during the field trip. The overwhelming presence of group work in all observed lessons, even when teacher-led instruction would be more appropriate, is one. The questions some national teachers posed during research interviews can provide additional examples. For example, one major concern for teachers in one of the schools for academically gifted students was a belief that in line with the new student-centred approach, the teacher’s talk should constitute 8 out of 45 minutes in each lesson. One teacher proudly admitted that her best result was 11 minutes. This preoccupation with the form over the rationale for using the new methods should be of concern to policymakers if they aim to embed the change beyond the level of ‘mimicry’.

The analysis of the references to the use of ‘Soviet’ in the discourses of national teachers brought to light a deep-seated tension between status and power of newly qualified and more experienced teachers. One interviewee observed: ‘Experienced teachers say young teachers have to do exactly what they are told to do’ (Interviewee P, Teachers focus group, CoE training, October 2012). Another interviewee gives further examples:

The young teacher comes to the mentor and says that he [sic] has got this and that idea, and the mentor says: ‘What is that? This is absurd! It will not work!’ as he [sic] knows better because of his [sic] experience. Our task will be to change this mentality. And many teachers will not want to do it. (Interviewee Q, Teachers focus group, CoE training, October 2012)

The interviewee’s greatest concern was that without careful consideration about how status and power affect educational change, sustaining the momentum of reform in teaching practices will be extremely challenging.

‘Soviet’ in the punitive function of assessment

It is as if you make a mistake you’ll be shot. That has to stop! (Interviewee N, International teacher, NIS School C, May 2014)

While the study of the Soviet curriculum and teaching methods has received a great deal of attention in the literature on Soviet schooling, the role of assessment in Soviet education remains largely unexplored. Such lack of attention is rather surprising because assessment, apart from its primary educational function of measuring student performance, accomplished a very important social function: it worked as a disciplinary mechanism which aligned individual behaviour with socially acceptable standards. Kharkhordin’s study The Collective and the Individual in Russia: The Study of Practices (1999) provides an interesting angle from which to view assessment as a manifestation of the organisational logic of Soviet society. Kharkhordin summarises this logic as ‘objectification’, practices revealing one’s weaknesses to the public gaze (Kharkhordin, 1999, p. 175).

As Kharkhordin explains, the practice of submitting an individual to the judgement of the relevant community, through intense reflection, self-criticism and admission of one’s guilt, had its antecedents in the Orthodox Christian practice of doing penance in the public gaze (Kharkhordin, 1999). Utilised by the Soviet leadership as effective tools of social control, ‘horizontal surveillance’ and practices of individual
scrutiny in the presence of the relevant community were present in all social settings, from classroom and university to teacher and factory meetings. What would be interpreted by a Western observer as a lack of concern for privacy and confidentiality, for the Soviet citizen was part of the daily life in which they participated on both sides, scrutinised and scrutinising: on one side revealing their own weaknesses, and on the other being exposed to such revelations.

This method was considered an effective tool for re-educating individuals, ensuring their improved performance in the school, university and workplace. This practice was rooted in the doctrinal objective of fostering the development of a ‘harmonious individual’ moulded in the image of the heroic ‘Soviet Man’, who effectively did not have any weaknesses (Kharkhordin, 1999, p. 175). The psychological response to the practices of forced submission to the judgement of the community provoked a tendency of concealing one’s weaknesses, forging performance, and a range of other dissimulating practices, which became particularly evident in the period of late Socialism (Kharkhordin, 1995).

The need to depart from the practices of using assessment as a repressive mechanism was often articulated in the discourses of international teachers. The quote opening this section summarises this attitude as: ‘It is as if you make a mistake you’ll be shot. That has to stop!’ (Interviewee N, International teacher, NIS school C, May 2014). At the same time, the national interviewees did not comment on the repressive character of assessment as the legacy of Soviet schooling as such. Instead, they criticised the exclusive focus on recall of knowledge as the primary goal of assessment. In their opinions, all that was required in Soviet schooling was the ‘reproduction of knowledge’ (Interviewee E, NIS managing company, October 2012).

The national interviewees also shared an observation that assessment in Soviet schooling was inadequate to reflect student preparedness for life outside school. This point was drawn from stories and observations that high-achieving students in Soviet schools, the so-called otlichniki (Rus. high-achieving students receiving grade ‘five’ out of ‘five’) – as opposed to troechniki (Rus. low-achieving students receiving grade ‘three’ out of ‘five’) – who are popular characters in anecdotes about the Soviet schools, struggled in adapting to the new circumstances after the breakup of the Soviet Union. As the same interviews confirm, otlichniki ‘were not successful, they could not adjust to the realities of life’ (Interviewee E, NIS managing company, October 2012).

Another interviewee suggests:

Those children left school and could not settle down in real life. It turns out that the school and society deceived them. We taught them the wrong things. (Interviewee K, NIS School C, May 2014)

In contrast, those who learnt ‘just a half’ adapted better to everyday life (Interviewee K, NIS School C, May 2014). The interviewee attributes their success to the skills they acquired while negotiating and bargaining for homework assignments with their fellow students:

Their skills became better developed. They called a friend in the evening and asked: ‘let me write off the maths homework’, [so] they would have confidence that they could exchange this for physics [homework]. Such skills as delegation, partner search, etc. were a common thing to mediocre students who then settled down [in life] better. (Interviewee K, NIS School C, May 2014)
To sum up, the discussion about the way assessment is currently practised in Kazakhstan evoked references to the punitive function of assessment as a legacy of Soviet schooling. This concern was present in the accounts of international teachers, who called for this practice to be reconsidered urgently. At the same time, the national teachers shared their observations about the inadequacies of assessment to capture a wide range of skills, as evidenced by stories of high-achieving students who found it particularly difficult to adjust to the new post-Soviet realities.

Conclusion: working at the intersection of memory, politics and identity

The discussion presented in this paper sheds new light on the politics of educational reform in Kazakhstan. It demonstrates how the two groups of practitioners in Kazakhstan, international and national teachers, make strategic use of the past in order to raise concerns about present-day educational initiatives in Kazakhstan. It was not the purpose of this paper to compare the two groups of practitioners, who have different access to power and control over the reform process and whose participation in the reform process is rewarded differently in both material terms and career progression. The differences and inequalities between international teachers, who enjoy many times greater financial security than their national counterparts, are discussed elsewhere (Fimyar, 2014d). The key objective of this paper was to trace the references to the ‘Soviet’ in the discourses of the two groups, keeping simultaneous attention on the changes required by reforms, and the dilemmas practitioners face in enacting those reforms.

The resultant analysis was organised around four interrelated themes, which were also constructed as sites for reflection for all participants in the educational debate. Empirical data provided by the study spoke directly to the questions raised in theories of social remembering, particularly about the relationships between memory and history; memory and identity; and memory and politics (e.g. Misztal, 2003). We conclude this paper by bringing these three lines of conceptualisation together.

In relation to the question of memory and history, from our engagement with Kazakhstan’s education system, it is obvious that for many of our respondents, regardless of their gender and career stage, ‘Soviet’ is not a distant past, it is here and now, despite its historical closure 20 years ago. References to Soviet education are present in discussions about the present nature and future direction of educational reform in Kazakhstan. In the discourses of the national teachers and administrators, ‘Soviet’ is used as an imaginary quality standard, somewhat similar to a universal golden standard, against which anticipated changes, for example the introduction of the new curriculum (which will reduce the number of contact hours in mathematics and sciences), are compared and fiercely opposed. While the national actors oppose the changes in anticipation that they will directly affect their workload and salaries, the international teachers are concerned about the lack of support for the proposed reforms. Hence, the use of ‘Soviet’ in relation to the question of history demonstrates that the ‘Soviet’ period in Kazakhstani education has not yet ‘passed to history’ (Hartman, 1986, p. 1, cited in Misztal, 2003, p. 120).

Furthermore, despite being used alongside the two opposing categories of ‘legacies’ and ‘achievements’, the ‘Soviet’ evokes a distinction between two contrasting views of teacher professionalism – i.e. a national, politically bound, teacher professionalism, and a post-national, practice-bound, teacher professionalism. The national, politically bound, teacher professionalism currently dominates the way of thinking...
about the purpose of education and teaching in Kazakhstan and other countries of the former Soviet Union. It defines teacher professionalism in terms of belonging to a particular political community, most commonly contained within the geographical borders of a particular nation, or groups of nations with similar political regimes, as in ‘Soviet’ school, ‘Kazakh’ pedagogy, ‘Western’ educational tradition, ‘Finnish’ lessons, etc.

This approach is opposed to a post-national, practice-bound, teacher professionalism which is defined not in terms of belonging to a particular political community but to a community of practice, as in teacher-centred, curriculum-driven instruction or student-centred, inquiry-based learning. The post-national view of teacher professionalism highlights the fact that schools of thought are not confined within national boundaries but have been present in all nations, of the global ‘East’ and the nations of the global ‘West’, though during different historical periods. For example, practices of progressive pedagogy and project work were the hallmarks of Soviet education in the 1920s and 1980s (Johnson, 2010), while teacher-centred learning dominated educational approaches in the Anglophone countries in the 1950s (Alexander, 2001; Schweisfurth, 2013).

The analysis of the relationship between memory and politics can be achieved by reflecting on the politics of knowledge production in a government-commissioned research programme, of which this work is part. At the time when Kazakhstan seeks to ensure its fast progress towards the political goal of entering the club of best-performing economies, topics like ‘Soviet’ remain outside of the official research agenda. The topics which are privileged by the established regime of knowledge production in Kazakhstan and other countries in the region are those which are believed will ensure the effectiveness of education systems and bring improved results in PISA, TIMSS and other international comparison tests. Without the authors’ own experiences of living in the former Soviet Union, the topic would not be given the attention it deserves. Despite calling for researchers’ attention, the topic of the ‘Soviet’ is less likely to appear in official requests to study educational change in the countries of the former Soviet Union, thus confining the topic of the ‘Soviet’ to the realm of popular memory, anecdotes, nostalgia and eventual forgetting. By writing this paper, we together with our research interviewees were performing the act of remembrance, which we strongly believe should accompany any attempt to bring genuine educational change, which our research interviewees believe is possible and desirable.

Funding
This paper is a result of a collaborative study between Nazarbayev University Graduate School of Education and the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education. The funding for the study was provided by Nazarbayev University.

Notes
1. The ‘Centres of Excellence’ is a three-level programme of teacher professional development jointly developed by the University of Cambridge Faculty of Education (FoE), the Centres of Excellence (CoE) and Cambridge International Examinations (CIE). The content of the programme encompasses seven areas specified by the Kazakhstani Government. These areas are: (1) new approaches to teaching and learning; (2) learning to think critically; (3) assessment for and of learning; (4) using ICT in teaching and learning; (5)
teaching talented and gifted children; (6) responding to age-related differences in teaching and learning; and (7) management and leadership of learning. Each level of the programme is being delivered by FoE trainers to Kazakhstani trainers through two two-week face-to-face periods with school-based work conducted by the trainees in between.

2. www.zakon.kz/top_news/4581331-polnaja-videoversija-zhestkogo.html ‘The video briefing of Nazarbayev’s hard conversation with the government’ (2013) (Rus.).

3. There are a number of studies by local scholars on the history of pedagogy and education in Kazakhstan. However, the majority of those studies focus on the issues of ethno-pedagogy and various ways of infusing national identity in students, rather than approaching the question of Soviet education, its legacies and ways of socialisation from a sociological perspective.

4. All interviewees are assigned letters A–Q according to the order in which they appear in the article. Responses of international teachers (Interviewees B, F, N and O) are marked as ‘international teachers’. All other responses are from the national actors. Five types of organisations in which interviews took place, (1) NIS managing company, (2) CoE training, (3) international organisation, (4) four mainstream schools (assigned letters A–D) and (5) three NIS schools (assigned letters A–C) are indicated together with the year and the month of data collection (October 2012, March 2013, February 2014 and May 2014). The gender of the respondents, subject specialism and role are not indicated as this could compromise the anonymity of the interviewees. It is worth mentioning that out of the 17 respondents cited in the paper, 10 are female and 7 are male.

5. In the original paper, Borytko (2005) uses the terms ‘technocratic’ and ‘humanitarian’, which we believe is inaccurate translation. In our opinion, ‘teacher-centred’ and ‘student-centred’ are more appropriate terms to capture the shift in philosophy and values of education.

Notes on contributors
Olena Fimyar is a senior research associate in the Kazakhstan Project at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, UK. The range of her research interests includes education reform, academic migration, governmentality and discourse analysis. Before embarking on her academic career, she worked for five years as an EFL teacher in Tsyurupynska Gymnasium, Kherson region, Ukraine.

Kairat Kurakbayev is an educational researcher at the Graduate School of Education, Nazarbayev University, Kazakhstan. He currently examines the ways in which teachers make meaning and respond to educational reforms taking place in Kazakhstan. He holds an MEd degree from the University of Exeter, UK and a PhD from the Eurasian University, Astana, Kazakhstan. Before starting his career in higher education, he worked as an EFL teacher in his home town, Pavlodar, Kazakhstan.

References
Alexander, R. (2001). Culture & pedagogy: International comparisons in primary education. Oxford: Blackwell.
Aydarova, O. (2013, March 22–23). Glories of the past or dim visions of the future: Russian teacher education as the site of historical becoming. Paper presented at the 21st Annual Symposium of the Soyuz Research Network for Postsocialist Cultural Studies: Authoritarianism and beyond? Lessons from Postsocialist Societies, Columbia University, New York, NY.
Bennis, W. G. (1963). A new role for the behavioural sciences: Effecting organizational change. Administrative Science Quarterly, 8, 125–165.
Bokayev, B., Zharkynbekova, Sh., Nursietova, Kh., Bokayeva, A., Akzhigitova, A., & Nurgalieva, S. (2012). Ethnolinguistic identification and adaptation of repatriates in polycultural Kazakhstan. Journal of Language, Identity & Education, 11, 333–343.
Borytko, N. M. (2005). *Values and education: Russian perspective* [Edited collection of the Institute of Pedagogy and In-service Training, Volgograd State Pedagogical University]. Retrieved from http://www.doiserbia.nb.rs/img/doi/0579-6431/2005/0579-64310502035B.pdf

Bridges, D. (Ed.). (2014). *Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Burkhalter, N., & Shegebayev, M. R. (2010). The critical thinking movement in Kazakhstan: A progress report. *Research in Comparative and International Education, 5*, 434–445.

Burkhalter, N., & Shegebayev, M. R. (2012). Critical thinking as culture: Teaching post-Soviet teachers in Kazakhstan. *International Review of Education, 58*, 55–72.

Charon-Cardona, E. (2013). Socialism and education in Cuba and Soviet Uzbekistan. *Globalisation, Societies and Education, 11*, 296–313.

Cheng, Y. C. (2008). New learning and school leadership: Paradigm shift towards the third wave. In J. MacBeath & Y. C. Cheng (Eds.), *Leadership for learning: International perspectives* (pp. 13–30). Rotterdam: Sense.

Dave, B. (2003, May 5). *Minorities and participation in public life: Kazakhstan* (Working Paper). New York, NY: Commission on Human Rights, Sub-Commission on Promotion of Human Rights, United Nations.

DeYoung, A. J. (2006). Problems and trends in education in Central Asia since 1990: The case of general secondary education in Kyrgyzstan. *Central Asian Survey, 25*, 499–514.

DeYoung, A. J. (2008). Conceptualizing paradoxes of post-socialist education in Kyrgyzstan. *Nationalities Papers, 36*, 641–657.

Dunstan, J. (1987). Equalisation and differentiation in the Soviet school 1958–1985: A curriculum approach. In B. J. Dustan (Ed.), *Soviet education under scrutiny* (pp. 32–70). Glasgow: Jordanhill College Publications.

Fierman, W. (1998). Language and identity in Kazakhstan. *Communist and Post-Communist Studies, 31*, 171–186.

Fierman, W. (2006). Language and education in post-Soviet Kazakhstan: Kazakh-medium instruction in urban schools. *Russian Review, 65*, 98–116. Retrieved from http://www.ihc.ucsb.edu/research/identity_articles/Rus_Rev_Jan_2006_article.pdf

Fimyar, O. (2010). Policy why(s): Policy rationalities and the changing logic of educational reform in post-communist Ukraine (1991–2008). In I. Silova (Ed.), *Post-socialism is not dead: (Re)reading the global in comparative education* (pp. 61–91). Bingley: Emerald.

Fimyar, O. (2014a). Five conversations and three notes on the ‘Soviet’, or finding a place for personal history in the study of teacher education policy in Kazakhstan. In P. Smeyers, D. Bridges, N. Burbules, & M. Griffiths (Eds.), *International handbook of interpretation in educational research* (pp. 1513–1532). Dordrecht: Springer.

Fimyar, O. (2014b). ‘Soviet’, ‘Kazakh’ and ‘world-class’ in the contemporary construction of educational understanding and practice in Kazakhstan. In D. Bridges (Ed.), *Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan* (pp. 177–195). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fimyar, O. (2014c). Translating pedagogical ‘excellence’ into three languages or how Kazakhstani teachers ‘change’. In D. Bridges (Ed.), *Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan* (pp. 301–324). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fimyar, O. (2014d). The value of dialogic approach in understanding international teachers’ identity in Kazakhstan (Research report 2013–2014, pp. 166–187). Document for internal circulation. Cambridge: University of Cambridge.

Fimyar, O. (2014e). What is policy? In search of frameworks and definitions for non-Western contexts. *Educate, 14*(3), 6–21. Retrieved from http://www.educatejournal.org/index.php/educate/article/view/375

Glowka, D. (1987). The unfinished Soviet system. In B. J. Dustan (Ed.), *Soviet education under scrutiny* (pp. 11–32). Glasgow: Jordanhill College Publications.

Grant, N. (1964). *Soviet education*. London: Penguin.

Griffiths, T. G., & Millei, Z. (2013). Education in/for socialism: Historical, current and future perspectives. *Globalisation, Societies and Education, 11*, 161–169.

Hartman, G. (Ed.). (1986). *Bitburg in moral and political perspective*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
Johnson, D. (Ed.). (2010). Politics, modernisation and educational reform in Russia: From past to present. Oxford Studies in Comparative Education series. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Keightley, E. (2010). Remembering research: Memory and methodology in the social sciences. International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 13, 55–70.

Kharkhordin, O. (1995). The Soviet individual: Genealogy of a dissimulating animal. In M. Featherstone, S. Lash, & R. Robertson (Eds.), Global modernities (Published in association with Theory, Culture & Society) (pp. 209–226). London: Sage.

Kharkhordin, O. (1999). The collective and the individual in Russia: A study of practices. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Koshmanova, T., & Ravchyna, T. (2008). Teacher preparation in a post-totalitarian society: An interpretation of Ukrainian teacher educators’ stereotypes. International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education, 21, 137–158.

Matuszkiewicz, R. (2010). The language issue in Kazakhstan – Institutionalizing new ethnic relations after independence. Economic and Environmental Studies, 10, 211–227. Retrieved from http://ees.uni.opole.pl/content/02_10/ees_10_2_fulltext_03.pdf

McLaughlin, C., McLellan, R., Fordham, M., Chandler-Grevatt, A., & Daubney, A. (2014). The role of teachers in educational reform in Kazakhstan: Teacher enquiry as a vehicle for change. In D. Bridges (Ed.), Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan (pp. 239–262). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mehisto, P., Kambatyrova, A., & Nursetiova, Kh. (2014). Three in one? Trilingualism in policy and educational practice. In D. Bridges (Ed.), Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan (pp. 151–176). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Misztal, B. A. (2003). Theories of social remembering. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Mitter, W. (1986). Bilingual and intercultural education in Soviet schools. In B. J. J. Tomiak (Ed.), Western perspectives on Soviet education in the 1980s (pp. 97–123). London: Macmillan, in association with the School of Slavonic and East European Studies, University of London.

MOES. (2012). 17.09.12 Astana. Novosti: Korennoye preobrazovaniye sistemy povysheniya kvalifikatsii uchitelej imeet obschestvennoe znachenie dlia modernizatsii obrazovaniya [17.09.12 Astana. News: Radical reform of the system of in-service teacher training has system-wide effect on modernisation of education]. Retrieved from www.edu.gov.kz

Muckle, J. (1988). A guide to the Soviet curriculum: What the Russian child is taught in school. London: Croom Helm.

NIS & CoE. (2012a). Center of excellence. Astana: Author.

NIS & CoE. (2012b). Courses for the Kazakhstani trainers-teachers at the Center of Excellence with the experts from the University of Cambridge International Examinations (23.01.2012–16.03.2012). Astana: Author.

NIS & CoE. (2012c). We are changing with the changing world. Astana: Author.

Niyozov, S. (2011). Revisiting teacher professionalism discourse through teachers’ professional lives in post-Soviet Tajikistan. In I. Silova (Ed.), Globalization on the margins: Education and postsocialist transformations in Central Asia (pp. 287–312). Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Niyozov, S., & Shamatov, D. (2010). Teachers surviving to teach: Implications for post-Soviet education and society in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. In J. Zajda (Ed.), Globalisation, ideology and education policy reforms (Vol. 11, pp. 153–174). Dordrecht: Springer.

Ross, L. (1960). Some aspects of Soviet education. Journal of Teacher Education, 11, 539–552.

Ruby, A., & McLaughlin, C. (2013, September). Transferability and Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools. Paper presented at European Conference on Educational Research, Istanbul.

Ruby, A., & McLaughlin, C. (2014). Transferability and the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools: Exploring models of practice transfer. In D. Bridges (Ed.), Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan (pp. 287–300). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schweisfurth, M. (2013). Learner-centred education in international perspective: Whose pedagogy for whose development? London: Routledge.
Shamshidinova, K., Ayubayeva, N., & Bridges, D. (2014). Implementing radical change: Nazarbayev intellectual schools as agents of change. In D. Bridges (Ed.), *Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan* (pp. 71–82). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shturman, D. (1988). The differentiation of opportunities in Soviet secondary education. In D. Shturman (Ed.), *The Soviet secondary school* (pp. 211–212). New York, NY: Routledge.

Silova, I. (2005). Traveling policies: Hijacked in Central Asia. *European Educational Research Journal, 4*, 50–59.

Silova, I. (2009). The crisis of the post-Soviet teaching profession in the Caucasus and Central Asia. *Research in Comparative and International Education, 4*, 366–383.

Silova, I. (Ed.). (2010). *Post-socialism is not dead: (Re)reading the global in comparative education*. Bingley: Emerald.

Silova, I. (Ed.). (2011). *Globalization on the margins: Education and postsocialist transformations in Central Asia*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age.

Steiner-Khamsi, G. (2013). What is wrong with the ‘what-went-right’ approach in educational policy? *European Educational Research Journal, 12*, 20–33.

Todorova, M., & Gille, Zs. (Eds.). (2012). *Post-Communist nostalgia*. New York, NY: Berghahn Books.

Turner, F., Wilson, E., Ispussinova, S., Kassymbekov, Y., Sharimova, A., Balgynbayeva, B., & Brownhill, S. (2014). Centres of excellence: Systemwide transformation of teaching practice. In D. Bridges (Ed.), *Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan* (pp. 83–105). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Umetbaeva, D. (2015). Official rhetoric and individual perceptions of the Soviet past: Implications for nation building in Kyrgyzstan. *REGION: Regional Studies of Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia, 4*, 71–93.

Yakavets, N. (2012). The recent history of educational reform in Kazakhstan. In D. Bridges (Ed.), *Internationalisation and reform of secondary schooling in Kazakhstan* (Study report for internal circulation, pp. 29–78). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yakavets, N. (2014). Educational reform in Kazakhstan: The first decade of independence. In D. Bridges (Ed.), *Educational reform and internationalisation: The case of school reform in Kazakhstan* (pp. 1–27). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yurchak, A. (2005). *Everything was forever until it was no more: The last Soviet generation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.