

Azerbaijan's Changing Public Schools: Teaching Citizenship in a Post-Soviet World

Introduction

The public education systems in the former Soviet Muslim republics are undergoing rapid and profound changes, and this has enormous implications for the future development of those countries' citizens. However, to date we know little about the substance of these changes or their impact on public school students, let alone their impact on group "belonging". For my dissertation, I will use an anthropological approach to examine Azerbaijan's secondary public schools' history and civics curricula; recruitment, training and supervision of faculty; and teacher/student dynamics during academic and extracurricular activities. I will pay particular attention to the government's education policies towards Islam; ethnic and linguistic nationalism; and international organizations, such as Western NGOs. My objective is to understand the public schools' understanding of citizenship and their programs for training and encouraging their students to become Azerbaijani citizens, including what it means to "belong" to Azerbaijan. Questions I propose to answer include: What concept of citizenship has the Azerbaijani government adopted for the public school system? What methods are Azerbaijan's secondary public schools using to train and encourage their students to become Azerbaijani citizens? To what extent do the policies of government officials and school administrators match the classroom and extracurricular understandings and practices of teachers and students? And what forces and issues in society, such as mass media and the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh, are strengthening, weakening or reshaping new understandings of citizenship, and group "belonging", among public school students? Conducting research in Azerbaijan, I will be able to

engage in careful and extended observation of, and interaction with, public school administrators, teachers and students both in their schools and in their communities.

History of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani Pre-Soviet and Soviet Education

Azerbaijan has long been a crossroads of competing empires, religions and languages. It was invaded by the Persians in the sixth century BC, the Albanians in the fourth century BC and the Romans in the first century BC. It witnessed several Turkic conquests between the fifth and seventh centuries AD, followed by an Arab invasion, and then several more Turkic conquests between the ninth and eleventh centuries. The Mongols arrived in the thirteenth century. Following their defeat, the Persians re-assumed control of the territory. However, the Russians, who had advanced into Azerbaijan in the early eighteenth century, defeated the Persians in the second Russian-Persian war in the early nineteenth century which, following the Treaty of Turkmenchai in 1828, enabled them to control Azerbaijan until the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Azerbaijan experienced a brief period of independence from 1918 until 1920. However, it was ultimately incorporated into the Soviet Union and remained a part of it until the latter's dissolution in 1991 (Altstadt 1992:89-107; Cornell 2001:36-39; Dragadze 1996:269-270; Swietochowski 1996:211-212). Some republics, such as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, emerged from the Soviet Union territorially unscathed. Azerbaijan, on the other hand, has been, and continues to be, troubled by a late 1980s and early 1990s conflict with Armenia for control of Nagorno Karabakh, a region that once comprised fifteen percent of Azerbaijan's territory. Following a cease-fire in 1994, Armenia occupied the region, which has resulted in the displacement of between six hundred thousand and eight hundred thousand Azerbaijanis from their homes (Croissant

1998:138-140; de Waal 2003:284-286). According to Oxfam, families of internally displaced people have been living in the classrooms of more than one hundred schools in towns near the occupied region for the past twelve years (www.oxfam.org.uk).

“Azerbaijan” is a Persian word meaning “land of fire”. The territory is purported to have acquired its name from the Zoroastrians who used the oil that was discovered in the area that is now Baku in the first century BC to light their altars (van der Leeuw 2000:17). The Arabs converted Azerbaijan’s population from Zoroastrianism to Sunni Islam in the seventh century. Then, in the sixteenth century, the Persians converted the majority of that population to Shia Islam. Islam still dominates the region; between seventy-five and eighty-five percent of Azerbaijanis identify themselves as Shia (the majority) or Sunni (the minority). The remainder practices various denominations of Orthodox Christianity, Judaism or Buddhism (Cornell 2001:21-22).

According to one linguist, the Caucasus is home to more than fifty languages, thirty-seven of which are indigenous to the region. The Caucasus’ non-indigenous languages belong to variety of language families such as the Indo-European, Turkic, Slavic, Mongolic and Semitic (Catford 1977:283-286). Prior to the Russian conquest of Azerbaijan, the majority of Azerbaijan’s population spoke a mixture of Persian and Turkic languages. Following the Russian Revolution of 1917, however, it became increasingly difficult for that population to maintain its native languages. Today most Azerbaijanis speak Azeri (a Turkic language) and/or Russian (a Slavic one) (Cornell 2001:17-25, 36-39).

Prior to the Russian conquest of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijani boys were educated in *madrassas*. When Russian colonial administrators arrived in Baku in the mid-nineteenth

century, however, they attempted to replace Azerbaijan's Islamic curriculum with a secular one. Many Azerbaijanis resisted the Russian colonial administrators' endeavors. However, they were not wholly opposed to the idea of a secular curriculum. Concomitant with the Russian Empire's attempts to secularize Azerbaijan was the development of an Islamic movement called *Jadidism*. Its founder, Ismail Gasprinski, was born in the Crimea in 1851, though he was raised and educated in Russia, Turkey and France. Following his return to the Crimea in the 1870s, he dedicated the rest of his life (until 1914) to advancing the idea of a quasi-Islamic, quasi-Western society. Among other things, Gasprinski developed a school curriculum to facilitate his ideas. *Jadid* schools used textbooks, printed in students' native languages, to teach subjects such as mathematics, literature, history and religion in a secular rather than religious manner (Khalid 1994:193-194; Voll 1998:68-69). *Jadid* schools spread throughout the Islamic regions of the Russian Empire (principally Azerbaijan and the five Central Asian republics). By the turn of the twentieth century, they were very popular among the Baku elite (Altstadt 1992:54-56). According to historian Audrey Altstadt, "Reformers in Baku planned to ensure bilingual and bicultural education to allow children to keep open their options of participating in both their traditional Turkish or Islamic milieu and the industrial West . . . The reform program of 1907 was aimed at preparing Azerbaijani children for life in the twentieth century without forcing them to sacrifice their intimacy with their own cultural heritage or their identity." (Altstadt 1992:56)

Following the Russian Revolution of 1917 and Azerbaijan's incorporation into the Soviet Union, however, Azerbaijan's education program began to change. One of the Soviet's achievements was the establishment of Russian language and native language

schools in each of its republics and compulsory education for all Russian and non-Russian boys and girls for a minimum of nine years (Atakishiev and Avakov 1984; Grant 1964). At the beginning of the Soviet period, students were encouraged to study in their native languages. As early as 1920 at least nine of the Caucasus' numerous indigenous languages had become literary languages (Catford 1977:295-298). As the Soviet period progressed, however, laws were passed that increasingly favored the Russian language schools over those using native languages.

Stalin's Russification program aimed to homogenize the Soviet Union's ethnic groups and native languages into shaping one *Homo Sovieticus*. First, a 1939 law entitled "On the Obligatory Study of the Russian Language in Schools of National Republics and Regions" required all native language schools to offer a minimum number of hours of Russian language instruction. Then, a series of laws passed between 1958 and 1959 elevated the Russian language from the status of a foreign language to that of a native language. Finally, a 1978 law entitled "On Measures for Further Improving the Study and Teaching of the Russian Language in the Union Republics" mandated that Russian language curricula and textbooks be introduced in all schools (i.e., native language schools) in which the Russian language was not the main language of instruction. From the end of World War II until *glasnost* and *perestroika*, Russian language and native language schools had different curricula, textbooks and teachers, and students from the former were more likely than those from the Azerbaijani schools to be accepted at universities to pursue academic, professional or government careers (Kellner-Heinkele and Landau 2001:51-62).

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Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the public education systems in the former Soviet Muslim republics have begun to change. Some systems, such as Tajikistan's, have been influenced by the government's acceptance of public manifestations of Islam. Other systems, such as Turkmenistan's, have been influenced by the government's decision to promote ethnic Turkmen nationalism at the expense of other nationalisms (e.g., Russian). Yet other systems, such as Uzbekistan's, have been influenced by the government's policies towards international organizations, such as Western NGOs.

During the past fifteen years, Azerbaijan's public education system has also been confronted by issues such as the government's policies regarding Islam, ethnic and linguistic nationalism and Western NGOs. First, although Azerbaijan is officially a secular nation, in recent years some Azerbaijanis have challenged the government's policy and re-opened *madrassas*. In so doing, various groups have sought out different nations' guidance: Azerbaijan's Shias (the majority group) have looked to Iran (an Islamic nation), while Azerbaijan's Sunnis (the minority group) have turned to Turkey (a secular nation) (Cornell 2001:21-22, 36-38; Swietochowski 1999:423-426).

Second, the government has promoted an Azerbaijani identity, beginning with its policy that Azeri, a Turkic language, replace Russian as the "national language". However, Russian has continued to predominate among the elite of Baku and among those who conduct international trade (Swietochowski 1999:426-428). At the same time, some ethnic groups, such as the Lezgins in northern Azerbaijan, who speak an indigenous language, and the Talyshi in southern Azerbaijan, who speak a Persian language, have also been advocating for their native languages to be recognized as

“national languages”. They want to educate their children in them, and they want to become independent states so that they can develop, respectively, a Lezgin and a Talyshi citizenry based upon, among other things, a common language (Cornell 2001:268-272; Swietochowski 1999:421-423).

Third, since the early 1990s Western NGOs have helped Azerbaijan’s Russian language and native language public school administrators and teachers learn about Western teaching methods and acquire Western textbooks. Some have also sponsored Azerbaijani students to study at schools in the United States (Ruffin and Waugh 1999). However, since the Georgian, Ukrainian and Kyrgyz revolutions were reported to have been supported by, among other things, Western NGOs, such organizations have come under government scrutiny.

Research Objective

In order to understand Azerbaijan’s secondary public schools’ understanding of citizenship and their programs for training and encouraging their students to become Azerbaijani citizens, it is first helpful to understand the Western and Soviet concepts of citizenship. Prior to the eighteenth century, the concept of citizenship was loosely defined (Marshall 1964). Following the American Revolution and the French Revolution in the eighteenth century, and the rise of the nation-state in the nineteenth century, however, it acquired a particular meaning in North America and Western Europe (Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm 1990; Marshall 1964). Specifically, it came to refer to a kind of contract between a state (i.e., government) and a society (i.e., people) that entailed specific rights (e.g., property) and obligations (e.g., taxes). According to sociologist Charles Tilly, citizenship is distinguished from other types of contracts, for example,

between spouses, between employers and employees, by “. . . 1) binding whole categories of persons rather than single individuals to each other, 2) involving differentiation among levels and degrees of members, 3) directly engaging a government’s coercive power.” (Tilly 1997:600)

Sociologist T.H. Marshall was one of the first theorists to elaborate the Western concept of citizenship. According to him, it was composed of civil, political and social rights that had developed during the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively. Civil rights referred to individuals’ freedoms which were protected by institutions such as courts. Political rights referred to individuals’ ability to participate in the political process. While social rights referred to individuals’ ability to benefit from educational and social services (Marshall 1964:71-83). Social rights were engaged through a variety of institutions though notably, according to Marshall, public schools: “The education of children has a direct bearing on citizenship, and, when the State guarantees that all children shall be educated, *it has the requirements and the nature of citizenship definitely in mind. It is trying to stimulate the growth of citizens in the making.*” (Marshall 1964:81) (emphasis added)

Today the Western concept of citizenship is variously defined, though it is generally presented as a dichotomy: legal citizenship versus cultural citizenship. Legal citizenship refers to membership in a nation-state while cultural citizenship refers to membership in a religious, ethnic, linguistic, etc. group. According to Western political theory, legal citizenship is supposed to supersede cultural citizenship. However, recent ethnographic research on citizenship in Europe, specifically attempts to reorient individuals’ focus from the national (e.g., France) to the transnational (i.e., European

Union), undermines that assumption (Baumann, Kastoryano, Schiffauer and Vertovec 2004; Darian-Smith 1999; Lawn and Novoa 2002; Schissler and Soysal 2005; Shore 2000). And events such as the collapse of the Soviet Union, which occurred prior to the campaign for European integration, further undermine it.

The Soviet concept of citizenship did not recognize the Western concept of legal citizenship, because the Soviet state and the Soviet society did not have a contractual relationship defining mutual rights and obligations. Rather, most elections were meaningless; most property was collectively owned; and taxes paid directly by individual citizens were not necessary, because the state collected most revenues and subsidized most services (Verdery 1996 and 1998). That said, the Soviet concept of citizenship did recognize a concept of cultural citizenship, for Soviet passports recorded individuals' membership in a state (i.e., Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), a republic (e.g., Russia) and an ethnic group (e.g., Tatar). And, as mentioned above, the Soviet Union's universal, compulsory education system was divided along ethnic and linguistic lines which resulted in, among other things, an ethnic and linguistic hierarchy, or "ethnic chauvinism". In other words, ethnic Russians were "superior" to ethnic Latvians who were "superior" to ethnic Uzbeks, and the Russian language was "superior" to indigenous ones (e.g., Latvian, Uzbek) (Kaaupcke 1994).

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, "ethnic chauvinism" has largely disappeared, though its legacy has remained, albeit in an altered form. For example, in an ethnographic study conducted in sixteen of Russia's twenty-one republics in the late 1990s it was noted that ". . . the titular [e.g., Tatar] and Russian youth residing in one and the same city apparently feel themselves to be citizens of different states: the first, of the

republics, and the second of [Russia] as a whole.” (Guboglo 2000:42) The study concluded that a concept of cultural citizenship predicated on a lingering ethnic and linguistic hierarchy, among other things, had strengthened in Russia since the collapse of communism and the introduction of quasi-democratic (i.e., quasi-Western legal) reforms.

In contrast to most social scientists, anthropologists have long challenged the Western concept of citizenship. Specifically, they have endeavored to demonstrate that citizenship, like other political, economic and social categories, is fluid and, at some times and in some places, different categories of “citizen” are subject to religious, ethnic, linguistic, gender, etc. discrimination (Ceuppens and Geschiere 2005; Kipnis 2004; Nic Craith 2004; Paley 2002; Rosaldo 1994; Verdery 1998). In so doing, some have focused on indigenous or autochthonous concepts of citizenship, as opposed to traditional ones (Nic Craith 2004). While others, as anthropologist Katherine Verdery has noted, have abandoned conventional terms for more nuanced ones, such as “flexible citizenship” or “destabilized citizenship” (Verdery 1998:292).

Anthropologists’ dissatisfaction with the Western concept of citizenship undoubtedly stems partly from the fact they have been trained to approach concepts of citizenship from multiple (and not just Western) perspectives and partly from the fact they have been trained to focus on both their formal (or explicit) and informal (or implicit) manifestations. *Formal citizenship* could be defined as the aspects of legal, cultural and/or other concepts of citizenship that are *directly regulated* by the government, while *informal citizenship* could be defined as the aspects of legal, cultural and/or other concepts of citizenship that are *indirectly regulated* (or loosely regulated) by the government. Based on the preceding definition, voting would be an aspect of formal

citizenship. It is a particular kind of relationship between a government and a people that is directly regulated by government officials. Attending public school, on the other hand, would be an aspect of informal citizenship. It is a particular kind of relationship between a government and a people that is indirectly regulated by government officials *through* school administrators and teachers. Since aspects of formal citizenship are *directly* regulated by the government, there are usually few, if any, individuals who function as intermediaries between government officials and citizens. Since aspects of informal citizenship are *indirectly* regulated (or loosely regulated) by the government, however, there are usually many different types of individuals who function as intermediaries between government officials and citizens. Said differently, formal citizenship is generally defined, inculcated and regulated through law which requires little personal interaction, while informal citizenship is generally defined, inculcated and regulated through a mixture of law and custom which requires extensive, and varying types of, personal interaction. It is, therefore, more difficult to observe and understand the processes and consequences of developing and managing aspects of informal citizenship, such as public education, than formal citizenship, such as voting. To cite T.H. Marshall again, "It may be fairly easy to enable every child below a certain age to spend the required number of hours in school. It is much harder to satisfy the legitimate expectation that the education should be given by trained teachers in classes of moderate size." (Marshall 1964:104) One can require a child to go to school, but it is much more difficult to ensure he/she will receive a particular kind or quality of history or civics education.

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Following the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the few anthropologists who had been working behind the Iron Curtain, such as Katherine Verdery and Caroline Humphrey, were joined by others who had not previously been there. According to anthropologist Thomas Wolfe, the majority of post-Soviet ethnographic studies have tended to focus on issues of “community” (in Eastern Europe) and “culture” (in the former Soviet Union) or, more generally, issues of group “belonging” in both regions (Wolfe 2000). (In qualifying the term “group” with “belonging” and/or replacing the term “group” with “belonging” I am acknowledging, though not wholly embracing, Rogers Brubaker’s criticism of academics’ tendency to reify categories into groups and then attribute agency, among other things, to those reifications (Brubaker 2004).) For example, Katherine Verdery’s What Was Socialism, and What Comes Next? presents a comprehensive picture of the social, political, economic, spatial and temporal characteristics of the Soviet satellites, focusing particularly on Romanians’ dilemmas concerning their new identity and new status as a nation simultaneously part of, yet not part of, Europe (Verdery 1996). Caroline Humphrey’s Marx Went Away – But Karl Stayed Behind, which is a revised version of her Karl Marx Collective: Economy, Society and Religion in a Siberian Collective Farm (published in 1983), details how the collective farm system is continuing to perform important social as well as political and economic functions for some, if not many, post-Soviet Russian communities (Humphrey 1998). Daphne Berdahl’s Where the World Ended: Re-Unification and Identity in the German Borderland describes an East German town’s re-familiarization with its West German counterparts (Berdahl 1999). While Daphne Berdahl’s, Matti Bunzl’s and Martha Lampland’s edited volume Altering States:

Ethnographies of Transition in Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union draws attention to issues of “belonging” in the Czech Republic and Armenia, among other places (Berdahl, Bunzl, Lampland 2000).

Citizenship as a particular form of “belonging” has been studied by some post-Soviet scholars. For example, sociologist Rogers Brubaker has examined the various models of citizenship that have been developed in the Baltic republics, focusing specifically on the different rights the various models have accorded to Russian and titular citizens (Brubaker 1992). Building on Brubaker’s research, political scientist Lowell Barrington has investigated the potential domestic and international consequences of supporting models of citizenship that favor one ethnic or linguistic group over another (Barrington 1995). And sociologist Risto Alapuro has compared the historical development of citizenship and nationalism in Finland, Estonia and Latvia in an attempt to understand the nature of the relationship between the two (Alapuro 1999).

Brubaker’s, Barrington’s and Alapuro’s studies have contributed much to the understanding of the ways aspects of formal citizenship have changed in the Baltic republics since the collapse of the Soviet Union. Unfortunately, few anthropologists who work in the former Soviet Union have focused on citizenship as a particular form of “belonging”, which means that comparatively little has been learned about the ways aspects of informal citizenship have changed in that region since that time. As T.H. Marshall noted a half century ago, attending public school is an aspect of citizenship. I define it is an aspect of informal citizenship and suggest that an examination of the way public education is being defined, inculcated and regulated in Azerbaijan will shed light on the ways understandings of informal citizenship and group “belonging” are changing

in the former Soviet Union. The following ethnographic studies and theoretical frameworks will help inform my research.

Two classic ethnographies of public education and citizenship are Paul Willis' Learning to Labor: How Working Class Kids Get Working Class Jobs (1977) and Douglas Foley's Learning Capitalist Culture Deep in the Heart of Tejas (1990). Willis details how British boys from working class families simultaneously resist and reinforce public schools' conscious and subconscious attempts to train and encourage them to become working class citizens. While Foley, building on Willis' research, describes how the interactions he observed in mixed "Anglo" and "Mexicano" classrooms in a public school in southern Texas mimicked those he observed in other mixed situations (such as the workplace), modeling the town's class hierarchy. Both Willis and Foley were interested in class stratification as opposed to religion, ethnic or linguistic nationalism or NGOs, all of which will be central to my research in Azerbaijan. Nonetheless, their studies are valuable references for contemporary studies of public education and citizenship.

Recently, some anthropologists have focused specifically on religion, ethnic and linguistic nationalism and, tangentially, NGOs in their studies of public education and citizenship. In Putting Islam to Work: Education, Politics and Religious Transformation in Egypt, Gregory Starrett examines, among other things, how religious discussions, specifically those occurring in schools, are being used to address contemporary political issues, such as the role of Islam in the "public sphere" in Egypt (Starrett 1998). In a similar vein, Henry Rutz's study of imam-hatip schools in Turkey details the Turkish government's recent vacillations between allowing and not allowing students to attend

secular and religious schools (i.e., secular “elementary”, religious “junior high” and secular “senior high” schools). Rutz concludes, “At present, ‘Islamic belonging’ has been dealt a blow that sets its project back to a time when secular nationalism left little space for religion in education or, for that matter, in the totality of civic culture.” (Rutz 1999:101). Rebecca Bryant’s historical and ethnographic research on Christian Greek and Islamic Turkish schools in Cyprus illustrates the different understandings of religion and ethnic and linguistic nationalism the different schools are imparting to their students (Bryant 2001). And Yasemin Soysal’s research has highlighted, among other things, the numerous individuals and groups involved, in one capacity or another, in defining, inculcating and regulating public education and citizenship in the European Union. She cites, “. . . teachers, academics, advocacy groups to ministerial and EU officers . . . [and] *international organizations of various sorts, UNESCO, Council of Europe and the like.*” (Soysal 2002:57) (emphasis added). Since Starrett’s, Rutz’s, Bryant’s and Soysal’s ethnographic studies of public schools and citizenship in the Middle East and Europe address, among other things, religion, ethnic and linguistic nationalism and, to some extent, NGOs, they will be useful models for my research in Azerbaijan (as will Baumann, Kastoryano, Schiffauer and Vertovec 2004; Lawn and Novoa 2002; Narangoa 2001; Schissler and Soysal 2005; Tulviste and Wertsch 1994).

Several theoretical frameworks contain ideas that will also aid my research. For example, many of the above mentioned scholars mention Benedict Anderson’s notion of “imagined communities” in their work. While Anderson’s Imagined Communities is germane for studies of citizenship as a particular form of “belonging”, I believe Rogers Smith’s Stories of Peoplehood: The Politics and Morals of Political Membership is more

relevant for such studies conducted in the former Soviet Union (Anderson 1983; Smith 2003). Unlike Anderson, who was primarily interested (at least initially) in the ways mass media (e.g., newspapers) facilitated the rise of nations; Smith is less concerned with nation-building and more concerned with “people-building”. Or, as he says, “. . . an explicit general theory of the ways senses of political peoplehood are generated, maintained, and transformed.” (Smith 2003:10)

Rogers Smith’s focus on “people-forming” and “people-building” is applicable to post-Soviet studies, because few of the former Soviet republics were nations (in the Western sense of the word) prior to their incorporation into the Soviet Union, and many of the leaders of the former Soviet republics that were not nations prior to their incorporation are now engaged in “people-forming” and “people-building” precisely because they were not previously nations. For example, Smith highlights the former Kyrgyz president’s use of the Kyrgyz epic *Manas* to generate a sense of “belonging” among the Kyrgyz. The Turkmen president’s use of the *Ruhnama* - his quasi-historical, quasi-spiritual “guide” to Turkmenistan - seems to be an attempt to achieve the same among the Turkmen. Smith writes, “. . . stories of peoplehood do not merely serve interests, they also help to constitute them, for aspiring leaders and potential constituents alike.” (Smith 2003:45)

Of course, Rogers Smith is not the first theorist to focus on “stories”. James Wertsch’s research on collective memory led him to examine “national narratives” in history textbooks in Russia, Estonia and Georgia (Wertsch 2002). Among other things, Wertsch has noted that Soviet children were taught both “official” and “unofficial” histories. The former were authored by the state and taught in the school while the latter

were informed by family and friends in or around the home. In the case of Estonia, “. . . they made a clear distinction between knowing an official history and not believing it on the one hand, and knowing and believing an unofficial history on the other.” (Tulviste and Wertsch 1994:323) While today’s secondary public school students in Azerbaijan are not necessarily being exposed to the bifurcated “stories” or “national narratives” to which their teachers and public school administrators were exposed, they are nonetheless being exposed to new – Azerbaijani – “stories” or “national narratives” that are being incorporated into the public schools’ history and civics curricula alongside other “invented traditions” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). Indeed, David Laitin’s research on “nationality re-formation” in Estonia, Latvia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan supports the idea that the former Soviet republics’ “stories” or “national narratives” are undergoing much change. He has noted the emergence of distinctive “Russian-speaking populations” in each of the above mentioned republics that did not exist, as such, during the Soviet period (Laitin 1999).

Rogers Smith’s, James Wertsch’s, and Eric Hobsbawm’s ideas will help inform my analysis of Azerbaijan’s secondary public schools’ history and civics curricula. Michel de Certeau’s and Erving Goffman’s theories will help guide my examination of the recruitment, training and supervision of faculty and teacher/student dynamics during academic and extracurricular activities. In The Practice of Everyday Life, Michel de Certeau presents the notions of “producers”, “consumers”, “strategies” and “tactics” (de Certeau 1984). In de Certeau’s view, “producers” possess (social, political, economic, etc.) power while “consumers” do not. “Consumers” can exert power, however, when they use the products (material and non-material) the “producers” provide. According to

de Certeau, “‘consumption’ . . . is devious, it is dispersed, but it insinuates itself everywhere, silently and almost invisibly, because it does not manifest itself through its own products, but rather through its *ways of using* the products imposed by the dominant economic order.” (de Certeau 1984:xii-xiii) “Strategies” are the power the “producers” possess because of the space (e.g., factory, business, academic institution) they control. Conversely, “tactics” are the power the “consumers” can possess if and when they learn how to subvert the “producers”’ “strategies” (de Certeau 1984:29-44).

De Certeau’s concepts lend themselves to a study of public education and citizenship, because the public education system is composed of multiple “producers”, “consumers”, “strategies” and “tactics”. For example, government officials and school administrators *produce* history and civics curricula that teachers *consume*. Teachers, in turn, *reproduce* curricula that students *consume*. While students, in a sense, *reproduce* curricula that those with whom they interact outside of the classroom *consume*. School administrators and teachers can enforce certain rules (or *strategies*) at school. However, it is much more difficult for them to enforce them in or around students’ homes where competing rules (or *tactics*) may be the norm. For example, a student might claim to be an Azerbaijani citizen at school but an internally displaced citizen from Nagorno Karabakh at home.

Finally, some of Erving Goffman’s concepts, like those of de Certeau’s, lend themselves to a study of public education and citizenship. For example, in The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life Goffman likens social interactions to theatrical performances (Goffman 1959). According to him, an “interaction” signifies any interaction while a “performance” assumes routine “interactions” among the same

individuals for the same reasons. “Expressions given” are verbal communication while “expressions given off” are their non-verbal counterparts. And the “observer” usually gains control of a situation at the expense of the “observed”. Goffman summarizes the various components of a theatrical performance, “Defining social role as the enactment of rights and duties attached to a given status, we can say that a social role will involve one or more parts and that each of these different parts may be presented by the performer on a series of occasions to the same kinds of audience or to an audience of the same persons.” (Goffman 1959:16) Based on Goffman’s definition, teacher/student dynamics during academic and extracurricular activities would seem to resemble “theatrical performances”: both teachers and students assume certain social roles at particular times and in particular places. The language a teacher speaks and the way a student comports him/herself in the classroom impart important verbal and non-verbal information. And sometimes the students observe the teacher while other times the teacher observes the students.

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