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Russian engagement with the Bologna Process: policies and practices in higher education reform

BOUTILLON, DAMIEN

Title: Russian engagement with the Bologna Process: Policies and practices in Higher Education reform

Author: Damien Boutillon

The Bologna process describes a collaboration of countries from Europe to Central Asia, where state actors and institutions work towards system convergence in higher education and define an international common space of education policy. This thesis provides a critical reflection on international higher education policymaking and reform implementation through the lens of the Russian engagement with Bologna, contributing to literature in the anthropology of "policy as a practice of power", and contributing to studies of higher education.

Drawing on seven months of fieldwork in Moscow in 2010-11, and from a corpus of European and Russian legislations, education policy documents and university surveys, the thesis explores Bologna as an international sociocultural normative effort, and reveals practices of power that emerge during Russia's engagement with Bologna.

The chapters offer an ethnographic look at Russian actors' engagement with Bologna, highlighting their roles inside the institutions, their discursive production, network mobility, and the kinds of agencies that thrive inside the Bologna process. I follow the implementation of the European Credit Transfer System higher education standard by a Moscow university, and illuminate practices of segregation inside the institution that limit the appropriation of Bologna's Social Dimension policies. Through such explorations the thesis shows regimes of power in the Bologna process, practices that strengthen Bologna's governance model and establish the legitimacy of its policies, and the emergence of political and institutional hegemonies. I also show negotiation practices that emerge during the appropriation of Bologna's policies, modifying or challenging these educational norms.

Russian Engagement With The Bologna Process

Policies and Practices in Higher Education reform

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Damien Boutillon

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List of Illustrations

Key Acronyms

Bologna Process governing organisations

Organisation	Acronym
Bologna Follow Up Group	BFUG
Bologna Follow Up Group (quality assurance stakeholder group)*	E4 group
European Higher Education Area	EHEA

 * This is the group of BFUG institutions that are tasked with overseeing quality assurance mechanisms in Bologna. Composed of EUA; EURASHE; ESU; ENQA (see below).

European higher education organisations and terminologies associated with the Bologna Process

Organisation	Acronym
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation	UNESCO
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation - Centre Européen pour l'Enseignement Supérieur	UNESCO-CEPES
International Association for Educational Assessment	IAEA
European Universities Association	EUA
European Association of Institutions in Higher Education	EURASHE
European University Association	EUA
European Students' Union	ESU
European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education	ENQA
Education International	EI
European Credit Transfer System	ECTS
European Quality Assurance Register	EQAR
National Training Foundation	NTF
Assessment for Higher Learning Outcomes	AHEO
Programme for International Student Assessment	PISA
Trans-European Mobility Programme for University Studies	TEMPUS
Student Exchanges of credit Transfer Assisted by New information Technologies	SEXTANT
European Credits Transfer System	ECTS

Organisation	Acronym
Unica Center for International Education	UCIE
Association of Non-governmental Higher Educational Establishments of Russia	ANVUZ
Evidence Informed Policy and Practice in Education in Europe	EIPPEE

Political organisations

Organisation	Acronym
Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa	BRICS
Commonwealth of Independent States	CIS
Directorate General for Education and Culture, Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency	EACEA
Directorate-General for Enlargement	ELARG
EuroAid Development & Cooperation Office	DEVCO
European Commission	EC
European Court of Justice	ECJ
European Economic Community	EEC
European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument	ENPI / ENI
European Parliament	EP
European Union	EU
General Agreement on Trade and Services	GATS
Open Method of Coordination	OMC
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	OECD
Treaty on Functioning of European Union	TFEU
World Trade Organisation	WTO
Interparliamentary Assembly of member nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States	IPA

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Acknowledgements

"Mais il faudrait bien autre chose pour forcer les fourmis à se détourner de la route millénaire. Elles grimpent sur l'obstacle et trottent, indifférentes et presses, sur les mots amers traces sur le papier en grandes lettres noires…" (Romain Gary, 1956 Education Européenne)

This work has been a journey. I want to thank all those who accompanied me, supported me, gave me the heart and means to complete this process. I cannot name all those who impacted this work, as each encounter that was made along the way gave me pause to reflect and push the analysis in better directions, but they are all remembered with warmth.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Questions at stake

This thesis is an ethnographic exploration of policy as practices of power, in the Bologna process of international higher education reform and higher education systemic convergence. The thesis offers an ethnographic look into the engagement of Russian higher education actors with the Bologna process, and with the Bologna process' international network of institutions and actors.

The 1998-2010 Bologna process was an international higher education policy effort that aimed to build enduring practices of governmental and institutional collaboration, academic mobility, and degree transparency in higher education across Europe and Central Asia. This international effort eventually gave birth to a multinational collaborative engagement in higher education reform, to coordinated policy reforms, and to a higher education system convergence between nations. In 2010, the Bologna process was renamed the *European Higher Education Area* (EHEA).

Through this ethnographic inquiry into the practices and policies that are associated with the Russian Federation higher education system and its encounter with the Bologna international development project, my objective is to address two research questions. First, at this point of encounter between a national system and an international policy process, what are the actors, agencies, human and institutional relations that make up the higher education policy known as the Bologna process, now the EHEA? Second, beyond presenting an ethnography of the policies and collaborative practices at the seams of this international/national encounter, I address one further question: what collaborative practices, practices of power, and actors' interactions contributed to the continued growth and expansion of the Bologna education normative effort, even as the appropriation of these norms encountered sustained divergences, resistance, and local adaptations? I look at the policies and practices that contribute to the construction of the Bologna process, inside a context where multiple autonomous and sometimes contradictory objectives thrive and co-exist.

I will start this introduction by presenting the Bologna process and its constituent pieces. I will introduce the Bologna process as an ethnographic field of research and show its significance for

the anthropology of education. I then present the rationale behind my choice of actors to follow during the research process, and what they bring to the analysis.

In the second part, I will provide a short review of the thesis' analysis material. I offer an overview of the social and cultural processes that the reader will meet in the thesis, including systemic analysis, policy text review, collaborative practices, resistance, and norm-making. I conclude the introduction with a summary of the thesis structure and an outline of the chapters.

1.1 The Bologna process: definition and actors

What is the Bologna process, and why should it matter to us? At its core, the Bologna process is an international higher education project that can be defined as a partnership of countries that adhere to a principle of higher education system convergence, and collaborate towards the appropriation of shared higher education norms. This partnership of countries extends across European and Central Asian geography, across varying political institutions, and across varying national higher education systems. The principal components of Bologna aim to reorganise higher education systems around core policies or '*action lines*'.[1] Three of these action lines were defined from the start of the Bologna process: a two-cycle degree system (BA/MA) in higher education, a system of academic credits that can be transferred across the member states, and a focus on developing the student mobility between the member states. To aid the student mobility and support the academic credit system, Bologna developed other actions lines: degree-transparency tools (Diploma Supplement), and a cooperation between members in quality assurance and reporting systems (with the creation of the Bologna European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education EQAR)[2]. With these policies, Bologna pushed for a 'European dimension' in higher education, and built a system convergence in higher education and student mobility. Gradually, other policies were developed by the Bologna actors, such as the creation of a *social dimension* in higher education, the development of lifelong learning, and the development of the European[3] Higher Education Research Area's impact on a knowledge-based economy. From the start, the political objective underlying Bologna was to raise the international status of European higher education, and increase the visibility of European universities/graduates. As the Bologna process expanded, the focus turned to the development of transnational guidance practices and supervisory organisations that could orient the education reforms in participating nations, and also to the legitimation of Bologna's pan-European educational authority.

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[1] Action lines, policy areas, are vocabularies used by the Bologna communiques to designate their scope of action.
[2] The European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) is a register of agencies that can be hired by universities as external auditors, when they seek to obtain a quality label or demonstrate standards compliance. EQAR was created in 2008 by the Bologna Process E4 governing group, and lists the quality assurance agencies that Bologna identified as having demonstrated strong compliance with the Bologna principles for higher education quality assurance in Europe. EQAR is, in effect, a directory of agencies in good standing with Bologna, towards which the universities are then directed.
[3] EHERA is the Bologna version of the European Commission's ERA (European Research Area).

29 countries signed the Bologna Declaration on June 19, 1999. 33 had signed by 2001, and 48 today.[4] The initial agreement envisioned the creation of a unified European higher education area by 2010. That year, in accordance with the initial vision, the Bologna Declaration became the European Higher Education Area. The EHEA was announced at the Budapest-Vienna conference of March 12, 2010. Over the past fifteen years, participation in the Bologna process expanded beyond the European Union to include eastern countries (Russia, Turkey). Bologna's policy influence also extended westwards towards Latin American countries.[5] The Russian Federation formally joined the Bologna process in 2003, within a context of considerable economic challenges, and profound changes in Russian higher education legislation, organisation, and curriculum. The Bologna process is first and foremost an international engagement by multiple parties around practices in education, teaching, and learning processes, and how these educational practices contribute to the development of our future societies and economies. In this sense, we are looking at a group of educators and policy makers who, collectively and individually, try to say something about the way knowledge, values, education standards and norms are transmitted to future generations in multiple countries. How the Russian system interacts with the Bologna process will appear through ethnographic exploration of the actors' practices, the documentary analysis of the governance models, and the exploration of Bologna policies as practices of power.

1- The Bologna process: a higher education policy and a sociocultural construction

The Bologna process started as a project of transnational higher education cooperation. Since then, it expanded to become a project of cultural construction and social transformation, using higher education as the transformation tool. Conducting research on the Bologna process hits at the heart of anthropological inquiry: it is an inquiry into a multinational effort to create an envisioned educative community, to transform the values attached to skill acquisition and access to cultural knowledge, and to transform the relationships that European and Central Asian communities have with knowledge transmission. Further, exploring the Bologna process opens a

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[4] See appendix 1: EHEA Membership
[5] No Latin America countries are members of the EHEA, yet. However, at the EHEA 2015 Yerevan Conference, multiple programmes of cooperation between the EHEA organisations and Latin America countries were developed, including degree recognition, joint programmes, and quality assurance systems.

window into multinational policy efforts to organise educational practices, establish relations of power, define new sociocultural norms, and regulate the appropriation of these norms.

Research into the Bologna process is relevant to anthropology because Bologna fosters a triple social endeavour. I outline below these three characteristics.

A first aspect of the Bologna process that warrants attention is the **holistic** and **prescriptive** approach to higher education reform that it has taken to redefine the role of education in contemporary society. The Bologna policies themselves do not officially identify or promote a 'holistic' interpretation of higher education. Rather, they focus on limited capacity-building[6] projects, and the attainment of specific action lines: narrow objectives such as the BA/MA tiered reform, student mobility, or qualification transparency. Nonetheless, these action lines, taken together, form a much broader, prescriptive social transformation agenda.

The comprehensive programme of reforms that make up today's EHEA policies contains nine *dimensions* of higher education development (listed below in italics). These policies, taken together, have been interpreted as forming a holistic approach to recasting the role of higher education in society (Garben 2011). The nine dimensions of education in which Bologna actors engage, cover a *social dimension*: the aim that the student body of a university should reflect the diversity of the national population. They touch on the learner's capacity to contribute to society through enhanced *mobility*: learners transporting their knowledge from one Bologna participating nation to another. The policies traverse the age ranges, aiming to accompany the learner through his adult life with a higher capacity to engage in *lifelong learning*. The policies seek to transform the relationship between educator and learner through *student-centred learning*, and define which skills should be taught in the future, for optimal transition towards *employability*. Here, Bologna anticipates what the future work force might require, and develops policies that define the underlying values of "active democratic citizenship[7]". Sjur Bergan (2014, 4) highlights this broad reach of the Bologna reforms, that rest on the interpretation that higher education's role touches on four points: preparation for employment, preparation for life as active citizens in democracy, personal development, continuous learning, and development of European research.

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[6] In education policy, capacitation, or capacity building, denotes the improvement of an institution's educational, administrative, financial, or networking capacity. In the specific case of Bologna, this corresponds to an improvement of universities' ability to implement and advocate for Bologna education reforms, an improvement to prepare learners to the job market, an improvement of the institution's international visibility…
[7] Strasbourg Declaration, 2006; Yerevan Declaration, 2015; "From Bergen to London", 2007.

The Bologna policies further transform how knowledge becomes a commercial product through strengthening of the *academia-research-industry* nexus, innovation potential, and capacitation[8] *funding*. The value of education, or the value of knowledge, is redefined and quantified through the creation of *qualifications transparency tools* and *reporting procedures on implementation*. Taken together, these dimensions of the Bologna process represent the attempt by multiple participants to define what education stands for in our societies, what place education should have in the construction of our societies, and which social partnerships and cultural values in education should be reinforced or changed.

A second fundamental element of the Bologna process is the **programmatic construction** of a **shared education community**. The Bologna process tries to foster a European education identity through several means. It seeks to build a European learners' community by promoting academics' regional mobility, by promoting student exchanges across borders, and by advocating for a shared language of education across the European space. Among these practices advocated by Bologna as hallmarks of the new pan-European education community, a core programmatic effort has been the *social dimension*. This is Bologna policy's normative effort to define who should be able to participate in higher education, what cultural diversity should mean in a student cohort, and how to promote minorities' access to education. The practices of power pertaining to this *social dimension* will be explored in chapters 4, 5, and 6. Each of the policies contributes to defining the future European education community as imagined by the Bologna policy.

A third key characteristic is that the Bologna process has designed over the past fifteen years a complex political, economic, advisory and expertise network intended to guide the social and cultural practices of higher education development participants. In that, the Bologna policies are a set of practices of power developed over the last two decades, organising actors and resources to guide their appropriation of Bologna educational norms. Nominally, Bologna is built around a voluntary participation principle: joint agreements and partnerships are formed between institutions and governments, outside of a centralised, state-like authority. The adherence of Bologna's members to the guiding principles of the Bologna higher education convergence efforts is a matter of choice - or it should be, but for the weight of the policy, political, and

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[8] The term 'capacitation' will thereafter be used to indicate the policy objective of improving the networking, administrative, or financial abilities of a university or other education institution. When used in the context of Bologna policies, 'capacitation' will also indicate the official objective to align the university's standards and systems to the Bologna standards.

economic apparatus that has been constructed with the precise intent to align the national actors' engagement with the Bologna model. The Bologna economic, political and education expertise network has been designed to **effect a guided educational and social convergence of voluntary participants**.

2- The Bologna actors

This thesis presents an ethnography of the policies and practices, including practices of power, that characterise the interaction between the Russian higher education actors and the Bologna process. It does so by focusing on three types of actors encountered during the fieldwork, noting that these actors may take on multiple roles: policymakers, university educators, and students/learners. The learners met during the fieldwork provided empirical insights into student communities coming from Asia and Europe, and Russian students' perceptions of educational mobility within the European Higher Education Area. Creating an ethnography of the Russian engagement with the Bologna process, particularly in its 2000-2010 Russian economy context, further calls for a review of the Russian legislative and economic reforms. The thesis contextualises the fieldwork's empirical information through a historical and document analysis of the policy texts, of the research commissioned by Bologna policymakers, of Russian education legislative texts, and other international legislation pertinent to the field of study. These combined research sources, perspectives, and actors represent the fieldwork as it was experienced during my stay in Moscow and during the post-fieldwork research. The university actors and students referred to in the thesis are directly involved with the Bologna policies, whether as policymakers, implementers, or beneficiaries.

The policy and legislation review

Prior to presenting the Russian ethnography, the thesis describes the official framework of the Bologna process. I show the institutional structure and organisational chart, the policy history, the legislation system framing Bologna and the Russian higher education system, and the governance model of Bologna, including audit structures and its advisory agencies. The objective

of this review is to shed light on the official system in which the higher education actors and Bologna policymakers engage, and the participative practices sought by Bologna officials.

Using organisational and legislation documents (e.g. education laws, international agreements, bilateral treaties, policy briefs, public presentations by Bologna policymakers), I review landmark moments in the Bologna history, and analyse documents that marked significant advances towards the construction of a European Higher Education Area. This first review focuses on the policy documents and discourses that make up the core of the visible, publicly accessible documents that are designed by policy makers to regiment the Bologna actors' practices, and organise the reform actions of universities across the EHEA. Among the legislative documents are those that contributed to the gradual construction of the European Union's *Acquis Communautaires*: the accumulated European legislation and directives that have an objective presence in national legislations. Also reviewed are the international higher education assessment and quality reports such as *Trends* or *PISA*[9].

These public texts evidence the construction of Bologna as an authoritative policy and as a political voice that holds quasi-legislative impact. Documents reveal the official history of Bologna's construction. The texts also reveal the narrative iterations and rhetorical choices upon which the public legitimacy and authoritative voice of Bologna in educational reform matters has been built. Looking at the Trends or the PISA reports, we also see a medium through which the voices of the Deans, Rectors, and European ministerial staff are made public and gain agency. I take the meaning of agency in the sense that such reports and audits become one of the core reference materials for electing future official Bologna agenda items and prescriptions. Through review of the texts, I explore the manner in which a public sphere of presence is constructed for Bologna policies, and the modalities through which this politically visible 'voice' is given legitimacy, then granted to actors, be they individuals or organisations. I look at where and how public agency is awarded, managed, disputed, and negotiated. I focus on the genealogy and authorship of the texts and on the practices of power that the texts reveal, rather than the policy's purported success or failure. I do not look at this body of legislation, directives, audits, and reports as 'determining reality' or ultimately shaping social life by themselves. Rather, I use the array of legislation, public declarations, international, and national reports as **evidence of** a

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[9] International reporting and ranking surveys on higher education. See chapters 4, 5, 6.

policymaker or policy actor's efforts to promote and enact a specific vision of what higher education should be.

The policymakers, faculty, and advisory experts

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 follow the actions of the policy design and implementation agents - the faculty members, administrative staff, advisory experts, and policy authors who have a direct effect on the creation of educational policies, either through financial engagement, publication, political activism, or involvement in guiding the appropriation process.

These actors may also hold dual roles as faculty members, Bologna policy experts, or non-academic technicians. In chapter 5, the analysis of the SEXTANT (Student EXchanges of credit Transfer Assisted by New information Technologies) multi-university development project highlights the capacity of these actors to transition between multiple roles, and across multiple institutions, countries, and financing and advisory agencies. By researching this geographic and professional mobility, I show that the actors purposefully rely on their mobility between different institutions and roles to ensure the success of the Bologna programmes' appropriation. Conversely, I reach an understanding of the impact that the Bologna process had on the careers of the actors involved. By layering this perspective upon the previous systemic and legislative analysis, I build a more precise comprehension of how collaborative and policy appropriation practices take form within the Bologna process, and impact the participants' lives.

The learners

Another voice that the thesis takes into account is that of the primary education recipients: the university students. Through interviews of both Russian and non-Russian students, and through ethnographic accounts of university life, I build an understanding of how the socially and culturally diverse student cohorts of the Bologna space relate to the Bologna education reforms, themes, and to its *social dimension*[10] policy.

From a research point of view, two elements of the prior analysis are deepened and developed through student sources. By looking at policy texts and at the policymakers' perspectives, I

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[10] Anti-discrimination principle, one of the nine Dimensions of the Bologna process. See part 2.3 for full definition.

gained an understanding of how Bologna officially constructs higher education as a set of problems in need of resolution, and how Bologna actors engage with the policies through a set of practices and relations of power, towards an "appropriation[11]" or negotiation of Bologna norms. Exploring the student's perspective deepens this understanding, and shows higher education through the eyes of "non-authorised" actors who are nonetheless involved in the construction of the Bologna process, to paraphrase Levinson's distinction between policy officials and non-governance actors (Levinson and Sutton 2001). Further, looking at students' perspectives allows me to examine situations in which the higher education norms promoted by Bologna presented inadequacies to the Russian national system, or policy appropriation limitations. Following this I am able to present the strategies that were developed by the learners, to remedy such problems outside of the sphere of influence of Bologna officials. For instance, I look at how students pursued international mobility solutions outside of Bologna networks, when they could not acquire international diplomas/competencies, and have those recognised with Bologna credits by the Russian university. With this I investigate how students strategically choose to inhabit a sphere of administrative invisibility while moving between Bologna-participating higher education institutions. Lastly, by looking at the university reforms in chapter 6, I uncover hegemonic processes and international practices of power that mark the field of international higher education reform. This part of the analysis is also deepened by the ethnographic exploration of students' daily lives at the MSPU institution, particularly those who belong to underrepresented groups in the university. With this ethnography, I can research another perspective on practices that create social hierarchies and processes of segregation and ascription in the Russian higher education institution.

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[11] "Appropriation" is a term used in the sociocultural research of policy as practice. The term marks the field's departure from previous studies of policy, including linear managerial studies of policy. "Appropriation" indicates the "ways in which creative agents interpret and take in elements of policy, thereby incorporating these discursive resources into their own schemes of interest, motivation, and action, their own 'figured worlds'" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, Cain 1998, quoted by Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 779). See a more complete definition of terms and concepts in chapter 2.

1.2 Thesis progression and findings

The thesis offers an ethnographic look into the collaborative practices that Russian higher education actors engage in with Bologna policy makers and policy advisors. I investigate these interactions, and I look at the practices inside the university. Through this investigation, I offer a general understanding of the practices that make up the Bologna-Russia engagement around higher education, and specific insights into practices of power, appropriation of higher education norms, and social and cultural phenomena of the Bologna process.

1- Social systems reviewed in the thesis

General results of the research

I offer four results from the analysis of fieldwork material and documents relating to the Bologna process and to the Russian engagement with Bologna higher education policies.

First, I provide a historical and systemic description of the Bologna process: its educational policies, its historical evolution and geographical expansion, and its political structure and governance model. I similarly provide an overview of the Russian higher education reforms over years of engagement with Bologna: the legislation history, the economic context, the principal legislative changes, and aspects of regional politics[12]. Through this systemic and historical review I offer the perspective that Bologna is more than an international higher education convergence reform: it is an international sociocultural normative effort. Therefore I frame the thesis' analysis from the start as an examination of practices taking place during the Russia/Bologna engagement, in the context of an international sociocultural project, not simply an educational project.

Second, I provide an interpretation of Bologna policy as a set of international practices. I offer perspective on these practices of power that surface during the construction and appropriation of the Bologna international education policy by Russian educational actors/institutions. As I explore these practices of power, I show why the Bologna policies should not be interpreted only

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[12] I particularly examine the regional politics of education reform in the Community of Independent State, ex-Soviet Union nations (see chapter 6).

as a top-down, government normative effort, and why the Bologna process should rather be understood as a set of appropriation practices. Therefore, I present the practices that strengthen Bologna's governance model and establish the legitimacy of its policies, and also the negotiation practices that emerge during the appropriation of Bologna's policies and modify or challenge these educational norms.

Third, I research specific Bologna higher education policies (BA/MA, ECTS, and *social dimension*, for example), and investigate their appropriation by university through development projects. Doing so, I explore the international response to contemporary changes in higher education: commercialisation of education, international competition, and increased mobility of learners and scholars. I explore the multiplicity of pressures bearing on the Bologna process, and argue that the educational reforms are not solely driven by neoliberal logic.

Fourth, I present the Bologna actors, within the bounds of the Bologna-Russia engagement. I show their roles inside the institutions, their discursive production, their network mobility, and the kinds of agencies (both institutional and individual) that thrive inside the Bologna process, contributing to its endurance and growth. As I follow these actors, I evidence how they both negotiate and utilise relations of power within the Russia/Bologna engagement. For example, I examine how expertise or advocacy roles are used to construct policy legitimacy and advance educational norms internationally, or how learners negotiate practices of discrimination inside the institution during the Bologna push toward the *social dimensions* of inclusion and diversity.

Specific findings within the sociocultural and educational practices reviewed

Bologna as a set of multi-sited sociocultural and educational practices

The core of the thesis is an examination of institutional and individual collaborative practices and network formation in higher education reform, practices and networks that traverse distinct legislative, economic, and political contexts. In particular, the research shows how the different roles and practices of institutions and actors contribute to our understanding of policy diffusion, programme replication, and multi-sited practices of policy advocacy or resistance. Among the actors' roles and practices, the thesis investigates the actors' discursive practices, the roles of nodal actors and actors of interest, and the networks of specific institutions. These all contribute

to ensuring the scaling-up and replicability of the Bologna process across varying geographical and cultural contexts. In particular, the notion of 'discursive diffusion' will be applied to help understand how the policies are propagated through the Bologna space, and how the construction of the narrative assists in the dissemination of Bologna higher education policies.

Practices of power and governance in the Bologna process

The second research question of the thesis explores the emergence and construction of practices of power in the Bologna process, and how these contributed to the continued growth of Bologna. In response to this I explore both the construction of the Bologna governance and the construction of other practices of power between the participating actors.

In presenting the history, ideological background, and policy structure of the Bologna process, I review the construction of a transnational governance model for higher education reform and system convergence. I present how, and by whom, the Bologna governance model has been defined. I also show which legislation and policies have been created to both preserve the autonomy of participants (individuals, institutions, and national systems), and foster a sustainable convergence between the Bologna signatories' higher education systems. This allows me to offer an interpretation of how the Bologna policies were designed to ensure the project survival, as well as its growth beyond heterogeneous national education objectives and beyond the unevenness of national implementation paces. Here I put forward the impact of shared histories, shared policy responses, and the pattern of discursive repetition that reaffirms and extends the Bologna policy message.

Ethnographically exploring the Russian engagement with Bologna, I deepen this analysis and present Bologna policies as a set of recursive and reflective practices of power that go beyond traditional top-down, linear interpretations of policy. The thesis establishes at the start that Bologna is nominally a non-legislative and non-governmental project. Its exploration therefore allows me to query how the legitimacy of its educational message is established, and which practices of power come to replace or supplement the traditional authority of a government. The thesis therefore explores the role that expertise, rhetoric, and the Bologna policy's construction as an extension of European education legislations, have taken in the construction of Bologna norms, and in their diffusion across the EHEA space.

Lastly, the higher education reform and the implementation of Bologna produces an apparently contradictory result: the promotion of participatory, equalitarian values in education, but also a growth of hegemonic practices at the institutional and the political level. The Bologna process reveals an education reform ideology predicated on voluntary participation, the reinforcement of egalitarian tenets in higher education, and respect for cultural diversity. Conversely, the thesis will demonstrate that higher education reforms and the Bologna process contribute to a concentration of political and education power in the hands of fewer institutions. Here the thesis will show how these hegemonic phenomena extended beyond the Bologna geography into the Russian-CIS political space, and how neoliberal standards came to dominate the education reforms in the Russian federation.

Norm-making and neoliberalism

The Bologna process intends to develop future higher education norms and standards of quality. It does so through project-based collaborations at the state, institutional, and individual levels, and by building a body of policy texts, international agreements, and background research papers. All these elements create a pan-European interpretation of what the future of higher education and knowledge[13] should be. This vision of education contends and competes with other visions of what higher education should be, notably neoliberal interpretations promoted by such organisations as the World Bank. In this thesis I argue that the Bologna process is not solely defined by neoliberal logics. Although some of Bologna's policies respond to pressures of higher education marketisation, shifts towards international competition, and audit processes, I argue that the EHEA is a cultural construction that goes beyond a response to education as a knowledge economy.

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[13] Bologna and other education development agencies at first considered their domain of action to be that of education development, and through years of implementation and policy reflection, shifted to interpret their action as one bearing on knowledge. The definition of education gradually shifted outside of the strict school-university domain, to all the other spaces where teaching and learning is done. It expanded, notably, to all the forms of 'lifelong learning'. This shift was in part led by the UNESCO, the Carnegie foundation and by the rise of the 'community of practice' concept in education development.

Policy as a discursive, negotiation, and meaning-making practice

As I present the analysis of Russia's engagement with Bologna, I engage with the texts and documents that form the official body of educational policy. The thesis shows how these texts contribute to the construction of legitimacy and authority. In particular I examine the impact that heteroglossia, overwording, and text reproduction have on the affirmation of Bologna's norms. Further, I examine how the actors are pushed to use pre-defined rhetoric and a pre-defined, official language to negotiate the appropriation of new educational norms. An education policymaker recently expressed to me her view that to successfully create an education community of practice, one had to fundamentally root the participating educators in specific negotiation protocols and collaboration processes. The objective was to root the educator in reform protocols developed by the expert/policy maker, to such an extent that the educator would always come back to these tools to resolve education 'problems', or to implement future reform programmes. While this vision is commercial to the extreme, I see the Bologna process as built on a similar understanding - of how we promote a chosen selection of strategies and practices for responding to higher education 'problems' identified across the European education space. By researching the Bologna process and its intersection with the Russian higher education space, I am able to observe the construction of these practices of power, and the negotiation frameworks within which the actors then interpret and make sense of the Bologna educational policies.

Racism and discrimination as institutional practices of power

As indicated above, the research focuses on specific policies and programmes to illustrate Russia and Bologna's joint engagement in higher education. One such policy is the *social dimension*. Through it, the thesis develops an analysis of the policy concepts developed at the European level (Bologna) for equality and cultural representation in higher education. It also investigates practices in the Russian university that impede the successful implementation of the Bologna social policies. Specifically, the thesis presents an ethnographic review that identifies racial discrimination practices, corruption practices, any patterns of ascription and privilege that impact educational access in higher education institutions.

2- Chapter review

Chapters 2 and 3 present the literature review and a discussion of the methods used in the research. Chapter 4 sets the foundations of my investigation into the Bologna process and Russia's engagement with it. This chapter starts with a systemic overview of the Bologna process, of Russia's postsecondary education, and of the policy and organisational framework within which the actors of Bologna and Russia interact. I examine the principal phases of Bologna's history and its foundational documents, draw out the official policy objectives and pre-1999 humanist principles, outline the Russian higher education system, and present the main stages of Russia's engagements with European Union educative initiatives. I situate the Russia-Bologna engagement in the larger history of bilateral and 'common spaces' agreements that guided education exchanges between Russia and the European Union. Through this history and systemic exploration, I show Bologna policies as normative policy efforts that reach beyond systemic postsecondary education reform, and officially seek to transform European sociocultural practices beyond education. Bologna is at its core a social and cultural transformation project. I also introduce the EHEA as a space of educational "convergence across localities", marked by a reality of divergences between the Bologna participants: different motives for membership, and different national education reform goals. Lastly, I show that Bologna's educational and sociocultural reforms present a complex interplay of neoliberal and non-neoliberal influences/practices in the official pursuit of a centrally guided educational policy.

Beyond this systemic and historical presentation, the object of Chapter 4 is to contextualise the actors' practices and take the first analytical steps in presenting Bologna policy as a set of practices and practices of power. I show how Bologna officials conceive of policy as a normative power to guide participating actors towards practices of convergence in higher education. I present Bologna's official governance model, chosen to ensure the process' successful growth and endurance: reliance on soft law, OMC (Open Method of Coordination[14]), the policy's use of the European legislative power, and governance through audit and evaluation practices. Through this, I show how Bologna built the legitimacy of its policy through reliance on advisory agencies, and organisational overlap with EU legislators, rhetorical mirroring of European education

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[14] Open Method of Coordination, see chapter 4.

legislations, and deployment of audit systems. In presenting Bologna practices and policy as normative effort, I explore elements of policy as practices of power that will be further explored through the thesis: legitimacy, meaning-making, multi-locality, convergence across localities, discursive diffusion, and analysis of documents' language. The ethnographic review of the actors' practices at the end of the chapter develops these elements of policy as a practice of power.

In Chapter 5 I look at a multi-university collaborative project funded by the European Commission to improve the universities' Bologna standards in learning outcome definition, student mobility, and credit transfer systems, to ultimately create a new cross-European higher education network. The Student EXchanges of credit Transfer Assisted by New information Technologies (SEXTANT) project was a 2007-2011 multilateral development effort co-led by the Moscow State Pedagogical University and University College Ghent, with three participating institutions from other countries. SEXTANT was the meeting ground of a multiplicity of political and academic institutions and agencies, each vying for a role or voice in the policy construction of today's EHEA. Through the narrow context of SEXTANT, I explore an example of successful Bologna policy appropriation. I look at how SEXTANT participants achieved some of the Bologna objectives, propagated Bologna education reform ideas, reinforced its governance structure, and generated practices of power during the appropriation of Bologna norms and educational standards. I explore systemic changes and practices by the actors and institutions that emerge during the course of the project. I also present the impact of the Bologna implementation on the actors' lives, including changes in geographical mobility, educational roles, positions inside advisory networks, and universities' international standing.

The chapter looks at two principal results of this international collaboration. First, I explore the universities' appropriation of Bologna policies, particularly the growth of international networks and bilateral agreements, technological developments linked to the definition of ECTS, and development of knowledge sharing between institutions and academic/private sectors. In this presentation of SEXTANT, I explore how the five participating universities appropriated the following Bologna policy recommendations: the European Credit Transfer System and learning outcome norms (as mechanisms for increased learner mobility), the growth of university

partnerships and academic networks (in support of learner mobility), and the multiplication of university-industry ties. Through this exploration, I show global and local practices of power emerging during this appropriation of Bologna policies. At the international level, I show global practices of power that further EHEA policies, such as the creation of normative guidance regarding learners' competencies and learning outcomes, the creation of negotiation framework to organise academic actors' interactions, and the promotion of an international language of education reform. Conversely, I show other local/national practices that limit the full appropriation of Bologna norms, such as practices of discrimination and bribery in Russian higher education.

A second objective of the chapter is to investigate the project actors as 'nodal actors' and 'actors of interest' for Bologna, and how the SEXTANT project helped turn the Bologna discourse into a tool of governance through practices of 'discursive diffusion' and adherence to a predefined, "authorised" (Levinson and Sutton 2001) Bologna education vocabulary. I show the construction by Bologna governing institutions of a centrally mandated rhetoric of higher education reform and institutional development standards. Exploring this rhetoric reveals how discursive diffusion practices contributed to the expansion of the Bologna message, and to reinforcing its legitimacy. I then examine how universities and individual actors derived novel positions of leadership in Bologna's expert networks, gaining new appointments to the Bologna Follow-Up Group[15]. I show how these educational expertise and brokerage roles permitted SEXTANT actors to promote Bologna objectives beyond the initial scope of the SEXTANT project, becoming leading actors in later projects, and exporting the model beyond the academic world towards industry. The chapter explores how Bologna works, and how the Bologna structures and governance systems are strengthened during an implementation project. It also takes the first steps in showing the practices of power that result from the education actors' work.

In Chapter 6, I extend the exploration of practices of power that emerge within processes of educational policy appropriation. Here I focus on post-2000 Russian reforms, during Russia's period of joint engagement with Bologna and international neoliberal financiers. During the first decade of engagement with Bologna, the Russian Federation pursued three parallel education

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[15] Leading advisory group in the definition and elaboration of the Bologna policies. See chapters 4 and 5.

reforms. A national programme focused on administrative and financial reform. An engagement with Europe (Bologna) focused on higher education reform and other engagements with international organisations (World Bank, OECD). These parallel reforms co-existed in the early 2000s, impacting each other and to some degree overlapping. Each reform pursued education quality improvement, creation of internationally competitive research universities, increases in international student mobility, and greater integration of academic institutions with industry. Similarly, each project was supported by comparable governance tools: international policy and legislative harmonisation, reliance on audit processes and benchmarking, and creation of international quality standards. Chapter six takes the view that an exploration of Russia's engagement with Bologna policies must be considered in this larger international context, taking into account the influence of international neoliberal organisations like the World Bank. I argue that by exploring Russia's international engagements, a more complete understanding of Russia-Bologna engagement is achieved, and a more contextualised comprehension of the Russia-Bologna practices of power can be reached. Doing so, the chapter deepens the analysis of practices of power that emerge within international processes of educational policy appropriation.

In this chapter, I first explore how Bologna's sociocultural norms and stated humanist objectives, of improving education quality and accessibility for all, are superseded by reforms and practices of power that concentrate financial and educational resources around select universities, fostering regional imbalances in education quality. In the early 2000s, the Russian Federation launched higher education reforms which sought to improve education quality and to advance Bologna higher education precepts (mobility, research-industry networks, quality standards). I show how the conjunction of national economic imperatives and international pressures by global financiers led these reforms to diverge from these humanist objectives, towards political and economic deregulation and decentralisation, a rethinking of the authority/legitimacy of the state, and a concentration of financial resources and decisional powers in the hands of a small number of 'elite' National Research Universities, creating a growth of power differentials.

I then turn to Russia's participation in higher education reforms financed by the World Bank. During the early 2000s, the Russian Federation was transitioning out of the Soviet Union's system into a market economy. It did so with the counsel of international partners such as

Bologna advisers, but also with international partners (OECD, UNESCO) and financiers (World Bank) with neoliberal economic and educational priorities. This meant that when Russia pursued objectives that were compatible with the Bologna process, the same objectives and associated development programmes were affected by the cooperation with other international organisations and their agendas. Chapter 6 looks at the World Bank's multi-million-dollar education reforms in Russia, and how these funds promoted the bank's vision of education as a neoliberal commerce, and neoliberal standards of efficiency and accountability. Here I explore the competition between EHEA norms of education and neoliberal norms of education, and which practices of power contributed to one education norm prevailing over the other.

Lastly, I present examples in which the Russian federal government uses education reform projects and education legislation reforms to attain political leadership in the CIS[16] region. Specifically, I show how Russia used its participation in international unions (CIS, BRICS, Bologna) and its newly achieved expertise in international higher education reform to become the dominant force in its geopolitical region (CIS and Eastern Europe). The chapter explores how international education harmonisation practices can create regional political hierarchies, or ensure that a nation gains greater access to market resources and regional influence.

The final chapter brings together the perspectives on the Bologna process presented throughout the thesis. It ties the first systemic and governance model review to the implementation of a Bologna multi-university development programme and to the Russian use of the Bologna reform model in regional and institutional dominance practices. Through ethnographic research and documentary analysis, and through the example of Russia's engagement with Bologna, the research brings to light the construction of an international education convergence process, and the practices of power that emerge during this policy construction. This concluding chapter bridges the first contextualisation of Bologna and of the Russian higher education system with the following ethnographic reviews exploring the practices of the participating actors. The concluding chapter also recalls the thesis' presentation of factors that contribute to the strengthening and endurance of the Bologna policies, its governance model, and the diffusion of its educational messages. The conclusion offers a transversal reading of the thesis' postulates

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[16] Community of Independent State, ex-Soviet Union nations.

regarding which practices contribute to the growth and stabilisation of Bologna's governance structure, diffusion of educational norms, and organisation of the actors' appropriation of these norms. Here it brings together the multiple practices of power uncovered by the analysis throughout the chapters, including the processes of discursive diffusion that reinforce the legitimacy of Bologna policies, the actions of nodal actors that contribute to the construction and diffusion of new international higher education standards, and the use of educational expertise by Russia to build regional political leadership. At the same time, the conclusion of the thesis recalls the variety of social and political contexts in which Bologna actors operate, and instances when their practices veered away from the original Bologna intent. Bringing a contrast to the legitimisation of the Bologna message and governance, the thesis shows that despite official pursuit of an egalitarian, *social dimension* of education, practices of segregation and ascription still endure inside the university, and practices of political hegemony are fostered during the pursuit of Bologna reforms. The conclusion of the thesis unites these elements, reviewing the actors, normative efforts, and practices that make up Bologna, and the practices of power that emerge during the Russian engagement with the Bologna process.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2. Overview

This thesis is an exploration of the policies and practices that define the Bologna process, and particularly Russia's engagement with Bologna higher education policies. The thesis also seeks to identify the actors' practices and collaborations that assist in the expansion and continuation of Bologna, even when the reforms face challenging conditions of implementation.

To answer these research questions, the thesis contends with several scales of time and space. The timing of the fieldwork coincided with a year that marked a turning point for both the Russian higher education system and the Bologna process. 2010 was when Bologna transitioned fully to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), and also when the first new federal higher education legislation was proposed in Russia since 1996. It was the year in which large-scale racial riots took place in Moscow and impacted the area around the university. Geographically, Bologna is a transnational, Pan-European collaborative project. But the Russian Federation also attained a new role in international communities outside that of the Bologna process (BRICS[17], the CIS[18]) by instrumentalising its higher education reform programmes and newly-gained expertise in education standards. The exploration of policies and practices must therefore reflect these different contexts of research.

The thesis first presents an overview of Bologna's history, and the regulatory framework inside which the Bologna actors operate. With this first review of Bologna and the Russian higher education system, I highlight several "practices of power" and governance tools that were installed at the origin of the Bologna process by policymakers and political organisations with a view to guide academic actors towards a convergence in higher education (EHEA). Several characteristics of policy as practice of power surface here: the development of an expert network of actors that disseminate the Bologna norms across the EHEA geography, the reliance on soft law and Open Method of Coordination (OMC), the policy's use of the European legislative

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[17] BRICS: association of five emerging national economies (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa), competing with the WTO.
[18] Community of Independent State, ex-Soviet Union nations.

power, and governance through audit and evaluation practices. In the following chapter I look at the case study of a successfully implemented Bologna project, and examine the collaborative practices and the practices of power from academics and policy actors that led to the diffusion and repetition of Bologna principles, and to the strengthening of governance roles and institutions. As the analysis progresses to question how the Bologna policies and ideologies take shape in practice, and how they are reproduced and reaffirmed across localities, I look at nodal actors, actors of interest, audit systems, and discursive diffusion processes. Here I explore the practices of power that further the appropriation of Bologna policies, but also other local practices that emerge during the actors' engagement with Bologna. Russia, during its early engagement with Bologna, was also in the midst of a profound economic and political reform (post-Soviet transition) that affected the education sector. Benefiting from the assistance of international organisations like the World Bank and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Russia reformed its education sector domestically across the federation, but also used education and legislation reforms to gain political influence across its post-Soviet zone of geopolitical influence (CIS). In the final chapter I explore these Russian reforms, and the corresponding contemporaneous legislations, educational policies, and national and international practices of power that emerged during the first decade of the century. Through the education reforms financed by the World Bank, I highlight practices that seek to impose an international neoliberal agenda in Russian education reforms, advocating for deregulation and marketisation in higher education and installing new values and norms for gauging the success of educational reforms. Through an exploration of Russian education policy texts, legislation, and CIS documents, I highlight how an educational reform program can be diverted towards an objective of gaining regional political hegemony.

To support these explorations and analysis of Russia's engagement with Bologna and higher education reforms, the research therefore calls upon a diverse body of theory. The thesis will primarily rely on the theory developed in the field of policy as practice, and specifically policy as practice of power. Key notions from this body of theory will be used, from practice, negotiation, and meaning-making, to approaching policy from an "appropriation" perspective rather than a top-down implementation viewpoint. Policy is seen here as more than a text; it is understood to be a constitutive dynamic where power, legitimacy, and governance are constructed in a dialogue between all interacting policy and academic actors. The Russian engagement with Bologna calls

for a theory that can interpret an educational policy that is appropriated across multiple geographies. Theories of policy as practice were historically built with an understanding of the importance of multi-sited research, and developed a set of analytical concepts specifically for such fieldworks.

The Bologna process calls for one final theoretical consideration. The research relies on the research field of policy as practice, as a sociocultural research domain. Beyond its educational objectives, Bologna is, officially, a social and cultural reform program. Its *Social Dimension* policies are but one branch of this sociocultural reform agenda. The thesis therefore calls upon theories relative to discrimination and racism as I explore institutional practices of power that relate to the Russian appropriation of Bologna norms and *Social Dimensions*.

2.1 Theory for the study of the Bologna policy as practice of power

Research on policy, particularly education policy, has grown and significantly changed during the past two decades. Policy studies gradually moved towards a more practice-centric, contextualised approach that emphasises notions of appropriation and recursive dynamics (see definitions below), and critically reinterprets beliefs previously held in educational studies, managerial studies, and political research. As I explored the Russian engagement with the Bologna process and the Bologna process itself, I aligned with a sociocultural theory perspective. My investigative path is situated within the critical, sociocultural theory of education policy as practice of power. I perceive the concepts of 'policy as practice' and 'policy as practice of power' as particularly applicable starting points for querying the Bologna process. This approach helps to understand the impact that transnational agencies have in the Bologna education convergence efforts, and the role that institutions, agents, and practices take in articulating, operationalising, and disseminating Bologna policies and ideologies. This theory provides the most complete toolset to illuminate practices seen in the field and to explore the lived experience of actors. In these pages I present a limited description of key aspects of this critical theory, focused on the elements most relevant to this work. I then present a brief review of the history of the field of "anthropology of policy as practice of power", and key terms attached to this sociocultural approach. The terminology and discussion set the stage for the second section of this chapter, where I explore additional theories in an effort to complete the sociocultural theory of policy as practice of power. I complete the present section by exploring how these key notions enable an analysis of specific social constructions in the EHEA.

1- Definition: anthropology of policy as a practice of power

In the sociocultural approach, policy is regarded as a practice, and the analytical perspective recognises the need for a critical and contextualised (or situated) approach (Braun et al. 2001, Gupta and Ferguson 2002, Hamann and Rosen 2011, Heimans 2012b, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Lingard 2009, Mundy et al. 2016, Rosen 2001, Singh, Heimans, and Glasswell 2014, Vandeyar 2013). From this sociocultural perspective of policy as practice, I highlight four characteristics. Practice is first a research concept **used to**

interpret social and cultural behaviours (Hamann and Rosen 2011, Levinson, Winstead, and Sutton 2018, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Mundy et al. 2016, Schwartzman 1993, Wedel et al. 2005, Yanow 2000, Yon 2003) of individuals or groups as they exercise agency by engaging in strategic actions to construct, negotiate, interpret, or appropriate a policy event. These and other terms are defined below. Second, practice is a **recursive and reflective dynamic** (Heimans 2012b, Koyama 2011, Levinson, Winstead, and Sutton 2018, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Lingard 2009, Mundy et al. 2016) that binds actors' engagements at the local level to engagements occurring in larger governance or legislative structures. Policy as practice makes the theoretical choice to follow and illuminate the ways in which social actors and governance actors interact continuously, and influence one another in a reflective manner. Here policy is the foil to traditional top-down, linear views of policy as political mandates. Third, practice is **defined as a discursive event** (Ball 2015e, Fairclough 2013, Gupta and Ferguson 2002, Heimans 2012a, Koyama 2015, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Lingard 2009, Mundy et al. 2016), where interactants continuously argue for, negotiate, and refine their collaborative and individual comprehension of the cultural meanings that surface through their engagement with a policy. Fourth, practice is **located in multi-sited research** fields (Bartlett and Vavrus 2014, Durao and Shore 2010, Levinson, Winstead, and Sutton 2018, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Mundy et al. 2016). Authors who participated in the early exploration of the new policy research field and developed it through the past two decades "reconceptualise the notion of policy itself as a complex social practice, an ongoing process of normative cultural production constituted by diverse actors across diverse social and institutional contexts" (Levinson and Sutton 2001, 1). Policy as practice accepts as a core research precept that the scholar will approach policy with comparative research methods, will follow the policy practice through different sociocultural spaces, and will seek to shed a critical light on the recursive social and cultural dynamics by following policy practices.

Sociocultural research defines policy as a practice, but also goes further and defines policy as a practice of power. Anthropologists identify the analysis of practices of power as a pathway to understand policy as a sociocultural, contested normative practice. Traditional interpretations of policy identify it as a set of normative guidelines that have status as legitimate, authorised governing texts. The policy as a guiding charter lays out in official language what should be

done by governing and governed entities (people, institutions, groups), which techniques of administration will enable said norms, and how one is to apply the norm. Evolving from this traditional perspective of policy as a top-down governance tool, sociocultural anthropologists recognise the indivisible co-construction of, on the one hand, policy as political normative guideline, and on the other hand, policy as a negotiated resource. Sociocultural anthropologists define **policy as a negotiated social and cultural practice of power, not solely a top-down political application of power**. Anthropology recognises policy as a set of vertical normative guidelines, but also as a practice of power construction that is jointly constructed and negotiated by both governance actors and non-governance social actors.

Finally, the new field of policy as practice of power gives a central role to the analysis of the **discursive construction of cultural meanings**. The theoretical element I highlight here is that policy is defined as a contested, negotiated cultural construct. Sociocultural researchers view policy as a contested cultural resource, not solely a political mandate. The research field of policy as practice of power extends the analysis to the processes through which actors negotiate the complex array of cultural values, languages, and meanings, and collaboratively define interpretations during the course of their appropriation of policy. Anthropologists follow these practices and explore the reified cultural meanings to interpret the actors' behaviours and daily experiences as these behaviours and experiences relate to policy appropriation. In the words of Levinson, "by highlighting the place and role of values, beliefs, and identities in the policy process, we provide analytical tools to range across the spectrum of sociocultural activity" (2001, 3). Exploration of the Russian engagement with the Bologna process, and of the Bologna process as a set of practices and practices of power, follows the theoretical tenets outlined above.

2- History of anthropology of policy as a practice of power

In 2001, Bradley Levinson and Margaret Sutton asked a question that lies at the heart of what was to become a new branch of the anthropology discipline. In their opus "Policy as practice" (2001) Levinson and Sutton asked what would "educational policy studies look like, if they reconceptualised the notion of policy itself as a complex social practice, an ongoing process of normative cultural production constituted by diverse actors across diverse social and institutional

contexts?" (2001, 1). In asking this question and eliciting responses, three objectives were pursued: to revisit previous theoretical approaches to policy as a domain of study, to build on the momentum of contemporary critical theory to lay the foundations of a new field, and to revisit the role that anthropologists can play as active participants in policy debates. This initial query grew into a multidisciplinary field, building a corpus of research that thrives today. The present thesis hopefully contributes to this field.

Early managerial, educational, and implementation studies: slow evolution towards critical approaches

Research on policy as a practice of power evolved from a traditional understanding of policy to a range of critical approaches. In early theories, such as 1980-90s managerial theories (Bowe, Ball, and Gold 1992, Newman and Clarke 1994) or those of early studies of educational implementation (Fitz, Haplin, and Power 1994), attentions focused on what a policy 'does', and its organisational rationale. In contrast to this, later critical studies highlighted individual agency, and moved towards a more practice-oriented approach to policy studies. These focused on the process of appropriation and sociocultural activity theories (Spillane, Reiser, and Reimer 2002).

Managerial studies: linear model of policy; problem-focused; innate power; official power

Managerial studies started by presenting a linear model of policy (Porter and Hicks 1995) in which the policy was shown to develop in sequential phases of problem identification, policy formulation, implementation, and revision. This linear model called for each phase to be examined separately. The problem identification phase was analysed by asking if the problem and problem construction had been appropriate and relevant to the sociocultural context in which the policy would be implemented. For this phase of policy construction, the question was whether policy makers had correctly identified the problem, and whether the formulation of the problem was adequate to the population that the policy was going to bring a "solution" to. Further, "spaces of power" were explored (see Mundy et al. 2016), with an aim to better understand the process of policy formulation. For example, managerial studies focused on dynamics of power present during the policy implementation stages. Finally, analysis of the post-

policy phase of evaluation brought the researcher back, full circle, to the first step of problem identification. The question here was whether the policy attained, after its full implementation, the sociocultural result that had been predicted during the "problem identification" phase. "Until recently, the preponderance of scholarship in the field has focused on the extreme ends of the process—how policy is formed, and methods for evaluating policy impacts" (Levinson and Sutton 2001, 5). This linear model presents characteristics that have been identified as problematic by anthropologists (Ball 2015e, Hamann and Rosen 2011, Heimans 2012b, Wedel and Feldman 2005, Malen and Knapp 1997). The sequential separation of the various phases of policy making, implementation, and review, gives credence to the perspective that policy is simply an application of authoritative mandates or cultural values by a group of stakeholders whose power is, somehow, innate. Similarly, when research separates the phase of policy conception from any subsequent implementation, there is a tendency to present the source of policy conception as possessing an innate power from which the policy mandate legitimacy is derived. For instance, the researcher will explore an institution's status or political clout to explain policy power, rather than investigating the practice of how this power comes to be negotiated, or the lived experience of this policy norm. The theoretical approach of managerial studies lays aside the possibility that the policy's legitimacy and power come from practices of negotiation, including negotiation in the "unofficial", "unauthorised" social spaces. The policy power is incorrectly perceived here to rest in the hands of authorised institutions and "stakeholders" alone. Correspondingly, researchers of managerial studies narrowed the scope of analysis for the implementation phase, focusing almost exclusively on practices of cultural adjustment, resistance (active or passive), or complete application of the new policy norms. Negotiations of meaning and creations of localised policies were topics generally left unexamined.

Educational studies: linear model of policy; technical efficacy; official power

Early educational policy studies similarly separate the implementation phase from the policymaking one, and reinforce the premise of a top-down, hierarchical relation of power. In this perspective, policy is the issuance of directives by authorised multinational or national stakeholders, directives that filter down to school contexts. This interpretation of policy as a top-

down process was further reinforced by the arrival of new, financially powerful non-state actors in educational policy and global education financing (e.g. World Bank).

> "This claim continues to hold true in particular for educational policy analysis in the Third World, the practice of which is strongly determined by the proclivities of external funders. With no less weighty an institution than the World Bank claiming intellectual authority over policy directions among nations that accept its funds, educational policy analysis applied to the Third World reduces to the "analysis of investment choices" (Psacharopoulos and Woodhall 1985). To be sure, support by donor institutions for systemic reform of education systems has expanded the range of acceptable techniques for policy analysis in Third World contexts. However, with the fiscal centre of gravity both for reform and for its study residing outside of national governments, educational policy analysis concerned with Third World settings remains more strongly technocratic than analyses produced by European and North American researchers about the policy processes of their own national societies." (Levinson and Sutton 2001, 6)

Here, policy is seen as a norm of conduct, or a set of educational and cultural standards that are simply to be applied (or resisted), and later analysed in terms of their efficacy. The thesis will show how the arrival of global financiers and NGOs pushed the analysis towards a rationality and financial analysis, with a lack of critical review of the values pushed forth by such global agencies.

Implementation studies: evolving towards policy as practice of power, and towards recursivity/reflectivity

The 1960s saw the emergence of new critical 'implementation' studies. These reflected new centres of interest: an attention to how policy moved across locations and organisational levels (attention to scale), and new attention to how policy reflected the interests of different actors, not solely the interests of the authorised policymaker. Research followed reflecting the 1960s civil rights movements (Levinson and Sutton 2001), and moved beyond linear perspectives of policy. Researchers started to advocate for a theoretical approach that interpreted implementation as part and parcel of the policy development process. To state it in a different way, researchers started to interpret the application phase of policy as indistinguishable from the phase of policy construction, previously identified as the "problem identification" phase of policymaking. This meant two conceptual shifts in policy study.

First, a conceptual shift regarding the notion of power in policy studies: the new implementation studies took the first steps in a theoretical move towards considering power in policy as something not simply contingent on the official group of policy conception actors, but rather as

something distributed and negotiated across all participating actors. The presentation of a government as a single rational decision-maker was first theoretically challenged by Allison (1971), who drew attention to the multiplicity of institutions operating within regulating bodies, and pointed to the need for researchers to recognise these "distinct institutional [governance] identities". This diversity of actors in the institutions was later noted by scholars of organisation theory including Powell and DiMaggio (1991), Meyer and Scott (1992), and March and Olsen (1989). Here, power in policy moved from symbolising a top-down normative imposition towards being a diffuse, situated agency and relational concept.

Second, due to the same reconsideration of policy as reflecting more than the official, authorised interests, implementation studies started defining policy as a practice and not as a simple imposition of "charter or political act" (Levinson and Sutton 2001).

> "These studies implicitly challenge a simple linear model of policy processes and focus attention more closely on the meaning of policy in the lives of those affected by it. As Odden (1991) documents for the United States, studies of implementation, which fundamentally recognise the processual character of policy, have "evolved" over the past three decades to develop increasingly sophisticated mid-range concepts and theories." (Levinson and Sutton 2001, 7)

Implementation studies started to place practice at the forefront of the debate, challenging the separation of policymaking and policy implementation, with implementation taking its full place in analysis of what policy is. The studies critiqued the linear model associated with the separation of policymaking and implementation, and challenged the idea that power lies with the policymakers only. Finally, implementation studies moved away from the notion that policy is only a normative imposition, instead spotlighting the meanings of policy, negotiations, and the 'lived' aspect of policies. The sociocultural approach builds upon these post-1960s educational policy implementation studies, and proposes a deeper exploration of the practice through notions of appropriation, negotiation, and meaning making.

Studies of social science research: bringing forth 'expert knowledge'

As research focus gradually shifted to the exploration of negotiation moments, meaning-making practices, and towards the recognition that powerful policy actors could be found in many locations other than State agencies, theories from the sociology of knowledge were applied to policy research. Sociology research brought to the fore an analysis of how academic researchers

collaboratively construct the social knowledge and assemble the data that stand behind a policy project. This is one example of the growing role of expertise from non-governmental sources in the design of educational policies. I note this evolution not only for the impact it had on the construction of policy as practice of power, but also because it has direct relevance for the thesis. In my examination of Russian involvement with the Bologna process, I outline the role that expert knowledge has on the lived experience and construction of the Bologna educational policies (chapter 5). Furthermore, anthropologic studies of education (particularly higher education) expanded on this examination of the role that experts hold in international policy construction. Implementation studies and social science research of 'expert knowledge' lead to a more contextualised understanding of policy as practice, where the negotiation of meanings has a central role in the practice, and the range of impacting actors has grown to include actors of civil society, not just authorised institutions and politically powerful policymakers.

Political research: revising the 'top-down' policy power model

The thesis examines practices of human engagement and policy construction that happen in the Bologna process. In doing so, I engage with the official European definitions of Bologna governance, and how actors and universities help to articulate, disseminate, and operationalise this governance model, ensuring its continued existence across multiple spaces and social contexts. This exploration of the Bologna policy is congruent with critical theories that highlight the relational and practice aspects of power. The theories of 'policy as practice of power' lay out that it is insufficient to uncritically analyse policy as a normative imposition, in which the top-down power of implementation is derived from an intrinsic political or economic power held by the stakeholder or institution. Beyond these research theories of the past decades, policy actors themselves produced new official models of policy implementation and policy development, models that similarly moved away from a purely vertical, State-centric normative imposition.

Governance theory: exploring changes in governing authority, legitimacy, and social impact

Research on the multiplicity of actors participating in regulatory or normative actions has grown during the past two decades. The term *"governance"* describes this change and encapsulates what has been observed by researchers in the ways national and international policies are created

and implemented (see Fimyar 2008, Jose 2007, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Lingard, Martino, and Rezai-Rashti 2013, Mundy 2007). In broad brushstrokes, *governance* covers three principles: change of the governing actors, change in the source of legitimacy, and an extension of the governing authority to economic and social areas of life. The Bologna process exhibits all of these characteristics.

Change of the governing actors means the delegation of the state's authority, and describes the transfer of the power to 'rule by direction' (Colebatch 2009) away from sovereign agents (the state) towards organisational networks (NGOs, audit networks). In the case of the Bologna process, education development policies are finalised by official European Union commissions and state representatives. But the policies are crafted, are started with the background research and expertise of advisory and non-state institutions. In Bologna, governance therefore covers both types of processes: governing by politically legitimised prescription, and governing by the actions of advisory bodies who define and audit education reforms.

Change in the source of legitimacy means that the laws and directives issued by the authorities do not draw their legitimacy from the state's (for example) monopoly on force. Legitimacy is derived from other means than capacity to apply force. In the case of Bologna, it might be the collaborative construction of an authoritative rhetoric that sets the policy goals for all members, and subsequent auditing practices.

Lastly, the extension of the regime of rule into economic and social life means that governance power now extends to areas not previously under its purview. In the case of Bologna, the domain of education had not previously been the remit of international governing bodies, only national.

Bologna process models of governance: convergence and OMC

In this thesis I explore, through the practices of power in the Bologna process, the construction of a governance model that does not rely on a sole top-down imposition of state power, neither in original policy definition nor in its application across the EHEA. The Bologna process established the official governance principles of *convergence*, soft law, and Open Method of Coordination (OMC). Researchers from the political sciences have approached the definition of governance in the European Union, and in Bologna, by exposing the tension between the EU's Open Method of Coordination (Schmidt 2006 in Capano and Piattoni 2011) and the 'Community

Method' (governance by arbitration process). The OMC currently holds the most sway in the EU cooperation on education. It proposes reliance on decentralisation (Reinalda 2011) and best practices enforced by monitoring, audit activities (Bieber 2010) and reporting processes (Serrano-Velarde 2014). Bologna's Sorbonne declaration contributes to this movement towards decentralised, audit-based and reporting governance. Researchers have focused on this reliance on soft law tools (Bieber 2010, Jayasuriya and Robertson 2010, Reinalda 2011). Stephen Ball calls this form of participative, non-state-based governance a heterarchical form of governance. "Heterarchy is an organisational form somewhere between hierarchy and network that draws upon diverse horizontal and vertical links that permit different elements of the policy process to cooperate (and/or compete)" (Ball and Junemann 2012, 137-138). For him, heterarchies create governable domains and governable persons. *Convergence* is the official representation of one aspect of Bologna governance. In the words of Johanna Witte,

> "The term 'convergence' is only used to denote the process [denoting a] far-reaching political consensus that higher education systems should converge, but not about the endpoint of this movement (i.e., convergence as a state, or result). […] Aiming at "convergence" is widely seen as compatible with the simultaneous upholding of 'diversity'—an agreed value of European HE—while 'harmonisation' is perceived as threatening this diversity." (Witte 2006, 83-84)

The notion of convergence is therefore politically crucial. It permits an official recognition of the worth and ultimate independence of national higher education systems, while at the same time promoting a centralised European model of higher education reform. Other authors have researched the various meanings and forms that convergence can take in the context of governance; the implementation of global policies in national strategies is defined by Ball (1998); as "convergence across localities"; other forms of convergence are described by Adelman (2009). An analysis of Bologna therefore starts with the fact that the policies were, at their inception, officially designating principles of authority that highlighted the participative nature of power in Bologna, and reliance on negotiation, distributed authority, and convergence rather than imposition. In this thesis, I look at practices of power in Bologna with a sociocultural approach, in which authoritative imposition of power from the state is challenged in favour of examining a larger scope of practices of power.

3- Key terms of Levinson and Sutton, and Winstead's "critical sociocultural" theory

Researchers who participated in the development of critical sociocultural policy analysis theory identified a set of notions, or terms, that lie at the core of the new field. In their article "Education policy as a practice of power", Levinson, Sutton and Winstead (2009) looked back at over a decade of collaborative work and focused the reader's attention on key points of the new field: the terminologies of practice, appropriation, reification, negotiation, and the notion of power in policy. These points became central research topics for the multiple authors who contributed to the proposal laid out in 2001 by Levinson and Sutton. I examine these terms below, to make explicit the breadth and characteristics of the research field that examines policy as practice of power.

Practice, negotiation, and meaning-making

Practice as theory: departure from dualisms and acknowledgement of the importance of context

> "Most social theories […] presuppose dualisms that are endemic to Western thought (individual/society; inner mind/outer world; self/other). Practice theories offer a significant challenge. They dismantle the dualisms of conventional accounts by portraying practice as the process through which person, setting, and knowledge are mutually constituted. Learning, in Wenger's synthesis, thus becomes the interplay of knowledge and context in the individual's negotiation of the social world." (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 781)

Several themes appear in this definition of practice. First, a departure from essentialising dualisms. In earlier pages I presented the consequences of moving towards a critical approach to policy, notably as the notion of power and the linear conceptions of policy process are reconsidered in favour of a practice-oriented interpretation. Similarly, the move away from dualisms allow the researcher to reinterpret relations of power in policy, challenging what was previously presented as a top-down power relation between an innately powerful mandating actor and a policy-implementing subordinate.

A second theoretical change is the evolution towards an understanding of policy through a contextualised, situated perspective, in which there is a recursive and reflective relation between the actor, the characteristics of the location/institution, and the manner in which meaning-making or knowledge is produced in this site. Policy research should account "for the situated logic across a wide array of contexts: the way individuals and groups engage in situated behaviours

that are both constrained and enabled by existing structures, but which allow the person to exercise agency in the emerging situation" (Vandeyar 2013, 250, citing Levinson). This theoretical perspective rests on advances brought by Bourdieu and Giddens, for whom "social practice" or "strategic conduct" are moments in which there is a mutual shaping of structure and the individual actor.

Negotiation and meaning-making

Policy as practice is defined in large part as a process of normative cultural production. As I presented, early theories focused on problem identification, on the process of policy formation, and on the results of policy implementation. This approach was problematised by sociocultural theory, and the focus of the research was increasingly placed on the social and cultural actions around the normative production. Negotiation becomes, in this sociocultural perspective, a cornerstone of how normative policies are transformed into appropriated values. Negotiation therefore becomes a central element of the sociocultural research on policy as practice of power.

Negotiation first refers to the process through which actors with differing views negotiate the policy, and come to an accord. This interpretation focuses on the process of resolving differences and reaching an agreement. But negotiation also points to the capacity that two actors have to jointly reinterpret the meanings of policy, and attribute a new understanding to a normative policy text, a meaning more appropriate to their lived experience and situated logic. "A practice approach [looks more closely] at the social arenas where the interests and languages comprising a normative policy discourse get negotiated into some politically and culturally viable form" (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 778). In the sociocultural perspective, the negotiation of the values, interests and languages of the policy is seen as indissociable from the process of meaning-making that occurs during the policy appropriation. Policy, here, is firmly installed inside the social world, and not limited to an institutional context of textual production during a policymaking phase. Meaning making is the process of negotiating the complex field of meanings and understanding during policy appropriation (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009). Beyond the theory developed by Levinson, other fields have seized upon this interplay between practice, negotiation, and joint elaboration of a shared meaning. Educational theorists Lave and Wenger defined the Community of Practice as a central organising unit of educational practice

and educational improvement programmes. Think tanks, universities and other participants in teaching and learning development consider to this day that achieving a highly functioning Community of Practice is one of the benchmarks of success in educational improvement. Lave and Wenger qualify the negotiation of meaning inside the Community of Practice as defined by a mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. My present thesis understands appropriation practices, negotiation practices, and meaning making to be part of the definition and examination of policy.

Appropriation

Appropriation, in the sociocultural field of policy as practice, has been defined as the "ways in which creative agents interpret and take in elements of policy, thereby incorporating these discursive resources into their own schemes of interest, motivation, and action, their own 'figured worlds'" (Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner, Cain 1998, quoted by Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 779). Studies that approach policy as a sociocultural practice move away from interpretation of policy as a linear progression from problem identification to policy implementation. Appropriation is the critical sociocultural theory response to the implementation concept. In opposition to a process whereby policy in enforced upon recipients who then adopt, adapt, or in some form resist said policy norms, appropriation refers to a practice of norm incorporation, and to the creative interpretive practice in which different people engage while they are involved in the policy process. Levinson and Sutton foreground in their 2001 and 2009 writings this dual quality of policy appropriation: that it is an interpretive practice that corresponds to the moment of cultural incorporation of a norm.

> "Appropriation theorises the process by which ideas, norms, and values initially generated in a particular social group, possibly in a different historical era, and then perhaps more generalised to a public domain, becomes part of a different social group's cultural repertoire." (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 782)

> "[The] active process of cultural production through borrowing, recontextualising, remodelling and resignifying cultural forms […]. The appropriation of educational policy emphasises the agency of local actors in interpreting and adapting such policy to the situated logic in their contexts of everyday practice." (Levinson and Sutton 2001, 17, footnotes)

The study of appropriation highlights moments when a policy text is circulated, applied, contested, interpreted, negotiated, made sense of, and recreated in other policy forms that match

the situated context of the actors. One of the gains achieved by focusing on appropriation rather than implementation is to highlight the recursive influence of local actors on authorised policy. Here, the use of appropriation in the sociocultural approach to policy rejoins the theory's interpretation of practice as a situated logic (see above). Both the notion of appropriation and the notion of practice as a situated action rely on the works of Bourdieu (on social practice, Bourdieu 1977, 1990, Bourdieu and Wacquant 2013) and Giddens (on strategic conduct, Giddens 1984), and identify the social practice as the moment when the actor and the larger social context co-construct each other.

Reification & Text

Sociocultural theorists developed the concept of appropriation, combining practices of interpretation, meaning making, and reformulation of the 'official' policy text into new cultural values and norms that are bound to the situated logics of actors. Appropriation became central to the new field of critical sociocultural research on policies. The definition of this appropriation concept, as provided in sociocultural theories, has direct consequences on how anthropologists approach other elements of policy, namely the policy texts. When the researcher looks at the practices that constitute the process of appropriation, the researcher is necessarily considering the lived experience of the policy: how actors reinterpret and model the policy norms written in the text into new cultural values, and how actors produce objects, texts, and things out of this lived experience (Levinson and Sutton 2001, Mundy et al. 2016, Yanow 2000) of policy. Levinson, Sutton and Winstead (2009), referring to Wenger (1998), identify these 'things' as reifications: "reification refers to the process of giving form to our experience by producing objects that congeal this experience into thingness. […] Text is one reified instance of a broad chain of sociocultural practices" (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 783). Theorists therefore face an object, the text, that is marked by its discursive meaning and its capacity to be negotiated and appropriated, not just 'implemented'. Proximate to this focus on the social actors' reformulation and adaptation of the policy text are the practices through which actors, during the course of their contention with the 'official' policy, create other derived policies in a reflective manner, outside of the original context of appropriation.

> "A sociocultural analysis of policy cannot end there. The study of official policy appropriation highlights other moments of the policy process, when the formulated charter, temporarily reified

as text, is circulated across the various institutional contexts, where it may be applied, interpreted, and/or contested by a multiplicity of local actors." (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 2)

Policy objects, including new policy texts and documentation, are created by the practices of actors, by the practices of negotiation of meaning that occur as the policy is appropriated. New policy objects are, in a sense, created by the actors' lived sociocultural experience of policy, and are representations of the cultural appropriation moment. In turn, new policy objects are created during the processes of negotiation and appropriation, and these objects, these meanings, are transferred towards new communities and contexts. The present thesis will explore such instances where policies are transported outside of their original appropriation context. During the analysis, I will particularly interpret how this moment of policy diffusion/reproduction contributes to a construction of legitimacy, for both the policy norm and for the agents of its diffusion.

'Power' as a constitutive dynamic of policy, and themes of legitimacy, official-unofficial, and neutrality of governance discourse

The relation or use of power in policy is one of the central themes of the new sociocultural research on policy. Sociocultural research recognises that policies constitute a significant part of the contemporary regulatory apparatus (Colebatch 2009, Fitz, Haplin, and Power 1994, Heimans 2012b, Koyama 2011, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Shore and Wright 1997, Shore, Wright, and Però 2011), and recognises that in most contexts, policies are perceived by participants as if they held a degree of regulatory or normative power (Lingard 2009). That is certainly the case in the Bologna process, as chapters of this thesis will bear out. How the notion of power in policy is interpreted has, however, shifted through the past decades.

Critical social theorists have, in the 1980-2000 decades, pushed back against earlier interpretations of 'power' in policy. First, anthropology of policy moved away from an appreciation of policy as something that is simply an imposition of governing power. Second, as I presented earlier, it challenged the traditionally accepted separation of policy formation and implementation, with its correspondingly uncritical acknowledgement that authorised policymakers hold a form of 'innate' power. In response to this top-down, implementation perspective of policy power, Levinson and other researchers (Haukland 2017, Lingard 2009, Spillane, Reiser, and Reimer 2002, Vandeyar 2013, 2015, Wedel et al. 2005) revisit the

distinction between policy maker and policy implementer groups. They identify two new categories of policy actors, each a source of their own practices of power. These two new categories are the governing bodies that produce the "authorised" official policy, and the local institutions, communities, or actors that produce the "unofficial" policies and norms. The authors relate these normative actors to one another, examine how they co-construct each other's practices, and give them even research importance. "Our working definition of policy fails to privilege official governing bodies only, and includes unofficial and occasionally spontaneous normative guidelines developed in diverse social spaces" (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 2). The notion of power in policy practices is thus interpreted beyond a narrow top-down implementation perspective. It is separated from any notion of 'innateness' where one social group inherently possesses power attributes and is capable of imposing a norm or set of cultural values upon another group. Finally, it is examined in a relational context of study where each actor recursively and reflectively influences the other - beyond the study of one group's imposition upon another.

A third shift in the interpretation of policy power has been to explore practices of power in connection with moments of "meaning making". Against the early interpretations of policy, the response of sociocultural theorists has been to investigate the 'moment' of policy formation in relation to negotiation practices in everyday life. As exposed earlier, the theories of policy as practice of power foreground the moments when policy actors (be they individuals, groups, or institutions) interpret and negotiate the cultural meanings, social and cultural norms, and the policy language that will be followed and appropriated. Power in policy is not just the application of one group's authorised authority upon another, it is also the manner in which, the practices through which, a sociocultural norm becomes the dominant one. Power in policy refers also to the practices of policy interpretation, the rise of new local normative forms, and how a policy is folded into the actors' given context. It is by exploring the moments of cultural and discursive meaning making associated with this appropriation that researchers can illuminate the fullest range of policy practices of power. By placing the focus of the research on the practice of appropriation, researchers have revisited the notion of 'powerful spaces'. These policy spaces of power (e.g. the seat of government, the inter-ministerial conference location, or the location from which an international policy is declared to the world) are now seen as locations that do not possess an innate power or innate role of implementing the policy, but rather as locations where

interests and language get negotiated into a reified form. This conception of policy power (Heimans 2012b, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Ball 1990) is different from a focus on the description of the "authoritative allocation of value" (Easton 1953), or issuance of a mandate, by a decision-making body of stakeholders. By revisiting the notion of powerful policy spaces, theorists contributed to demystify policy processes and move the field towards sociocultural research based on the exploration of joint, collaborative, recursive, and co-constructing practices between actors. Policy is not solely seen as a normative guideline anymore, but as a "contested cultural resource" (Levinson and Sutton 2001, Vandeyar 2013), and the ethnography focuses on transcribing for the reader the lived experience of policy actors. The anthropology research pursues the goal of exploring "the cultural logic, embedded meanings, discourses, institutions, and practices of policy actors" (Levinson and Sutton 2001, 4). New studies of policy as practice of power go beyond the sole examination of the capacity that one actor, group or institution has to enforce its point of view on other policy participants. The analysis of policy practices of power goes beyond vertical hierarchies, into the exploration of cultural and discursive frameworks inside which the actors collaboratively engage through negotiated practices of power. Researchers took as a premise that power should be defined as the full range of practices resulting in the establishment of a normative guideline, the negotiation and agreement of norms, the appropriation of this norm, and the cultural changes resulting from it all.

4- 'Policy as practice of power': theoretical foundation to follow specific social constructions in the EHEA

This thesis inscribes itself within anthropology's 'policy as practice', and 'policy as practice of power' field of research. The thesis will use these theoretical foundations to follow practices of Russian participation in the Bologna process, and practices within the Bologna process. By doing so, I draw on specific sociocultural constructions and practices in the EHEA that I believe must be explained in order to appropriately comprehend the lived experiences of the actors met during the fieldwork, and perhaps the wider span of actors of the Bologna Process.

Challenging dualisms

Theoretical advances that underlie the policy as practice field allow for a challenge of commonly accepted dualisms and linear conception of policy, particularly dualisms regarding international policy. The thesis aligns itself with those challenges as it approaches the construction of international relations and the attempts by Bologna actors to create a "European Higher Education Area". The thesis explores the relevance for Bologna of concepts such as 'local' and 'global', or 'centre' and 'periphery'. The thesis also presents how different Bologna actors, at the local level, engage with the linear conception-implementation-assessment vision of policy pushed by the financiers, audit structures, and other Bologna governing institutions.

Using "appropriation" to explore the Russian engagement with the Bologna process

Using the "appropriation" concept to examine Bologna policies permits the present thesis to accomplish two objectives.

First, "appropriation" enables the research to recount elements of the actors' lived experience in a manner that more closely matches their own words. The appropriation concept allows an analysis that brings policy designer and academic 'policy recipient' together: both are recursively and reflectively engaged in the construction of the policy, and in the practice of creating new cultural and educational values corresponding to the policy. This theoretical approach enables me to recount the experiences of Bologna actors who are at the same time working as Bologna policy makers and educational actors. With the notion of appropriation, I can explore their work practices in a way that more closely reflects their recounting of it as non-divided and seamless, as they transition between positions at different levels of 'authorised policy making' or 'unauthorised policy' development. Appropriation reduces the distance between phases of policy: policy conception, policy application, policy negotiation at the local level, transformation of lived experiences under the new regulations associated with the policy framework, and emergence of other local policies. Actors may engage with one or with many of these phases; they may also hold professional positions in each of these authorised or local phases. The thesis contends with such actors, and recounts their lived experience as they participate in the evolution and dissemination of multiple policies.

Second, by using the theoretical concept of appropriation, the thesis will reveal different interpretations of what "policy appropriation" might mean for the various actors of the Bologna process. Actors of educational improvement in Russia and in Bologna have significantly different interpretations of what is a successful integration of an education policy's values and norms. These different metrics by which the success of a policy is measured have profound sociocultural implications. The thesis will start by exploring what these differences of interpretations are, and follow through by demonstrating some of the social, educational, and cultural implications (Ch. 6.2). In particular I examine three interpretations of what policy appropriation means for the actors: appropriation by actors of an EHEA multilateral university development project, cultural appropriation as it is defined by the World Bank with its official grid of "change acceptance" used to assess the success of its programmes, and finally the views of university students on policy appropriation. For these actors and institutions, the thesis will show how different definitions of policy appropriation are given, how different policy tools have been developed to demonstrate the efficacy or presence of said policy's appropriation, and will show direct sociocultural implications of these distinct interpretations of "policy appropriation".

Exploring the construction of legitimacy

Defining policy as a practice of power, where the power is not solely a hierarchical relation, allows the researcher to challenge the notion that policies have an 'innate' legitimacy. With sociocultural approaches to policy, the researcher moves away from the notion that power is inherent to an actor's political, economic or social position, or to governing mandates. Likewise, research moves away from a theoretical perspective that power can be defined through the sole exploration of a duality of policy-maker/policy recipient. As the sociocultural approach operates this theoretical shift, the questions move from "how does power act?" and "where does power reside?" to "how is power attributed?" Sociocultural analyses root this examination of legitimacy in the examination of how the policy discourse is constructed and employed by actors and institutions. "Policy language and discourse provide a key to analysing the architecture of modern power relations" (Shore and Wright 1997, 12). In the thesis I look at such practices in the construction of legitimacy in Bologna, notably the use of policy language to create legitimacy and authority. I look at the dissemination of narratives and the processes of discursive

diffusion that contribute to the elaboration of a dominant narrative, or at least of a narrative that becomes the referent text for policy actors.

> "Policy debate often involves competition between advocates of conflicting myths for the (actual or perceived) power and legitimacy accorded by having one's own account institutionalised in the form of public or "official" policy. Narratives, like rituals, also validate cultural ideals by presenting reality in a manner that eliminates qualifications and uncertainties, and denies the conflict between the ideals of the moral order and the reality "on the ground." (Rosen 2001, 299)

In order to understand the construction of authority and legitimacy in the Bologna process, I explore practices and events during which official accounts of the Bologna educational reform are developed, the official discourse is diffused throughout the EHEA geography, and how this diffusion creates a legitimacy. Through an exploration of practices, I demonstrate how Bologna's official education reform narratives are validated by normative regulations that require Bologna actors to actively disseminate and actively contribute to their validation.

Cultural meaning making: foregrounding of Bologna's cultural ideology

Anthropologists who interpret policy as a practice of power now recognise two things. First, policy has in recent decades become a central driver of establishment of our norms and our international relations. Second, the practices of power in policy go beyond political power, and touch on the negotiation of cultural guidelines. The present thesis subscribes to these views and focuses in large part on illuminating practices that have to do with cultural meaning making. At the most fundamental level, conceiving policy as a practice of power allows me to fully embrace the original Bologna impetus: to create a new culture of education through normative policies. Bologna pursues an educational reform goal, but also a culture creation objective - an objective of building new tenets of peace in the EHEA, and a goal of creating a new transnational higher education population. All of these are fundamentally culture-making projects, where a specific educational culture vision is identified, shared, and appropriated by participating actors through practices of power. I use educational theory's interpretation of practice as a negotiation of meaning inside a community of practice (Wenger 1998, Lave and Wenger 1991) to highlight its three theoretically defining elements in Bologna examples: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and the development of a shared repertoire.

Exploring the role of discourse and language in policy practices and practices of power

Sociocultural theories tie the analysis of practices of power to the analysis of negotiation as a practice that is not only oriented towards cultural meaning making, but also a practice that is discursive. The thesis aligns with both these views, and explores the roles of discourse, language, and texts in the practices of power. I start by examining how practices of discursive diffusion influence the legitimation of official narratives. I show how they do so by producing a recurrence of shared language and by creating a system of referential texts and narratives. I examine how discursive practices create legitimacy, looking particularly at the process through which local discursive practices of normativity reach the international space, and how they interact with larger, global narratives. Finally, I present examples in which authorised texts use "discursive neutrality" (Shore and Wright 1997) to obscure elements of actors' everyday life that do not match with the official narratives. In this, I examine how discourse in policy is managed to construct and disguise governance power (Shore and Wright 1997, 8).

Institutional ethnography

My analysis rests on the premise that policy should be approached as a set of practices. The exploration of institutional practices is one of the pillars of analysing policy as a practice of power. Researchers demonstrated that in order to understand how policy is developed, negotiated, and framed, there needs to be a reconstruction of the practices that take place inside the institution. Policy appropriation as it has been defined by sociocultural researchers therefore calls the attention of the ethnographer to institutional research, and calls for an analysis of the social dynamics and social practices inside the institution, to understand how they impact both the policy construction and the policy appropriation. I follow these precepts and explore practices of Bologna policy appropriation and educational reforms inside the Russian university institution. Particularly, I examine practices of racial discrimination at they relate to the appropriation of the Bologna *social dimension* policies by Russian universities. Actors of higher education institutions contend with student population shifts subsequent to the higher student geographic mobility supported by Bologna policies. With these population shifts, new practices appear at the institution, and previously existing practices contend with changes in the student population makeup. In the thesis I explore some of these examples and practices. Further, during

the review of a Bologna-related development project, I show how actors interact with multiple institutions, multiple geographies, and multiple policy roles. Through this examination, I contend that any examination of institutional practices must be correlated with the larger national or global institutional structure. An analysis of the social dynamics of institutional actors illuminates the larger Bologna policy only if it is paired with an understanding of how institutions are kept at a certain place in the power hierarchy, with certain accesses to power structures and tools.

2.2 Other theoretical resources

The core theoretical premise of the thesis is the sociocultural research of policy as practice of power, theory which has been defined through the previous two decades. In this thesis I employ the fundamental and historical elements of this theory, with a particular focus on elements of discourse, practice, power, legitimacy, cultural meaning making, negotiation, and reification. The thesis introduces the reader to certain Bologna policy characteristics and to practices from the actors that call for theoretical resources that extend this "policy as a practice of power" theoretical base. In the pages below I explore three complementary bodies of theory: theories that frame the international, multi-sited nature of international policy studies; theories that permit a closer reading of practices inside the higher education institution, specifically practices of discrimination; and finally, theories defining how anthropologists could interpret the policy document as artefact of sociocultural practice.

1- Understanding the global in the Bologna policy practice: Comparative theories, International relations

Contemporary policy processes can no longer be framed within the sole analysis framework of the nation-state. In the previous section, I presented that sociocultural theories of policy as a practice of power reaffirm the need for anthropologists to approach policies in a comparative manner. Similarly, sociocultural researchers emphasise the need to employ a theoretical frame that accounts for the multiplicity of locations faced by ethnographers in the field of policy studies. In the coming pages I present a discussion of further theories that extend this comparative approach, and complete the theoretical model of policy as a practice of power that is multi-sited. The theoretical tool that I add here more precisely focuses the analysis on the role held by policy actors, "nodal actors" and "actors of interest" (Ball and Junemann 2012, Castells 2004, Christopoulos 2008, Williams 2002) in disseminating and transferring policies from one institution or political organisation to another. This identification of specific policy roles helps in analysing the Bologna policy as a set of transnational practices of power and norm diffusion. As I follow the practices of such individuals, and the mobility of Bologna policies in the context of

Russian engagement with European higher education and Bologna institutions, this theoretical focus on individual policy actors permits me to explore the impact that "nodal actors" and other policy actors have on the multi-locale appropriation of educational norms and values.

Anthropology of policy as practice: early call for comparative, multi-sited studies

Anthropology studies of policy have established the importance of looking at policy in a comparative manner, examining the historical, situated context of policy, and observing policy appropriation across different sites. The first explicit correlation between anthropology of policy as practice and the need to pursue multi-sited research was given in the seminal 2001 book by Levinson and Sutton. Reviewing the chapter contributions of their collaborators, the editors advocate for a sociocultural research that follows policies across various sites of occurrence.

> "we pay close attention to context-specific and localised elaborations of policy. […] The kind of sociocultural approach we advocate here requires such attention to the multiple sites in which, and multiple modalities through which, policies are formed and appropriated. […] To be sure, some of our authors have adapted a kind of "multi-sited ethnography" (Marcus, 1998; Ortner, 1997) to study intensively, and firsthand, the interconnected cultures of policy (see Anderson-Levitt & Alimasi, Chapter 1; Adams et al., Chapter 2; Quiroz, Chapter 7, this volume). Such multi-sited research may also become significantly longitudinal, attuned to different moments and cycles of the policy process as it unfolds in different sites." (Levinson and Sutton 2001, 10)

Bologna policies implementation: appropriation of a global form, and nodal actors

When I look at how actors and universities engage with the Bologna process and contribute to its appropriation in 48 nations, I trace policy projects that take place across multiple countries, and follow texts and some actors' experiences as they transit across countries and institutions. In the analysis of Bologna, I illuminate characteristics of system mobility, practices of power, relation between power and knowledge, and the importance of mobile actors. The notion of mobility and its relationship with power is of foremost importance in any examination of the Bologna process. There is first the fact that the Bologna process is, at its core, a policy of educational mobility and internationalisation of higher education. Second, the policy is transported and dispersed across Europe by actors and rhetoric. Third, Bologna documents officially cast knowledge as an economic power in itself, if tied to international mobility: increase the cross-border and inter-institution flow of knowledge, and increase the educational competitiveness of a region. Adding to that, the Bologna policy's implementation is rooted in a model of cross-border reporting,

international assessments and audits. For an actor like an institution or policy expert, knowledge about Bologna and the education improvement ideology translates into policy power and authority. All of these elements demand a that an analysis of Bologna policy as practices of power pay sustained attention to policy actors mobility, and mobility of norms and values.

The thesis therefore provides an ethnography of the practices of the actors (academics and Bologna policy experts), and of their mobility through Bologna networks. I look at how they transport the Bologna education principles through multiple networks and successive projects, and I explore agent mobility that contributes to the successful growth of the Bologna message, across a variety of geographies, states, political agencies, and educational institutions. The present thesis starts in chapter 4 by the description of the system and governance structure of Bologna, and continues in chapter 5 with an ethnographic exploration of how the Bologna agents and institutions articulate, operationalise, and disseminate the policies and ideologies of Bologna. By researching how the actors operationalise Bologna, I investigate in chapter 5 the "actual articulation of a global form" (Collier 2006, 400). To look at the impact of these actors on the universities and on the propagation and endurance of Bologna, I rely on the theories of such giants as Manuel Castells, Ball, and others. I look at the roles of actors as 'controllers-switchers' (Castells 2004) or 'nodal actors' (Ball and Junemann 2012) that perform multi-level governance and multi-level dialogue (Ball and Junemann 2012). Their role in promoting the Bologna message and rhetoric throughout the Bologna geography becomes apparent when the researcher looks at the career benefits that individuals can gain from being 'actors of interests' (Christopoulos 2008), or perceived as 'movers and shakers' (Williams 2002). Chapter 5 looks at how a Bologna education reform project made use of such nodal actors to extend the project beyond its initial scope, and contribute to the affirmation of the Bologna higher education principles and the growth of its governance network.

2- Improving upon institutional research: anthropology studies of social practices in the institution

Institutional research already gained a recognised place in the sociocultural studies of policy as a practice of power. Sociocultural ethnography notably highlighted the role that practices inside

the institution have on the construction, negotiation, and appropriation of policy. In the following pages I add to these institutional theories, namely the body of research that explored practices of discrimination and racial differentiation in the higher education institution. As I explore the Russian engagement with Bologna, the relevance of institution-based ethnography becomes clear. The very objective of Bologna is to redefine the educational process (BA-MA-PhD), institutional oversight (quality frameworks, EHEA advisors), and networks of higher education institutions, under the guidance of both European institutions and advisory institutions. My experience of the Russian engagement with the Bologna process highlighted elements that call for a theoretical background beyond that brought by institutional research. Over the years, Bologna gradually defined a set of shared "social dimension" policy principles, the objectives being to shape the sociocultural makeup of universities, and ensure that the student cohort be "representative" of the larger European population. Bologna's *social dimension* is a set of normative policies that define what higher education should look like in terms of egalitarian access to education, policies that fight against racial or other discrimination in education. This is a vast objective that puts front and centre the issue of race in the higher education setting. In the fieldwork for this thesis I observed significant discrimination practices in the daily life of the multicultural campus. For these reasons, I bring additional theoretical resources to questions of race, gate keeping, and discrimination inside the institution, as the practices observed in the Russian university impact the appropriation of Bologna's *social dimension*.

The Bologna social dimension

During the first years of Bologna, the policies that were created had an overly economic emphasis. The Bologna policymakers were cognisant of this problem, and of the potential negative social impact that such economic emphasis could have on the universities and student population. These negative effects might be economic imbalances between institutions, competition denying education access to specific social groups, or other political imbalances as I exposed above. As a counterbalance to these economic and market-driven education policies, between 2001 and 2012 the Bologna process gradually introduced a policy dimension that was composed of a large number of initiatives. This was the *social dimension*, eventually defined as one of the nine official *Dimensions* of Bologna.

According to this policy principle, Bologna members should act to shape a student population that, at university entrance and at all higher education levels, reflects the wider diversity of the European population. "The student body entering and graduating from higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations" (Bucharest ministerial meeting, 2012). Additionally, the *social dimension* principle advocates for the support of "underrepresented groups [to] reduce inequalities and provide adequate student support services" (Bucharest 2012). Last, the principle calls for higher education that is free of discrimination based on social, cultural, or economic backgrounds: Bologna notes "the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background" (London summit 2007). At first the policy was introduced only to counterbalance to potentially socially divisive effects of Bologna's economy-driven policies. By 2010 however, the *social dimension* was also defined as a driver of economic growth and EHEA international competitiveness[19]. In Russia, certain systemic changes (like the creation of a common national exam for university entry) have contributed to expanding higher education access and promoting non-discrimination in the application process. However, discrimination practices in the higher education system hamper Russia's successful engagement with this policy principle. In chapter 5.2, I focus on these internal university practices that hinder the implementation of this Bologna *dimension*.

Existing research on the Bologna social dimension

The Bologna *social dimension* is, at heart, an anti-discrimination principle. It focuses particularly on preventing discrimination against minorities, and tries to minimise the impact of learners' inherited social capital on their education outcomes. The principle emerged at the start of the millennium from a diffuse inquiry into the conditions of higher education in Europe; until now it has yielded few results relative to the ambitious agenda that it proposes. Many studies from the field of education research reflect these difficulties (Adelman 2009, Gálvez, Díaz, and Galán 2014, Holford 2014, Kooij 2015, Yagci 2014) and make a case for continued efforts to promote

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[19] The assumption underlying this interpretation of *social dimension* as economic driver is that if you provide equal chances of education to the population, and reduce the social, cultural and economic imbalances during the course of the education cycle, you drive up the potential for vertical mobility, you bring up the overall skill level, and the population of graduates will form a stronger, more competitive cohort.

the policy principle. Most of the documentation relative to the *social dimension* has been official reports and research by the Bologna institutions; only two comparative works of note have been produced, by Mete Kurtoglu (2016) and Yasemin Kooij (2015). The seminal work by Kooji in 2015 is an exhaustive and remarkably researched opus that provides a historical analysis of the policy principle, and contrasts its implementation in Finland, Germany and Turkey. In order to describe the history and the policy components of the Bologna *social dimension*, I rely on these insights that Kooij and other education researchers have produced on the principle over the past ten years. However, the present thesis introduces a new comparative perspective over the comparative studies of Kooji, namely that of Russia, and offers a new focus on student life inside the institution and their perceptions of social, cultural, racial stratifications. The research also brings a light on a crucial time of the policy, a transitional moment for Bologna and in Russia's history. In 2010, the *social dimension* was being reaffirmed as a core principle of the newly created EHEA. In the same year of 2010, the political and racial tensions inside Moscow reached a boiling point and erupted in one of the largest racial civil violence in the history of Russia (see below). Looking at Russia's engagement with the Bologna process, and with the *social dimension* in 2010, requires that I make use of theories to interpret racial and discrimination tensions in the Russian universities.

Theories on racism and discrimination in Russia and Russian education

During the ethnographic review of the practices in the Russian university, I rely on theory sources from the anthropology of post-socialism, race in Russia, and ethnographic research on discrimination in the education system.

The anthropology of socialism has produced a vast scholarship (Hirsch 2005, Law 2012, Lemon 2000, Weiner 2002, Holquist 1998, 2001, Martin 2001, Slezkine 1994) documenting the construction of race, nation, and nationalism as political concepts instrumentalised to advance Soviet progress towards a socialist state. From the 1930s and 1940s the Soviet Union's leadership implemented a gradual policy of national purges, segregation, and discrimination practices, such as mass deportation to the gulag based on census-declared ethnicity. These practices sparked scholarly debates as to the nature of the politics and ideology in place. Was the

government, as Hirsch states, practicing a "politics of discrimination and exclusion,[20] [without practicing] what contemporaries thought of as 'racial politics'"? Or were the Soviets conducting "racial politics without the concept of race", as Weitz (2002b) claims? This 2002 debate between Weitz, Hirsch, Lemon and Weiner re-energised the research on race in Russia, but only towards the end of the decade did the study of race in Russia truly shift to new post-Soviet paradigm (Arnold 2012, Law 2012, Zakharov 2015a, b). A review of the anthropology literature would be outside the present scope, but several elements from the debate will be taken to illuminate the fieldwork and the Moscow events that occurred during that time.

Racism and racial violence as a socio-political context

2010-2011 was marked by the largest racial riots and beatings that Russia had seen since the Stavropol riots of 2007 (Foxall 2010). In December 2010, a Moscow football fan died following a violent confrontation with a group of men from the North Caucasus. The subsequent release of some of the attackers sparked a series of violent clashes between Russians and Caucasians in Moscow. The result was a wave of violent racial rioting that coursed through the capital, with a particular focal point in *Manezh Square*, a street away from the Kremlin. The fieldwork was conducted during this 2010 time period, and the university was located on the street where several violent raids were conducted by both Russian right-wing militants and Dagestan youth. Students and the civilian population were caught in the middle of this violence. The ethnography that the thesis presents, exploring the university's racial dynamics that complicate the implementation of the Bologna *social dimension,* was therefore coloured by the events taking place. These riots were extensively researched (Arnold 2012, Foxall 2010, Hutchings and Tolz 2012, Law 2012, Zakharov 2015a). Indeed, they brought a unique theoretical perspective on the construction of race in post-Soviet Russia.

The riots brought together the politicisation of race by the Putin government, xenophobic media rhetoric (Law 2012, Hutchings and Tolz 2012), and the construction of the 'ethnic Russian' political movement (Zakharov 2015a, Shuster 2010). What played out during the Manezh Square events was, in part, a contest between the old Soviet legacy of race as a promotion of

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[20] The targeted nationalities were construed by the Soviet State, according to Hirsch, not as an ethnic group based on biology and inherited biological traits, but on a socio-historical class with a class consciousness that had to be eradicated.

multiculturalism, and the new post-Soviet ethno-nationalism that appeared as a politically powerful rhetoric of exclusion, particularly during the 2000s and the Caucasian wars. The seminal debate of 2002[21] between Hirsch and socialist studies anthropologists re-started the discussion on post-Soviet racial politics. The research is important as preliminary to my ethnography, insofar as it illuminates the cultural history in the background of today's politicised racial tensions. However, the present context of Moscow is different. Contrary to the Soviet times, the concept of race is no longer constructed in opposition to European racial ideologies. Today, there is a much closer association than during the Soviet times between the European racial ideologies against migrants and the Russian racial ideologies against the Caucasian and Chinese immigrants. Russia is also building new concepts of ethno-nationalism, with an explicit political agenda of reconstructing a 'new Russia'. Ian Law summarises this effort in the following lines:

> "In the Russian Federation racism has been modernised and has become a dominant social force. […] *Gusudarstvennost*, loyalty to the state, patriotic education campaigns and militarised patriotism are all key elements in Putin's 'post-ideological' state-building strategy." (Law 2012, 155)

This theory background will assist in the presentation of the immediate social, historical, and political context of the fieldwork as I explore racism and discrimination practices. The theories will help in the interpretation of the context, but the practices themselves call for theories that address more specific question of race symbolism, corruption inside the university, gatekeeping, education access, and ascription/attainment.

Gate keeping and conflict inside the university

Education anthropology, looking at notions of power and privilege differentials in education systems, slowly transitioned away from interpreting the university as a simple location of value transmission, towards looking at the construction of culture in education in terms of contested practices. "The meaning of culture in educational anthropology, following trends in the discipline at large, was reconceptualised in terms of competing and conflicting interests constituted by, and within, unequal relations of power" (Yon 2003, 418). Since the call to 'study up' by Laura Nader (1972 [1969]), education anthropology built a strong research corpus whose focus was social stratification, value transmission, and reproduction theory inside the education

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[21] See Slavic Review, 61:1

institution (Bourdieu and Clough 1996 [1989], Disson 2008, Howard and Gaztambide-Fernandez 2010, Palfreyman and Tapper 2009). A large part of this research has theorised conflict as linked to the community's internal/external boundary-making, including events of gate keeping. This has relevance for the present research as I link practices of student discrimination and denial of services to events of identity-checking at the entry point of education buildings.

Racism and racial discrimination inside the institution

The thesis examines practices that contribute to the racial differentiation of the student cohort inside the institution, contrary to the goals of Bologna's *social dimension* principles.

Academics have researched the effects of student living conditions on minorities (Aref'ev 2005, 2012), the difference between 'declared' equal rights and 'real' social rights afforded to minorities (Konstantinovskiy 2012), and the symbolism of 'dirt', 'darkness', and 'black' to mark Roma and Chinese groups (Law 2012, Lemon 2000, 2002, Pal 2007). In chapter 4.2, I examine events in which discrimination hinged on the use of the qualifier 'dirt', and on the use of institutional power to discriminate against an individual requesting a change in the residency system. In both cases I rely on the theories developed by Mary Douglas: her extensive research on the uses and implications of the notion of dirt (Douglas 1966), and her theoretical constructions of institutional racism (Douglas 1986).

Contrasting with this approach of discrimination, Russian theorists have increasingly offered an interpretation of higher education reforms wherein the reproduction of segregation patterns and class differences inside the institution remained firmly rooted in structural and financial causes (Gaman-Golutvina 2007, Salmenniemi 2012, Steen and Gel'man 2003). The interpretation is that in today's unequal economic context, the education reforms instituted by Bologna and by the Russian government contribute to the development of an economic chasm that fosters segregation in the student community along financial lines. Russian literature highlights a discrepancy between the levelling of socio-economic differences advocated by Bologna policy makers, and the continuation, if not increase, of class-based inequality. In chapter 6 I look at phenomena that participate in the persistence of "maximally maintained inequality": "under this theory, as the privileged classes are generally better positioned to grasp new opportunities than

their non-privileged counterparts" (Loi Weis, Foreword, in Howard and Gaztambide-Fernandez 2010).

Together, these theories form together the backdrop of my inquiry into the practices inside the institution that reduce the effectiveness of Bologna *social dimension* policies.

3- Contending with the Bologna documents: anthropology studies of texts, policy documents, discursivity

In this final section, I explore theories related to policy documentation, which have grown significantly in depth and importance over the past two decades of policy and international policy studies. Sociocultural theories of policy as practice highlighted the importance of texts, reifications of practices, discourse and language. Authors assembled a collection of research studies that demonstrate why the study of texts, documentation, and documenting practices cannot be overlooked as we seek to comprehend the lived experience of policy actors. Further ethnographic studies developed this new use of policy texts as research material, examining how an analysis of documents could be conducted, and how documents should be brought into the analysis alongside data gathered through direct contact with informants. Below I explore some of their propositions and how they apply to the analysis of Bologna documents.

Why documents, if the analysis' focus is on policy as practice?

Texts and documents may form a central part of the analysis on policy actors' lived experiences, and on what policy is as a practice. It may, and I argue should, form a central part of the analysis for a series of reasons.

Looking at the production of documentation: the growth of official 'for-policy' literature and 'evidence-based' documentation for policy support

Ethnographers gradually departed from earlier perceptions that documentary resources should be relegated as a secondary source of information, in favour of the more direct, verifiable, and deep

personal accounts from fieldwork informants. "The artefact is what the ethnographer looks for in the field" (Riles 2006, 17). This shift towards including documents in the range of standard ethnographic materials advanced with Evans Pritchard's use of vernacular texts to explore aspects of the Zande society that could not be reached through traditional interview techniques. "There are certain matters which cannot be discussed in public; there are explanations which cannot be asked for on the spot (as for instance during a funeral or a religious ceremony) without intruding and causing embarrassment; and there are texts to be taken down, which can only be done in seclusion" (Evans-Pritchard 1963, 246). Evans Pritchard's writings also brought to light the self-reflective dimension that came with his use of vernacular texts (Evans-Pritchard 1963, 1950). This revisiting of the role of the ethnographer as textual and cultural interpreter continued through the more recent works of reflexive ethnography, and grew further in strength as ethnographers expanded the policy research field.

> "The "post-modern" view of ethnography as text has led anthropologists to turn their attention to other textual genres that had either been set aside or regarded as less important once anthropology moved away from the "armchair" and gained "scientific" authority and legitimacy through malinowskian fieldwork. On the one hand, "archives" came to be viewed as privileged spaces for understanding relationships between colonial governments and peoples traditionally studied by anthropologists (Stoler, 2002, 2009; Souza Lima, 1995)." (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, 78)

In the anthropology of policy field, researchers have to contend not only with pervasive policy documents and supporting texts, but also with a culture of documenting practices among policy actors. "Writing is one of the most important activities and government technologies of state routines" (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, 106). In order to engage with Bologna, the universities and other actors have relied on an ever-growing body of literature that prepares, explains, or creates the background orientations of policies. This constitutes a growing body of official literature and research publications about Bologna that is produced by the institutions leading the Bologna process. This official literature describes the higher education development achievements by the participating members, the stages of policy creation and implementation, and the governance choices made year after year by the Bologna governing institutions. The literature grew in step with the expansion of the Bologna membership and the growth of its organisational and advisory structure (Bologna Follow-Up Group). It grew with the financing institutions' need to determine education reform project objectives, procedures, goalposts and benchmarks. It grew from the need to assess reform gains during and after implementation. It grew from the need to sustain development between periods of intense activity. In effect, 'for

policy' publications grew to accompany the linear 'proposal-development-implementation-assessment-diffusion' model of Bologna reforms.

This corpus of literature, Bologna policies and accompanying documents both, forms part of my research data, as raw research material. It often gives an up-to-date and comprehensive review of the official actions taken by the Bologna members, the reports, and the newly-proposed policy objectives. It provides textual evidence of the ideologies and rhetoric the Bologna leadership promotes towards its members.

Documents as artefacts of modern life: foregrounding the document's material and aesthetic dimensions

Anthropology recognises that documents, as artefacts, are objects that have been crafted by human production. Freeman (2011, 159) identifies the document as "a mark made on a thing". As crafted object, the document-artefact possesses both informational and materialistic properties that should be explored equally by the researcher (Riles 2006, 19).

> "Over the past few years, several anthropologists have highlighted the need to go beyond documents' informational and instrumental dimension, analysing them as producers of knowledge, relations, effects and affective responses (Stoler, 2002 and 2009; Cunha, 2004; Navaro-Yashin, 2007; Gupta, 2012; Ferreira, 2013) or even as artefacts whose material, aesthetic and formal properties, as well as social life (or socio-technical processes) can no longer be easily ignored (Latour and Woolgar, 1997; Riles, 2006, Reed, 2006; Hull, 2012)." (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, 80)

There are methodological and theoretical considerations to this interpretation of the policy document as an artefact. The boundaries between the types of documents that the anthropologist can consider are blurred, and the anthropologist is brought closer to other disciplines in which documents are a central part of the research material. For instance, Annelise Riles (1999, 2006, 2008, 2013) indicates that the document, as one class of salient artefact, appears in multiple fieldwork contexts: law, science, arts, activism, and that of market institutions. Other authors take the document as a point of meeting between ethnographic disciplines and others.

> "Different modes of document production present in the so-called Western societies came to be analysed as artefacts and/or knowledge practices that are crucial to understanding ethnographic universes that anthropologists have long been sharing with other disciplines, such as history, sociology and political science (cf. Riles, 2001; Latour and Woolgar, 1997)." (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, 78)

The document as artefact therefore brings forward the aesthetic and material elements as potential points of analysis for the ethnographer. This expands the field of research, and opens the door to an analysis that looks "at" the document to interpret sociocultural phenomena, rather than merely "through" the document's informational content. The document as artefact also permits, and even extends, an ethnographer's analysis of human practices.

Documents as artefacts of modern life: foregrounding the link to actors' practices

The document as artefact is also the object that initiates and frames the actors' practices. As the document is constituted, it becomes one of the objects through which the practices that constituted it are made knowable by others, made transportable and repeatable. Annelise Riles defined documents as "artefacts of modern knowledge practices" (Riles 2006, 7). In this sense, the document is an artefact of modern life because it is created by human practices, and it is an artefact because it embodies the practices that constituted it, making those transportable through geographies and time.

> "Artefacts and practices entail each other, they are mutually constitutive: practices generate artefacts, which in turn structure practices. The artefact serves as an embodiment of practice, which makes that practice knowable by others, repeatable over time. It seems to hold things together, not least by helping us to think as well as to do; things orientate our thoughts as well as our actions (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993). Indeed, it may even be the very existence of the object, its normal presence, that leads actors to think and act on, with, through or around it: the artefact requires the practice, which in turn requires the artefact." (Freeman and Maybin 2011, 165)

Documents are therefore material objects that are crafted through practices, that are representations of said practices, and that initiate human actors' practices. The connection between document and practice extends to methodological considerations. Freeman notes how the document can provide a guide for the ethnographer's fieldwork investigation.

> "Methodologically, we offer the document as a distinctive 'approach to practice': to the extent that it serves as marker for social and political life, it serves also as a point of entry and orientation for investigation.This is the spirit in which a range of studies of public consultation and participation have been carried out: Abram (2002) describes the process of local plan-making in Norway, questioning the role of the document in 'excluding the unwanted and complex demands of an unruly public', for example." (Freeman and Maybin 2011, 165)

The field of anthropology of policy therefore interprets documents and practice as mutually constitutive, not as distinct elements of social life. To define the policy document as an artefact is to shed light on the practices through which policy actors create, share, and reify cultural and

political meanings in the policy instrument: the document-artefact. Documents are products of, representative of, and constitutive of practices.

Interpreting documents: "study along" or "study against" the grain, "looking at" or "study through", and self-reflection on the ethnography practice

Study along, study against the grain

As the researcher faces a document's informational content, a choice is made to follow "along" the document's script, or interpret "against" the grain of the text. Anthropologists largely argued for a critical perspective of the document. This study "against the grain" would aim at uncovering the information that is not explicitly furnished by the text, going beyond the first level of information and seeking the multiple voices that the text hints at by its very narrative construction, and its factual assertions or omissions. In a reaction to this critical approach of documents, anthropologist Stoler (2009, 2002) started arguing for the validity of following, as a first step of research, "along the grain" of the texts.

> "According to [Stoler], "assuming we know those scripts (...) diminishes our analytic possibilities" (Id, 2002, p. 100). By analysing the archive as a cultural artefact, she seeks to understand the perspectives and concerns of its producers and administrators, giving particular attention to conventions that shape what can and cannot be recorded." (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, 82)

In a similar concern, researchers read in the policy authors' recorded voices underlying information about the policy actors' perspectives on one another. In this sense the text is taken at face value, and the voices of the texts are examined in how their authors propose competing projects or interpretations, or reinforce each others' values.

> "[Anderson-Levitt and Alimasi as well as Sutton] are concerned to elaborate a contextualised sociocultural analysis. [They] interrogate what these documents and people have to say to and about one another, what kinds of suppositions they make about proper or desirable conduct." (Levinson and Sutton 2001, 10)

Through the text, the researcher attains a comprehension of how the policy actors perceive one another, and some elements of relational norms.

The theoretical choice of constructing the analysis along or against the document's script is closely matched by a theoretical duality that has been defined as looking "at" or looking "through" a document. Both approaches point to a problem of analysis that revolves around following the informational content of the text and the ways this information is laid out, versus seeking information beyond that which is readily inscribed in the words of the text.

There has long been an understanding that anthropological research can derive knowledge of social phenomena "through" an analysis of documents' statements. "Looking through" points to the ethnographer using the text as an unchallenged voice. Lowenkron argues that this use of texts is far more prevalent than the critical analysis of the script: "The most classic way of dealing with documents is precisely to look through them, and not so much at them (Hull 2012a, 253), in order to produce ethnographic narratives about scenes, discourses and events that were not directly observed by the researchers" (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, 81). Looking through a document is more akin to studying along: the researcher's focus on what the text itself says about the policy actors' relationships. In opposition to this uncritical interpretation of the document's content, research of the past decades (Hunter 2008, Prior 2008) gradually proposed that other types of knowledge about a sociocultural phenomenon can be gained by "looking at" the document itself and interpreting in its material, aesthetic, or technical properties. Looking 'at' a document gives the researcher the chance to contemplate underlying practices that the document's informational content does not necessarily identify, practices that the document may even try to obscure or erase from official narratives. "Documents express and reproduce norms and patterns of thought set by relations of power between social, political and economic actors (in this way, documents serve as expressions of structure rather than agency)" (Freeman and Maybin 2011, 159). These underlying practices may be essential to fully comprehend the sociocultural phenomenon under review.

Documents as source of reflection on the practice of ethnography

Finally, working with documents entails a degree of self-reflection on the part of the ethnographer, whose work is so much about the detailed transcription of culture. Riles highlights this dimension of an ethnography of textual production: researching how others document their

own knowledge introduces a need to be reflective about how anthropologists document knowledge themselves.

> "The ethnography of documentary practices […] affords an opportunity to reflect and work upon ethnographic practice. […] To study documents, then, is by definition also to study how ethnographers themselves know. The document becomes at once an ethnographic object, an analytical category, and a methodological orientation." (Riles 2006, 7)

I appreciated one other dimension during the conversations with policy actors during the fieldwork. These actors had a very critical - in the sense of 'considered' - approach to the act of documenting. They themselves raised in the discussions critical views of the epistemological limitations of the documents they produced or handled in their daily practices. The limitations of methods, validity, and scope were fully part of the reflection of the policy actors, and sometimes the limitations of documents were strategically hidden or shown to achieve a result in the policy negotiation of meaning.

Documents revealing how policy movement, authority, and agencies are enabled

Bologna invested in a model that promotes considerable mobility of people and knowledge between universities, state, and non-state actors, such as between academic institutions, private research groups, the industrial sector, the tourism industry, and government. It also invested in developing the expertise networks necessary to propagate its vision of what higher education should become. Discovering how the official research literature serves in the construction of a policy voice or an authoritative message that can traverse geographical, political and social scales is therefore critical for an understanding of the Bologna process.

Document as tool for policy mobility: how the document permits policy geographic mobility

Authors identify characteristics in the policy document that permit policy mobility. Annelise Riles (2006, 2008), reviewing United Nations (UN) conferences, shed light on the text's capacity to be a link in a greater chain of information diffusion. Here, the document is at once a tool that allows policy to travel towards new locations/communities, a tool through which policy can be returned to its original geographical source, and a tool that allows policy language to be reproduced in subsequent policy documents.

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> "The emergence of the printed document is a moment at which it becomes possible to conceive of one's work as a step in a wider progressive trajectory (a "great chain of conferences," as delegates were fond of saying), to return to origins (to "take the document back to Fiji"), and to take the analysis apart again (to pinpoint key "language" from the document to be included in the next document)." (Riles 2006, 83)

Li (2007) further describes how the document permits the construction of an authoritative policy voice that can be disseminated across geographies. Gerrard and Farrell (2013) see the policy texts and the accompanying documents, advisory papers, reports, or planning agreements as "constitutive of the power of governance". The accompanying texts enable the implementation of policy and link it to official management best practices, making those transferable across different countries by 'materialising' the implementation model into text, image, and/or graphic form. The policy documentation creates recognisable referential frames, allowing the official discourse to travel across different geographical, political, and social scales. Latour (1987, 2017) also pointed to the ways in which the documents contribute to maintaining an immutability of the message, at the same time permitting the message's mobility.

> "For Latour it was the combined immutability and mobility of these inscriptions which made them peculiarly functional, both stabilising and multiplying their effects. In the same way, the physical properties of policy documents extend the scope and reach of governments in space and time." (Freeman and Maybin 2011, 160)

Here Latour points to the capacity that documents have to stabilise a policy message across geographies and temporalities.

Discursive diffusion, heteroglossia, overwording, and theories to examine the construction of an authoritative policy text

In the thesis I look into examples of multilateral Bologna partnerships, in which I examine the collaboration between academia, the private sector, politicians, and international financiers of Russian education reforms. As I examine these partnerships, I look at policy texts and other accompanying literature such as 'evidence-based' documentation, and analyse how the Bologna message is propagated towards multiple universities, states, and non-state entities, and how Bologna governance has been reinforced. I look at the creation of an official authoritative voice that travels through geographical scales and through varying institutions. To do so, I rely on theoretical concepts identified by researchers on policy, including overwording (Fairclough 1992) and heteroglossia (Lingard and Ozga 2007): "policy texts are usually heteroglossic in

character, discursively suturing together differing interests to achieve apparent consensus and legitimacy" (Lingard and Ozga 2007, 2). Bakhtin (1981) also traced the heteroglossic nature of the policy texts to their objectives of attaining consensus and legitimacy. I also rely on the theories of discursive diffusion to understand the continued propagation of Bologna policy models, vocabularies, and ideologies from one higher education reform to the next, and from one university partnership to another. These theories assist me in revealing how the discourse, despite originating from multiple disjointed actors, is instrumentalised to provide a unified Bologna message on education improvement. Here I represent an education reform process that permits the collaboration of 'discrepant forms of cosmopolitanism' (sense of belonging to a single community, Tsing 2005, 13). We are able to query how this discourse informs the contributors to the education system and permits them to dialogue through the difference.

Document as source of relations and agencies

Authors inquired how policy texts create connections between actors, but also act as authoritative references and perform the same role as a decisional agent. Gerrard, Harper (1998), Smith (2006), Rottenburg (2009), and Mosse (2011) directed their efforts to understanding the agentive role of documentation, and how documents create connections and coordination between actors. "for many genres of documents, it is often less important what they stand for than, like tables and desks, how they arrange people around themselves" (Hull 2012b, 134). But the agentive role of documents has been studied beyond this coordinative dimension. Looking at the transference of official authority onto people, Lowenkron examines how official police documentation of crimes in Brazil influences the evolution of individual and collective agencies. By transcribing the events of a crime into an official language, not only is the crime "made real" and given official visibility, it is also made into something that officials can act upon. The consequence of this act of making official through textual representation, according to Lowenkron, is that the actors involved are awarded specific agencies, specific roles and powers, pursuant to the transcription of the event into "official reality".

> "In our studies, we were only able to understand and analyse these different modes of agency, that are given form and materiality on paper and whose effects can be perceived through the bureaucratic fates of these administrative procedures, once we decided to analytically pursue the mediations and enactments which follow the processes of producing, circulating and archiving police documents." (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, 107)

Lowenkron and other authors (Hunter 2008, Navaro-Yashin 2007, Hull 2012b) push the analysis further, exploring how collective agencies are formed through the act of documenting a crime into official language, authoritative inscriptions and stylised forms. Hull (2012a) particularly notes that documentation confers rights and responsibilities, but also allows for a diffusion of said responsibilities, thereby creating a more collective form of agency.

> "Working from the premise that the material qualities of governmental papers are not only elements mobilised in the production of meaning, but are also driving forces behind other types of processes, his work analyses, among other issues, the relationships between carrying, signing and producing copies of documents and the diffusion of individual responsibilities in favour of a certain type of "collective agency." (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, 83)

By exploring the Bologna policy texts, I am able to shed a light on how the documents enable the geographic mobility of an authoritative message. Lowenkron and Hull's theories allow me to go one step further in the analysis, and explore how the Bologna texts enable an educational community to take collective ownership of the EHEA message and gradually construct a shared agency.

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2.3 Postmodern theories / neoliberalism

In the previous section I focused on the literature that aids an inquiry into the Bologna governance practices and their effects for participating actors. I outlined the theories that will support the focus on the notion of governance in Bologna - specifically, the delegation of governance powers from the state to non-state institutions, the role of nodal actors in propagating the Bologna policies, the practices that reinforce the governance model, and the entry into a disciplinary apparatus of audit culture.

However, Russia's engagement with the Bologna process did not happen solely in the Bologna political and economic sphere. During the same time it engaged with European partners in Bologna, Russia was transitioning out of the Soviet education system; this marked Russia's entry into new global economic, political, and international relations paradigms. During its Bologna reforms, Russia had concurrent engagements with other international financiers like the World Bank, OECD, and UNESCO. These overlapping partnerships pushed a different model of education improvement, and as the thesis grapples with this dual Bologna/neoliberal engagement by the Russian Federation, theories of globalisation, marketisation and neoliberalism will be the mainstay of our analysis. As Ganti explains, neoliberal theory helps focus the analysis on specific material effects of Russia's engagement with partners such as the World Bank:

> "World systems and globalisation are concepts that appear unwieldy for ethnographic scrutiny because they signify tremendous interconnectedness on a vast scale. However, neoliberalism is a concept associated with specific policies, practices, institutions, and agents with which anthropologists can 'follow the people, the thing, the metaphor, the plot/story/allegory, and conflict' (Marcus 1995, pp. 106–10) in a concrete fashion with fewer of the attendant anxieties that Marcus had outlined in his discussions about multi-sited ethnography. The framework of neoliberalism can also help anthropologists to disaggregate the study of the state by focusing on certain actors, institutions, and policies and offers a critical vantage point from which to study 'up'." (Ganti 2014, 98)

The research will focus on specific effects of Russia's engagement with neoliberal financiers: processes of deregulation in higher education reforms, processes of higher education marketization, and the creation of new relations of centre/periphery and power/inequality.

Deregulation and neoliberal reforms in the Russian higher education

Early in its engagement with the Bologna process, Russia was the recipient of large education development grants from the World Bank, the OECD, Soros Foundation, and support from UNESCO.[22] To approach this engagement with non-Bologna partners, I rely on the vast body of research that has been produced on the impact of the World Bank, OECD, and other international donors in spearheading and propagating neoliberalism as a model of thought and reform approach (on the World Bank and OECD's, see Bøyum 2014, Bray and Borevskaya 2001, Forrat 2012, Hilgers 2012, Lingard 2011, Olssen and Peters 2005, Suspitsyna 2005). With these partners, Russia engaged in a series of education and higher education systemic reforms. New federal *National Doctrine* (2004) and federal legislations implemented neoliberal practices of deregulation, transforming the former Soviet education system with a delegation of legislative powers from the state to the regions. Similarly, parts of the federal administrative competencies such as powers over curriculum and degrees, and student recruitment or fee decisions (Bain, Zakharov, and Nosova 1998, Butovsky 2004) were given to the academic regions. This marked a significant ideological shift in the techniques of public administration and state governance (Timoshenko 2011), what Ball (2015a) calls the "practices of government and technologies of policy".

I also draw from the large body of literature that critically reviews the acceptance or rejection of neoliberal reform models in Russia. Researchers reviewed how neoliberal discourse slowly became the norm in academic and government administration (Gounko and Smale 2007, Suspitsyna 2005), and how it gave rise to new curricula (Bain, Zakharov, and Nosova 1998, Gillies 2011, McCarthy and Teasley 2008, Pervova 1997, Suspitsyna 2005, Zajda 2007a) and academic departments[23] (Suspitsyna 2005). However, the neoliberal model of higher education reform was not uniformly accepted in Russia, in part due to discrepancies between the policy statements/objectives and implementation results. Little to no research has been conducted by Bologna-affiliated researchers on the unintended social effects of the Bologna norms, and when such research has been conducted (Guriyev 2007, Gänzle, Meister, and King 2009, Amsler and Bolsmann 2012, Telegina and Schwengel 2012), it is often contextualised as "variance", or "by-product" of the norm. In Russian academia, however, numerous research pieces have been

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[22] Some of these organisations (UNESCO and the OECD) are also involved in the Bologna-Russia reforms.
[23] Reviews of "transitional economics" studies at HSE, MSU, and NSE universities.

published on the resistance to such changes and on the discontent stemming from the disparity between announced policy and the effective pace of implementation. At the academic level, the concentration of financial and administrative resources in select universities, exacerbated the existing institutional gap in quality and resource availability. The concentration of personnel, financial, and legislative resources in already-powerful institutions is noted (Hossler, Shonia, and Winkle-Wagner 2007, Timoshenko 2011), as is the loss of supplemental education (Vlasov and Mokretsova 2013), and the negative effects of the new financial burdens on universities (Chugunov, Androushchak, and Kluyev 2010).

Marketisation / human capital / knowledge economy

The thesis looks at Russia's co-occurring engagement with the Bologna process and with other international neoliberal partners. In this context, and in the context of Russia's profound economic upheavals that marked the post-1990 years, the thesis relies on the literature that explains how the university came to be understood as a commercial entity.

The modern higher education institution has been increasingly theorised as an enterprise. The new 2004 Russian National Doctrines engaged fundamental change in the Russian education system, starting with the redistribution of financial duties towards the academic regions. This introduced new financial and market economy models which cast the university as an enterprise whose consumers are fee-paying students. It placed a new financial burden on the universities while allowing the state to proclaim advances in academic centres' "freedom". The reforms emphasised the improvement of individual and institutional competitiveness on the international market. This triad of marketisation of education (Maximova-Mentzoni 2009, 2012, Timoshenko 2011), individual competition (Forrat 2012, Hilgers 2012), and deregulation/devolution of competencies was the new neoliberal reform paradigm that surfaced in Russia through its engagement with international financiers and neoliberal advocacies.

Behind the European ministers' push for Bologna was also the growing realisation that Europe was entering an era of knowledge economy. The term 'knowledge economy' relates to the French *société de la connaissance* (knowledge society); this term was coined against a background of globalisation and continuous change to economic foundations of education (Mironov 2013, 29-30). Going back to Kerr's (1982) vision of the "multiversity", anthropology

theory gradually focused the debate on the proliferation of products, activities, and social values inside the modern university. Other researchers expanded the field of knowledge on the marketisation of the education sector. The attribution of value to non-physical assets (in the university, capacity to invent, or perceived commercial value of skills) has been diversely labelled "knowledge capital", "human capital", and "cognitive capitalism". Among the recent theoretical advances, Geroimenko (2012) worked on private higher education and human capital; Zajda (2007b, 2011, 2012) developed a body of research on higher education and human capital; Abs (2009), McGonagle (2012), and Piattoeva (2009) worked on the relation between education and citizenship. Wes Shumar and others (Canaan and Shumar 2008, Shumar 1997, 2004, 2007) built theoretical frames for research whose primary focus is the description of the process of valuation of a "social good". I refer here to the commodification of "social goods and processes into commodities" (Canaan and Shumar 2008, 4). This drive to commercialise higher education extended past the university and institutions into the conceptualisation of the individual. The shift towards individual competition has been viewed by researchers as a significant cultural change and rethinking of the self, tied to the transition to neoliberalism and marketisation. Hilgers (2011) researched processes by which the self becomes interpreted as an enterprise. Matza (2012) examined the development of a positive interpretation of individualism among privileged Russian youth, and the new post-Soviet valuation of individualistic competitiveness in academic contexts. Olssen and Peters (2005) examined the notion of self-interest as it relates to higher education and the knowledge economy.

The thesis relies on the literature cited to interpret the Russian engagement with the Bologna process, in the historical contexts of the Federation's support by World Bank funding, the post-Soviet economic restructuring, and the policy context where knowledge economy became a key phrase synonymous with modernisation.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In this chapter I present the methodological choices made during the course of this investigation. I first define the field, focusing on two core characteristics: a multi-sited geography and a sociocultural diversity. I then look at the unique perspectives that ethnographic research brings to this geographically vast and networked field of study. Lastly, I present how I conceived the position of the researcher in the process of research and writing.

During the construction of this chapter, I came back to some of the interviews that I conducted, and read through one reply that struck me in particular. One of the informants - holding several positions as university faculty, Bologna policy advisor, and national higher education policy expert - laid out a vision of Bologna that hit on all of the core issues that underlie my methodological reflection. The following excerpt from a conversation with this informant illustrated, perhaps in the most complete fashion, the complexities that underlie the methodology of research in international education policy. I refer to this text to introduce sections of the chapter below, as a background narrative that roots the methodology presentation in the words of a Bologna actor, perhaps making this methodological section feel as 'grounded' for the reader as it felt to me.

> "When I speak of Bologna process, I say that, I have this picture, maybe you have seen it in one of my presentations, that there are three different approaches to what is going on in Europe, in Bologna. One, that all this business of the Bologna process is like a puppet, that you have many strings, that the European Commission is pulling these strings, and that most of the time, it is just like this: we are manipulated by the bad European Commission, by bad process bureaucrats. It is one picture. Another picture is the picture of EU experts: it is a machine, a robot. That means, we have beautiful ideas, we have our action plan, we have our Bologna rules, we have our communiques and those of previous conferences, and what we want to do is only to follow what we have invented, and to check if we have any deviations, and if there are deviations they have to be corrected. The main thing is to have these plans, to have these rules, for example the European standards of quality assurance, and to follow these rules. However, [as a practicing expert, not an education theorist] I say, not. Bologna process, European Higher Education is a baby. This baby, the mother is the European Commission. The father is the collective fathers of the European universities. […] And as it is a baby, you know that babies, young people do not usually follow the patterns of their parents. They develop in their own way. They are independent organisms. Because of this, that they are independent organisms, that means that it is very difficult to predict or to, let us say, to control what young people are doing. We can try to do some predictions, we can observe, we can influence for example development, however we cannot control the development. There is the problem. So, because of this, we have to look at the Bologna process as

a real process. We can think of ways to influence this process, however it is something which is developing independently of the wishful thinking of the bureaucrats!"

Even as the policy advisor acknowledged the existence of this interpretation of Bologna, he opposed this shortsighted vision, and advocated for understanding the process as a much more fluid process, liable to diverge from the envisioned objectives, and whose future was certainly not tied down by the detailed crafting of official action plans. He saw the success and endurance of Bologna as ultimately tied to something else, beyond the linear implementation of European directives and constant administrative benchmarking. I join with this interpretation of Bologna as a process whose evolution, and indeed endurance, is ultimately tied to individual decision-making processes, to the meeting of personal and cultural agendas, and to the negotiation of these personal stakes.

3.1 Defining the field

At the end of May 2010 I arrived in Moscow, where I was invited by the Moscow State Pedagogical University (MSPU), in a partnership programme (student exchange) with Durham University. The projected work was the continuation of prior Master's degree program research done in the Roma (Gypsy) community of Moscow. Over the course of the next seven months, I gradually made contacts and participated in events around Moscow, and gradually re-oriented the research focus towards an analysis of education and higher education. Due to visa requirements and livelihood demands, I also participated in and observed educational practices at various institutions inside Moscow, as educator and invited researcher. These experiences spanned a large socioeconomic range of environments. I engaged with educators in the university that had invited me to the field, lived for several months with another European student who participated in an exchange programme with an elite university located just paces away from my institution, and taught at schools catering to socioeconomically divergent Moscow populations. One was a school whose students came from the wealthiest and most influential population of Moscow, while the other was a financially struggling evening school. Seven months later, I was attacked and robbed of all my important belongings, including all the material pertaining to my experiences in the field. Faced with a lengthy physical recovery, I lost my visa, and decided to refocus my thesis inquiry on what had been, in my eyes, the most significant engagements and astonishing experiences across the different education contexts of the fieldwork. As I reconstructed the research, sought new informants after my recovery, and re-built the 'field', I focused the thesis' inquiry on Russia, higher education, and the Bologna process.

1- Bologna process: a multi-sited fieldwork

The thesis builds on research that is not limited to the experiences in Moscow: although the primary research site was the MSPU university, it is also geographically multi-sited, following the practices of actors in a transnational, multi-university partnership projects funded by the EHEA (ch.5). The thesis also develops an analysis of the Bologna policy discourse across multiple sites, documents, and through online occurrences. The research is therefore not necessarily bound to a physical geography (Gupta and Ferguson 1997). With Levinson, I take the

view that "the new field of qualitative research is not the traditional community or institution but rather the constellation of social sites across which policy moves, gets appropriated, and so forth" (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 789).

A global, multi-sited field

> Excerpt: "The Bologna process European Higher Education is a baby. This baby, the mother is the European Commission. The father, is the collective fathers of the European universities."

Geographically, the 'field' of inquiry spans multiple locations. Moscow was first, as the site of the seven-month fieldwork. Second, a particular geography corresponds to one multi-university partnership programme that engaged in Bologna development objectives and was co-led by my receiving university and a university from Ghent, Belgium. Finally, a larger policy-relevant geography corresponds to the Bologna process and to other institutions I include in the research, on the basis of fieldwork interactions or subsequent interviews.

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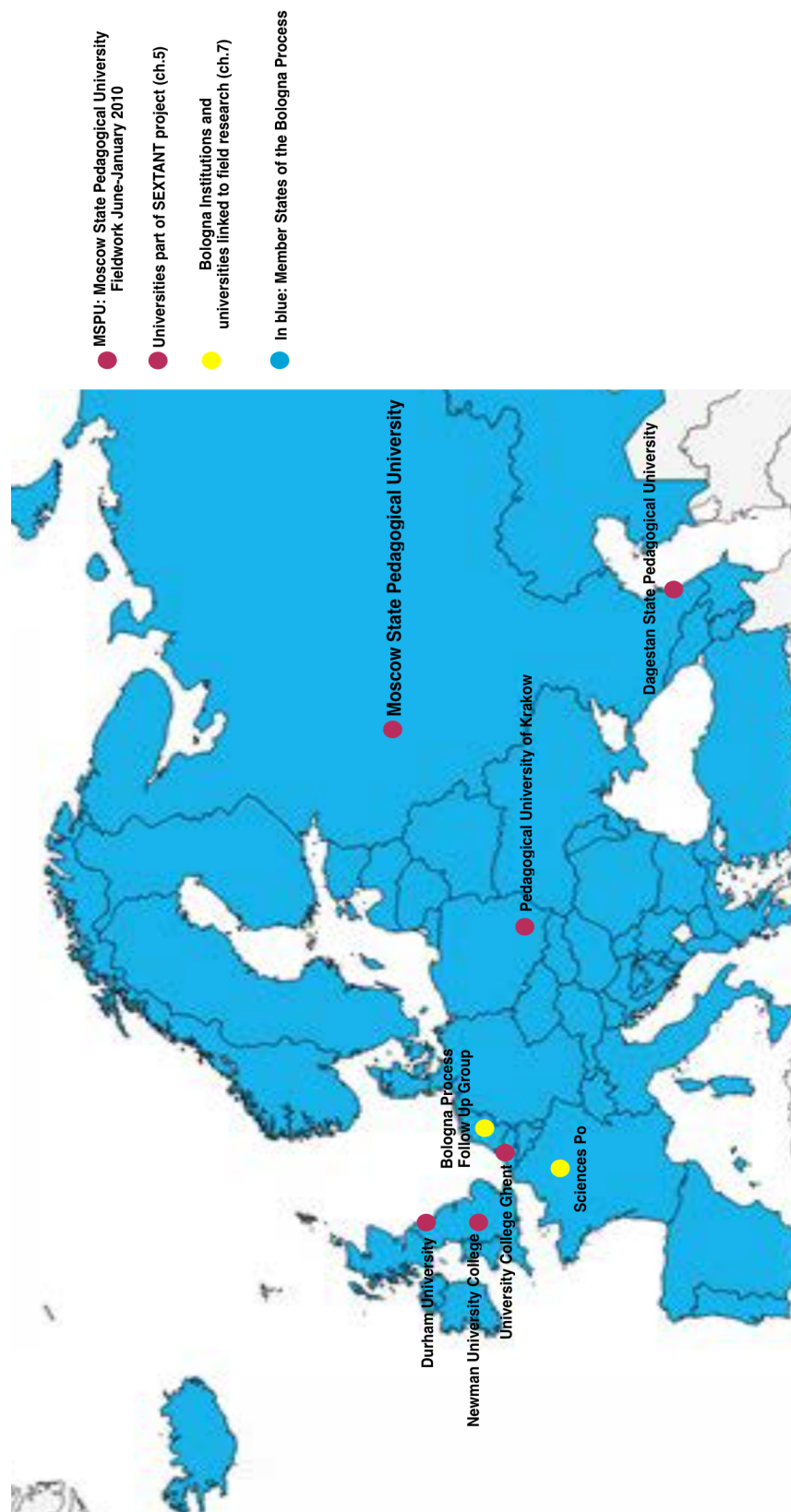
Fig. 1: Geography of the fieldwork

Russia and the Bologna process: a multi-level governance

> Excerpt: "[One view of participants is that] the Bologna process is like a puppet, that you have many strings, that the European Commission is pulling these strings, and that most of the time, we are manipulated by the bad European Commission."

The Bologna process is an engagement of national higher education systems with international political powers. The financial and political sources of authority for Bologna are in large part held by European Higher Education Area advisory groups, and by European funding instances and political committees. However, much autonomy is held by the institutional and individual participants. The political authority of Bologna has been purposefully rooted in a 'soft-law' principle: there is no direct legislative authority, such as one that a state might yield over educators at national levels. We are not in a situation where a single state authority has decision-making powers over an implementing agent (university). In principle, the Bologna principles are imparted upon member states through participatory, and collaborative agreements. Repeated engagement, audit processes, discursive diffusion, and other practices effectively confer authority to the Bologna process and principles. Actors in higher education work daily (knowingly or not) with international documents, principles, policy translations, and other such instances of Bologna politics. What are the methodological consequences of such a political structure?

Methodological implications of the multi-sited fieldwork

Theorists have identified two changes in the conduct of contemporary politics of international higher education policy that potentially impact research methodology. First is a rescaling of political authority, where national sovereignty gradually contends with new, additional levels of international political authority. Linked to this change of scale in political authority, another transformation occurs, in which the political authority of the state is increasingly shared with other non-state power centres (NGOs, policy advisory groups, businesses, education associations, or economic advisor groups). This is the second shift identified by theorists: the transition from government to governance. I see this happening with the Bologna process. Bologna pushes towards national governments a set of higher education development principles

(mobility, social dimension) and higher education system models (two-tier, credits) that do not necessarily originate from said nations. This happens in an international setting, and with different political institutions coordinating towards these goals, with the support of non-governmental partners. Methodologically, what this means is that we are facing a polycentric, networked context of research, where the practices are varyingly affected by authoritative and governance voices. Because of this polycentric structure and multi-level decisional context, the research should not seek to illuminate a single overarching logic. Looking at the Bologna policy as a set of practices and practices of power does not mean that a singular logic can frame all of these practices. The official, authorised Bologna institutions produce a narrative of coordinated actions, but there are a multiplicity of agents, and participating voices in the construction of these practices of power. Linear progress can be identified and charted through the official Ministerial communiqués that offer a coherent policy timeline/narrative. Nonetheless, the researcher cannot take this timeline as the only instrument of analysis, and research the Bologna process as a single policy entity, with a single timeline or a single organisational chart. Indeed, in Bologna there is no singular implementation plan that flows in a coordinated manner from one central European institution to a pre-determined set of national implementing agents. Timelines and implementation strategies are determined by individual implementation projects, and by distinct national legislations, as much as they are determined by the European Ministerial meetings. The research must reveal also the multiple voices and agencies. For these reasons, I sequenced the research of this thesis into chapters that follow multiple policy practices and Bologna policy appropriation moments. In one chapter I reveal a history of multiple engagements with Bologna, and the diversity of that marked the construction of this pan-European project. In another I follow a single multi-university Bologna collaborative development project. In a final chapter I examine how Russia engages with the notion of education quality that is pushed by Bologna, at a time when Russia transformed its higher education system to align with Bologna principles but also to match neoliberal administrative and economic principles.

2- The MSPU campus: site at a crossroads of diverse social groups

When I arrived in Moscow, I was brought to the Yugo-Zapadnaya campus, the southern campus of my receiving institution, MSPU. Yugo-Zapadnaya is the secondary campus of MSPU, at the southwestern end of Moscow. It is served by the last stop of the subway's red line. In the coming pages I expand on the historical contextualisation that I initiated above. The students and the university personnel of MSPU's Yugo-Zapadnaya campus were living in an environment of extreme differences in wealth, educational opportunities, living conditions, and cultural origins of the population living and working in the campus. In the pages below I add to the historical context presented previously and provide a description of the architectural characteristics of MSPU's Yugo-Zapadnaya campus, of the university infrastructure, of MSPU's proximity with other higher education establishments, and of nearby residential buildings. In doing so I offer a fuller picture of the campus living and working conditions, whereby the reader can appreciate the proximity of stark cultural, wealth, and education differences that marked this small area.

A diverse education and society

Within a campus extending one mile across, several education structures coexist: MSPU's administrative and classroom buildings, student residences, three other universities (People's Friendship University, MGIMO[24], and RANEPA[25]) and their student residences, a gated community renting to high-ranking businessmen and managers of foreign enterprises, and other non-university buildings such as residential housing, shops, churches, a large evangelical centre, and a market Here we are also in the first *Spakoina Rayon* (literally the 'sleeping region') after the city centre, a suburb of block housing that empties during the day and sees the returning crowd of Muscovite workers flow in late each evening. Most commute to central Moscow every day from this southern end of the red subway line.

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[24] Foremost Russian diplomatic corps institution. MGIMO has an elite university status, and is one of the few institutions responding to the Bologna Follow Up Group. These institutions are primarily ranked among the top ten institutions of Russia (Higher School of Economics, Moscow State University, MGIMO, People's Friendship University of Russia…). It is also one of the principal test-institution of the EU-Russia Common Spaces agreement "Road Map For The Common Space Of Research And Education, Including Cultural Aspects" (St. Petersburg Summit of May 2003)

[25] Academy of National Economy, Russian Academy of Public Administration
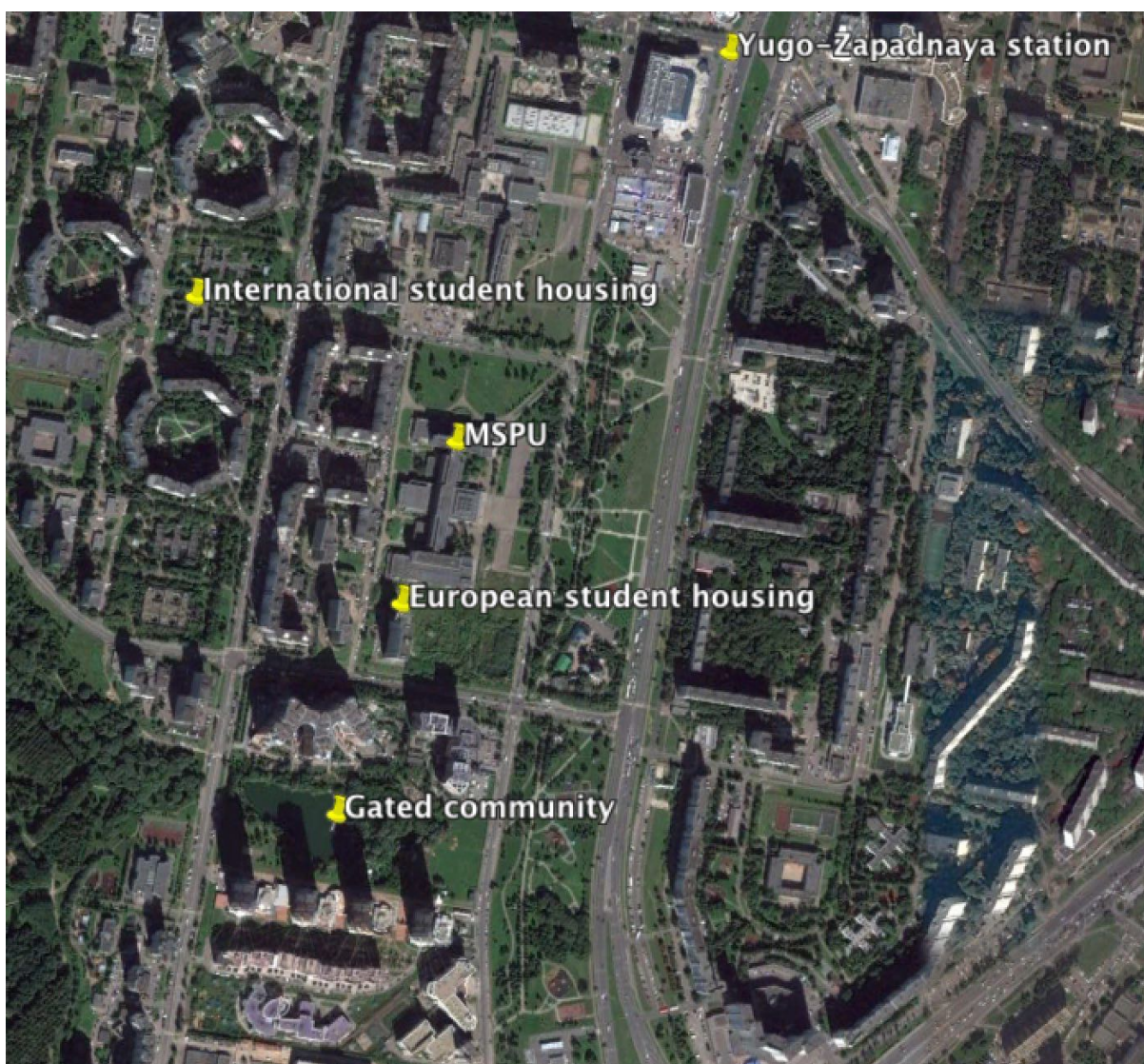
Fig. 2: Arial view of MSPU campus. Taken and labelled by D. Boutillon through 'Google Earth' application

Proximity to elite universities

While MSPU is among the top pedagogical universities, it cannot claim to be ranked at the highest level of the Russian universities. MSPU shares the last subway stop with two much more prestigious and better-endowed universities, *Moscow State Institute of International Relations* (MGIMO) and the *Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration* (RANEPA). The universities educate the administrators and civil servants of the

Russian State. During my engagement with MSPU students MGIMO was a recurrent reference, and was used during interviews to contrast with the renown of MSPU.

MGIMO offers foreign relations degrees and educates those who will form the corps of the Russian state diplomats. MGIMO, among other universities, partners with the Sciences Politiques Institute, an elite school in France that also produces a majority of the high-level state administrators. MGIMO hosts a group of ten French students every year.

Across the street from MGIMO, the newly created *Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration* (RANEPA) is the administration education counterpart to MGIMO's international relations focus. Founded by presidential decree in 2010, RANEPA merged fourteen former institutions into one national, elite university whose publicly announced purpose is to educate the future leaders of the Russian state. Among the universities incorporated was the former *Academy of National Economy* (ANE), known during the Soviet era to be the education centre for the *nomenklatura*[26].

Proximity to a gated residential complex

A stone's throw to the south of the MSPU student housing is a gated community protected by six-foot concrete walls and guards. The fenced-in circular complex of five towers is secured by a private company. It sits across the street from university housing blocks in comparatively much rougher shape, with multiple broken windows and unpainted façade.

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[26] During the Soviet period the *nomenklatura* was both the list of key government and administrative positions in the Soviet Union, and the corresponding list of people who were deemed suitable candidates by the Politbureau. It can de defined as the social and governing elite. The composition of the *nomenklatura* in part stayed the same through the post-Soviet transition, in part changed with the rise of a new class of entrepreneurs during the transition to the capital's economy.
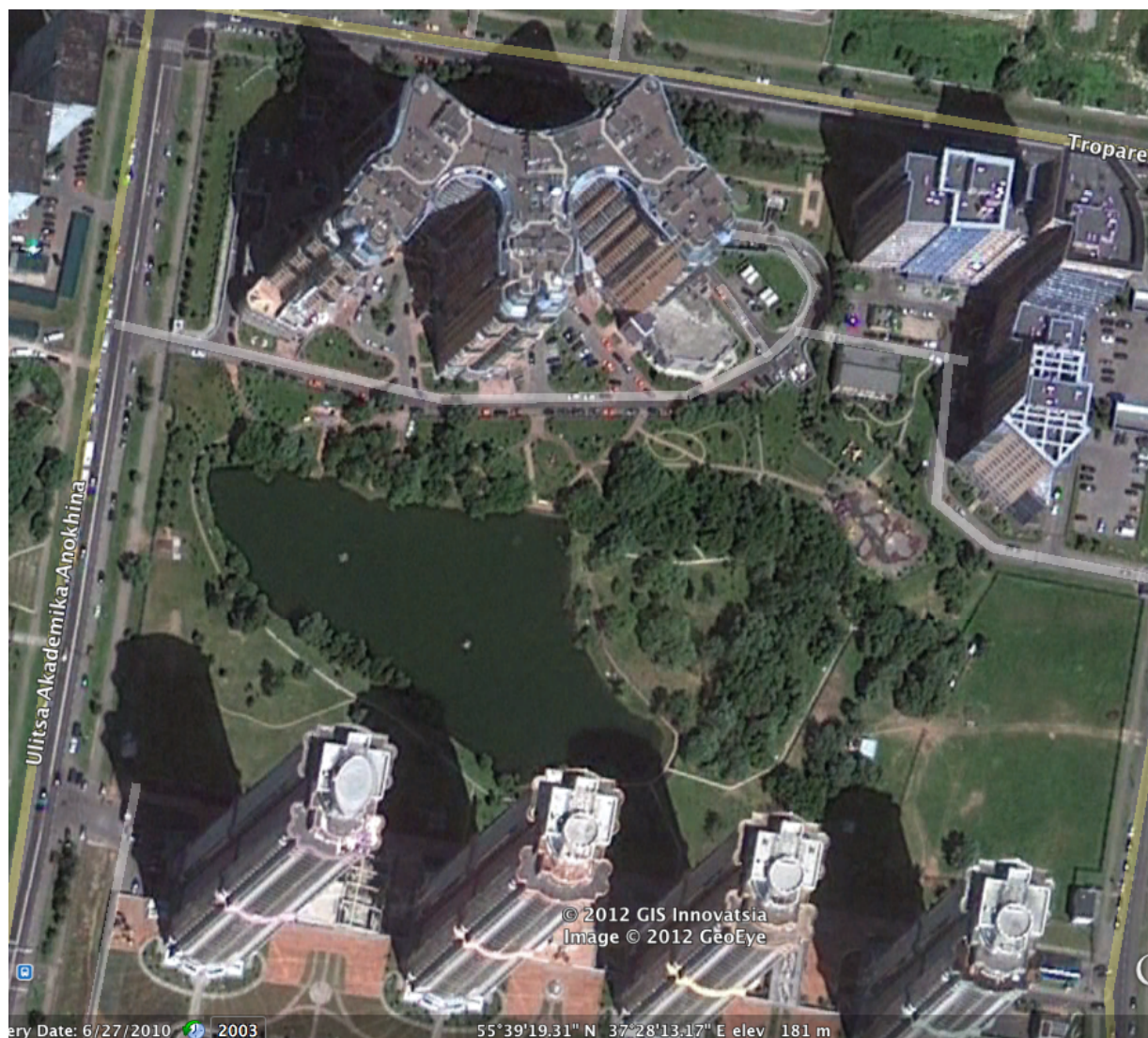
Fig. 3: Gated compound on Yugo-Zapadnaya campus. Taken by D. Boutillon through 'Google Earth' application

Within the protective boundary wall and beyond the guard house are the five towers, a tiny lake, and an even smaller zoo. This compound is completely off-limits for the university students, yet I experienced that the community of the compound could be a part of the university. A resident of this compound participated in the same MSPU classes as the other European students and me, and eventually showed us the world inside the gates.

Over the course of my fieldwork living at the university residence, I came to see that this compound provided a symbolic referent for the for the MSPU students' expression of life's difficulties and hopes. The constant proximity and the ostentatious wealth created a sort of

touchstone that surfaced again and again in conversations at the student housing facing it. I follow Salmenniemi in saying that for the campus population during this Moscow summer, "emotions are deeply involved in the lived experience of class" (2012, 4). The contrast between the conditions of life in our building and that which was displayed one mere street away was a topic of many conversations. These conversations, by my recollection, were often imbued with emotion. The proximity of wealth symbols and the differences in amenities combined to push conversations towards emotional descriptions of life opportunities, unattainable social advantage, and other elements of social hierarchy.

MSPU's Yugo-Zapadnaya campus: international population and vertical social layering in the building

Upon my arrival at MSPU, I lodged at one of the university student residences, located within the campus area on the southwestern edge of the university student and faculty housing. It stood at a crossroads – literally - in a 300 yards by 300 yards area that can be traversed in fifteen minutes of walking. This area contained the university's housing units, lecture halls, the non-university gated compound, and a small variety of shops. The Yugo-Zapadnaya campus itself is host to a large part of the university's foreign student population, including Asian (principally Chinese), European, and CIS students.
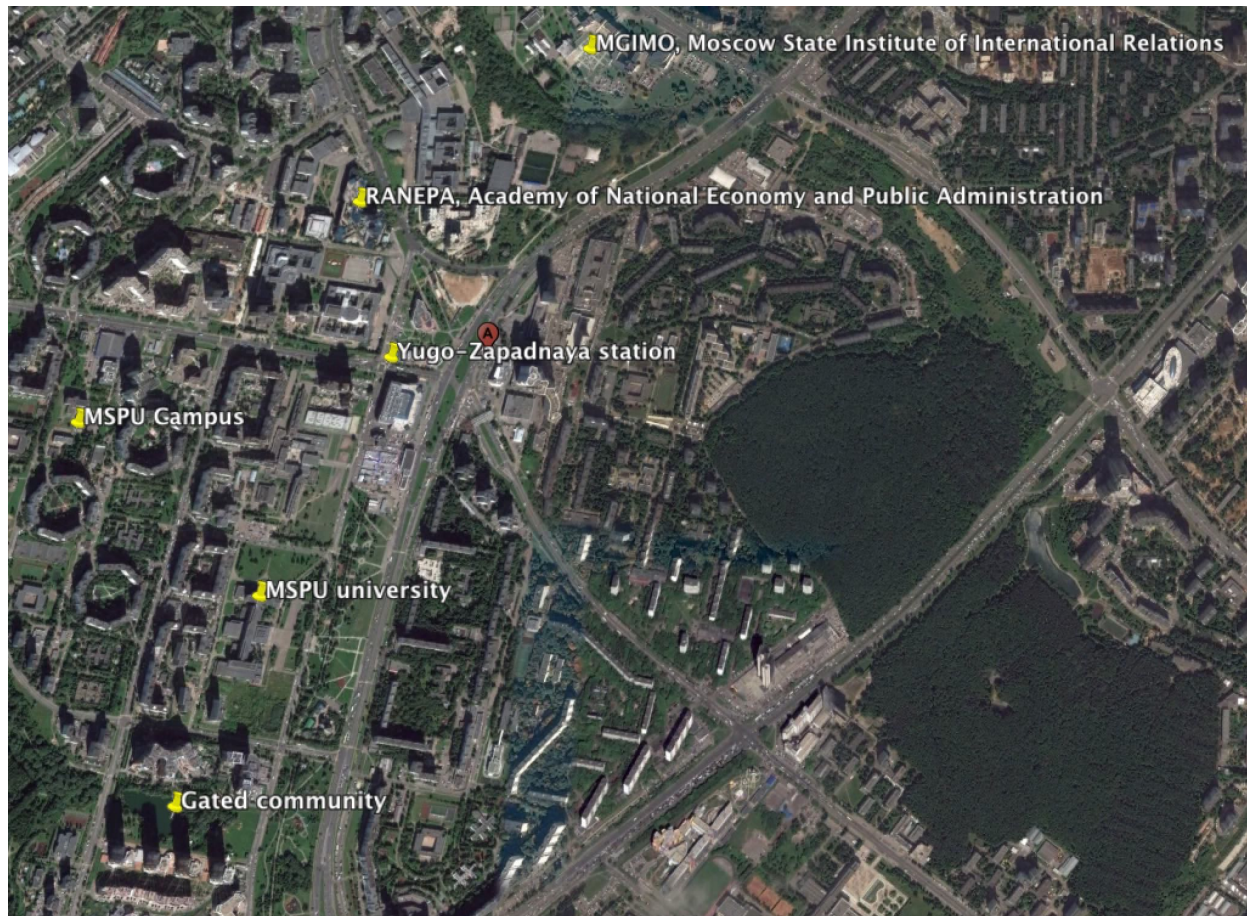
Fig. 4: Arial view of Yugo-Zapadnaya campus. Taken and labelled by D. Boutillon through 'Google Earth' application

As the bird's-eye view of the campus shows, the architecture created a series of circular spaces that contained 'living units'. The only architecture that had an 'open' public space was the principal administrative and lecture building of the university, with a common area in front often used for parking and/or meeting space for students. Otherwise, 'home' life (post-classes) happened in spaces where buildings faced inward in a square or a circle. In short, the architecture seemed to promote the formation of distinct living units, where population sets could be clearly identified.

My residence building was dedicated to European researchers and students. It was named the "European *obchejitee*[27]". The building opposite our European *obchejitee*, across the street and thus diagonally opposite the gated compound, contains lecture halls and the Russian student

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[27] Student housing

building. Behind that were two more units, primarily for Asian and Caucasian students. At the time of my stay, MSPU was partnering for the first time with Durham University (student exchange). At first, I shared the flat with a student of a Flemish university by way of Erasmus institution partnerships. Later, another student from Durham arrived, and later still a representative of a southern UK institution came to investigate the potential of an institutional exchange programme. All of these academics, like me, lived on the 17th floor of the 19-floor building.

3- Social context of racial tensions

2010-2011 was marked by several events that had a direct bearing on the context of racial tensions inside Moscow higher education, including the run-up to the presidential elections, and the associated rhetoric of Russian nationalism or distrust of authorities; a fire that ravaged the surroundings of Moscow, leaving a sentiment that the authorities had failed the capital's population; and the largest racial riots since the Stavropol riots of 2007 (Foxall 2010).

The month of August 2010 saw raging wildfires surround Moscow, to such a disastrous extent that the capital's administration had to declare a state of emergency. During this period, the Moscow firefighters and public service workers were overwhelmed, and the air became truly difficult to breathe due to the burning peat around Moscow. During these events I started to witness the extent of the social stratification on the university campus. After the first few weeks, most of the university population with sufficient means had fled the city, taking refuge in family-owned summer *dachas* and other undamaged areas. This left on campus a population of students and workers with lesser means, including foreign students who could not afford to head home, or did not have the social network necessary to escape to a friend's secondary residence. Those left behind gradually began to resent the failings of the Moscow public services.

During the same summer period, political tension in Moscow was constant and often visible, relayed by radio broadcasts and by a large number of public demonstrations. As I indicated in previous chapters, 2010-11 was the run-up period for the Russian presidential elections. When I

arrived in Moscow, the streets and surroundings of Moscow were alternately taken over by civilian protests of the regime or by pro-Putin rallies. Inside Moscow, there were similarly continuous anti-government rallies being staged, and armed forces were a recurring sight. Essentially, both police and protesters were out in force during this period. A large part of Putin's campaign had focused around the political resurgence of a national rhetoric. What happened during this summer was a slow merging of the politicised nationalist discourses, xenophobic rhetoric relayed by the media (Law 2012, 24-25), and resentment against the Moscow public services including the police. During the summer a number of youth support clubs installed camps and held week-long meetings in Moscow's vicinity, most of them propagating this rhetoric. Involved in the political support clubs for the *Russia United*[28] party were the same violent nationalist groups[29] that later took part in the December 2010 racial riots (Arnold 2012)that I describe below. A large part of the right-wing Moscow football fan clubs that led the December riots were similarly in open support of the 'ethnic Russian' political movement (see below, impact on 2010 riots, see also Zakharov 2015a, Shuster 2010).

This underlying current of politically infused racial tension (Arnold 2012, Foxall 2010), distrust in the overstretched Moscow authorities, and nationalistic/xenophobic media rhetoric (Hutchings and Tolz 2012) came to a head in December of 2010. On 6 December 2010, four Spartak[30] football fans had an altercation with a group of men from the North Caucasus, resulting in the death of one of the fans, Yegor Svidirov. Although six men were arrested and one was charged with the murder (Aslan Cherkesov, from Dagestan), the public impression was that the authorities had released the men responsible. Conspiracy theories, wherein the police had colluded with the Dagestani community after receiving bribes, were relayed by radio talk shows. The result was a wave of violent racial rioting that coursed through Moscow, with a particular focal point in front of the Kremlin in *Manezh* Square. Much of the literature on these riots (Arnold 2012, Hutchings and Tolz 2012, Shuster 2010, Zakharov 2015a) point to this Manezh

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[28] Ruling party supporting the Russian president V. V. Putin and D. Medvedev.
[29] Associated with both the summer political camps and the December xenophobic riots were the *Fratia Club* of the Spartak Moscow, and the nationalist Night Wolves motorcycle gang. The club is famously associated with Putin, and during the 2010 summer the then-prime minister made a very public, and media-publicised show of friendship with the Night Wolves's leader Alexander Zaldostanov. This was the same Zaldostanov that later went with associated to Crimea and northeast of Ukraine in support of the pro-Russia separatist movement. See http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/russia/10670244/Meet-the-Night-Wolves-Putins-Hells-Angels.html
[30] The Spartak Moscow is one of the capital's football team, known for its violent hooligan supporters.

Square rioting, where a 5000-strong crowd, principally of football fans unchecked by the police (Shuster 2010), essentially beat up any passer-by suspected, on basis of skin colour, to be associated with foreign, Caucasian, or non-Slavic origins. This 11 December event drew broad media coverage because of the scale of this xenophobic action, the violence perpetrated, the symbolic significance of the location in front of the Kremlin, and the seeming collusion of the authorities. Despite the proximity to the Kremlin, the police were visibly unable or unwilling to disperse the rioters. Although the government repeated calls for multicultural tolerance, researchers saw clear links between the Manezh Square protesters and known figures in political circles. "In [Manezh Square], rank-and-file participants were led by professional politicians as the [Movement Against Illegal Immigration] (DPNI) leaders Alexander Belov and members of the far right-wing groups and parties" (Zakharov 2015a, 112).

Near MSPU, racially motivated beatings continued to occur through December and into January, with frequent clashes happening just outside the university, with nationalist groups targeting foreign students at the border of the Yugo-Zapadnaya market and in the large adjacent avenue. There was also retaliation, with violence against Russians at the metro station the day after the Manezh riots (Arnold 2012). Coming out of the summer, the overall context in Moscow was one of political and racial tension that merged a discourse of racialisation, the reconsideration of long-held Soviet multiculturalist values, and a generalised discontent with authorities.

> "One ramification of the *Manezhnaia* events has been a noticeable increase in attention to interethnic relations within official discourse. In January 2012, Putin chose to dedicate one of his "election manifesto" articles to the "National Question." In it, he made extended reference to collusion between corrupt law enforcement organs and migrants, linking it to the "radicalization of the host society." […] Elements of [the] Soviet legacy are being reinvented and revitalized by the evocation of non-Soviet concepts similarly based on the essentialisation of ethnic and racial categories." (Hutchings and Tolz 2012, 899)

We see here that what played out during the Manezh riots was, in part, a contest between the old Soviet legacy of race and the ethno-nationalism that appeared as a politically powerful rhetoric, particularly during the first decade of the 21st century and the Caucasian wars. Researchers agree that the Soviet regime had developed a very intricate concept of race (Law 2012, Lemon 2002, Hirsch 2002, Weiner 2002, Weitz 2002a, b, Zakharov 2015a), specified in part by the academic research of Soviet ethnographers who pushed a medical anthropology classification of racial types in the Soviet Union (Lemon 2002, Hirsch 2002). However, both the state and academic

categorisation rejected the European concept of race as something that one inherits, that is immutable or transgenerational. Hirsch finds that:

> "Soviet anthropologists also formulated a Soviet version of *rasovedenie* that fit within the rubric of historical materialism (the Marxist theory of history). Races and racial traits were not 'essential' or 'eternal', the anthropologists argued, but were associated with certain stages of historical development." (Hirsch 2002, 34)

This conceptualisation of race went with a practice of "state-sponsored evolutionism" (Hirsch 2005, 7), as the Soviet regime attempted to eradicate threats to progress towards a communist society. The "state-sponsored evolutionism" started with the official designation of racial affiliations, as people were required to choose an official race designation during passport registration and census events. This registration was followed by a politic of repression and mass deportation of segments of the population based covertly on the criterion of race. Such practices of deportation without an official acknowledgment that this was indeed a racial discrimination is what Weitz calls "racial politics without the concept of race" (Weitz 2002b). This seminal debate of 2002[31] between the different interpretation of Soviet racial politics restarted the discussion on racism in the post-Soviet research. The debate and the history of Russia's politics of race is important as preliminary to our study, insofar as it illuminates the cultural history that plays out in the background of today's politicised racial tensions.

However, a number of elements today are fundamentally different. First, there is a much deeper engagement between anti-immigrant ideologies rising in Europe and comparable racial ideologies in Russia relative to the Caucasian and Chinese immigrant/transient populations. Second, the fall of the Soviet Union thrust Russia into a position where it had to contend with a new vision of "the Russian society as a territorially bound society" (Zakharov 2015a, 12). This appears in the rioters' cries of "Russia for Russians, Moscow for Muscovites" noted throughout the 2010 protests. Third, Russia's economic difficulties in the global market play into the rejection of the 'other' who steals opportunity and threatens a way of life, in the same manner than contemporary racial extremist discourses of Western Europe developed. Ian Law offers a revised vision of this tension that appeared, in light of what happened in 2010 in Moscow, as strikingly relevant:

> "In the Russian Federation racism has been modernised and has become a dominant social force. […] *Gusudarstvennost*, loyalty to the state, patriotic education campaigns and militarised

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[31] See Slavic Review, 61:1

patriotism are all key elements in Putin's 'post-ideological' state-building strategy as Sterling observes (2010). These position the state as without racism, in opposition to neo-Nazis, and yet invoke a racial imperial nationalism and legitimise state and 'underground' violence." (Law 2012, 155)

The student population and the staff at MSPU and in the nearby universities were living, when I conducted my research, in an extremely volatile social, political, and racial context. The student population of Moscow could feel this underlying tension. Numerous times I witnessed foreign MSPU students, principally Chinese students, gather in large groups when heading out towards the markets, towards the Western Union offices from which they drew the funds sent monthly by their families. The decision was explained to me as one of safety in numbers. The practices that I witnessed inside the university in 2010-11 were therefore influenced and perhaps exacerbated by this context.

The population that lives, studies, and works in the MSPU campus is diverse in terms of socioeconomic status, education perspectives, vertical mobility prospects, and origins. In the campus, the student cohort, administrators, instructors live in a context of extreme proximity with populations that have wholly different educational or economic opportunities (greater or smaller) and life conditions. This very diverse community lives in a space that is full of architectural and symbolic segregation markers. In the same way that I saw the political context weigh on the student population of MSPU, I also witnessed numerous moments where students reflected on their education, living conditions, or opportunities for education through references to the other privileged education institutions near MSPU. In these pages I offered a full picture of the campus whereby the reader can appreciate the proximity of stark cultural, wealth, and education differences that marked this small area.

3.2 Building a policy ecology: ethnography, document analysis

As I attempted to make sense of what the Moscow fieldwork experience had shown me, I rapidly came to the conclusion that I could not shed light on the practices and on the actors' experiences if I occulted the policy material and institutional histories that the actors themselves engaged with, knowingly or less knowingly. I had to bring together the ethnographic view of the actors' practices, with the analysis of policy texts/documents that the same actors engaged with, produced, conformed to, or resisted, in their capacities as educators, learners, or administrators. In this sense, I follow Lingard's perspective on the need to build a "policy ecology[32]" through which I could then follow the actors' collaborative practices and the policy effects, and trace the origins of particular Bologna discourses to illuminate what the actors were telling me. This policy ecology is constituted of "the policy itself, along with all the other texts, histories, institutions, and relationships that affect or are affected by it" (citing Weather-Hightower, Lingard 2009, 235). In the coming section I present the actors that I engaged with in the field, the reach and limitations of my fieldwork, and review the document sources that I investigated.

1- Ethnography

> Excerpt: "We [Bologna policy makers] can try to do some predictions, we can observe, we can influence for example development, however we cannot control the development. There is the problem. So, because of this, we have to look at the Bologna process as a real process. We can think of ways to influence this process, however it is something which is developing independently of the wishful thinking of the bureaucrats!"

In the pages above I described the complexity and the diversity of the field. This brought forward a reflection on the kind of ethnographic research methods that can best bring light to such an extended, networked field of study, marked by disjointed locations and policy timelines. In Janine Wedel's (2005) view, the very complexity of the policy field is the core reason that justifies, or indeed demands, the application of an ethnographic approach to the study of policy processes. Because the policy reflects a constellation of actors that each influence it, we cannot

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[32] {Lingard, 2009 #350}

approach it with predetermined variables, and instead must engage the actors in order to go beyond the letter of the policy.

> "An anthropological approach attempts to uncover the constellation of actors, activities, and influences that shape policy decisions and their implementation, effects, and how they play out. Anthropology therefore gives particular emphasis to the idea that the study of policy decisions and their implementation must be situated in an empirical or ethnographic context: they cannot be adequately mapped using variables whose values and correlations are pre-specified by an abstract model." (Wedel et al. 2005, 39)

I follow Wedel's (2005) model of anthropology of public policy, and draw on the "constellation of actors" and educational participants I observed and worked with during and after my fieldwork in Moscow. My comprehension of the Russian engagement with Bologna, and of Bologna as a practice of power, stems from this empirical experience and from extensive documentary research conducted post-field. I would identify three distinct participant observer experiences. First, my **fieldwork at Moscow State Pedagogical University** (MSPU), where observation and participation in daily campus life took centre stage. Interviews were conducted during and after the field. Second, my **participation in the construction of a semester-long course for MSPU**, a course responding to Bologna policy guidance. Finally, **my work as educator at two institutions outside the university**, institutions whose work directly impacted, and were impacted by, the Bologna process.

Fieldwork preparation: a view into the impact that national power contention may have on international exchange programmes

My comprehension of the Russian engagement with European higher education and with the Bologna process began with my fieldwork in Moscow and post-field interviews with policy makers and students. In the summer of 2010, I arrived in Moscow as an international exchange scholar, invited by Moscow State Pedagogical University for my PhD fieldwork. I embedded myself in Moscow's academic environment, both as a researcher and as a teaching participant. During the next seven months and through the post-field interviews, I was able to observe life on a Moscow university campus, and engage with actors involved in the creation of educational programmes, actors involved in the design of Bologna policy guidelines for higher education institutions, and actors involved in the appropriation of Bologna policies. I had reached my fieldwork location at MSPU as an exchange scholar from England, benefiting from a new

student mobility partnership between the Durham University Romance Languages Department at my home university and MSPU. This effectively thrust me into the very same kind of exchange programmes that Bologna aims to develop. MSPU had just become a student exchange partner for Durham University, and I traveled as the first visiting scholar of that exchange, in some sense as a test subject.

My experiences of jointly organising this fieldwork with the Durham Romance Languages Department gave me insight into the roles that individual networks, administrative uncertainties, and Russian state decisions play in the international mobility of scholars and in nascent university partnerships. Prior to finalising the 2010 MSPU-Durham partnership, Durham had placed the project on hold and oriented students towards St. Petersburg universities, due to administrative difficulties with Moscow universities. The capacity of Moscow educational institutions to develop long-term scholar exchange partnerships with Europe had been put in doubt, due to new regulations by the Russian state restricting international academic visas. The official objective of the state had been to root out illegal migration to Moscow aided by academic visas issued by institutions that then did not ensure their "students" actually followed through with their study programme. As I discovered during the course of the fieldwork, what actually drove this large-scale review of schools' rights to deliver visas was a battle to maintain a form of state control, in the middle of the nationwide educational reforms that pushed for more deregulation and devolution of rights from state to educational institutions (see ch. 6). During the months prior to reaching the field, I was witness to the creation of the Durham-MSPU partnership, to the falling through of a prior agreement with St. Petersburg University, and the travails of other applicants to scholar exchange programmes. This first experience, revisited in the light of the fieldwork academic experiences, provided some empirical knowledge of the international and political pressures bearing upon international academic mobility between Europe and Russia.

MSPU campus life, MSPU educators, and international exchange students

The first months of fieldwork were spent working inside the university with the receiving faculty from the Sociology department, attending classes and locating contacts at other Moscow educational institutions. Over the course of the next half-year I observed life on the campus of

one of the leading Russian pedagogical universities, and participated in the daily activities of the international student population. Housed in the international student dormitory, I lived alongside learners and scholars who came to MSPU, took courses alongside them, and engaged with them on a daily basis in shared activities and community events.

During this period I particularly engaged with four communities. One actor was a Chinese student with whom I shared my first accommodation, and through him met other members of the Chinese student population. Through this group I was introduced to a number of events where I witnessed segregation and discrimination practices first-hand, both inside and outside the university. I was also able to gain a sense of how the life of European scholars and students at MSPU differed from that of Asian learners. Post-field, I was able to obtain two further interviews with Chinese students, and through this, complement the direct observations on institutional discrimination that I had gained in the field. This fieldwork and post-field data was further explored through discussions with two other informants, an exchange student (USA-Russia) who eventually settled down in Eastern Russia, and a Russian student who had been my principal contact in Moscow. The American exchange student recounted his year-long experiences of differential access to education, racial targeting, and corruption practices at the Russian university he had attended. During my conversations with the Russian student, I revisited the subject, benefiting from the point of view of a Russian native. This empirical data and post-field information contributed to the construction of chapters 5 and 6.

Another community from which I was able to gather information was that of European students coming to MSPU. Like me, these students were rapidly asked to contribute, as educators or researchers, to the university or to satellite educational institutions. I was able to gain insights from three students in particular. One followed as the second exchange student from Durham University. I was able to witness her trajectory, the opportunities that the university provided, and the requests that were made from her, notably to participate as an educator in the school of a friend of one of the MSPU administrators. The two other students similarly came through international exchange programmes from Belgium and France. The information provided by these learners offered a contrasting view of international mobility organised between Russia and Europe. The first had essentially spearheaded his own exchange programme from Belgium, and was asked by MSPU to provide a work product in exchange for being received in Moscow. This product was a series of online content for the purpose of advertising and expanding the newly

created exchange programme at the Belgian university. This demand rejoined my experience of being asked to work for MSPU to pay the exchange programme, or pay the full tuition cost. The French student, on the other hand, came from an elite Paris institution (Sciences Politiques) that held a long-standing partnership with the elite Moscow State Institute of International Relations University (MGIMO, also a diplomacy/government studies institution). As explained in the previous section, MSPU and MGIMO are located within steps of each other, in effect sharing the same Yugo-Zapadnaya campus. These international exchange students offered contrasting perspectives on the student mobility structures that tied Russia to Western Europe, on the stability of international university partnerships, and on the demands placed on the exchange students. The trajectory of both students offered a further counterpoint to the experience of the Chinese students. Speaking with and gaining information from each of these European students shaped my analysis of the Russian engagement with the Bologna process. I came to understand that the Bologna student mobility programmes directly contribute to the growth of Russian non-university educational programmes, both state institutions and private education centres. Mobility programmes directly provide European educators to schools, impact the salary brackets in education (students from Europe working as part-time instructors may be paid more than the average full-time salary in Moscow), and orient some schools towards employing a more transient instruction staff. My engagement with European students in Moscow, and my own experiences as educator (see below), therefore directed me towards a view that any ethnographic analysis of the Russian engagement with Bologna must be contextualised within a larger-than-Bologna context. An analysis of Bologna should consider the growth of private or non-higher education structures in Russia during the first decade of 2000, the commercialisation of the education industry under pressures from neoliberal financiers, and the competition for European academic resources that shapes some sections of the Russian education market.

Beyond the Chinese and European student communities, a third informant was a Russian student with whom I conducted multiple interviews, during and post-fieldwork. In effect this person became the principal informant from whom I gathered information. Shortly before my research in Moscow, he had changed majors, moving from an MSPU course that awarded the old Soviet degree to another MSPU course that conferred the newly created Bologna-type Masters degree. He had also studied abroad, gaining access to other European universities through personal enterprise on one occasion (Germany), and through an international exchange programme of

MSPU in the other (Finland). At the time of his visits, both receiving universities had offered courses with the Bologna credit system. I kept in contact with this informant post-field, conducting remote interviews and exchanging information via mail. The core of my interaction with these students came from informal interviews, fieldwork observations, post-field reconstruction of events and conversations, and participation in shared community activities. More formal conversations had taken place with the Russian student during my time in Moscow, and continued post-field. These empirical experiences guided my post-field documentary research, and informed my analysis of Bologna policy texts, educational statistics, and SEXTANT project publications (see next paragraph, and ch. 5). Fieldwork experiences also guided the questions for interviews that I conducted post-fieldwork, in an effort to complement the data lost when I was victim of an attack and theft in Moscow.

Finally, during the seven months of fieldwork I had recurring contact with the faculty and staff that worked for the MSPU *Department of International Relations*. These faculty and staff worked to develop international partnerships for the university, and lead international education programmes funded by the EHEA. The MSPU *Department of International Relations* was the administrative unit that led the SEXTANT[33] programme, the focus of this thesis' chapter 5. Post-field, I made contact with three other leading figures of SEXTANT: a former administrator of MSPU whom I had known from the *International Relations* office; a former Secretary General of the Bologna Follow Up Group EURASHE[34] that had been called to advise on SEXTANT; and a Polish professor and EURASHE expert. Although several communications were exchanged with the former EURASHE director, the exchange eventually did not bear fruit, and most of the information came from the other two SEXTANT actors. Among other faculty working in the *International Relations* centre, I had weekly discussions with the professor who had been assigned as my receiving advisor. This faculty member held several positions at MSPU: as faculty in the Sociology department there, faculty at the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences where a Bologna BA/MA curriculum was being developed, and finally as programme director in the *Department of International Relations*. When I was in Moscow, his purview was Asian partnership programmes, but he eventually transitioned to Europe and took over, notably, the MSPU-Durham exchange partnership. The multiple roles held by this scholar allowed him to

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[33] Student EXchanges of credit Transfer Assisted by New information Technologies
[34] EURASHE: European Association of Institutions in Higher Education. Advisory group for the Bologna process.

provide a unique perspective on the programmatic changes happening in Moscow universities, and Russian responses to the implementation of the Bologna policies. Following the precept expressed in the second part of Wedel's text, "that the study of policy decisions and their implementation […] cannot be adequately mapped using variables whose values and correlations are pre-specified by an abstract model", in each chapter I situate the study of the Bologna policy in an empirical and ethnographic context. For the study of the SEXTANT multi-university partnership, I follow particular policy practices and explore the different roles taken by the MSPU and SEXTANT actors.

Course development at MSPU

The partnership developed between Durham University and MSPU came to fruition just as I went into the field. In this early stage of partnership, it became clear that the Departmental administration still had to justify to the MSPU Rectorate, and higher national authorities, the attribution of long-term researcher visas. I had to either pay the university in full for the period of study corresponding to my stay, or offer something beneficial to the university. During the second part of the fieldwork, I was therefore offered the opportunity to participate in the creation of a Masters' level course that offered to select humanities students - in particular social science students - an added "translation certificate[35]" to their final diploma. At the time, I only saw this as the institution making use of my presence to bolster their course offering, while at the same time providing an administrative justification for the visa. It was only afterwards, upon researching governmental education policies, that I realised this course had also been a direct response to the Bologna process. Directives by the Russian government at the time called for the creation of courses that would render the diplomas and graduate competencies legible internationally[36], and increase disciplinary competitiveness. The Bologna process, during the same years, had been pushing the Diploma Supplement (see introduction and chapter 4.2) as an approach to making learners' competencies internationally legible and "transparent". MSPU

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[35] This was not officially designated as the Bologna "diploma supplement" (see chapter 4.2), but sought to fulfil the same objective, and provide MSPU students with a certificate that demonstrated the international competency of their learners.

[36] This Diploma Supplement was created in 1999 by the European Commission, by UNESCO/CEPES and the Council of Europe. The objective is to provide an international translation of the outcome skills acquired during the course of a degree, and thereby improve the international 'transparency' and recognition of qualifications. The Russian Federation ratified the Lisbon Convention in 2000 and gradually implemented the "diploma supplement" under the tutelage of the Bologna Follow Up Group.

followed a similar set of objectives with the "translation certificate", seeking to certify the students' ability to not only reason effectively in their academic field, but also "translate" Russian concepts to equivalent European (English in this case) concepts. Over several months the class was developed with my MSPU supervisor, and eventually set to be offered in the Spring term. Unfortunately, the assault that occurred in January, forcing my return to England, caused the cancellation of the course. Nonetheless, during its development period, I was able to acquire an understanding of some differences between the Russian and British curricula in social sciences, and identify, with my Russian supervisor, some of the European anthropology concepts that would be of particular interest to the Moscow students. I was also able to witness how the MSPU university reinterpreted a Bologna educational norm (the Diploma Supplement), and appropriated this norm in response to federal calls for curricular reform. Finally, I was able to see how "practices of power" emerged from such policy responses. The creation of this class at MPGU corresponded to a shift in the balance of power inside the humanities section of the university. As the course was developed, and the proposal was brought to the lead humanities faculty, it came to light that the course was going to create a new section of hand-picked top students. The faculty who approved the project was able to select the top students of each social science, history, and philosophy departments for the course. Her position was, in effect, bridging all departments of the graduate school, and allowed her to personally select students among the top performers, and enter them directly into the course that would add international credence to their final diploma. The course therefore added a layer of "power plays" between departments. The way in which the student selection was organised was another example of organised selection of elites, where local and international educational discourses merged to produce internal stratification and practices of power.

Educator work beyond higher education

Beyond my participant-observer role at MSPU, my interpretation of the Russian engagement with European education and the Bologna process was coloured by my experiences at two other educational institutes of Moscow. As a self-funded doctoral student, I came to the field with the need to engage in some type of remunerative work outside of my activities at MSPU. This primarily impacted the latter months of the fieldwork, as I gained entry into two Moscow schools. Because this work was not conducted within the direct scope of the fieldwork, I did not

include quotes, references, or ethnographic vignettes from the two schools where I worked. Nonetheless, my almost daily experiences at both schools were invaluable, and guided my understanding of the Russian educational engagement with Europe. Further, I was placed in the unique position to experience educational settings across the socioeconomic spectrum, from low-tuition night schools to the most elite tutoring centres. Each of these schools and after-school programmes were focused towards providing access to European higher education, or on developing mobility for professionals towards Europe. This perspective complemented my field data from the Moscow universities. One institution was a night school that catered to adult learners, providing language instruction to professionals who sought to either pass a promotion examination, gain a certificate, or prepare for travel to Europe for their companies. This experience was relevant to the study of Bologna: European policies specifically promote the creation of such "lifelong learning" educational programmes to position workers towards international mobility. Here, I was able to observe and participate in a school that specifically developed courses to enable international professional mobility. The tuition at this school tended towards the lower end of the spectrum in Moscow. My participation therefore provided new empirical knowledge: what happens when a Europe-oriented institution is created in Moscow's private sector, outside of state grants and stable finances? During the course of my work there, I was witness to a high turnover of educators, and to practices that shed light on the economic difficulties encountered by instructors in Moscow.

The second institution I participated in lived at the opposite end of the socioeconomic spectrum, providing individualised tutoring to the financial and political elite of Moscow, across age groups. Through this institution I was introduced to elite education networks that prepared young learners to enter top-tier European institutions, from Oxford and Cambridge to the Rugby School and other elite European boarding schools. This provided me with an intimate view of a kind of student mobility that ran parallel to Bologna structures, yet was grounded in Bologna programmes. On the one hand, this school was entirely a private business, wholly outside of any university partnership or European Commission funding. On the other hand, the school made full use of the Europe-Russia university exchanges. The student population in Russia was used to fill their instructor staff; the school's founders taught in elite European universities and sent their students to Russia with the understanding that they would work part-time at the private coaching company. They further offered sporting tournaments at their universities in Russia and

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networking trips for the private company. As I practiced in these educational environments, I gained insight into the direct impact that the Bologna project had on the growth of Russian non-university private education ventures. Similarly, I witnessed how young Russian learners were prepared and coached for entry into European universities in ways that largely eluded European statistics and educational policies. Both experiences at the night school and the elite education institute provided context to my reading of Bologna policies and to Russian engagement with European higher education.

2- Policy as discourse: review of policy documents, discursive diffusion…

> Excerpt: "[The EU experts see Bologna as] a machine, a robot. That means, we have beautiful ideas, we have our action plan, we have our Bologna rules, we have our communiques and those of previous conferences, and what we want to do is only to follow what we have invented, and to check if we have any deviations, and if there are deviations they have to be corrected. The main thing is to have these plans, to have these rules"

During the research period, I engaged in education activities as a participant, conducted post-fieldwork interviews with people I had met during my time in Moscow or contacted post-field. I also aggregated a set of documentation from the Bologna policy, national education reform legislations, and European Commission documents on higher education. These texts I analysed in light of the fieldwork observations and interviews. Among the Bologna documents were the *Russian Bologna Process National Reports* (2005, 05, 07, 09); the initial Bologna Declaration and Communiqués of the Bologna process' Ministerial Conferences[37]; the 2012 *Bologna Process Implementation Report*; and the Berlin 2003 Ministerial Communiqué *Realising the European Higher Education Area*. Among other treaties, the *Treaty of Lisbon* and the *Nordic-Russian Cooperation Programme in Higher Education and Research 2012-2015*. I also closely reviewed the EU-Russia documents and post-Soviet transition documents that pertain to higher education. Among those are the joint statements from the 8th to the 26th *EU-Russia Summits* (defining the EU-Russia bilateral treaties and *Common Spaces Agreements*); the translation of the Russian

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[37] 1999 Bologna Declaration; 2001 Prague Communiqué; 2003 Berlin Communique; 2005 Bergen Communique; 2007 London Communiqué; 2009 Leuven Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué; 2010 Budapest-Vienna Declaration; 2012 Bucharest Communiqué; 2015 Yerevan Communiqué

federal higher education laws of 1992, 1996, 2012; and the principal federal higher education development programmes.[38] Statistical data on post-Soviet higher education was reviewed as well, from the *Russian Federal Statistics Service* and from the *Moscow Higher School of Education Indicators of Education 2013*, and *Innovation Indicators 2013*. These statistics form the core of the data conveyed by Russia to the European Union and Bologna process participants. Finally, I reviewed documents from Russian higher education reforms that were funded by the Bologna process and other international financiers (e.g. World Bank). For the Bologna documents, I focused on the SEXTANT documents, a project that was ongoing during my fieldwork and co-led by my receiving university in Moscow and Ghent University (see above). For the international community documents, I focused on the three principal projects that the World Bank financed in Russia between 2000 and 2010: the *Education Reform Project #P050474*; the *e-Learning Support Project #P075387*; and the *Financial Education and Financial Literacy Project #P120338*.

These documents, taken together, provide a thorough overview of the state of higher education in Russia, as perceived and published through official channels. It also provides an overview of the legislation and higher education statistics that form the background data to international agreements. Finally, the documents trace the history of the international education policies, locating when and to what extent the original agreements were repeated in later policy texts, and how the rhetoric changed or remained the same over the Bologna process years. In the spirit of trajectory studies (Lingard 2009, Lingard and Rizvi 2009, Wedel et al. 2005), I trace the histories behind the Bologna policies, influences that shaped Bologna, the implementation process (or for chapter 6, the moments of economic and legislative reform), and specific effects of these implementations or reforms. I start the thesis with a general presentation of the Bologna principles, and review in that chapter (ch. 4) the history of policies and international agreements that contributed to Bologna: the message repetition, the layering of similar texts and treaties, and how the Bologna membership built a common response to a shared political threat. Continuing to an analysis of a multilateral university partnership (ch. 5), I look at how the appropriation of Bologna norms was accompanied by a demand by the European Commission to follow the official Bologna rhetoric, and how the documents produced by the SEXTANT project

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[38] 2000 *National Doctrine of Education in the Russian Federation*; the *State programme: education development, 2013-2020*; the 2005 *National Priority Project Education*

contributed to a diffusion of Bologna norms. Methodologically, I root the research on the Russia-Bologna higher education encounter in the uncovering of as complete a chain as possible, from the historical influences, to the actors involved, to the economic and other influences affecting implementation, and to the roles played by policy texts and documents. I subscribe to the interpretation that policy is, in part, a discourse. This 'policy as discourse' perspective has already been defined by numerous researchers, whose theories I rely on to conduct the thesis' inquiry (Ball 2015e, Fairclough 2013, Howarth 2010, Johnson 2011, Manzon and Areepattamannil 2014, Saarinen 2008, Sum 2009).

> "The 'argumentative turn' (Fischer and Forester 1993) in policy studies had dramatic implications for the way we understand EU policymaking, since EU institutions can no longer be seen as monolithic policy agents if discursive practices are taken into account. Using this analytic approach, European scholars have shown that the EU is a discourse based, polycentric governance structure. […] Frames are central organising ideas or story lines (Gamson and Modigliani 1987, p. 143). They provide meaning to an unfolding series of events and influence future policy choices. (Serrano-Velarde 2014, 42-43)

In this thesis, I present the Bologna process as a set of practices, but I also describe its discursive dimensions, and follow policy documents' role in the diffusion of Bologna norms. On one hand, we have the discourses of nodal actors advocating for a specific Bologna policy in different countries, and thereby transforming a policy into traveling rationalities. On the other hand, the same discourse can be found in a multiplicity of policy texts that traverse national and educational borders.

> "Methodologically, […] we must continually redefine the ethnographic field: because policy is fundamentally a normative discourse, and often intends to order and control relations between groups that may occupy very different social spaces and scales, research must be multi-sited and attuned to the production and flow of reified texts across sites. […] Correspondingly, we urge new research practices of institutional and discursive mapping, in which policy language is traced across documents." (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, 789)

I take the Bologna policy texts and discourses as narratives that relate, on behalf of Bologna governing institutions, a selective and official reality of the education reforms across the European Higher Education Area, traversing borders and sociocultural regions. But I also interpret the policy texts and discourses as actors that participate in the construction of a new European culture of education, in the construction of new ways to relate between actors and new practices within the educational communities.

> "Text and discourse should not be understood dualistically, as either describing the world or constructing it. Language is holistic – texts may be artefacts (such as letters on paper or bytes in a

document file), they may describe the state of affairs, but they also construct and/or support some form of reality or some form of social practice." (Saarinen 2008, 722)

3.2 Making room for the self in the ethnography: subjectivity and reflexivity questions in the methodological process.

The fieldwork was interrupted before it was completed, with a complete loss of data and an eventual reconstruction of the research project. This event brought the notions of reflexivity and subjectivity to the fore of the project: I had, in short, to rebuild part of my fieldwork experiences after the fact. To do so I had to rely on my memories, on some notes that were left to me, and on perceptions that endured or were triggered by my readings during the short time following my return from the field.

Peter Collins (2010) and David Mills (2013, 2014, 2012) define ethnography as a way of being, seeing, thinking, and writing, a moment in which emotions should not always be overlooked for fear of losing a supposed 'rationality' of research. My post-fieldwork recollection and writing brought about exactly such a reflection on the place that could be given to the senses, personal memories, and emotions in the ethnographic and writing process.

In their edition *The ethnographic self as resource* (2010) Collins and Gallinat remind the reader that "making room for the self in ethnography depended partly upon the loosening of textual conventions." The long tradition of exploration in writing starting from the literary turn in anthropology and Clifford and Marcus' *Writing cultures* (1986), and continued with a growing awareness of the positionality of the ethnographer and necessity for some degree of reflexivity (Giddens 1991, Ruby 1982). As I returned from the field, one of the first tasks I took on was to join an ethnographic writing group led by Pr. Mary Steedly, during which I started to write out the most vivid field experiences from memory, focusing on detailed descriptions, free writing unbound by typical academic requirements. Two things happened in this moment of re-writing of fieldwork notes.

Two things happened in this moment of re-writing of fieldwork notes. First, I was able to follow Mills' advice (2014) and bring out those moments of discomfort that had most marked my fieldwork time. Ethnography is a process in which particular attention should be given to the uncomfortable moments, as these indicate the moments when the ethnographer is straddling cultural conventions (Mills 2001, Mills and Morton 2013, Rapport 1993, Sikic-Micanovic 2010). Examples of these moments are shared in the final chapter of the thesis. By foregoing usual

constraints of writing, I allowed free rein to the emotions. Those moments that had most shocked my cultural conventions, or surprised my senses, were brought forward and written out in detail.

This was, however, only a first step. The next methodological step was to regain some research distance, what Mills calls 'empathy', in which the researcher is able to recognise the distance and tension existing between his/her view and that of the informant or actor at the focus of research. I took the themes of these texts and those ethnographic vignettes, and brought them to my Bologna document research, and to the informants I had regained, with the objectives of contextualising, and informing my perceptions with statistics, recorded policy histories, and the views of the actors themselves. It is upon these contrasts and contextualisations that I built my 'empathy' and undertook an anthropological analysis.

3. Conclusion

The thesis draws on multiple, distinct materials to conduct the investigation. I draw from an array of methodologies to match the materials under review, be they policy texts or actors' practices. The research offers a reading of policy as practice of power that is informed by a fieldwork study in several Moscow educational contexts. Empirical data was gathered from observation of a range of actors (scholars, exchange students, Russian students, administrators), and from participation as an educator at multiple schools. In this chapter I examine the range and limitations of the empirical knowledge gained from the fieldwork in Moscow. I chose to gather these experiences and build a "policy ecology" that might then guide the documentary research among Bologna publications and policy texts, as well as Russian educational legislation. Finally, I examine the theories pertaining to the ethnographer's reflexivity, and the implications of rewriting a part of the fieldwork experiences post-field.

Chapter 4: The Bologna process, principles that support an enduring collaborative engagement

4. Introduction

In this chapter I set the foundations of my investigation into the Bologna process and Russia's engagement with it. This chapter aims towards two objectives: presenting the Bologna process, and taking the first analysis steps by contextualising the actors' practices.

I start with an outline of Bologna and Russian postsecondary education. To do so I present the principal phases of Bologna's history, revisit the foundational documents, draw out the official policy objectives, and synthesise the organisational framework in which the higher education actors of the EU-Russian cooperation interact. I also outline the Russian higher education system, and the principal stages of its engagements with European Union educative initiatives. The chapter here presents the reader with a clear understanding of the development history, legislative framework, and organisational structure of the Bologna process. By exploring the foundational ideals of Bologna and the evolution of its official policy goals, I show the Bologna policies as a normative policy effort that reaches beyond systemic postsecondary education reform, and officially seeks to transform larger sociocultural practices. Bologna is at its core a European social and cultural transformation project, through educational convergence among forty-plus countries.

In the second and third section of the chapter, I situate the actors' practices, and take the first analytical steps in presenting Bologna policy as a set of practices and practices of power. To do so, I start by exploring the governance model and normative guidelines that have been selected by the EHEA political and regulatory institutions to frame and orient the new sociocultural practices that Bologna policies sought to elicit. I show the Bologna policies and governance choices that were made by officials and legislators, with a view to build practices of power and guide actors towards practices of convergence around new higher education ideals. The founding agreements of the Bologna process were designed by the European ministers to guide Bologna participants (member States, education institutions, individuals) beyond an initial disparity of

membership visions, towards a recursive engagement with common objectives, convergent educational practices, within a shared education development network.

The chapter starts with a presentation of Bologna's organisational structure, its first declarations, and outlines its initial unifying ideology. It then presents a reality of divergences among the member states (differing views on what engaging with Bologna means) that contrasted with the announced unity of Bologna, and presents Russia's uneven implementation of Bologna reforms. The chapter then presents the legislative principles and normative processes that were developed by the Bologna organisation leaders, to support practices of convergence towards the pan-European negotiation and appropriation of Bologna's education reforms. The object is to foreground specific practices of power, and cooperation norms, that guide the Bologna actors' recursive engagement, and the endurance of the Bologna policy message beyond internal conflicts, failures and membership diversities. Through the chapter, I show elements that contributed to the growth of a singular, coordinated Bologna message: the creation of a common policy history by repetition of the official Bologna policy objectives, the gradual structuring of the administrative and domain-specific advisory agencies that act in support of said Bologna policies, the development of audit practices, and the creation of common responses to external challenges.

In this chapter I only speak of Bologna's core statements, its organisational structure, its principles of actions/leading policies, and its policy rhetoric. I will investigate the effects of these principles in later chapters. This chapter's focus is to present the official definition of Bologna policy as practice of power, shedding light on some practices that developed the policy's intended norms. The ethnography chapters that follow the present one will develop the actors' 'work[39]' that I witnessed during fieldwork inside educational institutions, work that illuminates the reach, the failings, and the ethnographic translation of the Bologna governance model outlined in this chapter.

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[39] By 'work' I mean the administrative and advising work, but also the social construction, community creation and re-creation that occurs through the activities of the Bologna actors.

4.1 History and underlying principles of Bologna

In this chapter section I introduce the Bologna process and themes of research that will be explored throughout the thesis. The overall structure of Bologna is given through a presentation of its core policy objectives, underlying ideals, membership, and principal development phases. These elements lead to a first presentation of Bologna as a policy effort that seeks to develop a systemic and practice convergence among European educational actors, but also to transform larger sociocultural practices across the European geography. In this first exploration, I foreground social and cultural transformation policies that stand at the heart of Bologna. I follow this introduction with a review of diversities that mark the Bologna process: diversities in membership objectives and the multiplicity of educative projects that coexist in the European space. The EHEA is both a policy of convergence in education and a coexistence of nations that maintain their unique identities in higher education. I complete this historical and systemic policy introduction by reviewing the timeline of policy declarations and bilateral agreements that contributed to maintaining a common and convergent education agenda among these EHEA nations. Through this systemic, historical, and policy review, I introduce theory elements that will be explored throughout the thesis: policy as practice, policy discourse, multi-locality, and convergence across localities (Ball 1998). I also extend the theoretical discussion beyond a neoliberal interpretation of education reform. The review of core ideals underlying the inception of Bologna show the EHEA as an education project that stands on more than neoliberal reform principles.

1- Membership and priorities of the Bologna process

On 25 May 1998, French Minister of Education Claude Allègre took advantage of the Sorbonne University's anniversary to launch the initial steps of a multistate higher education collaboration, the Bologna process, that would become the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) twelve years later. On that day of 1998, the ministers of Italy, United Kingdom, Germany, and France adopted the *Declaration on harmonisation of the architecture of the European higher education system*[40]. This first declaration became known as the *Sorbonne Declaration*, and was followed by

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[40] Sorbonne Joint declaration, 25 May 1998

the formal *Bologna Declaration* one year later, on 19 June 1999. This was the start of the Bologna process. At this stage 29 countries were participating, soon to expand to 33 in 2001, and 48 countries today[41]. The *Bologna Declaration* envisioned the creation of the unified European educational space by 2010. In accordance with this initial vision, and with some trepidation, the EHEA was announced during the Budapest-Vienna conference of 12 March 2010. In 2003, Russia joined the Bologna process.

The Bologna 'Dimensions': core policy priorities

The Bologna process advocates for collaboration towards a total of nine core *Dimensions* that should, together, improve and raise the quality, equity, and efficacy of higher education. Improving the equity in higher education is one of the nine Bologna policy dimensions: the **Social Dimension**. This policy states that the student body should reflect the diversity of the national population. The Bologna process also calls for the creation by participating states of regulations to support the learners' capacity to contribute[42] to society. This is enacted through five Bologna dimensions: creating policies to enhance learners' international **mobility**, provide opportunities to engage in **lifelong learning**, improve **student-centred learning** pedagogical practices, and smooth the transition between academia and the market sector. This last is the **employability** principle, and targets efficiency in educating the future workforce by strengthening the **academia-research-industry** nexus and innovation potential. Beyond those five dimensions, the Bologna process works on developing **qualifications transparency tools**, on **reporting procedures on implementation**, and capacitation **funding**.

Membership in the Bologna process

Membership in the Bologna process can be defined at its base as a partnership of countries that adhere to a principle of higher education system convergence across the entire European and Central Asian geography. The past fifteen years have seen a constant growth of participation in the Bologna process, and a sustained demand from new states to be considered for membership to Bologna, then to the EHEA, post 2010. This expansion first reached the European Union, then

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[41] See appendix 1: EHEA Membership
[42] 'Contribute' is the term that is recurringly used in Bologna policies and supporting texts.

beyond to eastern countries (Russia, Turkey…), and now extends westwards towards Latin America[43].

The Bologna process encompasses three core goals that define the pan-European education convergence project. These objectives are that participating nations should adhere to a ***two-cycle*** (undergraduate/graduate) higher education system, whose standards are ***jointly assessed*** (quality assurance standards), and pursue an objective of ***global and mobility-enabling*** higher education. The joint assessment of higher education standards assists in the mobility objective through the creation of the European Credit Transfer System[44] (ECTS). These principles were first outlined in the two seminal declarations that gave birth to the Bologna process, the *Sorbonne Declaration* and the *Lisbon Recognition Convention*[45]. These Bologna objectives are officially firmly separated from any notion of 'standardisation'.

> "In the discourse of the Bologna process, the term "convergence" is only used to denote the process [denoting a] far-reaching political consensus that higher education systems should converge, but not about the endpoint of this movement (i.e., convergence as a state, or result). The popularity of the term "convergence" hinges on the perception that it denotes a process only; while the term "harmonisation" has been abandoned due to the perception that this would imply the standardisation of HE systems (see Neave (1996, p. 28) for a similar interpretation). Aiming at "convergence" is widely seen as compatible with the simultaneous upholding of "diversity"— an agreed value of European HE—while "harmonisation" is perceived as threatening this diversity." (Witte 2006, 83-84)

The notion of non-standardisation is important politically: this choice of rhetoric is central to officially recognise the worth of diversity and to refute any notion of superseding national education systems with a centralised, uniform education model. Bologna is therefore billed as a convergence process.

This convergence towards an integrated pan-European higher education geography is achieved through individual, national, or institutional collaborative projects to implement Bologna's recommendations. The actors of these projects can be governments, individual academics or students, higher education institutions, or international organisations. Governments delineate a national education development strategy that is aligned with Bologna standards, and collaborate

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[43] See EHEA 2015 Yerevan Conference and the development of Latin American countries cooperation

[44] The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System was initially created in 1989 by the Erasmus programme, to assist in the recognition of students' learning that had been achieved during studies abroad. Credits earned abroad could be transferred in credits towards their 'home' degree.

[45] The Lisbon Convention, signed 1998, was the joint convention by the Council of Europe and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) through which the first steps towards a degree recognition process were taken. It enters into force on 1st February 1999. It defined the principles of diploma recognition across the member states participating to Bologna.

towards those development objectives with support from higher education networks that are composed of the Bologna advisory institutions (for different forms of convergence, see Adelman 2009). This implementation of global policies through national strategies is defined by Ball as "convergence across localities" (Ball 1998). Other large collaborative projects are the result of governmental legislations that pave the way for multiyear, multilateral institution partnerships. I present such a multilateral development example in Chapter 5[46]. Non-state participants (individuals, institutions) implement education reforms in the Bologna space by creating partnerships between universities or between the academic and private sector, Bologna advocacy actors, or other education reform groups. The scale of the projects can be as individual-focused as a single student benefiting from an ad-hoc partnership between two universities. The time frame of projects also varies: participation can take the form of immediate and short-term collaborations, or at the other extreme, long-term state engagement with international agencies such as the Bologna quality standards agencies, whose work resulted in university ranking processes (Ball 2015a, c, d) and in structuring the governance of today's EHEA (Bieber 2010, Morgan and Shahjahan 2014).

Bologna's initial humanist values and socio-cultural dimension

Initial humanist vision

At Bologna's inception, the founding declarations determined that the negotiations on higher education convergence should be conducted in the cultural sphere of international cooperation. It should not be conducted in the market space, but the social, political, and cultural space of inter-state cooperation. Underlying the Bologna Declaration is the vision that the members' joint collaboration on education can result in progress towards the common commitment to peace[47], democracy, and cultural exchange.

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[46] See chapter on TEMPUS project SEXTANT

[47] One must recall that the Bologna Declaration was pronounced at a time of war in Kosovo. The Kosovo war had at the time profound political and social impact on the European Union. It was the first war in Europe since the second world war, and featured the largest influx of refugees that the European Union had seen, testing the Union's collaborative strength. As a point of comparison, the number of refugees during the Kosovo wars was estimated as close to 800,000 when today's Syria refugees is estimated at 1.3M+. Experts on Syrian refugee crisis estimate that the stress on the EU institutions was much greater due to the shorter span of time during which the influx of Kosovo refugees arrived in Europe.

"A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space. The importance of education and educational co-operation in the development and strengthening of stable, peaceful and democratic societies is universally acknowledged as paramount, the more so in view of the situation in South East Europe." (Bologna Declaration, June 1999)

The Lisbon Convention also remained attached to the same political ideology of creating a new social and cultural European paradigm. Today, the official EHEA roadmaps for education cooperation again bring to the fore the principle of cultural cooperation, and the objective of improving social convergence between member states by sharing cultural histories within the framework of education exchanges. Focused on enhancing cooperation, the *Louvain-la-Neuve Communiqué* (2009) emphasised the need to "fully recognise the value of various missions of higher education, ranging from teaching and research to community services and engagement in social cohesion[48] and cultural development". These themes are also reflected in Russia's higher education international engagement and national reforms. Looking at the post-1990 Russian education restructuring, Zajda (2003a, 2005, 2007) makes explicit three principal post-Soviet trends: democracy, individualisation and humanity.

Social Dimension: ulterior policy vision

Among these nine Bologna policy dimensions, the social dimension was proposed to Bologna leadership in 2001 and adopted in its final form in 2012. The definition of the *social dimension* principle evolved between these dates. It became one of the nine official dimensions of the Bologna process in 2009, and was promptly reaffirmed as a core principle upon the transition to the EHEA. The social dimension is a core dimension of the Bologna process that calls on member states to act against inequalities in access to higher education and against unequal chances for higher education completion. It is a reform objective that the Bologna leadership committed to pursue, to advocate to its members, to support with research and implementation resources, and around which it develops coordinative actions. In contrast with, say, the European

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[48] The Bologna "Social Dimension" is a policy principle that advocates for a higher education student population that reflects the wider diversity of European population (Bucharest 2012). It also means representativity and government efforts towards equity in education (Bucharest 2012) and an education free of discrimination on social, cultural, and economic backgrounds (London summit 2007).

Credit Transfer System, it is not a specific educational tool that can be implemented, nor has it been paired with a single regulatory framework. Rather, it is a social and education reform concept that is implemented through several Bologna policies (Kooij 2015). Bologna leading institutions and European political institutions defined social dimension differently, over the course of ten years of construction, and pursue different agendas to advance it. It is therefore more a diffused principle of equalitarian education around which actors and institutions coordinate, than a single implementation strategy.

The idea of promoting a social dimension in higher education was first proposed for examination in 2001 at the Prague Convention. At the time the European Student Union[49] proposed an inquiry into social and gender inequalities in higher education, and advocated for actions to improve social cohesion in higher education. The concept of social dimension was not at first well defined, but rather proposed as a potential new element of Bologna collaboration. In this first stage of policy proposal, the social dimension was introduced as a balancing measure to the overly economic emphasis of Bologna's higher education policies (these economic policies focused on improving market relevance and world-wide competitiveness of European higher education). From this 2001 point onward, the social dimension principle went through several stages and definitions. The Bologna European ministerial meeting of Berlin (2003) produced a general call for data collection to define what a social dimension in higher education might entail. A more specific call for national data and national strategies followed in Bergen in 2005. At this ministerial meeting the social dimension became a constituent element of Bologna: a core principle that was publicly identified as central to the Bologna process strategy, and a commitment which prospective members had to agree to. It was then (2005-2007) that a working group was formed (the BFUG-WG[50]) to create a coordinated agenda and a data bank, and to identify implementation actions for the improvement of the social dimension. Two aspects were added for consideration: ensuring equal access to education, and appropriate conditions for students throughout their education. At the beginning, the principle was considered by Bologna policy makers to be purely a social counterbalance to Bologna's economic slant. By 2005 however, it was perceived differently: as a principle supporting the rights of all individuals to education, vertical mobility, and ultimately increased economic power. In 2007 in the London

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[49] Advisory member of the Bologna Follow Up Group

[50] *Bologna Follow Up Working Group on Social Dimension and Data on the Mobility of Staff and Students in Participating Countries*. Leading members: ESU, EUA, EI, and 10 countries including Russia {Kooij, 2015 #651}.

ministerial meeting the BFUG working group started calling for reports from participating countries and suggestions for further actions. Between 2007 and the 2009 Leuven ministerial meeting, the social dimension was officially identified as a priority area, one of the nine official Dimensions of Bologna. This identification as a priority policy brought more attention and funds to this principle, and engaged all policy actors of Bologna to participate in the creation of responses to the social dimension.

The current definition of Bologna's social dimension was created during this period: the social dimension advocates for a higher education student population that reflects the wider diversity of European population, at university and in all levels of education. "The student body entering and graduating from higher education institutions should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations" (Bucharest 2012).

> "The expression [social dimension] is no longer vague. The Bologna Working Group on social dimension (2007) was very explicit as to the objective: "the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of our populations" (p. 11). [The Working Group] makes it clear that the definitions and processes will reflect "the social and political culture" and "the systems and structures of education in the different states" (p. 11). It's another case of convergence: Bologna countries will sing in the same key on the social dimension, but the melodic line and improvisation will vary. In a very smart reflection, the Working Group felt that "it is not appropriate to narrowly define the social dimension or suggest a number of detailed actions that might be unduly difficult or inappropriate to deliver for all countries involved" (p. 11)." (Adelman 2009, 148)

In other words, the socio-cultural diversity in a nation should be reflected in the student body. The London meeting also introduced a key conceptual change: equal access to knowledge, rather than a more restricted call for equal access to education. The implications bear on both the strategic goals and the means of action: it meant that learning technology improvement (access to knowledge everywhere), student-centred learning, and lifelong learning (improving one's skills beyond traditional university years) were seen as part and parcel of the social dimension principle. Additional ministerial declarations set the Bologna agenda to improve education services for "underrepresented groups […], reduce inequalities and provide adequate student support services" (Bucharest 2012). The principle further advocated for an education free of discrimination based on social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. The 2007 London summit emphasised "the importance of students being able to complete their studies without obstacles related to their social and economic background". After 2010, the principle was fully understood

by the policy makers of the BFUG to be a driver of economic growth and a driver of the international competitivity of the EHEA.

There was therefore a gradual transition from the initial 2001 definition the social dimension as a counterbalance to the market focused Bologna policies, to then state that individual acquisition of education participates in the general growth of the nation's economy, to finally perceive that the social dimension is truly a central driver of economic and international growth for the nation. Similarly, there was a transition from the initial perception of social dimension as providing equal access to education, to eventually define the principle as promoting a student body representative of the EU population, and promoting equal education and completion for all, including minority populations and non-traditional learners.

The Bologna process is a set of policies that officially seeks a normative construction of humanist cultural values and of new sociocultural practices (Aydarova 2014, Croché 2009, Gálvez, Díaz, and Galán 2014, Haukland 2017, Yagci 2014), across a geography of 48 countries. Policy documents and authoritative discourses by political figures designated an official principle of "convergence" (Adelman 2009, Witte 2008), to guide and organise the actors' practices advocated by Bologna across this extensive geography. Bologna policy as practice officially seeks a recognition of the roles of localities in the construction of the global, within a larger framework of guided humanist and sociocultural convergence (Witte 2008). Finally, the official principles of Bologna unambiguously seek a transformation of the socioeconomic and cultural characteristics of education. Its Social Dimension seeks to transform access to education, the ethnic makeup of participating populations, mobility across localities, cultural value of education, and to create a shared educational culture.

2- Diversity in Bologna: co-existing educative projects and different membership goals

From its early years, the Bologna process had to contend with a dichotomy. On one hand, it announced the objective of uniting its members around a shared education collaboration and a vision of a new shared transnational European education community. On the other hand, it faced

a diversity of visions, objectives, and implementation pace among its members. The coming pages present this diversity of participants' realities. This review of Bologna's complexities is a necessary first step to adequately contextualise an ethnography of the actors' practices.

The Bologna process had been a floating project gradually taking shape since 1988, through a succession of other European education programmes. Many of these initial programmes survived the appearance of Bologna, creating an education policy context where multiple programmes grew in parallel, vying for similar education development goals.

The European Commission had initiated the *Socrates* higher education programme in 1994. Socrates funded innovation, trans-European education mobility, and various other initiatives whose objectives were to foster a "European dimension of education". The Socrates I and II programmes continued from 1994 until 2006. Under Socrates, several initiatives were united, including the *Erasmus*[51] student mobility programme. This programme funded actions very similar to mobility projects of the future Bologna process. Socrates was also coordinated and funded by the same European Union government branch that would later fund the post-2010 EHEA education mobility projects[52]. The Socrates initiative was eventually replaced by the EU's Lisbon Convention *Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013*[53]. An extension of Socrates, the Lifelong Learning Programme had additional impact on language education, European academic community development programmes, and vocational education. Over the same 2007-13 time period, the education principle of 'lifelong learning' was gaining traction in Bologna process efforts, with more and more attention being given to vocational education (Zajda 2003b, on European lifelong learning and Russia vocational education programmes). The coexistence of Bologna, Erasmus, Socrates, or the Lifelong Learning Programme exemplifies the internal

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[51] European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students. European Union programme established in 1987 by the European Commission, replaced in 2014 by ERASMUS Plus.

[52] EU Education and Culture branch, Information Society and Media section.

[53] This 2007 transition towards lifelong learning is one example among many of the education policy convergence efforts that occurred during the past decade. In this instance, the European Commission (EC) transitioned its mobility programmes towards a larger coverage of lifelong learning perspective, in an official effort to 'make Lisbon happen'. As will be explained later, the Treaty of Lisbon (*Treaty on Functioning of European Union*), announced that education was a domain of competence for the EC. Before 2007, the EC only held an observation and liaison role, leaving all competence to the Bologna agencies. This transition signalled the support by the EC of a vision where the EU's world-wide competitive status was founded on the power of a 'knowledge economy'. It also marked a complexification of the European institutional governing actors (now Bologna and EC) regarding education reform.

multiplicity of programmes that thrived in the European Union during the initial years of Bologna, pursuing comparable objectives. This diversity endures today, with multiple strands of funding that support distinct education development agendas.

The internal diversity of Bologna can also be seen in the multiplicity of interpretations demonstrated by the first participants in the programme. The first steps of the Bologna process were launched on the initiative of four principal partners: France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom. At the time, one of the principal participants and initiators of the process, French education minister Claude Allègre, was facing serious political challenges at home as he attempted to move through a series of contentious higher education reforms. During an interview, a policy advisor of the EURASHE[54] organisation recounted his vision of the diverse responses:

> Interviewee: "It started with France, who as you know, wanted to pass [unpopular education] reforms, because they would be 'killed' by French academicians, so they wanted a pretext, therefore they organised this Sorbonne meeting. And then Germans jumped in.
>
> […]
>
> So in fact it was like this, that practically, you did not have, let us say, twenty-nine signatures under Bologna declaration, but you had 29 Bologna declarations. Every country had something different in mind when they were signing the Bologna agreement!"

It was in this climate of unpopular national modernisation reforms, and diverging efforts by the four initial partners to increase the international standing of their respective educative systems, that the broad outlines of the Sorbonne declaration were defined. In this context, member states variously saw Bologna as an avenue to potentially deepen European integration, raise international visibility and renew competitiveness on the labour market, or as a shield against contentious internal reforms. While resting on a background of successive advances in education cooperation, neither the four initial partners nor the subsequent 29 signatories of the Bologna Declaration had had the time to fully develop and negotiate the particulars of what turned out to be a broad commitment to an ideal of pan-European harmonised higher education. Hoareau (2012), Capano & Piattoni (2011), and Witte (2006) extensively review the initial divergence of approaches and interpretations of Bologna, and how this formed the historical background to the eventual choices in governance models, particularly the growth of 'deliberative governance' and 'discursive coordination' **as** governance architecture.

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[54] European Association of Institutions in Higher Education, organisation that is part of the advisory committee of Bologna

3- Sustaining a common agenda through policy repetition and accumulation of bilateral agreements

Over the past twenty years, the engagement of member states with Bologna has been marked by a diversity of interpretations, and various paces of implementation. What, then, was the basis upon which the Bologna project could forge ahead? In the design of the Bologna process and governance structures, what factors were supposed to provide cohesion? The coming pages show that the various stages of Bologna transitions, from inception at the Sorbonne Declaration to the creation of the EHEA, exhibit a pattern of policy iteration, gradual structuring and distribution of governance powers, and reliance on network overlaps to diffuse the policy message. I show the political and organisational framework within which Bologna practices and values are negotiated, and introduce the role that message repetition and creation of a common language have in the sustainability of the Bologna policy. This will be developed through the thesis into a deeper exploration of the practices of discursive diffusion (diffusion of policy rhetoric) in Bologna.

Keeping common objectives over a decade of policy-making: policy iteration from Bologna to the post-2013 roadmap

The common European education space has been imagined around a set of educational and societal principles that were repeated in a succession of meetings and conferences, reformulated by multiple agencies, and reasserted year after year.

In the Bologna years leading to 2009, the policy and Bologna rhetoric was organised around three central themes. First was the fostering of education innovation to support European social cohesion and academic mobility. Second was the new 'comparability' framework of higher education that I identified earlier as the keystone of Bologna transnational agreements (this framework includes a system of transparent and comparable degrees, a curriculum progression articulated around the 2 + 1 cycle: Bachelor's/Master's + Doctoral, and a system of course credits facilitating student learning outcomes across education systems). Third, Bologna was

organised politically and in its policy concepts around an understanding that future social and economic productivity of its actors depended on enhancing the community of workers through lifelong learning activities, and by consolidating once more a shared quality assurance system throughout the Bologna geography. As for the present-day EHEA, the critical areas for the future of higher education were identified in 2009 at the Louvain-la-Neuve[55] meeting (EHEA launch). There, the representatives outlined the *Bologna beyond 2010* programme for the 2010-2020 decade; the objectives remained in keeping with the three original education development themes of shared innovation, comparable education, and lifelong learning. I observe in the Louvain-la-Neuve reports and the 2010-2020 programme a preservation of the rhetoric found in the original 1999 documents. The reports highlight the need for a "correlation of education, research, and innovation" and "increased enterprises partnership initiatives". They promote the creation of a common framework of education standards with an increased effort in "transparency through reporting" and investment in an "overarching European national qualification framework". The texts of Louvain-la-Neuve insist on the importance for future generations of developing a lifelong, student-centred learning experience. Lastly, the 2010-2020 development programme insists on the need to respect cultural diversity and increase through education programmes the "number of European minorities attaining higher education, […] working towards a wider Europe".

Repetition of the Bologna education message through treaty repetition and layering, inside and beyond Bologna

The Bologna message was built on more than forty years of efforts in education development, most of which can be sourced to internationally governing bodies. It was initiated by national education ministers, backed by UNESCO and by the European Commission. In support of the Bologna declaration, European Union legislative bodies are full partners in the creation and growth of Bologna. The European Commission holds a central advisory position in the Bologna process. The European Council has a financial and diplomatic involvement in the Bologna process. As the Bologna project grew, what was nominally a non-binding, diversity-respecting,

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[55] Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009

participatory process, in fact relied heavily for its continued success on the combination of message repetition and alignment with these powerful international governing bodies.

History of treaties in the European Union: message repetition, message alignment, and gradual distribution of governance powers

As early as 1957, the *Treaty of Rome*[56] recognised the stalling effect that diploma non-recognition could have on academic mobility. The treaty delimited the legal and policy competencies[57] of the European institutions on this subject, awarding a leading role to the European Council.

> "In order to make it easier for persons to take up and pursue activities as self-employed persons, the Council shall, acting in accordance with the procedure referred to in Article 189b,[58] issue directives for the mutual recognition of diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications."[59]

This interpretation of the diploma recognition's socio-economic role is the interpretation that was later reproduced in the 1997 Lisbon Convention[60]. 53 states eventually became signatories, with a geographical reach that spanned from Europe, to the CIS, USA, Canada, and Israel, marking the first entry (1999) of the Russian Federation into the European system of diploma recognition. Following closely on the heels of the Bologna agreement and the Lisbon Convention, the 2001 *Treaty of Nice*[61] marked the first cooperation effort at the European Union level towards an area of common policies in transnational vocational education. Article #150 of Nice determined three key pursuits that were aligned with the Bologna efforts: geographical mobility of participants, engagement with 'third countries' (therefore the Russian Federation), and adoption of common principles supporting a shared educational space. The latter decision in effect prepared a continued diplomatic effort towards these Bologna-type educational objectives.

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[56] Treaty of Rome, 25 March 1957 (Sect. Establishing the European Community)
[57] Competencies: term officially used to indicate what rights and duties a political institution has to perform a task or provide guidance on a particular policy domain, and the limitations of said rights/duties.
[58] Art 189 b1: The Commission shall submit a proposal to the European Parliament and the Council. The Council, acting by a qualified majority after obtaining the Opinion of the European Parliament, shall adopt a common position. The common position shall be communicated to the European Parliament.
[59] Treaty of Rome, Art. 57.1
[60] Lisbon recognition convention: Convention on the recognition of qualifications in the field of higher education in the European region. (08-11 April 1997)
[61] The treaty of Nice (26 February 2001 establishing the European Economic Community and amending the EU Maastricht treaty).

"The Community shall implement a vocational training policy. […] encourage mobility of instructors and trainees and particularly young people […] foster cooperation with third countries and the competent international organisations in the sphere of vocational training"

"The Council, […] shall adopt measures to contribute to the achievement of the objectives referred to in this article".[62]

The Treaty of Nice also defined an increased financial role for the EU in Bologna, with the agreement that financial donations by the European Union members would be given towards Bologna programmes that focus on 'border regions'. Article 165 states that "the Union and the Member States shall foster cooperation with third countries […] and the competent international organisations in the sphere of vocational training". This is important on multiple levels for the present research: the Russian Federation is designated as a 'third country' by European legislations. It is also a country that places heavy emphasis on vocational training; Russian programmes in vocational training are recognised by EU institutions as a core strength of the Federation's higher education system. Nice therefore officialised a funding line and policy competence, from EU institutions, to Bologna, to Russia. Lastly, this role given to the EU of diplomatic agreement initiator and centralised political force behind education development efforts is a step forward in the EU's active involvement, a step forward from being a simple contributor-observer to the Bologna process as it had been until then.

Later in 2007 with the *Treaty of Lisbon*[63] (different from the Lisbon Convention), the European Union continued the Treaty of Nice's educational efforts, employing the same policy phrasing and objectives. Eight years after the start of the Bologna process, the European Council completed the move from observer and advisor towards a more involved position. The Treaty of Lisbon defines the *Treaty on Functioning of European Union* (TFEU), officially marking education as a domain of supporting competence for the European Commission[64], when the Commission had previously only been present in an observation and liaison role. The Treaty of Lisbon defines the charge of this new competency role for the European Commission, keeping the exact same policy terminology as the previous Nice engagements: "developing the European dimension in education", "encouraging mobility of students and teachers, [and] academic recognition of diplomas", and "encouraging the development of distance education". Lisbon is a direct paraphrase of Nice; but it also introduces key changes that indicate a movement towards

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[62] Treaty of Nice article 150, #1,2,3 (better known as article 128 of the EEC)
[63] Treaty of Lisbon 13 December 2007
[64] Treaty of Lisbon, Art. 165 & 166

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institutionalisation of Bologna in the EU system, by awarding political competency to the EC. In Chapter 6 I present similar governance shifts from participant-observer to initiator-regulator that occurred between the Russian Federation and the CIS countries, notably regarding distance education.

Beyond the European agreements, other treaties reinforce the governance capacity of the Bologna directing organisations. I note for example the role of UNESCO in drafting both the core Bologna documents and a number of other international treaties. An original member of the Bologna process, UNESCO participated since the start to the design of the policies. Research shows that prior and during this involvement, between 1960 and 2011, it participated in the drafting of 18 other major international education treaties: 10 conventions, 6 agreements, one international charter, and one declaration. Now a member of the Bologna Follow-Up Group[65] (BFUG) alongside the representatives of member states, it is an important actor in the governing structure, responsible for monitoring implementation actions across all of the EHEA. In this role, UNESCO holds a hinge position between the BFUG governing body and the international organisations that built the above-mentioned treaties.

Historical formation of "common European economic and social spaces[66]" between the EU and the Russian Federation: repeated bilateral agreements[67] and repeated principles of higher education cooperation.

As shown above, there is a convergence of legislations and governing powers whose authority supports the Bologna process. Signatory members of Bologna are also often participant to a number of other convergent treaties, whose legally binding international agreements *de facto* lend weight to Bologna's education principles. Taking the case of the Russian Federation and its signed education-specific treaties, five principal agreements both impacted the writing of its national higher education laws and lent weight to the Bologna objectives. The *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) advocates the rights of all to education (Art. 26.1). "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and

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[65] Bologna advisory group which serves as advisory structure and leads the funding and implementation of Bologna process
[66] For full analysis of Russian and European transnational efforts through the 'Common Spaces of Research, Education and Culture', see George Leach, 2014.
[67] Source: http://www.st-gaterus.eu/en/538.php

fundamental states". The *First Protocol to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms* (1950) protects religious and cultural rights (Art. 2) "the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religious and philosophical convictions". I see this as the international cultural freedom counterpart to the Bologna efforts towards recognising and preserving European education culture differences. The *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966) protects, among others, the right to vocational education (Art. 13.b), and awarding higher education rights on the basis of ability (Art. 13.c). The first article's insistence on continuing education was later reflected in the renewed Bologna efforts to promote adult education. The *Convention against Discrimination in Education* (1960) determines that education is a vehicle for the international promotion of tolerance and peace (Art. 5.1.a) as it "shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace". This agenda for education is reflected in the first humanist vision of the Sorbonne and later declarations. Education rights, across international texts, revolve around the availability, freedom, non-discrimination, access to vocational education, and length of education (primary/secondary/higher).

Adding to the policy convergence described above, a series of bilateral agreements were developed, year after year, between Russia and the EU. Below is a table of EU-Russia bilateral meetings in the pre-EHEA period, during which the development of trade partnerships, education area integration, and cultural exchanges were shaped.

Period	Name	Date	Details
pre-1990			
	Germany - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation	7/7/87	Agreement on S&T, including on education
	Trade and Co-operation Agreement between the USSR and the European Community	30/11/89	Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation Agreement. Regulated relations EU-Russia until 1997 and the PCA
1991			
	Launch of the EU-Russia		

	cooperation programme		
	Opening of the Delegation of the European Commission to the Russian Federation	2/91	
1992-97			
	Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA)	24/6/94	"Agreement on partnership and cooperation establishing a partnership between the European Communities and their Member States, of one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part" (see appendix)
	France - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation Italy - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation United Kingdom - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation	28/7/92 1/12/95 28/5/96	
1998-00			
	Individual Agreements with EU countries: - Italy Cultural and Educational Collaboration Agreement - Norway-Russia: agreement on S&T Cooperation	10/2/98 26/5/98	
	Adoption by the EU of the Common Strategy of the EU on Russia	4/6/99	(see appendix)
	Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology between the European Community and the Government of the Russian Federation	5/10/99	(see appendix)
2001-02	…		

Fig. 5: Summary of EU-Russia Russian Federation bilateral agreements[68]

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[68] For full listing of all EU-Russia Common Spaces and bilateral agreements until 2008, see appendix "Russian Federation bilateral agreements"

These bilateral agreements were the basis upon which the dialogue on education reform between Russia and Europe was sustained through the final post-Soviet years and through the first Russian economic reforms[69]. Bilateral agreements are often simply the vessel of joint declarations that outline non-binding guidelines for future cooperation. Nonetheless, they are essential to define and outline the upcoming inter-European cooperation agenda, and the calendar of activities of the Bologna advisory groups[70]. Just like in any endeavour, a mid-range perspective is needed to establish a calendar of actions, and it is on the basis of the assurance brought by the bilateral agreements that the advisory groups can establish prospective Bologna higher education development goals, and build their expertise over time. This expertise in turn supports the national institutions' education development activities, and fosters ongoing dialogue on the same social-education rhetoric of the bilateral agreements. Lastly, these bilateral treaties were the agreements through which the EU and Russia political representatives repeatedly tied the higher education international development into the industry development programmes and common trade spaces. Significant efforts have been made jointly by the EU, international organisations, and Bologna policy makers towards casting our current society as one of "knowledge economy". In effect, what we can perceive from the texts of Bologna and of the successive bilateral agreements is the construction and the refinement of joint political statements on what 'knowledge economy' actually implies and how it is politically defined. That definition has direct impact on which education policies can be funded by the European Union institutions, and this in turn impacts the of higher education institutions.

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[69] "The legal basis for EU-Russian relations was established in 1989 by signing the Trade and Co-operation Agreement between the USSR and the European Community. This treaty regulated relations between the EU and Russia until 1997. The Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA), which the EU and Russia signed on Corfu in 1994, entered into force in December 1997 and was valid until 2007. The PCA envisaged the establishment of a free trade area (which was later abandoned in favour of a Common European Economic Space, CEES) and the creation of an institutional framework for intensified political dialogue." {Made, 2004 #550@10}

[70] The Bologna advisory group is the 'E4 group', a congregation of academic, government, International Organisation, and Industrial representatives. The composition, proximity to the EU agencies, and role of the E4 group will be presented in detail in the second section of this chapter.

4- Conclusion

The Bologna process has been politically devised as a set of transnational policies to pursue systemic changes and educational practice changes across a vast geographical area. In the pages above I presented the history and documented policy objectives and diversities inherent in the Bologna process. The policies openly advocate for social and cultural shifts throughout an extended European area, by way of implementing a guided convergence of educational practices, educational values, and norms. As much as it is a theoretical choice in this thesis to approach policy as a set of sociocultural practices, it is also the officially stated goal of Bologna to implement changes in social and cultural behaviours among actors of the higher education sector.

In this chapter I explore which aspects of the Bologna history and legislative/administrative structure provided its governing body with the means to overcome the initial participating actors' diversity of intent, comprehension of the Bologna message, and their varied paces of reform implementation. The construction of today's EHEA model required a capacity to gradually build a shared rhetoric and repertoire of education development, and build a system of convergence between disparate state actors that might support the continued implementation of the Bologna precepts beyond the initial disparity of members' engagements. There has been a diversity in the member states' initial interpretations of the Bologna vision of education and its objectives, which endures to this day in the Bologna implementation processes[71]. Nonetheless, beyond this initial diversity, we see at the policy level fifteen years of growth of the education community, policy framework, definition of expectations, interaction with European legislations in education, and objective definitions. Bologna also relied on the growth of the European Commission's role, and the parallel development of education reforms in international organisations and the European programme. This constancy in the political message corresponded to a constancy in high-level European funding. Even while the European education project suffered economically from an overly rapid expansion and a lack of political cohesiveness, and while individual national implementations of the Bologna process and institutional engagements towards it varied, the transnational education convergence effort still maintained a small number of policy objectives through its the first decade of growth, and enforced a continuity of policy goals since its

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[71] 2015 EHEA implementation report.

inception in 1998-99. Two elements seem central to me: policy goal repetition, policy language diffusion, and systemic structuring around a singular message. The construction of the Bologna governance is rooted in a message repetition, the proliferation of support agencies, and a gradual merging of obligatory European legislative powers with the participatory principle of the Bologna process. It is this constancy in rhetoric and overarching goals that constitute a first analytical stepping stone to understand the workings of the Bologna policy construction. As practicing experts might say (see Johanna Witte, 2006; Bologna Training Centre Ben-Gurion University 2012), the overarching Bologna goals cannot be the sole explanation of what happens "on the ground"; neither can they be the sole explanation of the education practices and education culture changes that occur. Nonetheless, it is around these repeated objectives that the participating members reunited each year; it is around these central themes that individual strategies are negotiated. It is around this language that institutional identities and actors' identities are negotiated, hierarchies and cooperations developed. I see in this administrative repetition and policy structuring an essential organisational force that defined the Bologna governance. Last, I see in these policy recurrences the emerging rhetoric, timelines, and member-state participation rules around which the individual practices of the Bologna actors were officially expected to organise themselves.

4.2 Russian higher education system, diverse engagements with Europe, and uneven implementation of Bologna

Having presented an overview of the Bologna process history and policy tenets, I now present an overview of the Russian higher education system, and history of the Russian State's engagement with the European Union's education programmes (Abankina and Scherbakova 2013, Aydarova 2014, Gänzle, Meister, and King 2009, Kabanova 2013, Knyazev and Drantusova 2013, Mironov 2013, Telegina and Schwengel 2012). The coming pages further describe the Bologna process, particularly the enduring diversity that marks it; members appropriate Bologna policies at different paces, or maintain co-existing Bologna and non-Bologna educational systems. I explore below the Russian appropriation of specific Bologna policies, such as the degree system or the Social Dimension. This section widens the contextual framing of this thesis' analysis to the Russian engagement with Bologna and Russian post-secondary education.

1- Overview of the Russian education system and degree diversity

In 2014-15, the Russian Federation higher education system was made up of 950[72] institutions: 548 state and municipal institutions and 402 private. Legislatively, the Russian Federation higher education system is overseen by the Ministry of Education and Science, and is regulated by the 2012 federal law on education[73] which superseded the 1992 and 1996 laws on education and higher education respectively. More detailed analyses of the legislative framework for Russian-European partnerships is given through the following chapters. The total number of full-time, part-time and distance education students enrolled in 2014-15 was recorded at over 5 million[74] (for historical evolution and regional overview, see the analysis of Berdashkevich 2011). The OECD[75] *Country Note 2014* for the education sector in the Russian Federation reveals that in 2012, of all OECD countries, the Russian Federation had the largest percentage of adults (25+) who attained tertiary education: 53%, while the OECD average was only 32%.

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[72] Source: Russian Federation Statistics Service (Rosstat)
[73] Federal Law "On Education in the Russian Federation" dated 29.12.2012 No 273-FZ
[74] 5.2 M: since the 2012 law on education, this figure includes distance and online learners.
[75] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

Since 2007[76], there are three large categories of professional and post-secondary education. On one hand is basic vocational education, and on the other, higher education (tertiary education), itself divided into two branches: non-university-based mid-level professional education, and university higher education.

University higher education establishments are divided into three types: universities, institutes, and academies. Universities and National Research Universities[77] support the wider range of graduate, post-graduate and continuing education in the humanities, natural and social sciences. The new denomination 'universities' replaces all the former Soviet Pedagogical, Humanities, Medical, Polytechnic, Agricultural and Specialised Institutes. The new Institutes are autonomous education entities that can be either independent of, or divisions of, larger universities. They can offer the same type of graduate and post-graduate instruction as universities. The Academies are education establishments that focus on a single major[78].

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[76] Date at which new legislations on higher education changed the higher education degree structure towards Bologna higher education standards. See further below.

[77] Re-structuring of higher education by creation of three "Excellence Initiatives" whose stated goal is to select the best universities and assign the label of "National Research Universities" or "Federal universities" (5% of all higher education institutions). The governmental objective is to place 5 Russian HEI within the top 100 world HEI by 2020.

[78] For example, the *Russian Foreign Trade Academy of the Ministry for the Economic Development of the Russian Federation* is a higher education academy that trains ministry personnel in Russian foreign trade policy; the *Admiral Makarov State Maritime Academy* is a professional higher education academy for merchant trade.

Doctorate (Doctor degree)

3
2
1

ISCED 6 — Advanced research programmes

Ph.D. (Candidate degree)

3
2
1

Postgraduate education

ISCED 5 — ISCED 5A Tertiary-type A programmes

Diploma of a specialist

21/24		5
20/23	Specialist's	4
19/22	programmes	3
18/21		2
17/20		1

Master's diploma

| 22/25 | Master's programmes | 2 |
| 21/24 | | 1 |

Bachelor's diploma

20/23		4
19/22	Bachelor's	3
18/21	programmes	2
17/20		1

Higher education

ISCED 5B Tertiary-type B programmes

Diploma of basic level

17		3
16		2
15		1

Diploma of upper level

18		4
17		3
16		2
15		1

Diploma of basic level

| 18 | | 2 |
| 17 | | 1 |

Diploma of upper level

19		3
18		2
17		1

ISCED 4 — Post-secondary non-tertiary education

Secondary vocational education

Lower vocational education certificate

17	**Lower vocational**	3
16	**education**	2
15		1

Secondary (complete) general education certificate

17	**Secondary (complete)**	12
16	**general education**	11
15		10

ISCED 3 — Second stage

ISCED 2 — First stage

Basic general education certificate

14		9
13		8
12	**Basic general education**	7
11		6
10		5

ISCED 1 Primary education

9		4
8	**Primary general education**	3
7		2
6		1

ISCED 0 Pre-primary education

6		4
5	**Preschool education**	3
4		2
3		1

International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED-97)

Age, *years*

Years of study

Russian Federation Law «On Education»
Federal Law «On Higher and Postgraduate Professional Education»

Tertiary education — Secondary education — Additional adult learning — Additional children learning

Fig. 6: Education system in the Russian Federation[79]

University-level education is reached after passing the *Unified State Exam*. This standardised testing was introduced as a pilot project in 2000-01, and was one of the first Russian legislative changes towards the Bologna process. It became compulsory in 2009[80]. During the course of the higher education curriculum, five types of degrees can be conferred on the student. The intermediate diploma (*Diploma of Incomplete Higher Education*) is given after the completion of two years of higher education, be it towards a Bachelor or Specialist degree. The *Specialist Diploma* awards a degree in professional fields of specialty, and gives access to doctoral studies. The Bachelor and Master degrees were gradually introduced[81] after the entry into the Bologna agreements, and follow the European standard of 3 or 4 + 2 years of study. Both diplomas certify progress towards entry to doctoral degrees. To complete this review, the first doctoral degree (*Kandidat Nauk*) corresponds to the European *Doctor of Philosophy* degree, whereas the final *Doktor Nauk* degree is awarded later, corresponding roughly to a full Professor title.

2- Russian higher education: an uneven Bologna appropriation

Prior to 2003, when the Russian Federation formally joined the European Bologna initiative, the education engagement between Russia and Europe had already been marked by a multiplicity of international ties and a diversity of national reforms in preparation for Bologna. This contributed to an enduring diversity in educational engagements with Europe, beyond the Bologna partnership. The Russian higher education institutions also were confronted with difficulties in the full implementation of some central Bologna policies, such as the BA/MA system and the social dimension principle. Below I explore practices that limited this engagement and appropriation of Bologna policies.

Note: OECD statistics define higher education as categories "ISCED level 5, 6" (5 = short-cycle tertiary degree; 6 = long-term research degree -Bachelors & Masters). Russian Federation defines higher education more narrowly than ISCED levels 5-6. ISCED 5B is excluded and counted as "secondary professional education" in HSE statistics. See OECD thematic review of tertiary education 2007.

[80] Unified State Exam, Art. 11 of Law N 125-FZ, 2009

[81] The Russian Federation passed an amendment to the law on education in 2007, introducing the BA/MA degree structure. 24 October 2007: "On Amendments to Certain Legal Acts of the Russian Federation within the part concerning the establishment of degrees in education" #N232-FZ. This law also ensures that students can pass from one programme to another, or from Specialist to Bachelor, within the higher education system.

Multiple Russian education engagements with Europe

Since 1996 Russia has been a member of the *Council of Europe*. In this capacity, it participates in 3 programmes that were developed under the aegis of the Council and of the European Commission: the *Diploma Supplement*, *Erasmus Mundus (HEI -action 2)*, and the *Tempus Program*. These programmes specifically target eastern European nations that are geographically outside of the European Union[82]. Of these, only the Diploma Supplement falls directly under the Bologna process. Prior to its full entry into Bologna in 2003, Russia signed the Lisbon Convention on 7 May 1999, ratifying it on 25 May 2000. Since 2000, the Russian Federation has been confronted with a proliferation of reform advisory agencies, both domestic and international, that impacted Russian education development policies. These committees laid out the agenda of changes in higher education until 2010, with growing difficulties due to their number and to administrative instability. Following the signature of the Convention, the Russian Ministry of Education conducted a pilot survey of European higher education in 2002, and started to establish Ministerial committees[83] for the implementation of Bologna. The result was a proliferation of advisory agencies, each vying for a voice in the reforms. One of the effects was that by 2006 there was still a lack of a national credit system that could validate the Russian institutions' learning outcomes (Andrushchak 2008), and therefore enable recognition abroad along Bologna standards. The transition towards a Bachelor's/Master's-type curriculum was slowed down by resistance on two fronts. Academics still perceived the Soviet education system as having been successful, and saw little reason to change it so radically. The Russian enterprises also held the specialist Diploma in high regard, with a clear comprehension of the skills or knowledge it represented. On the other hand, the lack of a clear national strategy to explain to the industrial, business, and financial sectors what exactly the Bachelor's and Master's degrees represented, discouraged any sidelining of the Soviet specialist degree. In 2007, the first significant legal step was taken with the restructuring of the degree types. The federal law of 24 October 2007 (*On introducing amendments into separate legislative acts of the Russian*

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[82] 'Erasmus Mundus action 2' targets specifically "Third-Countries" and is the implementation programme of the Nice treaty's (Art. 150) objective to reach countries outside of Europe (i.e. Russia). "Third country" designates countries that are not a member of the 27 European Union states, are not a candidate to accession country, and are not Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, or Switzerland.

[83] Ministry of Education decree #1291, 09/03/2004; #100, 25/10/2004; Ministry of Education and Science 16/12/04

Federation), in the section concerning the degree system of higher professional education, defined the entry of the two-cycle system in the federal education model, alongside the specialist degree. The deadline of 2009 was announced for the full implementation of the law. By 2009, however, surveys found that only 9.4% of students were enrolled in the two-cycle degree (EUA *Trends VI*, 2012). Between 2010 and 2012, a new higher education law was drafted as a response to the difficulties in implementing reforms. The government made it a point to start the 2012 presidential term by publishing, in parallel to this legislation, a new 2013-2020 programme of education development, attempting to convey a clear and cohesive vision of change for the second decade of the 2000s.

Uneven appropriation of Bologna's 'social dimension' in Russian universities

One of the core Bologna policies is that participating nations converge towards a Bachelor/Master/Doctorate structure of higher education. Members have had uneven results in the appropriation of this policy. Another core component of Bologna is the *social dimension* principle. Bologna's object is to reach a higher degree of equality in higher education, equal access to higher education, and that the student population "should reflect the diversity of Europe's populations" (Bucharest communiqué 2012). One of the policy objective that defines success in achieving the Bologna social dimension that universities gain a degree of *social cohesion* in their student cohort. The Bologna policies identify several implementation norms and practices by which social cohesion should be achieved in the university. Among these are the improvements of regulations that ensure the fair and equal distribution of student welfare resources, the presence of student counseling systems that combat discrimination, and the promotion of other practices fostering non-discrimination. Over the course of my stay at MSPU I witnessed several practices that divided the university's learner population in ways that ran contrary to the development of this definition of social cohesion.

Practices contrary to social cohesion at the MSPU residential building: racialisation and unequal distribution of welfare resources

Bologna's social dimension policy, is in part a set of practices of equal distribution of resources to student, and practices fostering non-discrimination. Upon my arrival to the Moscow State

Pedagogical University (MSPU), the residence to which I was assigned was identified to me by students of MSPU as the 'European' student residence, a first indication of the racialisation that this building engendered. The building hosts visitors from European universities in its top floors, namely the 17th floor. In this building, floors 1 and 2 are offices and staff housing. Floors 3 and 4, as I understood, are housing for older people and couples, mainly Slavic-speaking. The 18th and 19th floors are rented rooms managed by the university like a hotel. Floors 5 to 13 house the Asian population. Almost ten stories of flats are primarily, if not exclusively, dedicated to Asian students, thrown into less than stellar accommodations: six, eight, or sometimes more students to each unit, compared to our two students per flat on the 17th 'westerner' floor. A series of nationwide student surveys[84] led by the Russian Ministry of Education noted the dissatisfaction with poor living conditions and dormitories' basic amenities. Through analysis of this government study and through parallel research, Aref'ev identifies a convergence of living conditions, racism, and low pedagogic quality as marking the experience of Chinese students in Russia. In particular, Aref'ev (2005, 2012) notes the impact that living conditions have on Chinese students in Russia, and the likely impact on future enrolment numbers. Among the research respondents, he identifies a combined total of 44% of Chinese students in Russia that denounce these conditions to their fellow nationals.

> "The main reasons that respondents are not going to advise others [prospective students in China] to attend the same institution or to come to Russia at all include racism and nationalism, poor living conditions in the dormitories, and inadequate quality of the professional training." (Aref'ev 2012, 45)

At the MSPU dormitory, this national pattern of living conditions can be found in the building's state of repair. Floors 14-16 of the dormitory are for Slavic students, and floor 17 is the 'westerner' floor: to my left and right, Polish and Eastern European graduate students. I took the elevator daily and walked along the corridors. I had distinct visual impressions as the doors opened at different floors on the way up: first torn wallpaper, then different shades of beige in a patchwork that barely covered the walls. Then a shade of faded green. A few seconds later, a newly-applied coat of cream colour, washed, smooth: the 17th floor. This pattern struck me, not just because of the repetition I went through every day, but because it seemed a clear visual mark of social stratification. It differentiated a privileged population (me and my cohort of Western

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[84] Center for Sociological Research of the Russian Ministry of Education. Surveys of student population in 2001, 2003, 2007. 2006 and 2007 surveys: 34 institutions in 15 cities, 522 Chinese students.

students) from the Russians living across the street in the buildings marred by broken windows and lack of repairs, and from the Asian student population in my building. All incoming Western European faculty and students, and other European Union students, were placed by the administration in a position of privilege, and advised to maintain separation from the other non-privileged student populations. This division was confirmed through later discussions with French students of the wealthier MGIMO university nearby, where a similar pattern of segregation existed. It was further confirmed during an interview I conducted with an American student of a different university (Vladimir State University).

> American student (AS): I was put in the foreign student dormitory. I had requested to live in the regular dormitory for Russian students for the sake of language practice but that was denied to me by the director. Yes, I am not sure why they decided to lump all the foreign students together in one dorm, if this was some kind of xenophobic thing. Actually, after a while it became more [pause]. Yes, I understood that it was not just to lump all the foreigners into one dormitory and keep them away from our students, it was more like regular Russian student dormitories are chaotic and the conditions are not nearly as good so they wanted to give us a quiet space with nicer facilities.

> Damien Boutillon (DB): I am interested in how far the comparison goes: for us it was top to bottom, the hotel was at the top and as it got closer to the ground floor the conditions degraded gradually.

> AS: Exactly [emphasis], yes. We had one floor [at the top] that was considered a hotel, that was a swanky floor.

> DB: Internet access…

> AS: Disappeared… Yes, the toilets were… Well, you know.

> DB: Did you have to share your room?

> AS: Yes, I lived on the seventh floor, and that was a fancy floor. From seventh, eight to the ninth floor, which was the top floor, it was very nice. I lived on the nicest floor.

> DB: Similarities are eerie here. For me it was the 17th to the 19th floor.

> AS: I lived in a double [room] with an Armenian aspirant. […] We did have Chinese students. The majority of them were here for one year, to study language and leave. Similarly, we had some English students as well, they were there for one year as well on some kind of programme where they got to teach a bit of English and study Russian, and they left after a year. I don't know what university they were from.

The similarities confirmed that the student population division I had experienced at MSPU was a practice found at other institutions. We see here a practice through which resources were distributed unequally to the student population. The social cohesion element of the *social dimension* is put at risk by uneven distribution of resources that ensure the welfare of the student body. At minimum, populations from Europe are given preferential treatment and access to better resources, without having to pay more than the other students. Welfare here goes beyond

the quality of the lodging, to include access to communication means (internet). This meant a direct impact on restricting access to knowledge and educational tools along lines of population origin.

Social division reinforced: racism in the institution, and discrimination-based gatekeeping events

To support the principle of social cohesion, Bologna pushes a global policy action against racial discrimination in education. During my fieldwork I witnessed events where resources were distributed, or kept from students, in a manner that suggested racial motives and threatened the social cohesion as intended by Bologna. The fieldwork provided particular insight into the practices of racial discrimination at the university. The events that I relate below highlighted the interplay of prejudice and discrimination in key moments that involved granting access to a resource and asserting power.

Upon arrival at the university every learner is issued a *spravka* (sometimes referred to as *propusk*[85]): a certificate of lodging, a proof of payment, and a bill of university registration. This document provided by the university proves your current administrative and financial status. Upon ours was written whether we had paid the bills for the Yugo-Zapadnaya lodgings. At the ground floor of every building, the official regulation is the same: all inhabitants must show their *spravka* to a guard, and sign-in any accompanying visitor. The university-mandated guard, or set of guards, had the power to deny the student or visitor access to the residential building. As I found out, the guards routinely stopped Chinese students for extensive review of their documents, and sometimes barred their entry to the lodgings. This is the gatekeeping moment upon which I want to shed light, the moment that every person entering the university building had to experience multiple times per day. In this recurring events I witnessed the construction of prejudice and the application of discrimination, in a moment where access to a resource was negotiated. The repetition of this discrimination practice eventually pushed students to internalise racial differences and self-segregate, dividing the group along racial lines, prior to entry in the building.

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[85] This was the Soviet document, issued by the government, to register the place of residence of an individual.

As part of the normal curriculum, foreign students are required to pass a Russian language class in parallel to the university courses. The class in which I participated was composed of 8 students: two of us from the English university of Durham, one Spanish woman, and five Chinese students, three of whom lived in the same university residence as my British colleague and me. The instruction building was across the street from the lodging residence. As the weeks progressed, our group gradually fell into a routine of coming back to our residence for a fast lunch. Day after day, for two months, we came back to our residence, a single group of young people, similar age, similar clothing, similar purpose, satchels in hand. Yet as the weeks progressed, a pattern started to develop whereby the group split in half along the short 200 feet needed to reach our residence: the westerners at the front, the Asian students falling behind. Daily, this dual troupe arrived in the hallway of the residence, and faced one of the five rotating guards. At this time, the cause for the self-segregation and group division became clear, as the first group (our European group) was waved through with a short banter, a smile, a greeting. But as the second (Asian) group arrived, the smiles disappeared, the checking time lengthened to sometimes laughable periods, as the *spravka* were checked and rechecked. This routine became somewhat of a ritual, as the guards came to know our faces, and exerted his institutional power to let us pass, unmolested so to speak. Every day I would come in, my European colleagues would come in, we would get through, and the guard would stop the Chinese students: Immediate, insistent, tangible, personal scrutiny. The effect was almost immediate, and divided the community both before the fact and after the fact: in preparation for this longer document-check, the students divided beforehand, and afterwards, often rode the elevator in distinct groups, as the Europeans regularly had faster access to the elevator while the Asian group had to wait for the next to arrive. I perceived in this an internalisation of racial segregation by half of our group, self-segregating from the European students in preparation of what was to come.

Regarding access to the university resource (the residence), the guard elected not to wield his institutional power to deny me entry, as he had constructed a (positive) prejudicial definition of who I was. In the case of the Chinese students, the same guard occasionally elected to use his institutional power and deny access to the resource, and almost constantly elected to at least delay entry, delay the granting of the resource. In this set of events I perceive the construction of institutional racism (Douglas 1986), and the routine application of practices that are infused with

both prejudices and discrimination, negatively affecting a racial minority's equal access to the resources and services of the academic institution.

Another event contributed my perspective on the existence of racial divisions and lack of social cohesion in the institution. Three months after my arrival at MSPU, a Chinese student insisted to the administration on being relocated from the 7th floor to the 'European' 17th floor, and placed as a co-resident in my flat. His demand triggered a succession of events that opened a window on practices of social segregation and differences in treatment afforded to European students compared to Asian students. I had no objection to his request, despite the numerous cautions that were given to me by the resident administrator. The student and I were called to one of the manager's office where I was advised, repeatedly, that I did not have to agree to the new flatmate. Upon our arrival at one of the administrators' offices, the Asian student was pushed outside, and the door of the office closed. At this time I was told "you have the choice, we don't mind sending him back, he has just been annoying, they are all dirty, we don't want you to live with them. Still, someone is likely to come to your room as roommate at some point, so it is your choice, but we do not advise this." After all, 'they' were dirty. I should say at this point that I agreed to the student's request, and he became my flatmate. 'Dirty': certainly I was aware of the racial undercurrents of the statement, but what further grabbed my attention was the reproduction of the statement in the student's own words. As I explained, the student had been told to wait outside the office, denied the right to argue for his cleanliness and orderliness. Thus our only interaction came afterwards, where in his eagerness, he grabbed my arm and proceeded to make the forceful argument that he did not desire to live with 'dirty' Chinese (his words) anymore, but with a 'clean' European! All this in both halting Russian and halting English. I perceive here an internalisation of the discrimination that compounds the one that I described above with the *spravka* checking routine.

This word 'dirt' must also be placed in a larger theoretical perspective. First, there was a systemic, institutional perspective to consider. The use of the term reminded me of the definition by Mary Douglas:

> "It implies two conditions: a set of ordered relations and a contravention of that order. Dirt then, is never a unique, isolated event. Where there is dirt there is system. Dirt is the by-product of a systemic ordering and classification of matter, in so far as ordering involves rejecting inappropriate elements." (Douglas 1966, 36)

In the context of the demand by the Chinese student, the institution clearly had an established order, whereby I was living in better accommodations, alongside other European students, and all the Chinese students lived in quarters below that happened to be a little less amenable. The student had been threatening that order, or at the very least was asking for a contravention of it. I, on the other hand, had been clearly asked to reject the inappropriate element (the Chinese student). The word 'dirty', here, was referring to a systemic organisation. Second, the present-day use of 'dirt' as a social qualifier must take into account the long-recorded history of the term's use as a social discrimination tool. Theories noted that the use of such symbolism endured from the Soviet times into the post-Soviet years. Chinese students have been reported to face similar discrimination as the Roma (gypsy) groups (Pal 2007). Symbolism of dirt, darkness, and black has been associated with both groups (Law 2012, Lemon 2000, 2002, Pal 2007). Similarly, both groups have faced denial of residency or other legal rights based on refusal by authorities to grant the needed *propusk*.

> "The implementation of racial discrimination and racial segregation through the internal passport regime of *propiska* […] further exemplifies how racist hostility has been incorporated into state bureaucratic practice. […] Many people were refused *propiska* for Moscow virtually as a rule, including Roma. Although officially abolished when the Soviet Union collapsed and despite being unconstitutional they remained in place in many successor states and cities […] including Moscow. […] The shadowy *propiska* regulations in Russia have led to numerous allegations of extortion, or of discriminatory treatment of refugees, asylum-seekers, or anyone who happens to not look like a Slav', with the Roma and ethnic minorities being continually at risk of police harassment, mistreatment and detention as well as exclusion from particular places, from work and from public services. The apartheid-like character of the *propiska* system also laid foundations for the Chinese *hukou* system." (Zakharov 2015a, 26)

As I explained earlier, the student *spravka* was occasionally referred to as *propusk*, perhaps due to its function as proof of right to residence at the university. Whatever the name given, the associations of official documentation of residence with ethnic discrimination, racialisation through symbolism, and restriction from accessing resources had endured for the Moscow Roma and the Chinese population since the Soviet times. These elements surfaced in 2010-11 with a new political push for nationalist debates, a politicisation of ethnicity, and the December xenophobic riots.

3- Conclusion

At the start of the chapter I presented the official norms underlying Bologna's vision of policy as practice. Bologna aims to promote a sociocultural convergence around novel, shared educational and humanist values. It seeks to guide actors and practices towards a model of convergence that does not exclude, abandon, or diminish local values and practices. Convergence, both in the official discourse and in the actors' practices, does not mean uniformisation, but rather the co-existence, collaboration, or negotiation of different values. Presenting the divergences that coexist in the Bologna participants' practices brings clarity to this official policy of convergence. The Bologna policies aim to establish a social dimension in higher education, with the objectives that the diversity of the larger population be represented in the diversity of the student cohort, and that there be a degree of cohesion among learner populations, with equal rights to access education. In this section I presented the argument that in Russia, the Bologna *social dimension* was challenged by institutional and actors' practices that run contrary to the principle of social cohesion - practices that created a social segregation along racial lines in the student community. I focused on actions inside the institution that produced discrimination or social segmentation. I showed practices that contributed to the segregation of the campus community, and opened the door to possible restrictions of access to education resources. These practices challenged the 2001 Prague Convention's call for actions to improve social cohesion in higher education. I also showed events in which segregation was reflected in the actors' self-identification. By following the practices of actors in the institution I foreground practices of power and segregation, causing resistance to the appropriation of social dimension norms advocated by Bologna policies.

4.3 Mechanisms of governance in the Bologna process

Since 2000 we have witnessed a gradual growth and structuring of the agencies that participate in the Bologna collaborative model. In the previous pages I showed the objectives and normative ideals pursued by the Bologna process - objectives that reach beyond educational systemic reforms and pursue the creation of new sociocultural norms and practices. The analysis explored the repetition of this focused set of objectives through fifteen years of collaboration, and the development of a common policy language. In this section I explore the Bologna governance model in greater depth. I explore the governance model selected by the EHEA political and regulatory institutions to frame and orient the new sociocultural practices that Bologna policies sought to elicit. By looking at this governance model, the coming pages therefore present Bologna's official definition of policy as practice of power. Specifically, I explore three levers of the Bologna governance model: the reliance on soft law and Open Method of Coordination (OMC), the integration of Bologna agencies with European legislative power, and governance through audit and evaluation practices. Each of these governance tools are normative guidelines that have been developed to shape the practices that make up the Bologna process, guide actors towards participative practices of "convergence", and bring all the participating education communities into alignment with the recommended Bologna reforms. In the theory chapter, I presented discourse as a central research theme in sociocultural analyses of policy as a practice of power (Ball 2015e, Bartlett and Vavrus 2014, Colebatch 2009, Fairclough 2013, Hamann and Rosen 2011, Heimans 2012b, a, Koyama 2015, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Lingard 2009, Lingard and Ozga 2007, McCarthy 2010, Mundy et al. 2016, Viczko and Riveros 2015, Wedel et al. 2005, Yanow 2000, Yon 2003). Here, I show how discourse and language is a point of entry to understanding how the Bologna policies' proximity to European legislation enable the appropriation of new educational norms by political and education actors. I also state that neoliberalism is not the sole influence driving Bologna's educational policies, though it is one of the core drivers. I started the present chapter by showing the non-neoliberal, humanist ideologies at the root of Bologna's policies. I now present the other more neoliberal drivers that shape the Bologna policies.

1-Overview of Bologna's agencies: structure, relation to the EU and governance model

Bologna's internal governance mechanisms: advisory body, international organisations and trade organisations

The advisory structure that Bologna relies on to set its agenda and distribute its message is made up of official European government bodies, the academia representatives, and industry sector representatives. The advisory structure therefore goes beyond the political sphere, and cuts across a wide range of social actors (Croché 2009, Haukland 2017, Mundy et al. 2016). The individuals assembled together vary from administrators, to European council members, to education ministers, to rectors and student representatives. This consulting arm is the "Bologna Follow-Up Group" and its delegate network of advisors, as well as an inter-ministerial meeting that is held every two years.
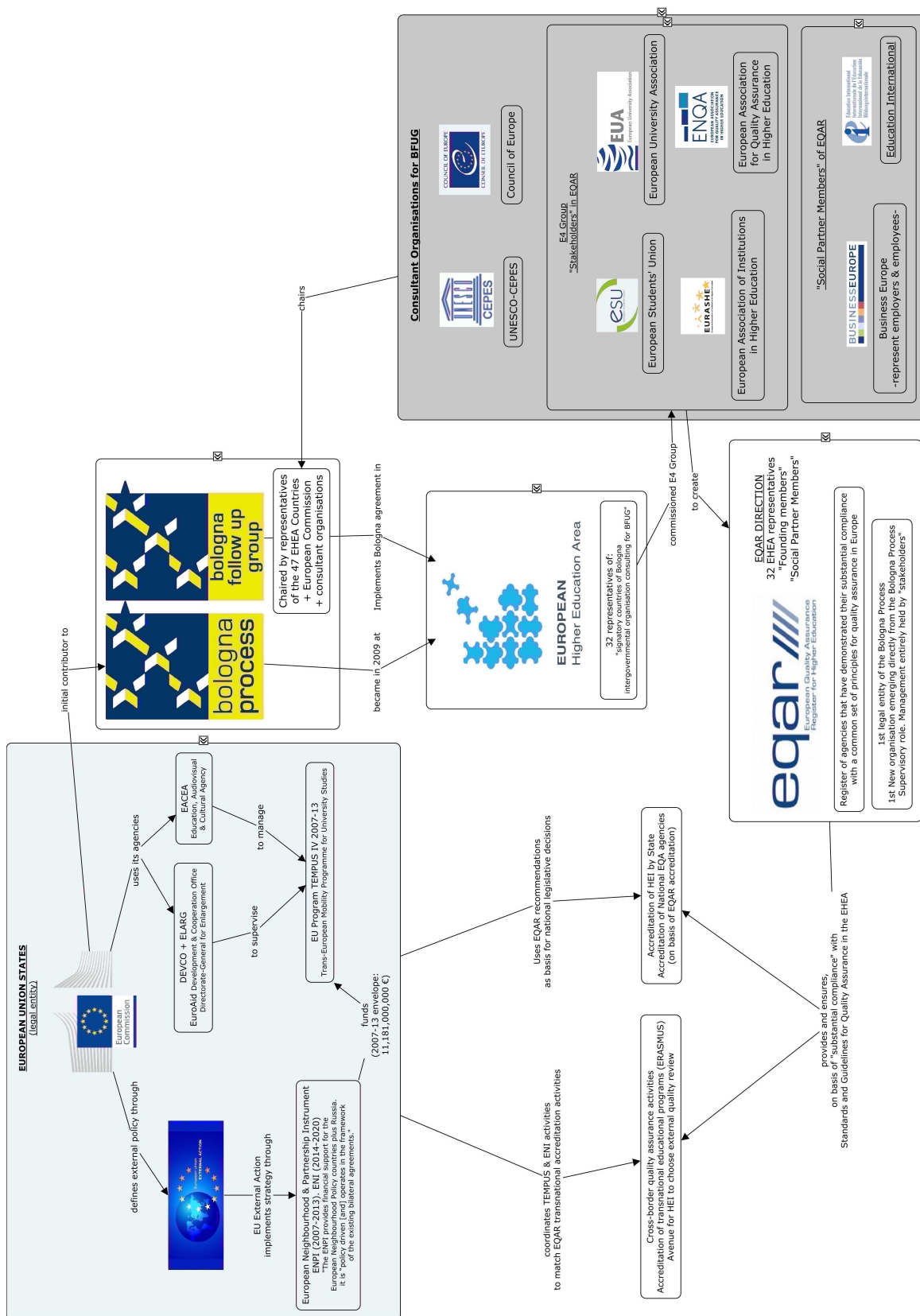
Fig. 7: Bologna process executive structure

The BFUG works to define the future of the Bologna process, and to support the governmental implementation of the nine core principles of the EHEA educative vision (see Chapter 1.1[86]). The members of the BFUG are (1) the representatives of the 48 EHEA countries, (2) the European Commission, and (3) the representatives of the consulting organisations. There are three entities among these consulting organisations: UNESCO-CEPES[87]; the E4 'stakeholder' group; and the 'social partner members'. The E4 stakeholders are the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), the European Students' Union (ESU), and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The reach of academic cooperation is extended to the business world through the participation of the fourth consulting entity: the 'social partner members'. With this inclusion of social partner members, we see a first engagement of the non-state actors, those described as "lay actors" by Fairclough (2013). These social partner members are composed of business representatives with 'Business Europe' and of education personnel representatives with 'Education International' (EI). With these "lay actors", we witness the first indications that the Bologna policy is constructed with the participation of experts, expert networks, and members of the civil society, outside of a purely state-dominated, top-down model of power. This has implications for a policy-as-practice interpretation of Bologna, in that it is systemically designed to integrate "local knowledge" (Yanow 2000), or school-based expert knowledge (Vandeyar 2013, 2015). The last participant to the Bologna process is the OECD. A non-member of the BFUG, the OECD provides supporting research data that may be used for the implementation and elaboration of Bologna policies. At present, the consulting network operates in two directions. Internally, the consulting actors to the Bologna directing agencies work as a source of policy development and predictive analysis for education development roadmaps. This still holds to a traditional, managerial and implementation vision of policy, wherein the principal role of the expert is to develop a model of resolution for an identified problem (Hamann and Rosen 2011, Lingard 2009, Yon 2003). They also act as liaisons between the European Union's government assemblies and the Bologna actors, relaying the objectives of the European Commission to the

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[86] These nine 'dimensions' of education on which EHEA actors engage are: social dimension (student body should reflect the diversity of the national population); growth of academic mobility; lifelong learning; student-centred learning; employability; academia-research-industry nexus; qualifications transparency tools; reporting procedures on implementation; higher education institution funding.
[87] CEPES: Centre Européen pour l'Enseignement Supérieur.

Bologna stakeholders. Externally, the BFUG and associated consultants assist member states for Bologna implementation support, and act as liaisons to non-education sectors (industrial, NGO), promoting efforts in education-innovation coordination beyond the EHEA. Through this organisational structure and distribution of roles, I perceive several factors qualifying the Bologna policy framework. Social actors are included in the policy development, moving any interpretation away from a simplistic top-down power model. The principles of problem-identification, expertise of implementation, and reverse planning still hold sway in Bologna. Finally, as Haukland indicated, the preponderance of administrative units in Bologna indicate that power dynamics "changed towers": "The ivory towers of academia are replaced with those of ebony, and consist of the bureaucracy that has increased its legitimacy and authority throughout the last decade of educational reforms in Europe. In Norway, the Quality Reform programme strengthened the autonomy of the HEIs, an argument used against those who feared a top-down development of the EHEA. [..] This suggests a new elite in academia: administration" (Haukland 2017, 269).

Bologna's interface with the European Commission

Bologna's capacity to build policies of education reform is organised around the interaction of three types of governing bodies: state representation (including the European Commission), audit structures, and external networks (international organisations). The close ties of Bologna with European political institutions mean that its successful operation depends in part on its capacity to anticipate, or at the very least follow closely, European-level diplomatic advances. The European Commission provides advisory support in four domains: advancing Bologna's cultural dimension, its European identity-making objective (through the European Neighbourhood Instrument), transnational partnerships development, and building a convergence of policies with international laws and agreements.

The Bologna process is dependent on the support, financial and diplomatic, of the European Commission to advance or even maintain its education development agenda. As Sarah Croché writes, "the Commission put the means at the disposal of the states to enable them to improve their cooperation in higher education" (Croché 2009, 496). For instance, Bologna has no nominal

control on the various national visa policies that might support academic mobility. At best, its action can enhance cross-institution partnerships by supporting the development of long-term relationships between universities (as we will see in Chapter 5), and smoothing the administrative procedures. However, even these elements are contingent on higher-level legislations and trans-national state-level agreements. The primary legislative purpose of the Council of Europe is to provide support and guidance in the creation of bilateral agreements between signatory countries. Beyond this legislative support role, the Council advises on the social and cultural dimension of higher education. The European Commission, on its end, funds the higher education reform initiatives through a budget that is held by the very same arm that initiates most of the diplomatic relations of the EU (European External Action, see the EHEA organisational chart). The Commission therefore can foster a multiplicity of converging initiatives. This allows a policy to be pushed across multiple fronts, and to place particular countries or geographical zones at the top of the diplomatic and financial support agendas. This is where the diplomacy arm of the European Union ties into and supports the Bologna efforts.

In the case of Russia, the Commission defines external policy through its External Action branch, which implements said strategy through the *European Neighbourhood Instrument*, which in turn funds and coordinates trans-European mobility grants and quality assurance efforts that are either used by Bologna higher education institutions or directly coordinated by the EHEA. In the same manner, Karolewski (2011) describes the EU strategy or "European identity making" as an alignment of actors around EU socialisation standards, achieved through the interplay of soft law and bilateral actions, cooperation agreements, and the European Neighbourhood partnership. Karolewski identifies this model as governance through convergence, as opposed to the creation of legislative homogeneity. For the period 2007-13, the influence of the European Commission on trans-European programmes can be weighed at over 11 billion[88] euros of funding. The important factor here is that while the Commission develops a wider strategy of inclusion that spans from the political to the cultural and industrial sectors (Partnership and Cooperation Agreement, Agreement on S&T Cooperation), the Bologna process also benefited from these agreements. Theoretically speaking, the political and financial support for Bologna coming from the EU External Action branch demands a research that is rooted in multisited ethnography and that follows the policy through its varied instantiations across multiples sites (Ball 1998, 2012),

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[88] One thousand million euros.

or a theory that "transverses the vertical case study" as developed by Bartlett and Vavrus. "The vertical case study adapts multisited ethnographic methods to trace the appropriation of policy and the cultural production of policyscapes across space and time by diverse actors in distinct assemblages" (Bartlett and Vavrus 2014, 144).

History of the Bologna soft law governance model

To understand the governance context in which the Bologna process grew, and the surrounding choices being made, we need to look back to the first international agreements that regulated the early members' collaboration. As seen earlier, the genesis of the Bologna model of governance can be traced back to both the Sorbonne Declaration and the Lisbon Recognition Convention, conventions which framed many of the Bologna choices. The Lisbon and Sorbonne declarations are state-level agreements that direct the participant nations' future cooperation in higher education development strategies. From a practical perspective, the agreements outline radically different strategies of governance. Lisbon helped to define *efficiency and accountability* (Triantafillou 2004) governance tools whose aim is to regulate, assess, and audit the Bologna actors' 'work'. In contrast, the Sorbonne declaration outlines the *ideational principles* of a European educative community. This impacted the definitions of agency inside the Bologna membership: what should a state do to bring about the envisioned European community? In a minimalist definition, we might say that the Lisbon convention introduced a "steering at a distance" style of governance to the Bologna process. In contrast, the Sorbonne declaration outlines "participative governance" principles for the Bologna process. From a theoretical perspective, they have elicited correspondingly differing visions of how governance might operate in the dual cadre of higher education reforms and transnational cooperation.

Researchers (Bieber 2010, Capano and Piattoni 2011, Dobbins, Knill, and Vögtle 2011) see the Lisbon agreements as an example of *coordinative governance* comparable to the EU's Open Method of Coordination (OMC) (Schmidt 2006 in Capano and Piattoni 2011). Currently, the Open Method of Coordination is the governance model gaining traction in the EU cooperation on education. "In defining the OMC, use is often made of terms as decentralisation, best practice, mutual learning, qualitative and quantitative indicators, targets, benchmarking, periodic

reporting, monitoring, peer review and multilateral surveillance" (Garben 2011, 84). In this model, government-backed *coordinative discourses* regulate activities of a competition-based, human-capital, knowledge economy vision of higher education. The 'Open Method of Coordination' is essentially a consensus-by-paperwork through which government policy agents are able to strategically 'frame' their desired higher education strategies inside a high-visibility higher education reform agenda, and use this visibility to advance their policies.

> "The 'framing strategies' used by policy agents [in areas where the EU has no binding authority] operates in two phases: first, the strategic adoption of frames increases the visibility of the higher education agenda at the European level and second, it paves the way for action in politically opportune circumstances, making it possible to implement new programme schemes through the framework of the open method of coordination (OMC)." (Serrano-Velarde 2014, 42)

During the 2000-2010[89] decade, the Open Method of Coordination contended with another governance model present in the EU, that of the 'Community Method': an arbitration process for competing interests that uses successive commissions to review and gradually align the interests of member states' representatives. As opposed to this, the OMC proposes a reliance on decentralisation and best practices enforced by monitoring and reporting processes. This steering at a distance further relies on surveillance governance tools such as comparative standard setting, assessment, and audit activities (see Tonia Bieber 2010, on PISA as governance tool)[90]. The Lisbon Convention therefore introduced three central elements that ultimately would influence the governance model and the orientations taken in the Bologna process. First, it introduced a change from Community Method governance to OMC (Reinalda 2011, 3,10), replacing centralised commissions with decentralised monitoring practices. Second, it introduced the principle that the European Union now operated inside a learning and knowledge-based political economy where knowledge diffusion, peer-engagement, and best-practice definition were fundamental to the overall community's growth. Third, it posited that innovation would be the primary resource of economic renewal. The redefinition of higher education as tied to corporate innovation implied a policy-making world that spanned both education and business domains. This had considerable impact for higher-education financing and Bologna financial support, particularly in Russia during the post-2000 higher education financial restructuring. Chapters 5 and 6 touch in more detail on these education-innovation impacts and the Russian higher education financial restructuring.

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[89] The OMC was formally defined at the 2000 Lisbon Summit.
[90] Programme for International Student Assessment.

The Sorbonne declaration was seen by researchers as pushing the Bologna governance model towards a reliance on soft law tools (Bieber 2010, Jayasuriya and Robertson 2010, Reinalda 2011) and network governance. The Sorbonne declaration develops a participative governance where vertical, single-state governance is replaced by the development of what Stephen Ball terms *heterarchical relationships*.

> "Heterarchical relationships replace bureaucracies and administrative structures and relationships with a system of organisation replete with overlap, multiplicity, mixed ascendancy and divergent-but-coexistent patterns of relation. Heterarchy is an organisational form somewhere between hierarchy and network that draws upon diverse horizontal and vertical links that permit different elements of the policy process to cooperate (and/or compete)." (Ball and Junemann 2012, 137-138)

Ball describes the creation of heterarchies as the process of creating governable domains and governable persons. Here I see one difference between the Sorbonne vision of Bologna process governance and the Lisbon vision of Bologna governance. In the Sorbonne declaration, governance lies in the creation of the governable network/space/actor, while Lisbon's governance power lies in the development of the accountability/performance/comparative tools of governance. Across the diverse networks of the Bologna member states, soft-law governance and discourse dissemination is operated by mobile actors whose 'work' spans multiple networks. These actors perform *multi-level governance* and *multi-level dialogue* (Ball and Junemann 2012) by carrying the governance model from network to network. They also construct the governance model by coordinating actions (Burt 2000, 2001), by taking pivotal roles ("nodal actors" Ball and Junemann 2012); ("movers and shakers" Williams 2002); ("controllers-switchers" Castells 2004), by acting as interest brokers ("actors of interests" Christopoulos 2008), and by centralising a new legitimacy in their hands every time they carry their influence from one network to the other. Performance surveillance tools are supplemented here by the *ideational alignment* of participants (Capano and Piattoni 2011, Gornitzka 2010), *discursive dissemination* (Bieber 2010), and technical assistance through expertise networks. Chapter 5 will present an example of how one Bologna education reform project made use of such *nodal actors* to extend the project beyond its initial scope, and participate in the discursive diffusion of the Bologna higher education principles. The present-day education governance model upon which the EHEA is thus founded is the sum total of both the Sorbonne and the Lisbon agreements and each of their governance implications.

This governance model analysis is not an ethnographic definition of what happens during the daily interaction of the actors, but it sets the political and structural context within which we can situate the Bologna actors' practices. The pages outline the different norms of collaboration that are promoted in today's EHEA. They outline which principles of regulation and governance were chosen to support and sustain the growth and expansion of the Bologna process. This review contextualises Bologna practices within the official, "authorised" (Hamann and Rosen 2011, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009) regulatory principles. These pages also set the groundwork for understanding what might be seen as we approach Bologna policy as a set of practices of power. When I explore Bologna's monitoring and benchmarking practices, I offer an analysis of the Lisbon efficiency and accountability model of governance. With exploration of the practices that support Bologna's discursive diffusion, expertise networks, and mobility, I offer a critique of the Sorbonne model of governance.

2- Building Bologna's legislative legitimacy: a proximity to legislative power but no legally-binding mandate

The Bologna process develops an array of educational policies to effect a convergence in higher education systems, and a convergence of practices among higher education actors. In the introduction I stated that Bologna's governance model relies on three levers of power to attain this convergence of systems, practices, and educational values. One lever is the use of soft law, particularly the Open Method of Coordination. Bologna's Lisbon agreements highlight this coordinative governance as the official negotiation model. It is used to guide, or "steer at a distance" (Singh, Heimans, and Glasswell 2014), the education actors towards collaborative practices, and ultimately towards a consensus on educational practices. This was outlined in the pages above alongside a presentation of the Bologna governing institutions, the advisory council, and the EHEA organisational structure's overlap with European Union political institutions.

The coming pages present the second lever through which the Bologna governance model seeks to attain a convergence of educational systems and practices. I show Bologna policies' overlap with European Union legislations. I also present how Russia developed a coordination of rhetoric with European legislations on education. In doing so I explore central concepts of the

sociocultural theory of policy as practice of power. I explore how the discursive coordination between European laws and Bologna policies contribute to confer an aura of legitimacy on the Bologna policies, in the eyes of Bologna actors. This section shows the "force of law", in the eyes of its participant states and participating actors, facilitated by collaboration between EU legislative bodies and Bologna governance institutions, and discursive proximity in policy language. Following elements of sociocultural theory, I start by looking "at the text" (Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009) of an EU policy document, and explore what this reveals. I then look "through" the text, and finish by exploring, through the eyes of an informant, the consequences of the legislative and systemic overlap between EU and Bologna.

Bologna policies' similitude to other European education legislations

As presented previously, the Bologna process is a long-developed by-product of prior European collaborations on education, but is not in itself part of the binding European treaties. In effect, it is regulated by a 'soft law' (Veiga and Amaral 2012), not directly by the European Union's treaties or other legally binding agreements. Nonetheless, there is a sentiment among Bologna actors that the policies of the EHEA have force of law, and that the policies come from authorised European legislators. Even though it is not the case, actors often equate Bologna policy implementation with top-down normative power, where the "top" is the European Union. As the Bologna process developed, the boundary between its participatory model and the "authorised" normative power of the EU government gradually became blurred. I argue that Bologna's institutional proximity with EU official bodies and the Bologna policies' language similarities with EU laws contribute to this attribution of state-like authority to Bologna policies.

Previous sections have shown that the Bologna network of governing institutions is directly linked to European Union institutions. The European Commission is a voting partner in the EHEA implementation governing body, the Bologna Follow Up Group. Further, all European Union countries are also part of the EHEA. Those EU nations, as part of their membership agreements, have the obligation to implement the education agreements promulgated by the EU Commission, the same Commission that is itself an advisor to the EHEA. This is compounded by the fact that European legislators financially promote education mobility projects (Socrates, Leonardo Da Vinci), and ensure continuation of prior human rights agreements and international

regulations on education and culture (see earlier section on "background binding treaties"). Here, there is an overlap between the Bologna educational policymaking project, the European political organisation, and the European Union's own education-related treaties. When joining the European Union, countries agree in a binding manner to develop certain collaborative principles around education development (Balzer and Rusconi in Martens 2007, on EHEA as collaborative governance). They agree on necessary actions to enable academic partnerships and diploma recognition schemes through the European space. Such laws regiment how the states may act and their goals in developing the higher education system. Some of these laws come from the European Council, the political body that is part and parcel of the Bologna advisory network. Shore notes this conflation of Bologna non-binding standards with the EU's legally binding treaties in his analysis of the EU's *acquis communautaires*. "The EU's *acquis communautaire*, or accumulated legislation, directives and regulations, appear to have had an objective presence in [Eastern European countries] deliberations and actions even before it had been translated into national law" (Shore, Wright, and Però 2011, 13). The "*acquis communautaires*" is the corpus of European legislations that are shared by all members. It is also more than just legislation: these regulations reflect the gradual constitution of a set of shared cultural values and political norms, to which every participating nation is expected to adhere.

> "The areas of education, training, youth and culture are primarily the competence of the Member States. A cooperation framework on education and training policies aims to converge national policies and the attainment of shared objectives through an **open method of coordination**, which led to the "Education and Training 2010" program, which integrates all actions in the fields of education and training at European level. As regards cultural diversity, Member States need to uphold the principles enshrined in Article 151 of the EC Treaty and ensure that their international commitments allow for preserving and **promoting cultural diversity**. Member States need to have the legal, administrative and financial framework and necessary implementing capacity in place to ensure sound financial management of the education, training and youth Community programmes (currently Leonardo da Vinci, Socrates, Youth)." (European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, 2016: Chapter 26 of the acquis: Education and Culture[91])

The document's rhetoric highlights concepts that I outlined previously as core themes in the sociocultural theory of policy as practice of power. This document brings light to the themes of "negotiation" (Colebatch 2009, Koyama 2011, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Mundy et al. 2016, Schwartzman 1993, Viczko and Riveros 2015), "value" (Ball 1998, Colebatch 2009, Durao and Shore 2010, Haukland 2017, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Schwartzman

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[91] European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations (2016). Chapter of the acquis: Chapter 26, Education and Culture. European Commission. https://ec.europa.eu/neighbourhood-enlargement/policy/conditions-membership/chapters-of-the-acquis_en

1993), "legitimacy" (Gillborn 2005, Gupta and Ferguson 2002, Haukland 2017, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Mundy et al. 2016), policy as a sociocultural endeavour, "normative guidance" (Hamann et al. 2007, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Mundy et al. 2016, Vandeyar 2013), and "looking at/looking through" a text (Levinson and Sutton 2001, Riles 2006).

The paragraph, drawn from the official European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) documentation, outlines the official scope of the European Union's normative legitimacy. The document shows what the EU says about its rights to normatively shape the actors' cultural values and practice; particularly, the *acquis* affirm the EU's legitimacy over education and culture. Education legislation per se is not, and has never been, a part of the official EU regulations: these "are primarily the competence of the Member States". Yet the document states that the EU, through the *acquis*, does have legitimacy in providing normative guidance and defining the "cooperation framework" on education and culture. Focusing on culture, the ENP document restates the EU's sociocultural purpose beyond the narrow educational objectives: "the EC Treaty [ensures commitments to] cultural diversity". As I look "at" the text, I see how the Commission requires that its members appropriate new values on what a good society should look like. The "good norm" of contemporary society is officially a "diverse" society. This norm goes far beyond education.

The paragraph also defines the acceptable norms of negotiations (Colebatch 2009) between actors. It reiterates the EU's commitment to "Open Method of Coordination" that I discussed previously. I recall here that the Bologna Lisbon convention is also committed to a type of coordinative negotiation: there is a congruence here between Bologna and the EU political policies in terms of the acceptable norms of negotiation.

Finally, I look at the title of the parent document: the "European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations". This is a corpus of policies that aim to regulate the relations between actors, and the coordination on shared **values** between the EU and neighbouring countries. "Values" is not my own wording, but rather the language intentionally promoted and disseminated by the European Commission. The "Commission of European Communities" frames its action in a community-building discourse, and uses the terms "common values" and "neighbourhood" in its publications, such as in the European Neighbourhood Policy strategy papers:

> "Neighbours will build on mutual commitment to common values principally within the fields of the rule of law, good governance, the respect for human rights, including minority rights, the promotion of good neighbourly relations, and the principles of market economy and sustainable development." (European Commission 2004)

These exact same lines are then found trickling down to the national forums, for instance in the "European Neighbourhood Policy" definition by the *EasyEU* Irish website of the National Adult Literacy Agency, sponsored by a grant from the "Communicating Europe Initiative":

> [ENP]: "A policy, developed when the EU enlarged to 25 member states in 2004, to build good relations between the EU and the non-member countries that border it through shared values of democracy, human rights, rule of law, good governance, free trade and sustainable development.[92]"

I see here an instance of meaning making, where meanings of "value" are defined through "good citizenship" and "neighbourly" characteristics of human rights, minority rights, diversity and democracy. I also see the impact that the document has in both enabling policy mobility and providing a referential frame. The aesthetic qualities of the document (Riles 1999, 2006, 2008), reducing the definition of ENP to a few lines that can be extracted and removed from context, enable this definition to be reused in other contexts and geographies. Further, this dissemination of the ENP definition gives new status to the original document, which with each new use of the lines becomes the referential document, the "parent" text.

There is therefore first a systemic proximity whereby the EU Commission advises the Bologna process on educational policies. Second, there is a legislation convergence whereby a state's membership to the EU (and *de facto* to Bologna) imposes that state's adherence to pre-existing international treaties on education, and to European policy frameworks for new educational/cultural norms. Third, the documents show that there is a level of rhetorical similarity and convergence between the European declarations/treaties on education and those of Bologna.

All this proximity of regulations, overlap in networks and governing organisations, discursive repetition and dissemination, and capacity to build referential documents, contribute to the creation of a legitimacy and a governing power. As an informant explained, this ambiguity is used as leverage tool by national governments to pass difficult education reforms.

> "In some countries, Bologna is used as a justification for unpopular reforms. For example in Germany or in Austria. Why do people are against Bologna? Because governments say 'we must

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[92] http://www.simplyput.ie/www.easyeu.ie/result?l=E&v=28

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introduce Bologna because it is just an order from above'. And it is not true. It is not true because education is not a part of the "acquis communautaires", so therefore, these are free decisions of governments."

At play here is how legitimacy and authorised state-like power are derived from a conflation of European legislations, EHEA policies, background binding treaties, and discursive management of texts. Educational policies, be they created by Bologna or by the European Commission, gain an aura of legitimacy where the power is closely tied to the governing authorities of the European Union.

The case of Russia: an agreement on rhetoric, more than a direct legislative application

"Since the right to education today is the subject of international regulation, the question arises as to the principles of interconnection between Russian education legislation in its general sense and international legal engagements of Russia." (Kapustin in Groof, Lauwers, and Filippov 2001, 77)

Through Art. 15.4 and 17.1 of its constitution[93], the Russian Constitution recognises the international treaties and other international norms as integral part of the federal legislative system. The normative international treaties and the indicative customary laws are both recognised as valid over internal federal legislations. However, two specifics allow for the Russian Federation to maintain a degree of independence in its decision-making process towards implementing Bologna and other international rulings or agreements on higher education. These legislative specificities structure the law in a manner that allows a choice of how and when, or even whether, the international rulings are applied at the institutional level.

First, the legislative setup distinguishes between the duties at the federal level and the duties of the 'subjects' (regions and non-federal entities): a **direct application** of international law at the federal level, and **coordination/fulfilment** roles at the regional level. This difference is borne out in the word choice of the laws on education (1992 and 1996). The subjects of the federation are given the legal competence to implement regulations, but they can operate with a degree of latency in the implementation of international customary laws.

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[93] Art. 15.4 stipulates that "The universally recognised norms of international law and international treaties and agreements of the Russian Federation shall be a component part of its legal system. If an international treaty or agreement of the Russian Federation fixes other rules than those envisaged by law, the rules of the international agreement shall be applied."
Further, Art. 17.1 states that "In the Russian Federation recognition and guarantees shall be provided for the rights and freedoms of man and citizen according to the universally recognised principles and norms of international law and according to the present Constitution."

Second, a semantic distinction separates 'laws' from 'international customs' (for definition of customs, see Beiter 2006, 44). At the federal level, the normative international treaties and the indicative customary laws are both immediately recognised as valid. However, the federal[94] legislative structure of Russia, and in particular the legislative separation of duties regarding education law, reinforce the region's capacity to take the international directives as indicative 'customary rules' rather than normative laws[95]. As Kapustin (2001) points out, they are not subject to immediate implementation. "As to the federal legislation on higher and post-university professional education, Russia follows the provisions of international treaties in which it takes part but does not permit the operation of international customary legal rules and of 'soft law' rules" (Kapustin in Groof, Lauwers, and Filippov 2001, 78). Here is a governance situation where the application of international customs on education signed prior to the Bologna process do not necessarily "trickle down" to institutional-level implementation, in which the soft-law recommendations of the Bologna process can be considered as suggestions by the institutions, and in which the only implementation obligations come from interstate treaties, bilateral or multilateral. We are therefore in a situation where the overseeing power of the Bologna institutions come from means other than direct legislation.

The presentation above of the Russia-Europe legal interaction should not lead to the conclusion that there is a systemic lack at the institutional level of implementation of international education development agreements in Russia. Rather, research demonstrates that the legal construction makes full use of the rhetoric of international law, even through the separation of the notion of immediate legal obligation from that of the implementation processes at the local/institutional level. The point is that there is no systemic implementation of international standards. What we see is an integration of these standards in the national practices through parallel rhetoric and convergence of legislations rather than the application of an inescapable legislative obligation.

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[94] The federal distinction between law and customs, and ensuing difference in its application within the educational system, may not be necessarily specific to Russia, but rather to a Federal system.

[95] It is important to note that legislatively, the term "universally recognised principle" points to a markedly different type of ruling than international signed treaties. Russian constitutional articles on education and higher education speak of "universally recognised [international] norms" and "universally recognised [international] principles and norms".

3- Governance success through evaluation: implementation and monitoring groups and national reporting processes

Beyond the use of soft law and coordination with European legislative authority, Bologna relies on its growing education audit services, as well as processes of evaluation, benchmarking, and self-reporting to bring its participants onto a common path. Over the past fifteen years, the Bologna governance model was developed around a proliferation of administration, of experts and expertise networks, and the gradual development of an audit culture. In the previous section I presented the dual use of rhetoric alignment and proximity with EU governing legitimacy to move the diverse body of EHEA actors towards a shared set of practices. Here I look at the empowerment of advisory agencies and audit practices. One of Bologna's principal actions is the creation of audit structures to monitor its members' activities, to set standards and joint objectives, and to develop forums of collaboration. For the Bologna process, one of the key difficulties of developing an education quality assurance system was that two opposing goals had to be achieved. On the one hand, to demonstrate a respect for differing education cultures, and for the diversity in education standards and curriculum differences across borders. At the same time, impose a shared lexicon of education standards, and an effectively centralised monitoring process that gives a central governance role to the BFUG through audit and quality assurance systems. Bologna's policy aims to achieve convergence by developing audit and self-evaluation practices, alongside collaborative practices to establish new international learning norms. By exploring this audit build-up in sociocultural theory terms, I look at the recursive and reflective dimension of practice (Levinson and Sutton 2001). Audit processes are a window into practices that are both recursive and, with regard to policy, reflective. For instance, Bologna education audits are repeated, and the self-reporting and audit practices are designed to reflectively influence the policy-writing. This will be explored below. I also explore the construction of centralisation in global policy practices, the construction of educational "values", and the construction of international standardised "best practices" documents (Mundy et al. 2016). Finally, by following the construction of audit practices (Braun et al. 2001, Durao and Shore 2010, Gusterson 2017, Singh, Heimans, and Glasswell 2014), I introduce practices and actors associated with neoliberalism.

Audit structures, and centralising the process of reporting on implementation

There are currently a number of quality assurance organisations that gravitate around the Bologna process: the member states' national accreditation agencies, the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and the IAEA (International Association for Educational Assessment).

One of many audit tools that functions as quality assurance is the *Trends report*. Alongside the *Programme for International Student Assessment* (PISA) studies, Trends was constructed as an international reporting and comparison tool. Trends is a publication that was created by the Bologna European universities representatives through the European Universities Association (EUA), in an effort to define what the future of higher education standards might be. Focused on the institutional level, the Trends reports review the status of the member states' efforts towards Bologna implementation and outlines the pitfalls that each educational system encounters. Bologna analysts for Trends produced a range of thirteen comparative categories that define the state of progress in the Bologna members' implementation of education reform. These categories in effect create a range of 'good practices' that enable governance through international competitive comparison and benchmarking. Since 1999, seven occurrences[96] of Trends were issued; since its entry in Bologna (2003) the Russian Federation participated with reports every other year, and continued to do so until 2009. The Trends reporting format impacts higher education governance, enabling a shift away from state administration towards other accountability processes. It also marks a shift in whose voice is represented. For instance, a number of the actors in the development of the reports come from the student and other higher academic populations. This inclusion of the civil society - that is, non-government representatives - in the reporting process was marked as a significant governance change by Martens. "A last issue concerns the consequences of internationalisation and marketisation for societal actors. Processes such as Bologna or Copenhagen, for example, now include representatives of civil society, such as students and rectors" (Martens 2007, 239).

In addition to expanding the base of actors involved in the reporting processes, the format of Trends also brings a layer of required pro-Bologna advocacy by the respondents. In the case of

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[96] Trends I through VI + "Trends 2015": 1999; 2001; 2003; 2005; 2007; 2010; 2015

Russia, the 2004-2005 Russian Federation representatives to Bologna had to file reports for Trends. One set of questions that had to be answered in the pre-formatted report concerned the Russian Federation's obligations to Bologna: first, to demonstrate the viable future for collaboration with European policy funders by highlighting that the already-attained reform benchmarks matched with the initial implementation calendar and agreements. Second, to publish a document advocating for the future of the Bologna reform in the Russian higher education sector, and combining the participating university centres into a coherent voice. Third, and linked to the prior objective, to demonstrate the continued creation of 'working groups' for future Bologna implementation. The form of the questions in the national reports was chosen by Bologna experts not only to enable cross-country comparisons, but also to serve as a foundation for continued comparative reporting processes, and to enable the experts to establish future quality assurance criteria. Trends serves as much, if not more, in securing the future of Bologna's audit model as it aids the participating nations' implementation efforts. At the national level, Trends reports serve as both an example of how vertical governance is constructed between Bologna and Russia, and an example of Christopoulos' 'actors of interest' (Christopoulos 2008) for Bologna.

Nominally implementing credit transfer system while defining learning expectations

Another of the principal tenets of Bologna education quality assurance is the creation of a European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System[97] (ECTS). The ECTS is a system of internationally transferable credits that mark a student's completion of a given course. ECTS ensures that new competencies acquired in a university abroad are recognised across European borders, and that learning outcomes are clearly defined, for international intelligibility. It is predicated on the capacity of universities and national education bodies to work together towards establishing an internationally comprehensible and transferable accreditation system and definitions of what a student learned. The ECTS is a crucial piece of the Bologna process because it is this recognition of course completion that enables student mobility across the Bologna space: learning done abroad can be recognised at home, and vice versa. At first glance

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[97] Cooperating in the creation of the ECTS are many international monitoring powers: UNESCO and OECD being two principal leaders. Post-second world war, UNESCO and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) have participated in the development of international dialogues on education, cooperation models and later specialised their activities towards monitoring and policy support.

the transferable credit system is a clear academic tool that helps the international community to recognise the worth not only of a student, but of the quality and kinds of learning that are being produced in different nations. In the development of ECTS, I see the Bologna process nominally creating a recognition procedure for national education standards. In doing so Bologna advances three parallel policy agendas. With ECTS, Bologna recognises the worth of national higher education systems: Bologna states publicly that the learning outcomes reached in one nation should be accepted or should be recognised in others. A second effect is that Bologna develops through the ECTS a centrally managed concept of what quality education should look like. Lastly, through the ECTS support agencies and the Bologna advisory experts that assist universities to implement ECTS, it creates a centralised audit system that supports the central Bologna governance.

The creation of ECTS, and therefore the creation of a process of "learning outcomes" validation, is predicated on the preexistence of a national and institutional capacity to design a curriculum and validate precise student learning outcomes. This development of guidelines for learning outcomes, including the development of definitions of what a learning outcome actually might be, can be traced back to the international assessment efforts of the OECD, particularly the *Assessment for Higher Learning Outcomes* (AHEO). Since 2010, the OECD developed two international monitoring programmes, AHEO and the prior PISA study. Both have become the principal international tools which define future policy themes of education development and cooperation, and through which the corresponding funding strategies, such as those of the World Bank or the EU, are refined. Participation in these year-long assessment exercises has become a pole of interaction between governments, educational institutions, and policymakers. Tonia Bieber, in her 2010 analysis of the PISA studies' impact on soft governance in Bologna education reform, highlights this reliance on prescriptive behaviour by the OECD and the rise of "standard setting" as a governance instrument that then pervaded the Bologna process.

> "By providing comparative data, benchmarks and rankings, PISA creates a normative pressure by enhancing the competition and performance orientation. The introduction of education standards to monitor outcomes was furthered by PISA and institutionalised by regular education reports. […] By organising expert conferences on PISA, the OECD shows best practices and rankings, and recommends measures to overcome national problems." (Bieber 2010, 20)

Bieber continues by reviewing the impact of this international comparative assessment programme on the Bologna process. First, PISA becomes the vehicle through which the OECD

enters the Bologna governance structure. Through its expertise in PISA, the OECD becomes an expert advisor in the higher education assessment exercises, and provider of a comparative development model. Second, the European Commission and the BFUG, without legal competency towards Bologna member states, transcends this governance limitation by exerting pressures on states' education reform processes by becoming a driving force behind the application of PISA-like comparative exercises.

> "As a voting member in the Bologna Follow-Up Group (BFUG), the Commission contributed to the Bologna Stocktaking exercise through the contributions of the Eurydice network producing country analysis and comparative overviews. Via Bologna, the Commission provides a platform for the international and national discussion of educational topics, thus spreading international policy models via transnational communication and policy learning in the Bologna countries. [discursive dissemination]." (Bieber 2010, 21)

In a similar manner, the capacity to define what learnings are offered by a university plays into the much-criticised university rankings. These rankings foster a practice of self-monitoring and self-discipline inside academic institutions. Strathern, in her earlier description of audit culture, highlights a merging of measures and outcomes. "Audit is deliberately built on the conflation of measures with targets, and audit culture enhances the process" (Strathern 1997, 19). Here I see a conflation, where the ECTS measures **become** the 'kind of learning' that should be promoted.

Russia participates in both the PISA and AHEO audit programmes. These engagements are not limited to a simple participation as respondent. In similar ways to its obligations for the *Trends* reports, Russia's Bologna participation requires that its Ministry of Education account for the ways in which it actively promotes OECD and UNESCO doctrines. Within the reports to the Bologna Follow Up Groups, the Russian Federation is further required to outline the efforts that its Ministry of Education and Science has made to promote the new higher education model outside of Europe. In 2005, the UNESCO and OECD collaborated on a joint text, the *Guidelines on quality provision in cross-border higher education*. As part of the Trends assessment for the BFUG, Russia had to report every other year on the ways in which these guidelines were applied and promoted, both inside the educational system and abroad[98]. The participation in the Bologna agreement required the Russian education ministry to act in a back-and-forth promotion of

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[98] Among these efforts was the "development of analytic materials for the preparation of the National Report on the higher education in Russia using the methodology of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)" [Russian Federation National Report to EHEA, 2009].

standards and guidelines between the BFUG and the OECD. Russia, as member of Bologna, is therefore required by signed agreements to turn itself into an actor of interest. This promotional role, embedded inside recurring national audits, has a direct impact on how national ministries collaborate with and enhance the global influence of the UNESCO and OECD organisations. It similarly impacts the economic survival of the international organisations (see OECD deriving significant income from PISA participating fees Ball and Junemann 2012, 300). Participation in one forum of education reform, in effect, translates into required participation in the other, and requires that the member state take up an advocacy role for the Bologna model in an auditing event led by the OECD. In this sense, the audit process and educative reform policy foster each other.

> "Policy and audit sound on the face of it like opposite ends of a process. The one deals with the inception of plans and aims (policy) while the other institutes check on good practice and their execution (audit). Yet distance between the poles is illusory. For the one is also inside the other: policy-makers may build auditing practices into their schema, and auditing will replay to policy grounds of its own effectiveness" (Strathern 2000, 282)

Lastly, there is a multiplication of Bologna policies that promote the uses and validation of 'learning outcomes' as a higher education metric. This results in the development of 'good practices' guidelines that are distributed by each international organisation, themselves 'recognised' or 'quality labelled' by the European Commission. For example, the *EUR-ACE®* label delivered by the European Network for Accreditation validates engineering curricula approved by the ENQA. This label is also recognised by the European Commission as a mark of good practices. This recognition and quality label has recently (2014-15) been at the core of Bologna's expansion towards Latin America. It is on this strength of having created an internationally recognised label of engineering 'good practices' that a new audit structure was developed: Spain's national quality agency's (ANECA) work with Mexico, Peru, Central America, Ecuador, and Guatemala. This new quality assurance agency was then able to export to Central America the standards and audit processes of the European agencies. It is through such chains and actor participation that the principles of soft governance apply, and foster a centralised governance through network creation and audit structures.

4- Conclusion

The development of a non-legislatively regulated common education space within the European Union and beyond the EU borders is a feat of faith, bureaucracy, and practices. To restate the difficulty inherent to the Bologna process, it is a legally non-binding agreement that cannot be in itself enforced in a court of law. The previous pages have shown how policy as practice of power, in the case of the Bologna policies, establishes the legitimacy of Bologna policies and achieves a normative convergence of actors' educational values and practices. I explored three avenues: Bologna's governance/negotiation model, Bologna's organisational and discursive integration with EU, and its reliance on audit practices. The legislative and policy structure of Bologna was designed to be a cooperative model operating outside of legislative governance, and yet has shown multiple point of overlap with legislative structures of the EU. This structuring of Bologna governance has several consequences. It results in a sustained national autonomy vis-à-vis Bologna reforms and in the recognition by policy texts of the importance of cultural diversity, guaranteeing the larger-than-education sociocultural project of Bologna. It results in a governance model does not impose a unique legislative framework for the appropriation of Bologna educational values; rather, it allowed for the participating nations to create a multiplicity of legislative approaches to 'Bologna implementation'. Contrasting with this national recognition, the expertise and audit networks enforced the dissemination of a centralised Bologna message through centralised organisations and repeated assessments of governments' implementation achievements. The presentation also explored how the discursive construction of Bologna policies contributes to disseminating the policy rhetoric, and builds a referential frame that points actors to the European Union, reinforcing the state-like legitimacy of Bologna policies. This contributes to the analysis of how Bologna builds its practices of power. Finally, I explored the construction of the audit practices in Bologna, and through these, how reflective and recursive practices build the Bologna policies. The Bologna process was designed as an open collaboration towards an educational development goal, not a state-like legislation. It nonetheless remains that the combination of specific governance practices, repeated and disseminated rhetoric, reliance on expertise networks, and soft law obligations all lend a quasi-normative weight to the Bologna process. This quasi-normative process ensured the application of Bologna

reforms across a vast European region, while leaving sufficient decisional liberty to individual nations, and steers clear of being a wholly obligatory process.

4.4 A history of common responses by member states to shared Bologna challenges

With the creation of a common history, with the definition of shared engagements, and with the collaboration in educational practices, the Bologna member states gradually shape a common voice. The first parts of this chapter outlined the history, organisational structure, and underlying ideals of Bologna. Through this I exposed how Bologna started its project of defining shared educational values and practices, and how the initial humanist principles driving the inception of Bologna differed from neoliberal logic. I then explored the governance mechanisms that contribute to the desired convergence of educational values and practices in the EHEA. In particular I present Bologna's reliance on soft law, the development of a legitimacy through Bologna's partnership with the EU, and the deployment of audit systems. In contrast with the original humanist ideals of Bologna, the growth of audit systems, and the governance model that distributes power to non-state actors, demonstrate that Bologna is a complex partnership between neoliberal and non-neoliberal influences. In this last part of the chapter, I explore a final example of common voice construction. In the context of an international policy fight against neoliberal international influences, I show how a shared voice was built between members of Bologna. The EHEA developed as a leading international education project in a global world where other competing organisations clamour for leadership in the shaping of education. One consequence for Bologna members was the potential to be a signatory of international networks/agreements that conflicted with Bologna. It follows that as an organisation, Bologna has had to build a collaborative response to these internal policy conflicts. Here I review an example in which the Bologna member states had to collectively develop a history of concerted responses to the pressures brought by neoliberal policies of international organisations, over the 2000-2014 period. I offer the Bologna-WTO conflict as an example in which we can see how the Bologna process has built for its members a background of successful coordinated responses to systemic and legislative conflicts with neoliberalism. I see in this history of successful conflict management one of the foundations upon which the success of Bologna rests as it attempts to overcome internal divergences and diversities.

Bologna versus World Trade Organisation: defining education as a commerce, or not?

In August 2012, after a nineteen-year-long process, the Russian Federation became a member of the World Trade Organisation. This was the conclusion of a drawn-out process that predated Russia's engagement with Bologna (pre-2000). This membership had, and still has, a strong potential to impact the education sector, particularly as the education sector is conceived through the Bologna process. Over the past decades, international institutions and organisations such as the WTO, the OECD, the World Bank, or UNESCO have gained a preeminent voice in the development of educational policies (Mundy et al. 2016). They however present divergent visions of education to Bologna. Succinctly, the WTO and Bologna operate inside different international market regulation boundaries. The salient point is that WTO and Europe/Bologna push for a different categorisation of education: either as a commercial or as a non-commercial activity. The legislations that apply to the education sector therefore diverge, as different legislations apply to a commercial activity or non-commercial. As I will show, it has far-reaching implications for the universities and students.

The Bologna process and the higher education partnerships created under the umbrella of today's EHEA all operate inside the European Union's regulations on markets, consumers, and international trades. The WTO regulates markets, consumers and trades internationally, beyond European Union geography. This means that Bologna member states may also be signatories in the WTO's main treaty, the *General Agreement on Trade and Services* (GATS). Countries may be participant to both GATS and Bologna, that define higher education as a commerce for the former and non-commerce for the latter. In the GATS treaty, education and higher education are defined as a commercial activity. The WTO and Bologna both recognise that education (particularly higher education) may generate wealth, and that it is intimately tied to the health of a nation's industrial sector (innovation, quality of manpower). But Bologna and the WTO differ in their interpretations of whether international higher education relations between nations and systems should be defined as education 'trade[99]' relations. GATS is a tool that protects principles of fairness in international commerce and equality between trading nations. GATS stipulates that

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[99] Article 1.3 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services: "any services supplied in the exercise of governmental authority … neither on a commercial basis nor in competition with one or more service suppliers". In a context where the government and only the government decides on the ultimate goal of education of its citizens, is education is supplied under its authority? Can a private university that provide an education service outside of the government's definition of education be considered a competing service supplier?

whatever economic conditions are extended by a national system (e.g. Russia) to said nation's producer of goods and services (Russian businesses, or in our case, a university), the exact same economic conditions must also be extended to all foreign producers of goods and services that import into Russia (in our case, any education service provider). Camacho's (2013) provides a complete analysis of Russia's accession to the WTO[100], particularly a reflection on the modes of trades and services. The problem that Bologna encounters is that while the GATS treaty defines one set of rules of fairness for goods and services, and extends these protections to consumers, the European Union does not operate under the same commercial regulations. As an example, national students and foreign students access education under different fee-paying conditions. If an international student is seen as a consumer of an education service, under GATS it should pay the same as a national consumer of the same service. Under the European Union's regulations, that is not the case, with foreign students facing higher university fees than natives. Bologna had to construct a collaborative response to this regulatory conflict.

Such a categorisation has deep consequences for the pressures upon the education institutions: it impacts the rights of access to education across borders, and it impacts the rights that education providers have in their international endeavours. For example, as higher education becomes privatised and educational licences are given to private institutions, does higher education still belong to a 'not-for-profit' classification, or does higher education now provide goods and services in the same sense that an industry does? If it does provide goods and services, what are the individual's rights of access to education, and what are the duties of universities as businesses? For the Bologna process, this international situation means that its members may be signatories to two international processes with divergent definitions of what higher education means for our societies.

Bologna's diversity among members and collective response

In the case of Russia, these questions have increased significance. They lie at the very heart of the Bologna education reform effort in Russia. The Russia-Bologna internationalisation happened during the time of the post-Soviet Russian education economic restructuring, during

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[100] Similarly, under the principle of most favoured nation, if a government grants beneficial conditions to a trading partner (a nation), similar trading conditions must be given to all other trading partner-nations. A further principle of national treatment ensures that all signatories to GATS treat equally nationally produced goods and foreign goods.

the interventionist development programmes that introduced neoliberal practices in Russia and placed the notions of capital, trade, and economic liberalism front and centre for education reform. The principal element that research shows is that Russia, as signatory to both Bologna and GATS, agreed to limit its binding GATS agreements to "the privately funded education organisations/services only", and remains unbound to the GATS treaty in all manners of governmental subsidies, regardless of the nature of the education service (public/private).

Sectors and sub-sectors	Limitations on Market Access	Limitations on National Treatment	Additional commitments
	heritage of the Russian Federation and/or being a cultural property of the peoples of the Russian Federation[30].		
C. Higher education services (CPC 923*)	(4) Unbound except as indicated in Part I "Horizontal commitments". (1) None. (2) None. (3) Unbound. (4) Unbound except as indicated in Part I "Horizontal commitments".	(4) Unbound except as indicated in Part I "Horizontal commitments". (1) None, except the following: - unbound with respect to subsidies and other forms of State support, including access to the financial and other material resources of the State. (2) None, except the following: - unbound with respect to subsidies and other forms of State support, including access to the financial and other material resources of the State. (3) Unbound. (4) Unbound except as indicated in Part I "Horizontal commitments".	

[30] For the purpose of this Schedule of specific commitments:

- "The cultural heritage of the peoples of the Russian Federation" represents the material and spiritual values created in the past, and also the monuments and historic and cultural territories and facilities of importance for the preservation and development of the originality of the Russian Federation and of all its peoples, and their contribution to world civilisation;

- "The cultural values" represent moral and aesthetic ideals, norms and patterns of behaviour, languages and dialects, national traditions and customs, historical place-names, folklore, artistic handicrafts and crafts, works and acts of culture, results and methods of scientific research into cultural activity, buildings, structures, objects, and technologies of historic and cultural importance, and territories and facilities unique in their historical and cultural respects;

- "The cultural property of the peoples of the Russian Federation" is a totality of cultural values, and also of cultural organisations, institutions, and enterprises of general national (all-Russia) importance, which, by virtue of this fact, belong undividedly to the Russian Federation and its subjects without the right of their transfer to other States and Unions of States with the participation of the Russian Federation.

Fig 8: GATS exceptions, Russian Federation

However, review of Bologna documents reveals that not all parties associated with Bologna and the Russian education development efforts stood on the same side of this dilemma. Of the large Bologna advisory powers, the trade union Education International (EI) lobbied for the exclusion of education from the GATS-covered services (see Geneva and Honk Kong *Statement to the WTO*, 2009, 2005; see 1998 and 2001 *World Congress Resolution*). Similarly, the UNESCO's purpose was to develop 'non-profit' international education. Contrary to this, among the organisations that financially supported Russian education reforms and some European development efforts, the World Bank and the OECD chose to view education as a contributor to world economies and take a pro-market stance on education. Beyond this opposition, there are organisations that worked on education for all parties at the same time: in Russia, the National Training Foundation, the same organisation that implements the Bologna process, works with the Russian government on WTO-education matters. Such divergences in policy alignment on education touched all Bologna member states. Bologna members thus had to build joint policy responses to the question of how the Bologna governance defines the relation between education, economic, and international cooperative agreements. In September 2001 a common resolution was reached. The E4 advisory group (principal actor of the BFUG; see earlier), represented on this occasion by the European University Association, signed a Joint Declaration calling for all Bologna signatories to exclude any commitments to GATS for the categories of adult education, higher education, and secondary education.

Today, involvement in both the EHEA and GATS forces the participants to collaborate in defining what is education, to whom does education belong, and, what are their shared, collaborative roles in these definitions. What this example reveals is that as an organisation of member states Bologna is in a unique position to utilise the internal diversity of advisory groups and members, nominally united in a non-aligned, non-political context, to enable governance that transcends divergences.

4. Conclusion

This chapter develops the first systemic overview of the Bologna process, of Russia's postsecondary education, and explores the policy framework in which the actors of Bologna engage. The first objective of the chapter is to introduce the Bologna process: the history of the EHEA, its organisational and legislative framework, and the humanist principles that drove the inception of the Bologna process. As the chapter develops, this systemic review shows three elements. History reveals a continued diversity of motives among its actors. The organisational review then shows a model of centrally directed "convergence across localities": respect of local cultures but goal of centrally guided sociocultural change. Finally, a review of Bologna principles as documented in official regulations show the initial humanist ideologies. This "looking at the document" is tempered by presentation of the governance model that distributes regulating powers away from the state towards non-state actors, the rise of audit practices, and debates around the commercialisation of education. The review of these practices and core ideals underlying the inception of Bologna shows the EHEA as an education project that is a complex interplay of neoliberal influences/practices and non-neoliberal forces.

As a second objective, the chapter provides an initial exploration of Bologna policies as "practices of power". I explore the governance model, as well as several normative practices of power that are officially supported/developed by the EHEA leadership and advisory network to guide the actors towards convergence in higher education. Specifically, I explore three levers of the Bologna governance model: the reliance on soft law and Open Method of Coordination (OMC), the proximity to European legislative power, and the governance through audit and evaluation practices. Through this review, I show how Bologna officials conceive of policy as normative power and guide for sociocultural practices. The chapter demonstrates how the Bologna process does not rely on the same mechanisms that a state might use to enforce the application of its edicts. The chapter investigates the governance tools through which the Bologna participants were guided towards a continued investment and re-investment in shared higher education principles. Among these governance tools, I present Bologna's reliance on soft law, and how it built the policy's legitimacy through organisational overlap with EU political institutions, discursive similarities with European education legislations, and the deployment of audit systems. I also describe the effects of the diffusion of the Bologna higher education

development vocabulary, the repetition of comparable policy agreements, the layering of education objectives, and the associated audit processes. Leading such an international education effort was an exercise in other types of governing processes than relying on the usual centralised and normative power of a State. The founding intent of Bologna was that its policies should aim to guide actors towards a convergence of higher education systems, not an obligatory, politically-imposed march towards a complete uniformity of education systems. In presenting these practices and policy as normative effort, I explore elements of policy as practice of power that will be further explored through the thesis: legitimacy, meaning-making, multi-locality, convergence across localities, discursive diffusion, and analysis of documents' language.

Chapter 5: The SEXTANT project, successes of a Bologna process implementation

5. Introduction

The previous chapter presented an overview of the policy history and policy framework of the Bologna process. In this chapter I look at a multi-university education development project that pursued Bologna standards in learning outcome definition, student mobility, credit transfer systems, and ultimately the reinforcement of the EHEA cross-European education network. The SEXTANT project (Student EXchanges of credit Transfer Assisted by New information Technologies) was co-led between 2007-2014 by Moscow State Pedagogical University and University College Ghent, with five other participating institutions. I look at how SEXTANT participants achieved some of the Bologna objectives, propagated Bologna education reform ideas, reinforced its governance structure, and generated practices of power within the process of appropriating Bologna norms and educational standards.

The chapter starts with the presentation of SEXTANT's objectives and timeline, and introduces its educational implementation process. I explore in SEXTANT the process of ordering a 'global form' into an 'actual and specific articulation' (Collier 2006, Ong and Collier 2005). In this presentation of SEXTANT, I explore how the five participating universities contributed to the following Bologna policy dimensions: the appropriation of European Credit Transfer System and learning outcome norms (as mechanisms for increased learner mobility), the growth of university partnerships and academic networks (in support of learner mobility), and the multiplication of university-industry ties. For each of these three dimensions I explore systemic changes, practices by the actors and institutions, and practices of power that emerge and define both the appropriation of Bologna norms and the creation of local standards. I also explore each of these points through a progressive analysis. I first discuss the systemic changes (e.g. creation of technologies for the university, the introduction of BA/MA, and new learning outcomes). SEXTANT shows the co-construction of actors' practices (universities' technical implementation of ECTS and other Bologna objectives) and systemic context (Bologna policies

and the changing Russian higher education degree system). I then explore the practices of power that influence this Bologna policy appropriation. In this international development project, we notably see a work where expertise on Bologna education reform and political power develop together. Finally, each section discusses other, localised practices and norms that emerge during SEXTANT actors' engagement with Bologna ECTS, mobility, and education-industry policies.

The final section of the chapter focuses on the ways in which SEXTANT strengthened the Bologna governance model and its leading institutions. Funded by the European Union, SEXTANT contributed to the growth of the Bologna governance capacity by bringing SEXTANT universities and academics into central networking positions, and into new appointments at the governing institutions of the Bologna Follow-Up Group, or other expertise positions in well-regarded international education development networks. From these positions, the SEXTANT participants became 'nodal actors' advocating for Bologna in multiple academic, policy, and industrial contexts. They helped promote Bologna objectives beyond the initial scope of the SEXTANT project. Most importantly, their actions developed the pathway from academia to leading policy roles. Lastly, I examine how SEXTANT helped turn the Bologna discourse into a tool of governance through practices of 'discursive diffusion' and adhesion to a pre-defined, official Bologna education vocabulary.

The present chapter explores how Bologna works - how the Bologna structures and governance systems are strengthened during an implementation project. It also takes the first steps in showing the practices of power that result from the education actors' work, and their practices outside the Bologna policy framework.

5.1 Education multilateralism: the example of SEXTANT TEMPUS project

In 2007 at the Moscow State Pedagogical University (MSPU), a collaborative project was proposed by five universities to the European funding programme TEMPUS[101]. This proposal was made within the EU Joint European Partnership (JEP) framework for a funding period of 2008-2010. TEMPUS and JEP are EU contributions to the development of Bologna. The successful application confirmed Moscow State Pedagogical University and the University College Ghent (UCG, Belgium) as co-leaders of the "Student Exchanges of credit Transfer Assisted by New information Technologies" project. SEXTANT[102] is a trans-European higher education development project designed to attain a series of university goals towards Bologna higher education standards. These goals were the growth of academic exchange partnerships (student/instructor mobility between institutions), the development of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation Systems (ECTS) for some of the institutions, and staff training in international exchange management. The SEXTANT project brought together a consortium of five universities from Russia (Moscow State Pedagogical University, MSPU), Dagestan (Dagestan State Pedagogical University, DSPU), Poland (Pedagogical University of Krakow, PUK), Belgium (University College Ghent, UCG) and England (Newman University College in Birmingham, NUC). MSPU was principal project coordinator, the project being managed through MSPU's International Cooperation Department. UCG was elected by TEMPUS to be both project monitor and grant-holder. It also held a development advisory role for the coordination of the multinational project in accordance with Bologna standards, and for the technical implementation of online ECTS software. The other universities were: Krakow University, whose representative would eventually reframe SEXTANT in other post-2010 TEMPUS applications; Newman University, whose long-standing partnership with MSPU[103] brought the required measure of partnership experience in the 2007 funding application; and Dagestan University, who coordinated the dissemination of ECTS best practices in the Caucasian region.

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[101] Trans-European Mobility Programme for University Studies
[102] #TEMPUS UM_JEP_27184-2006 (RU)
[103] A first partnership was the 1999 Mobility-JEP project #10713

Placing the project within its wider history, I identify a first timeline: the project exploration phase as early as 2005, followed by the 2007-10 implementation years. A second timeline was the 2011-13 years, during which the outcomes that the project had produced by 2010 were actually implemented in the MSPU, with various success of depth and breadth. A final timeline that I saw as important for MSPU was that of the legal and political transition of 2012, when the new Russian higher education laws were promulgated. In preparation since 2010, voted on in 2012 and taking effect in 2013, the laws translated some Bologna standards (the same that SEXTANT introduced into MSPU) into legal obligations, accelerating the tempo of their implementation (credits, credit transfer, internationalisation, explicit online repository of course goals, and university history/philosophy).

5.2 SEXTANT: the appropriation of Bologna ECTS and learner mobility norms

The SEXTANT project organised a multi-university partnership around core Bologna policies: moving the universities towards an alignment with standards of European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), developing the transnational mobility of learners, and developing the corresponding university networks and personnel qualifications for both ECTS and international education. This coming section explores the practices, norms, and systemic changes that emerged during the course of the European-funded SEXTANT project.

In the first part of the analysis, I review the SEXTANT project's implementation of Bologna goals, particularly the systemic changes advocated during the project, and the creation of tools for SEXTANT's universities and students that enable an application of Bologna ECTS and learner mobility policies. I then examine the emergence of practices of power that accompanied this process of ECTS appropriation, and accompanied the appropriation of other Bologna norms by the project's participants. The analysis particularly follows institutional practices related to Bologna ECTS and to technologies that support learning outcome transparency, and thus learner international mobility. I complete the analysis of the SEXTANT universities' negotiation of Bologna's norms by exploring practices inside the Russian university that converge with an appropriation of Bologna norms, or challenge those norms. Particularly, I look at practices that run contrary to learning outcomes transparency, challenging a full appropriation of ECTS. Here, the analysis speaks to the vastly researched relation between the global and local in education policy (Ball 1998, 2012, 2015e, Hamann and Rosen 2011, Hamann and Vandeyar 2018, Heimans 2012b, a, Koyama and Varenne 2012, Lingard 2009, Lingard and Ozga 2007, Lingard and Rizvi 2009, McCarty and Castagno 2018, Mundy et al. 2016, Viczko and Riveros 2015, Zajda 2005), public policies (Fischer and Gottweis 2013, Parry and Murphy 2014, Wedel and Feldman 2005, Wedel et al. 2005), neoliberal governance (Ball 2012, 2015b, Greenhouse 2010, Gupta and Ferguson 2002, Mosse 2013, Riles 2013, Zerelli, Heatherington, and Dalakoglou 2016), and in policies' practices of power (Heimans 2012b, a, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009). I explore local practices and policies in the Russian university that converged with Bologna policies, yet revealed the emergence of local values that do not fully correspond to those of the global policy. Throughout this section I follow Cris Shore's call to "think about policy

[and] follow its trajectory – its genealogy, the language used to frame and represent it, the way it is translated into practice, its institutionalisation, and the effects it creates [as] a methodological tool for connecting the global to the local" (Durao and Shore 2010, 605). In chapter five's next sections, I review SEXTANT's role in the appropriation of other Bologna policy objectives. I explore SEXTANT's development of international university networks (5.3), the programme's contribution to academic-industry partnerships (5.4), and to position participating universities inside the Bologna governance network (5.4). Throughout these presentations, practices and practices of power will be brought to the fore of the analysis.

1- SEXTANT's ECTS and learner mobility implementation: policy and practices

Recall of Bologna ECTS and student mobility logic, and its consequent requirements for the universities: transparency, stability of curriculum

The SEXTANT project was a collaborative effort by five universities to bring Bologna norms inside their institutions, specifically norms of student mobility and ECTS. In a first approach I will review the Bologna policies and objectives that were targeted by SEXTANT's project proposal. Bologna seeks the creation of a shared, comparable and convergent European higher education system. To achieve this convergence objective, two of the primary Bologna objectives have been to increase student mobility across the EHEA, and ensure that acquired skills could be recognised correctly throughout the Bologna territory regardless of where they were acquired. Bologna determined that successful increase in student mobility rested on the capacity to make learning outcomes, however defined, assessable and observable across borders. Bologna therefore developed the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) to ensuring continuity in students' education, and recognition of semesters spent abroad. The policy logic behind this push to establish internationally recognisable learning outcomes is that learners and academics must be able to travel and acquire new qualifications or skills anywhere among the Bologna member states, and have those recognised in their home institutions and countries. To ensure the learner's opportunity to internationally move across academies and have his/her skills recognised, Bologna policies seek to develop a centralised form of learning assessment that may be shared by all EHEA members. I note that the majority of Bologna actions towards a convergent higher

education space reside in this valuation of student competencies, and normative regulation of learning outcomes. In the words of Johanna Witte,

> "According to the stated aims [of the Bologna declaration], the convergence of European Higher Education systems in their entirety is aimed at the creation of a common European Higher Education system. However, if one looks at the actual action lines agreed upon to achieve these aims, they are largely confined to the teaching- and learning-side of HE: degree systems, measurement of student workload, student mobility, and curricular development." (Witte 2008, 84)

The measurement principle of the credit system is that each course is awarded a number of credits in accordance to its number of instruction hours, the quality standards of said course's pedagogical structure, and the defined learning outcomes. Credits also serve as a symbol of quality in education; they indicate a reliable standard of learning. As a tool of convergence policy, the ECTS has an intended purpose to foster two characteristics of the European education space: an increase of learner mobility across the EHEA, and the creation of comparable norms of learning across the EHEA. This process goes beyond an application of ECTS: what is at stake here is the "authoritative allocation of values" in education (Heimans 2012b, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Lingard 2009, Lingard and Ozga 2007, Mundy et al. 2016) through normative guidance on assessment practices, and through the dissemination of a new education language. Adelman expressed the opinion that:

> "The learning outcome or competence does not live until it is observed and assessed. And it is observed in something the student does, to which criteria of performance can be applied. At the same time (and as observed by the CoRe evaluation of Tuning templates), it takes a considerable change in faculty culture to adopt a language of learning outcomes, one reason that the desired convergences of Bologna will continue well beyond 2010." (Adelman 2009, 67)

To assign credits to a course, the university is called upon to define the course's learning outcomes in a manner that is 'transparent' to other nations, in fact, define the outcomes through standards shared by all. The institution's governing structure must also demonstrate for each course a reliability of outcomes learning, a stable curriculum structure (in the case of the EHEA, the adherence to the BA/MA diploma structure), and a curriculum that follows the international quality standards.

> "In its original formulation under Bologna, there are three components to the assignment of ECTS credits: student workload, learning outcomes, and grades. […] In the language of Bologna, credits are a "notional device," something that can be measured in a consistent manner." (Adelman 2009, 75)

In these two quotations, Adelman points to three separate objectives of the ECTS as policy tool. First, to develop across the EHEA a centrally managed norm by which learner competences are measured, and learning outcomes defined. Second, to root this educational norm within new assessment and comparative evaluation practices. Third, to ensure that countries appropriate this centrally-managed norm and assessment practices through a new, shared language of learning outcomes that will change the faculty and institutional culture and ensure that this change lasts for decades to come. By looking at the ECTS, the Bologna policy demonstrates that its objective is a long-lasting cultural change in higher education. ECTS is designed as a practice of power wherein a centrally mandated norm is pushed towards global appropriation. Finally, this practice of power bearing on culture-change (Yon 2003) is conceived by Bologna documents as inherently joined with the creation of a new language, a new discourse of learning outcomes and learner competencies.

SEXTANT project as appropriation of Bologna's ECTS/mobility norms: practices of power

Having situated SEXTANT in the larger context of Bologna's ECTS and mobility policy, I continue the analysis by exploring the specific practices developed during SEXTANT to support and develop Bologna's student mobility and credit transfer system. The multi-university project created online tools, training resources, institutional partnerships, and a community of practice that developed these Bologna policy objectives. I argue that by exploring the SEXTANT tools (website, documents, partnerships), it is possible to better understand why the Bologna policies should be interpreted as practices of power (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014, Vandeyar 2013, 2015, Yanow 2000). The multi-university programme shows the development of four practices of power between Bologna governing institutions and universities/academic actors: the framing of individuals and partnerships within Bologna norms and negotiation templates (Koyama 2015, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009); the growth of a singular language (English) to organise these policy interactions and negotiations (Ball 2015e, Braun et al. 2011, Fairclough 2013, McCarthy 2010, Viczko and Riveros 2015); the orientation of actors towards a pre-defined system of education; and finally, the creation of best practices documents (Hamann 2003, Mundy et al. 2016) that reinforce Bologna's normative guidance power. These elements, I argue, all contribute to the development of Bologna policies as practices of power.

SEXTANT: multi-university partnership to appropriate Bologna policies of mobility and ECTS

Following Bologna policy goals of learner mobility and credit system implementation, the SEXTANT project proposed a multi-university modernisation plan with three objectives. The project aimed for an ECTS implementation in all participating institutions, the development of internet technology tools to support student mobility, and training for staff in student exchange management. The SEXTANT proposal specifically targeted the Moscow and Dagestan universities for improvement in personnel qualification, while designating Newman and Ghent as the guarantors of quality in modern university management and transnational partnership management. By the end of 2010, the SEXTANT project yielded achievements in the implementation of ECTS. It created an online system to support MSPU and DSPU student exchanges between UK, Russia, Poland, Belgium, and Dagestan. This website contained an online catalogue of selected courses in the Russian institutions that were made available to incoming students, with the catalogue of courses' learning outcomes and European credits equivalency (e-ECTS). Through the e-ECTS website, students could review course descriptions, access information documents on education standards, download application forms, and sign learning and training agreements. It was designed to support the learner in his/her preparation for courses abroad (at MSPU and DSPU), and to act as academic mobility management technology. Below, I explore through this online tool how Bologna policies are organised as practices of power.

SEXTANT and norms of learning

By creating a tool for alignment to e-ECTS standards, the SEXTANT website exports a normative guidance from the central EHEA institutions to the participating universities across five countries. It exports the Bologna norm (ECTS) of how learning achievements should be evidenced by universities, or publicised to academic actors. The online catalogue created by the SEXTANT universities contains documents - courses' learning outcome descriptions - within which the universities' learning competencies must be couched; these documents were created with guidance from Bologna experts. By doing so, the SEXTANT e-ECTS tool evidences what kind of competencies a traveling student may acquire in the receiving country, but it also

requires from the actors to formulate their local learner identities within a centrally mandated Bologna framework. I further note that all of these courses were eventually given in Bachelor's or Master's degree programmes. Incoming students from mobility programmes were therefore oriented towards the newly created Bachelors and Master courses, eschewing the university's still-existing *Specialist* courses that remained from the Soviet system. What this evidences is the efforts by the governing EHEA institutions and its corps of experts to guide the student population and the universities towards a new system of courses, a new nomenclature of learning outcomes, and a change in competencies' valuation. I note that here I am "looking at" (Lowenkron and Ferreira 2014) the SEXTANT documents, drawing out from the SEXTANT programme which new practices the project sought to facilitate among academic actors and what systemic changes it sought to achieve. How this impacted the appropriation of the ECTS system by the Russian MSPU university is yet more complex, and will be discussed further below.

SEXTANT and norms of negotiation

The SEXTANT project's online tools also provide a framework of negotiation to which the different participating actors were asked to conform. Students and receiving instructors are asked to sign, prior to exchange programmes, online training agreement forms. These training agreement forms require that both learner and educator adhere to a normed relationship that has been, in part, pre-defined by Bologna and European institutions. The relationship expectations, the timeline of educator-learner negotiation, and the scope of the learning agreement negotiation, are all recommended by the Bologna governing actors and the experts mandated to advise on the development of projects like SEXTANT. By developing this framework of educator-learner agreements, Bologna advisors ask the actors to negotiate what their educational relationship will look like, within the pre-specified, EHEA-defined framework. What we see here is how Bologna manages the educator/learner negotiation during the course of academic mobility implementation.

SEXTANT and language norms

Finally, the SEXTANT online system designated the English language as medium of communication about the e-ECTS standards, as the primary language for the training agreement

forms placed online, and the course catalogue. In the above presentation of the SEXTANT project we saw that the courses open to the incoming students were those aligned with Bologna BA/MA norms. These courses were also selected based on their perceived interest for future EHEA generations, with an emphasis on those fields foregrounded by Bologna policies as areas[104] important to future economies: information technology, computer sciences, management. These courses, systemically aligned with Bologna norms of higher education, were also ones that were taught in English. The courses align with Bologna's vision of what skills the future European worker will need. In this correspondence, promotion of the English language, and this convergence with MA/BA structure, I perceive an extension of Bologna educational norms to the SEXTANT universities.

SEXTANT and best practices

Beyond the creation of the online management system for student transfer and ECTS information, Moscow and Dagestan developed internal policies for ECTS implementation that corresponded to Bologna standards and benchmarks. Best practices documents were created to adapt the learning outcomes definitions of international courses, and the courses' associated study records, to Bologna ECTS formats and Bologna learning outcomes categories. Here we see the production of material that assigned value (Braun et al. 2001, Haukland 2017, Heimans 2012b, Schwartzman 1993) to educational practices, and guidance regarding adherence to the Bologna norms.

Bologna's ECTS/mobility norms: the negotiation of new local policies, practices, and educational norms convergent with Bologna objectives

I started with a review of the Bologna policy objectives promoted by the SEXTANT project: ECTS, learner mobility, and corresponding institutional 'capacitation' (for SEXTANT, staff training in student reception and ECTS). I then examined how the SEXTANT project developed educational tools, and fostered actors' practices towards support/appropriation of those policies. Exploring these practices of the SEXTANT project reveals the practices of power associated

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[104] Geography, Computer sciences, Information technologies, Linguistics, Management, Music, Pre-school education, Social pedagogy.

with the implementation of mobility policies and ECTS. In the coming pages I explore practices inside a Russian university participating in SEXTANT (MSPU), practices which differed from SEXTANT's implementation of Bologna policies. The SEXTANT project coexisted with other university-level systemic and academic practice changes that were extraneous to Bologna policies. Many of the shifts occurring inside the Russian universities were linked to Russian educational reforms and national economic difficulties that had little to do with the push by Bologna for post-secondary reforms. If we are to understand how SEXTANT actually and specifically articulated the global Bologna ECTS form in the university, we must look at SEXTANT from the point of view of how a policy implementation project places the global, national and local systems in relation (Bartlett and Vavrus 2014, Heimans 2012a, Levinson, Winstead, and Sutton 2018, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Lingard 2009, Mundy et al. 2016, Wedel and Feldman 2005, Wedel et al. 2005), and how practices inside the institution (Braun et al. 2001, Heimans 2012a, Singh, Heimans, and Glasswell 2014, Vandeyar 2013, Viczko and Riveros 2015) impacted the appropriation by MSPU of the European ECTS and learner mobility policies.

Changes in the MSPU university: systemic convergence with Bologna

Upon completion of the project in 2010, SEXTANT officially completed the implementation of the new Russian institution student exchange system. However, at the whole-university level, systemic change towards the ECTS only began in 2013, when a system of "points" was established in parallel with the transition to a BA/MA system. This new points assessment system outwardly allowed the university to fulfill European "Quality Assurance Standards": the final degree corresponded to the student's participation in a certain number of instruction hours. In this, the attendance in hours of instruction was given a new quantitative value, the 'points'. At MSPU, the total overall points attributed to a year's worth of instruction within the new BA system was 80, which, unsurprisingly, corresponds to the expected yearly maximum number of credits in the three-year European BA degree (total maximum credits: 240). On paper, this granted the MSPU degree system the maximum length of instruction, and therefore the highest learning outcomes. This implementation of the ECTS seemed transparent and logical to those who are aware of the European parameters, and indeed aligned with the design of the

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SEXTANT's online catalogue of courses' learning outcomes. We see here an appropriation practice that is also a practice of power: the institutional system was tailored to position the MSPU university at the top of the Bologna quality assurance ratings based on instructional assessment criteria.

Practices inside the MSPU university: reframing Bologna norms

While the introduction of a points system at MSPU certainly matched the ECTS requirements and their implementation in SEXTANT, inside the university there was no clear corresponding practice of communicating ECTS information to the student body. ECTS goals and purposes were not presented clearly to the student body, nor did it seem to imply a radical change in assessment procedures. Upon discussion with students, it appeared that the 2013 points system was perceived as a replacement of the earlier Soviet *Specialist* diploma system, carrying with it the prior perception of subjective notation by the instructors. There had been no notification explaining the transition, nor clarification of the European model on which the 'arbitrary' number 80 was based. Similarly, seven years after the official adoption of the BA/MA system (2001), this Bologna reform had not translated into clear, unambiguous changes for the students. Interviews with a student who transitioned between two MSPU departments (History to Sociology) in 2010 highlighted that at the time, there was little actual difference between the requirements of the still-existing *Specialist* degree (5-year degree) and the new BA/MA programme. The student started in the former Soviet *Specialist* degree in History, then transitioned in 2010 to a BA/MA-type degree in Sociology. Speaking of this experience of mobility towards a Bologna-type degree, he expressed a certainty as to the lack of fundamental differences, and lack of visible change in the student experience. During the same 2010-11 period, I witnessed faculty wrestling with the changes in degree names, and expressing frustration with the lack of actual instructions from the academy that would outline the purposes and differences of the new degree. It seemed to be a case of 'new name, same teaching' in most conversations. Several of these conversations took place in the international office and the Russian language department, which catered to the incoming EU students and managed SEXTANT. While the nomenclature of the degrees matched the required European standards, and the timeline of the diploma was similarly in line with Bologna reforms, students and staff

could not readily point to differences in the curricula, assessment standards, requirements, or outcomes. Similarly, students could not point to any communication strategy by the university to clarify the changes taking place.

2- Challenges to the appropriation of learning outcomes transparency

In the previous pages I explored SEXTANT's implementation of Bologna ECTS and learner mobility norms, and presented some of the tools and practices that developed these policies. The EHEA pushes to implement ECTS policies throughout all member states, with the background objective of establishing new norms of higher education learning. By defining what an "educational credit" is, and defining European credit transfer norms, Bologna stated that there is a need to internationally normalise the evaluation of learning competencies. Governing institutions expressed that there is value in shared understanding of what a learning achievement is. Bologna also made a statement on the importance and value of learning transparency inside and between nations. Here, I investigate some of the practices inside the Russian universities that challenge the appropriation of these principles: practices that run contrary to establishing an internationally-comparable norm of learning achievements, and demonstrating transparency for those learning achievements.

Context and scope of analysis

This section examines students' perceptions of corruption and bribery[105], and such practices that were directly witnessed inside the Russian university. These practices, such as payment for degree completion, call into question the validity of any credit system or other evaluation of students' learning achievements, and directly undermine the Bologna policy of transparency and comparability of students' learning achievements. Further, the forthcoming discussion of bribery and corruption will centre on examples that are tied to student's economic or social background. By focusing on cases conditioned by a students' socioeconomic background, the exploration of

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[105] "A poll [2007] by Transparency International, an anticorruption group, found that 66 percent of Russians consider the higher-education system to be corrupt, says Elena A. Panfilova, director of the institute's office in Russia." {Nemtsova, 2008 #647}

bribery and payment-for-grades practices will deepen our understanding of two points. It will illuminate how such practices undermine the complete appropriation of Bologna's social dimension principles. Bribery practices, when explored from a sociocultural standpoint, highlight the fact that student populations are subject to discrimination (Gillborn 2005, Mundy et al. 2016, Yon 2003), and/or unequal opportunities to complete a degree (in particular the examination process). Both types of discrimination run contrary to Bologna's social dimension policies. An exploration of bribery practices will also show how practices of power emerge within the classroom and the Russian institutions. Not all of the events that were related to me were witnessed directly by the informants, as the interviews will make clear. However, I join with previous researchers in saying that the informants' direct experience and their general perceptions on a subject should be, in this case, conflated. I follow Denisova-Schmidt, Huber, Leontyeva (2016) when they "advocate 'ignoring' the discussions about perception vs. actual evidence in analysing corruption in the educational sector: 'when an institution is perceived to be corrupt the damage is already done, regardless of whether guilt is manifest'" (Denisova-Schmidt, Huber, and Leontyeva 2016, 11). Heyneman (2013) later brought a similar perspective, stating that the actual experience of corruption and the subsequent reporting of corruption have a combined and cumulative effect on the population. Following Heyneman and other researchers (Aref'ev 2009, Borusiak 2013, Denisova-Schmidt, Huber, and Leontyeva 2016, Fursova and Simons 2014, Humphrey 2012, Nemtsova 2008, Rumyantseva and Denisova-Schmidt 2015, Shirin 2015), I take as a premise that corruption practices affect the institution's entire student body, and the students' social support groups, including parents or other actors close to the learner. My experiences in Moscow of the police and other national systems reinforced this interpretation that actual witnessing and reported actions both have a combined effect on the population's perception.

Challenges to the exam transparency: payment for grades

National context

Researchers have noted the difficulties faced by the Russian higher education system in eradicating corruption, in particular the practice of payment for better grades or the completion of a degree. In 2010, Fursova and Simons et al. (2014) conducted a sociological study of the

Kazan universities, identifying a typology of corruption and some of the factors fostering corruption practices. In their research of over 400 Kazan students, they determined that "40 percent of respondents prefer to use illegal methods of enrolling in the universities" (2014, 27). Student interviews during the fieldwork confirmed that this problem persisted in the university. Citing research conducted by *Transparency International*, an institute led by academic Elena Panfilova[106], Nemtsova's *Higher Education* article (2008) relates that "19 percent of wealthy Russians, 14 percent of middle-class Russians, and 11 percent of poor Russians said they had paid bribes to admissions officials and Professors to gain admission and passing grades".

> Russian Student (MSPU): Medical school is different. […] Studying there is very hard, you have to be very attentive, through the lessons, and you know not everyone is very attentive. Today they just get back bad marks and just pay for the better marks at the university. That is also possible.
>
> American Student (Vladimir State): So I did not see much of that but I was told that Professors and others will, during the exams, some of them will go in a separate room, and a guy might write on the blackboard a 5 equals 5,000RU, a 4 equals 1,500RU, something like this. Bribery is commonplace. Just put the money in your grade-book. That's it. For me, for a lot of students that was the case.

These practices are still widespread in Russia despite increased efforts by the government to curb the misuse of funds and the bribe system. In her 2012 article on Russian higher education, Caroline Humphrey recognises the pervasiveness of "favors" in examinations, entry and educational coaching:

> "The main change is that the system of "favors" given to selected students has massively expanded. Many more students make use of it, and it now applies to every stage of the educational process: entrance exams, marking coursework, special coaching, exam falsification, positive reports, transferring to graduate courses, grants and stipends, and so on." (Humphrey 2012, 32)

Recently, Denisova-Schmidt (2016) conducted a comparative study of first- and fifth-year student attitudes towards corruption in general, and in education settings, evidencing the socialisation of corruption. Shirin (2015) examined the impact of Russian Federal legislation and state court practices that enable corruption by university applicants, students, degree candidates, administrators, and other employees.

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[106] Elena A. Panfilova is an academic of the National Research University Higher School of Economics, and produced, beyond her work for Transparency International, a number of publications on higher education reform in Russia. See chapter 2.

Bribes, and their relation to the learner's socioeconomic capital

The examples I share below relate to bribery practices mentioned during a conversation between three students of MSPU (one Russian and two Chinese), where bribes were perceived as a mechanism to obtain a 'pass' grade.

> Chinese student (CS): You know everything; Professor asks if you want to get 3 or 4 on the exam.
>
> Russian student (RS): In other words, you download an essay and the Professor asks if you want to get 3 or 4?
>
> […]
>
> RS: Many students do not attend classes, right? They have problems but they still pass. Because they pay money.
>
> CS: Else they give a present or just ask for good a good grade because they have a job or wife in China or some other reason.

Several elements are discussed in this exchange. First, the practice itself of paying for a certain grade, even though the essay has been directly downloaded from the internet and is not the student's own composition. A specific aspect of the education experience is being related here: the notion of expediency, how to spend less time in class and out of class on education matters, yet still obtain a passing grade. At that point in the interview the student was only talking about the trade-off between the time invested in education and the financial expenditure, not yet about improving the grade, or attaining a more competitive degree. The concluding remark by the Chinese student links this expediency to two further elements that are directly relevant to Bologna's *social dimension*: the national origin of the learner, and the economic condition of the learner. Later in the interview, the same Chinese student indicated that attending classes was indeed an issue for him, for the exact reason that he had to earn a living outside of university.

> CS: If I have free time, I want to read at the library. There is no time. I work during the day. I have only 2 or 3 hours in the evening when I have to find all the information on the Internet quickly.

Placing the two moments of the interview side by side highlights that the first comments on "downloading an essay" might not have been mere speculation on his part. The point that is made here is that in the examination process, a difficult economic condition of the learner (an obligation to miss classes because of work, for example) can be compensated for, through bribes. Later interviews with the same Russian student brought to the surface the fact that many of his fellow learners, particularly those who did not attend class, were making a conscious transactional choice: pay the university to pass the exams, enabling opportunities to stabilise paid

positions outside of university. This phenomenon has been identified by Fursova and Simons as one of seven core reasons behind the continued bribe practices in Russian higher education. "A lot of students are forced to work because of the difficult financial situation and have to compensate for their poor academic performance and attendance by giving bribes" (Fursova and Simons 2014, 29). We are here in a situation where variances in the learners' economic background (see London ministerial meeting on *social dimensions*) are compensated for by practices outside the official realm of the education institution.

Grade transparency, Bologna, and unequal assessment of visiting students

Even when the examination process is equally applied for all, without bribes involved, evidence shows that instructors are not necessarily bound to clear and transparent protocols, and may award grades influenced by the national origins of the student, irrespective of the quality of their academic work. The interview with the Vladimir State student from the USA demonstrated one such example:

> American Student (AS): Criteria of assessment and grading? No, no. It was entirely [emphasis] up to the TA (Teaching Assistant).
>
> Damien Boutillon (DB): I am interested in that, because I am looking at it from the Bologna process, it is trying to make uniform pedagogical standards and assessment standards for the EHEA.
>
> AS: Well, you can say that it is uniform in Russia based on the fact that it is not uniform. It is uniformly not uniform. So if a student from the United States, such as myself, or a student from Pakistan, or Syria, is showing up to class every day, you know he is making an effort, doing all of his work. […] And sometime a student will joke, ah, will I pass automatically? Because that is a thing you know. If you have received so many points, but it seems to be more about what kind of relationship you have to the TA. But if you have a certain amount of points then you are a candidate to pass it automatically, you show up, they just write a five in your grade book and you leave without having to take the exam. [The points] are dependent on your previous exams, tests, practicums, and attendance. So someone might joke about it you know, but even if they have the points, even if they meet all the criteria to pass automatically, after that they still have to prepare and the teacher will kind of bust their balls so to speak and give them a four for an answer that was, well, when they have given fives for worst, let's say.

In Russian universities there are courses that can be passed based on continuous examination. Attendance, term papers, and other assessments count towards an overall grade, and if the student achieves a certain level (generally one that corresponds to a high mark such as 5), they will be credited for the course automatically, with honours. In the example related by the Vladimir student, we see not only a breakdown of this strict examination rule, but also the fact

that an absence of bribes from some students results in an unwarranted examination, and lower grades than should have been given. When the interviewee says "it seems to be more about what kind of relationship you have to the TA", the implication was the prior absence of bribes. This segment of the interview came right after a lengthy discussion on the building of 'relationships' with the instructor, particularly through bribes and other 'gifts'. There is a slight difference here from the first situation described by the Chinese student. Where the first context was one of bribes to compensate for an economic choice made by the student, the present context is one where the bribe practice was imposed on the foreign students. I also note that the American student specified, with irony, that he himself had never been asked for a bribe, adding one more layer to the impact that students' origins have on their education experience. The student continued by relaying one of many examples where a better final result was awarded, in his view, on the basis of national origin:

> AS: The criteria for receiving a five or a four was very subjective. It is not like the exams I had in the University of Kansas where, you know, multiple choice, written, there are multiple criteria, that you have to be able to attain, right? And it's measurable. By and large it's measurable and it does not depend on the kind of relationship you have with your TA.
>
> DB: So how is that presented in the university, in the setting that you experienced?
>
> AS: Well, there is one guy that did not show up [to classes], he was an Uzbek student. And then there was - this is, this is *one* instance that I can give you as an example - another Russian student, that showed up even less, but he was Russian, you know. This guy sort of stumbled with his answers, you know '*po logiku*', this idea that I can answer based on logic, so he did this, and he received a five, which is equivalent to an A, and the Uzbek student received, I forget, either a four or a three, but his answer was far more thorough, it was well more thought out. More involved. So, you know, it's more subjective.

The implications of the Bologna ECTS and *social dimension* policies are that assessments should be applied equally to all. The underlying assumption being that these examinations must represent an impartial assessment of actually-learned knowledge and skills. The practices of bribery as laid out in the interviews challenge this on both counts: equal application of assessment to all students, and fair application of the assessment irrespective of sociocultural background. The point that becomes clear through these discussions is that there are still practices in Russian higher education that allow degree outcomes to be disconnected from student achievement. Also, that these practices of bribery and preferential treatment are recurrently mentioned in relation to students' origins or economic situations.

Fursova and Simons go further in examining the link between bribes and unequal access to education by reminding us that most payments come from the family of the student, with some families unable to participate in the 'education bribe' system.

> "[This touches on the] erosion of the constitutional principle of equal opportunities. This principle is commonly referred to as 'free education.' That means that the starting capabilities are not initially equal, which is divided between those who can and cannot pay the 'necessary' bribes." (Fursova and Simons 2014, 30)

Providing some context for the financial weight of such payments, researcher Anna Nemtsova cites the director of the *Economy and Education* project at the Moscow Higher School of Economy, one of the foremost universities in Russia (see Ch. 6).

> "Families can spend 30 to 40 percent of their incomes on bribes for what is supposed to be a free education, says Yefim Galitsky […] The project surveys Russians, both rural and urban, about their opinions on education and other issues. In Moscow each year, some 30 to 40 Professors are caught accepting bribes in exchange for grades, according to figures from the Russian Parliament." (Nemtsova 2008)

Both researchers point to the impact of corruption practices at Russian higher education institutes in making the education experience unequal for different social groups, according to the economic background of the students and families involved. This is a clear challenge to the *social dimension* principles of Bologna. It is also a source of power relations within the education institution, and within the civil society, beyond the university. This latter impact of corruption practices in education is raised by Denisova-Schmidt, Huber, and Leontyeva's 2016 article:

> "Our analysis points to the possibility that the Russian higher education system has, from a social perspective, an undesirable side effect on its graduates: It may make them more open to corruption or compliant with the corrupt structures in place, thus potentially hampering economic and social development in the country as a whole." (Denisova-Schmidt, Huber, and Leontyeva 2016, 11)

In chapter 4.1, I indicated that the European ministers and the Bologna advisory committees identified the *social dimension* policies as an economic driver for the Bologna region development. The ideal underlying their statement is that if the population is given an equal chance to learn more skills, without social or economic restrictions, the eventual result will be a shared growth of economic power by all the population, irrespective of prior economic capital. What is at stake here is the capacity of individuals to use education as a social and economic ladder. This ideal was at the source of policy language shifts, first in 2005 with the *social dimension* principle as a "support" to vertical mobility and increased individual economic power.

In the endurance of systemic corruption at Russian academic institutions, Denisova-Schmidt and her colleagues see a threat to this growth capacity and upward mobility. In all the examples brought to the thesis, we see corruption practices that hampers Bologna's policy principle of equal access and education completion, in favour of practices of power and practices of ascription.

Differential quality of teaching and attention to students, linked to cultural background of student

The interviews above revealed bribery practices that challenged the policies of Bologna. In the same interviews, a pattern emerged that demonstrates how teaching quality and high-level pedagogy was often directed only to a select part of the student population. Teaching attention seems to be denied to a proportion of the students on a basis of cultural background. During an interview, one of the Chinese learners expressed his dismay at the reduced expectations in terms of academic requirements, and the lack of feedback.

> CS: For example, the minimum volume of an essay for Russian students is 15 pages, for us 10 is enough. The Professor corrects everything for Russian students: grammar, language stylistics, everything has to be written. It is unnecessary for us. There are two options for us – pass or fail.

In the same interview, his Russian classmate indicated that in his experience, foreign students were likely to be given greater academic input by the instructors.

> RS: Don't [the Professors] provide good teaching experience? I suppose not. They are mostly elderly. Of course, they are strict enough with Russian students, but not with foreigners.

Two things are being said by the student here. First, in his experience, the MSPU instructor staff habitually bypassed the foreign students on account of their origin. The second element is more of a subtext, presenting another side to the educational experience of the Asian students: the fact that the administration does not wish to put pressure on a valuable resource (the foreign fee-paying student) with a too-demanding education experience. Nataliya Rumyantseva's research shows that "only the most prestigious universities - about 30 to 40 institutions throughout the country that receive generous support from the Ministry of Education and Science - are in a position to be selective with their admissions" (Rumyantseva and Denisova-Schmidt 2015:18). These 30 to 40 institutions are, in great part, the National Research Universities that receive the lion's share of federal funding (see Ch. 6.1). This concentration of resources in the hands of a

few institutions, combined with the new legislation on "per capita" funding (see also Ch. 6) results in high financial strain on the other institutes.

> "Public universities receive their budget allocation according to the number of students. If they expel students, they need to return the money they received from the state for those students. This is hardly possible, because the money is already covering personnel and other costs. It might also mean that, in the next academic year, the budget will be cut by the state and the universities will need to dismiss faculty or staff, or close some programmes." (Rumyantseva and Denisova-Schmidt 2015:18)

We see here how the national reforms that funnel federal funding to elite universities impact the unequal distribution of instructional focus on students. Here, the Bologna policies are directly impacted by Russian practices of power played out at the national level. Rumyantseva also links this financial strain to the rise of bribes and the lowering of teaching standards and faculty commitment. Her research and others' (Konstantinovskiy 2016, Zajda 2003a) indicate that when academic requirements cannot be enforced for fear of students leaving the university to seek easier experiences elsewhere, the instructors are much more likely to gradually abandon the pursuit of teaching excellence and ethics in the institution. A similar view on the preferential treatment of students perceived as 'valuable' to the institution was provided by the Vladimir State University student:

> "Perhaps because I was the 'American', they constantly tried - they would jump through hoops for me. After a lecture […] they found out through someone, I don't know how, that I was trying to transfer. And so the head of the department came and said 'what do you need, I will write you a letter of recommendation, for this [programme in the States]."

In this excerpt we can see the immediate and strong reaction from the university's top management to the mere hint that the American student would transfer out due to the disappointing level of teaching, the reason made clear earlier in the conversation. As an incentive for him to stay on until the end of the year, the Department head immediately offered assistance to the student, to help secure the place in the prestigious programme that the student was applying to. The background that perhaps explains this hurried response from the Russian administrators was the anticipated political pressure on the university if the student did, indeed, transfer out. Indeed, the programme through which the American had arrived was not an exchange with an American university, but rather a direct scholarship from the Russian government.

"I received a scholarship from the Russian government through an organisation called *Rossotrudnichestvo*.[107] Every Russian embassy, well most Russian Embassies abroad have a cultural centre, which is an arm of the Embassy. Yes, I believe that is called Rossotrudnichestvo, or it is what they refer to it as. If you go to Washington DC, it is referred to as the Russian cultural centre. It is a different location, somewhere else, but it is underneath the umbrella of the Russian Embassy. And they offer these sort of scholarships to foreign students. Well, from what I understand, it was a programme that was made under Medvedev, in order to attract children of Russian parents, you know, to study in Russia. You know, to try to reverse brain drain wherever possible."

Losing the student would mean that the university had failed to meet the needs of a student selected by an international programme sponsored by the president. This, clearly, was not an option that Vladimir State University was prepared to consider. The *social dimension* principle of Bologna calls for a policy effort to ensure equal and appropriate conditions for students throughout their education period, as well as equal and adequate student support services (Bergen ministerial meeting, 2005; Bucharest 2012). The examples above indicate how the leadership of universities may direct resources and services towards certain students considered strategic to the university. Such practices of power form the context within which the Bologna evaluation norms and Bologna *social dimension* policies are negotiated, interpreted, appropriated. They also impact the extent to which universities appropriate, ignore, or resist Bologna policies. I do not suggest that this is specific to Russian institutions, but merely observe an existing practice that here runs afoul of Bologna policies. What may be specific to the Russian institutions is the prevalence of these practices, sustained by extremely difficult economic conditions and political pressures bearing on the institution, and sustained by the culture of corruption and bribery being fought today with uneven success.

3- Conclusion

In SEXTANT, we see a concrete example of how international programmes promoted the convergence practices regarding learner mobility, learning outcomes and education assessment norms, and the European transferable credit transfer system. At this point I look at intersecting strands of global Bologna policy, national higher education reforms, and practices of educational

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[107] *Rossotrudnichestvo* is a Russian federal programme under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, whose object is the promotion of the image of Russia abroad, the promotion of the Russian language in the CIS and other international destinations, and bringing selected young students to Russia. With this broad remit, it is present in 80 countries, being particularly present in the CIS countries.

partnerships, institutional reforms, as well as other intra-institutional practices. The global policies, local policies and the practices intersect and construct one another. By exploring the SEXTANT project, I show how Bologna policies are constituted through practices of power, appropriated by actors, and how other local norms and policies appear -sometimes converging with Bologna, sometimes diverging from its policies and practices. The SEXTANT example shows an instance of both successful convergence in Bologna standards, and heterogeneity of institutional implementation priorities. If we follow the documents of the SEXTANT programme and its technological achievements, we can see the extensive appropriation of ECTS and mobility policies, and the growth of new actors' practices that enable the Bologna policy objectives of education convergence. SEXTANT also reveals practices of power that appear as the appropriation of the European policies takes place in the five SEXTANT universities - notably, Bologna's normative guidance on learning outcome definition, the creation of English-language standards, practices of foregrounding Bologna-compliant BA/MA courses, the management of negotiation processes, and the production of new 'best practices' that define new, Bologna-defined educational values.

I further outline where the multi-university SEXTANT programme encountered other development processes. The movement towards ECTS enabled by the SEXTANT programme co-occurred within other national education reforms, notably in Russia. An exploration of practices seen in the SEXTANT Russian university reveals that the notion of transparency, at the very source of the credit transfer system, is implemented technically but remains distant from the learning community. We can see through this example how Bologna policies do not necessarily represent a reality of learning and instruction practices, but rather takes the role of a framework within which institutions gradually define themselves and define the educative reform steps needed to arrange the national and local changes into formats that can match with the global Bologna credit/ECTS systems.

5.3 SEXTANT: development of international university networks

With the aim of developing the European Higher Education Area, the Bologna process incentivises its members (financially, with expertise support, and/or with recognitions) to create programmes that multiply international university partnerships and academic exchanges. The growth of such programmes contributes towards the Bologna policies of developing academic and learner mobility throughout the EHEA, and establishing a pan-European lattice of academic networks. In a similar manner to its implementation of ECTS norms, SEXTANT contributed to these Bologna goals of pan-European higher education by fostering new networks and student exchanges between the participating universities. In the coming pages I examine the history and scope of MSPU's European and international partnerships in student mobility initiatives. I then foreground two features of these engagements: practices of continued reinvestment with the same European partners, and a westward focus in MSPU's exchange agreements that makes little financial sense for the university. By presenting this context of international networking and practices of multilateral cooperation, I lay the groundwork for examining practices of power later in the chapter (5.5), particularly practices of political positioning by the leading SEXTANT universities.

1- Context of MSPU's European and international partnerships

History of MSPU's involvement with Europe

MSPU came to the Bologna process with a strong history of teaching international students and a history of language education for international learners. This long tradition of international relations dated back to the 1950s; MSPU built its programmes of foreign student exchange and the Russian language teaching curriculum side-by-side. It is upon this expertise and administrative structure that the Moscow State Pedagogical University developed its present international student exchange support structure. The contemporary offices and buildings used for incoming foreign students and their language education are both in the south of Moscow, unchanged since their creation in the 1980s. A *Bureau of International Development* was created there in 1980, then renamed *Department of International Relations* in 1993. In the following years the scope of functions of this department broadened, along with MSPU's international

activity. The new bureau holds a mandate for three principal tasks: "work with foreign students and realisation of inter-university cooperation with foreign partner universities; participation in international projects and programmes; [and] collaboration with international organisations and foundations". It is from this group of faculty members and administrators that the university oversees and develops the current international partnership programmes that align with Bologna development objectives and are funded by TEMPUS - including the SEXTANT project.

MSPU's international cooperation contextualised: East-West balance sheet

The MSPU international network extends from European partnerships to CIS countries and partners in Asia, principally China. Today, the geographical distribution of the MSPU university bilateral partnerships largely favours member states of the EHEA.

Country	Number of Bilateral Partnerships	Union	Total Number of Bilateral Partnerships
Abkhazia	1	Japan	5
Argentina	1	Kazakhstan	1
Austria	2	Lithuania	1
Belarus	2	Macedonia	2
Belgium	2	Norway	1
Bulgaria	1	Poland	4
China	12	Roumania	2
Czech Republic	3	Slovenia	1
Finland	2	South Korea	1
France	2	Spain	3
Germany	3	Sweden	1
Great Britain	3	Ukraine	3
Italy	3	USA	1

		Total, CIS	3
		Total, Bologna	40

Fig. 9: MSPU Bilateral partnerships, 2017

For national statistic comparison, in the earlier stages of the SEXTANT process, data from A. Minaev[108] shows the declared number of higher education international cooperation projects to have stood at 753, 90% of which were with EU countries.

MSPU Partner Universities
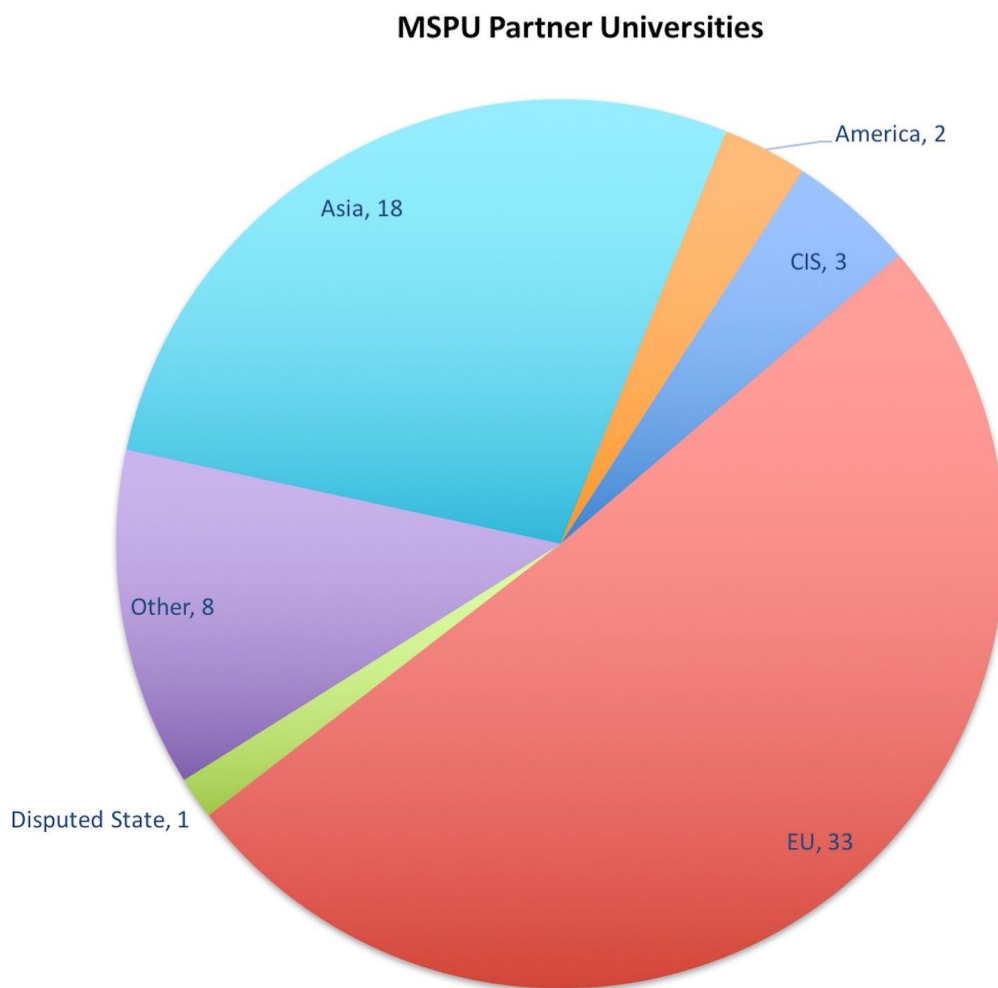

Fig. 10: MSPU partner universities, 2017

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[108] 2006 (Presentation on the implementation of Bologna higher education system in Russian higher education institutions). Elaboration of Joint Degree programmes - 25%; Elaboration of joint curriculum - 23%; Elaboration of distance learning technologies – 16%; Optimisation of study process- 12%; Implementation of ECTS – 10%; Others – 14%
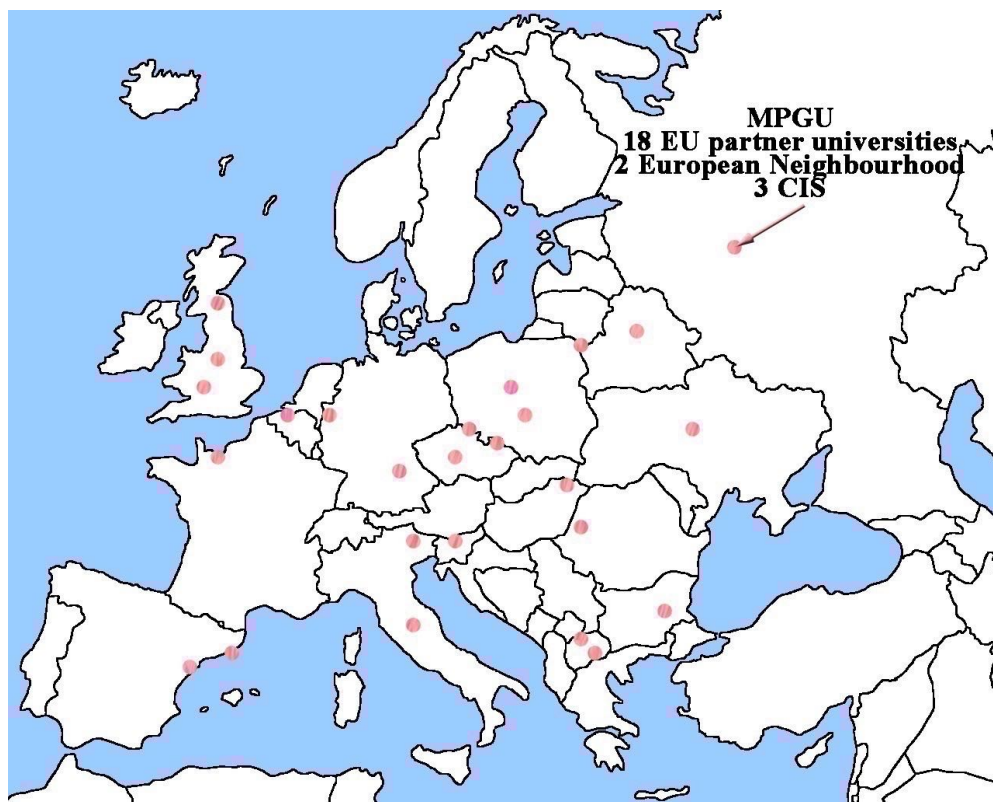
Fig. 11: Map of bilateral partnerships of Moscow State Pedagogical University, 2010

This picture provides some background to the SEXTANT project and its advances in network-development. Numerically, we can see the preponderance of partnerships that have been created with countries of the EHEA, and the westward-focus of MSPU's networking efforts.

2- University practices in the development of bilateral/multilateral partnerships

I outlined above the historical background and network of MSPU's education partnerships with Europe. Looking more specifically into SEXTANT-relevant partnerships, we can see a practice of enduring and repetitive collaboration with a select number of international partners. Examining student mobility initiatives, we can see that the SEXTANT project was simply the latest instance of a long sequence of partnerships with the same European universities, an extension of MSPU's already-established network and collaborative practices.

SEXTANT universities: a repeated engagement with student mobility projects

The SEXTANT partners regularly engaged in student mobility initiatives. Newman College, UCG, and MSPU in particular repeatedly partnered in student exchange programmes. The two leading institutions of SEXTANT, UCG and MSPU, held a long-standing relationship that was initiated in 1999 and renewed over the course of more than six joint European funding applications. Both institutions' histories reveal a proximity of interests and continued investment in joint technologies and development projects. As early as 1999, MSPU and Newman College successfully applied for a TEMPUS mobility grant covering three years of funding "to create a mobility network for the education and training of highly qualified language teachers in the new Russian Federation who will meet the challenges of the new century by teaching others". This Joint European programme[109] NACOLL (New Approach in Contemporary Language Learning) was a multilateral consortium of seven pedagogical institutes and five countries: Russia, England, France, Spain, and Germany. Five years after the completion of this mobility grant, the two institutions renewed their association with SEXTANT. From 2010 onwards, Russia's partnership with British universities expanded, with a continued student exchange programme with Durham University's Department of Slavic Languages. Initiated in 2010-11, this exchange agreement was renewed during a faculty visit to the UK in 2013-14. The collaboration between MSPU and UCG continued after 2010, with a number of new 2013 TEMPUS applications prepared by the same SEXTANT team, while 2014 saw the renewal of the partnership between the two universities.

> "At the end of February, 2014, MSPU signed a new agreement with the Faculty of Business and Information Management of the University College Ghent (Belgium). […] The new agreement presupposes students exchange programme and scientific collaboration for 5 years." (Bilateral agreement, Student Mobility Studies -2019).

This agreement was developed by the same SEXTANT faculty team that maintained the successful relationship with the University College of Ghent (UCG) and that explored other collaborations with the University of Exeter. Here we see that the universities engaged in SEXTANT had already built multiple projects around student mobility. SEXTANT continued this pattern of cooperation, and provided the grounds for subsequent applications to European funding. Later in the chapter, I will explore acquisitions of power, particularly the political

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[109] TEMPUS-Tacis JEP #10713-1999

authority, international visibility, Bologna expert status, and national governance positions gradually obtained by SEXTANT's leading institutions. In the pages above, I take the first analytical step and provide historical context for these gains in authority and power. Here I aim to shed light on the time frame of practices of power. I show the timeline that governs these institutional practices that lead to establishment of influential and authoritative roles.

MSPU: a westward institutional investment

The data of MSPU's international partnerships indicate clearly that the majority of the Russian university's bilateral agreements are westward-focused. However, I must offer an important specification here. Although the total number of partnerships is greater for European countries, this does not necessarily reflect the financial impact they have on the institution, nor the incoming/outgoing student balance between EU and Asian students. MSPU is positioned between two student flows, one European and one Asian, the latter having grown at a much more rapid pace over the past years. Looking at global flows, Altbach sees the same balance east-west:

> "The mobility of international students involves two main trends. One consists of students from Asia entering the major academic systems of North America, Western Europe, Australia, and Japan. The other trend, within the European Union, involves its various programmes to encourage student mobility." (Altbach, Reisberg, and Rumbley 2009, 8)

For MSPU, the balance of incoming students from the eastern regions is much higher than those from the West. MSPU's engagement with Bologna therefore rests on a pre-existing network with Europe, a network whose growth is not tied to the need to secure additional income from student fees (derived principally from Asian students). The engagement with Europe also brings different kinds of benefit to the Russian institution, namely political clout, international visibility, and pedagogical engagement, as I will develop in the last section of this chapter (5.5). As will become apparent, the continued engagement with European partners and the continued creation of new partnerships is part of a larger strategic effort to position the MSPU institution in a leadership role within Bologna governance networks, and within conference venues where expertise on Bologna policies can be showcased.

3- Learners' mobility practices: personal enterprise, living outside Bologna norms, and negotiating administrative invisibility

Within the Bologna process, student mobility is organised between universities and states through bilateral partnerships and exchange programmes like SEXTANT. These programmes yield opportunities for the institutions to position themselves in networks of power (Ball 2012, 2015e) and in new roles of authority and Bologna expertise (Croché 2009). Those can be advisory or academic leadership roles, within the national organisations of universities or within the international Bologna networks. But there exists another kind of academic mobility that adds to the flow of students and ultimately contributes to the development of international mobility and the transfer of academic skills between universities. By looking beyond official university partnerships and into student-initiated mobility, we can gain a different vision of how the learning outcome mobility plays out across the Bologna space. In the pages below I explore individual learner practices that bypass Bologna policies, and highlight a space of what I call 'administrative invisibility'. The object of this exploration is to bring to the fore practices that emerge, within the EHEA "space of flows" (Bartlett and Vavrus 2014, Castells 2011, Levinson, Winstead, and Sutton 2018, Mundy et al. 2016) that the Bologna policies' push for learner mobility has opened over the past decades. I explored above how Bologna policies of learner mobility contribute to the emergence of practices of power by universities. Below, I explore how Bologna policies of learner mobility also co-exist and benefit from other, local, individual-based, practices of mobility.

MSPU learners: actors outside the Bologna framework of international mobility

Student mobility initiated by personal enterprise is a theme that recurs in discussions and interviews with MSPU and Moscow students. Associated with this kind of student mobility is the notion of administrative invisibility: such student initiatives can exist outside of the university's guidance on learning recognition (ECTS) systems and bypass the administrative processes put in place under Bologna development. This administrative invisibility in the international flow of students was brought home to me through conversations with students of MSPU and with a doctoral candidate at the Moscow Conservatory. One of the students relayed to me his first-hand experience of the processes of mobility towards foreign institutions in the Bologna space. His first move to Germany was entirely conducted through his own resources, for a short but

ultimately unrecognised educational experience. He then participated in a semester abroad in Finland, where he encountered for the first time an ECTS-capable university programme. At the time MSPU had just started to transition to an ECTS or "points" system, and upon his return, every course-credit he had gained abroad had to be re-validated through the normal examination process in MSPU. Namely, semesters abroad in partner universities with a European ECTS system did not result in transferable course credits that could be matched to the MSPU internal course system. While participation in courses abroad was largely recognised by the MSPU staff, the university's requirements took precedence. Students had to pass MSPU exams and send in coursework projects like the home students. There was no transferability of credits between the ECTS-capable Finland university, and the nominally ECTS-capable MSPU university. The degree transparency and ECTS system had been developed through the SEXTANT project, and this reform was implemented by the MSPU Department of International Relations, and a "points" system for ECTS compliance was used in MSPU courses. However, as the student's experience shows, these new norms of educational credits had difficulties in breaking the confines of the International Relations' unit, and be appropriated throughout the MSPU university. For him, the only recognition of learning was that his time passed abroad would not count as absence from the course, and the returning student could pass final exams in the course contents he had studied abroad. As he indicated in conversations, his was not an isolated incident.

Beyond MSPU: Russian learners being forced into administrative invisibility

The administrative invisibility of personally organised international mobility is frequent and spans many curricula. Another student, a music conservatory *aspirantura*[110], personally committed to an international musical career, found that he had to seek education abroad by his own means to achieve his education objectives and not be bound by the limits of his national institutions. He pointed out that this was not an uncommon situation for students:

> "It is common in Moscow, […] in the past ten, fifteen years, it has been a big jump. Moscow is first of all, not a centralised place, not a European place. […] That is why many people, during studies in Moscow conservatory, they were also, or are also, studying somewhere else in Europe or in America because, first of all, it is a completely different school, different way of teaching,

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[110] PhD Candidate level

different culture, also it is the door to different worlds, different opportunities. European, American opportunities."

During the nominal period of study in the Moscow Conservatory from 2006 to 2011, he worked a schedule that brought him to Moscow twice a year for periods of a few weeks for examinations. He studied, passed the exams, and went on to live abroad, principally benefiting from European and USA music education and professional structures. When asked if there were any formal ties between the two institutions from which he graduated, he responded that no two universities had formal recognition of his work in other places, nor any administrative evidence of his learnings at the other institutions. He eventually graduated with the Master's and artist diploma in both Moscow and Boston. Like the MSPU student, he perceived a coming generational change and gradual mobility towards European integration of educational models. However, as he spoke of global and government policies in music education, there was no feeling that the government makes a concerted effort to recognise western elements in the curriculum:

> "If we speak of a government policy of [music] education. There is no tendency, I don't feel that they really want, on a high level, to take as much as they can, useful information and integrate it and connect it and make it better. I feel that it is still Russia and it is on its own. I am not talking about the individuals, who go study, some of them return, teaching and share their knowledge, but in general, Moscow is still Russian in a cultural and educational system, still remains with pride, and sort of thinking that they don't really need western influence."

The successful appropriation of the EHEA's learning outcome credit system and the implementation of international education mobility policies increased the universities' international reach. However, this new international reach lives side-by-side with individual enterprises towards mobility, and a bureaucratic invisibility that results from both the choices of the individual and from administrative structures (Singh, Heimans, and Glasswell 2014, Vandeyar 2013). These experiences demonstrate two things that seemed central to many educational experiences in Moscow: first, a dependence on individual resources and independently organised mobility; and second, a recurring and potentially sought-after administrative invisibility of this individual mobility.

4- Conclusion

One achievement of SEXTANT was the continuation of a long tradition of Russian-European engagement around learner mobility. In this section I illustrate practices of repeated engagement by the Russian university with known European academic partners, a continuation of a long history of partnership with European universities, and a continued investment in Bologna partnerships that reinforces the EHEA exchange networks. The analysis shows that MSPU's strategic engagement towards Europe is not necessarily tied to the pursuit of incoming student-based funding revenue. Indeed, I will show in the coming section (ch. 5.5) that the derived benefit for the universities lies in another domain, that of the acquisition of international visibility and political agency in influential EHEA organisations/networks. In this section I show practices of iterative and long-term collaborations around student mobility. I argue that these collaborations are strategically formed to position the participating universities (here MSPU and Ghent) in international leadership positions. Lastly, I expose that while Bologna policies opened the European space to student mobility and created a new awareness of international learning, there are individual learners' mobility practices that exist on the margins of the Bologna/institutional norms. I show that by following some learners' practices of mobility, we reveal educational gaps and zones of administrative obscurity in the Bologna framework of mobility - gaps that are quite apparent to the students themselves. Student mobility is also a personal engagement, knowingly targeted to supplement those gaps.

5.4 SEXTANT: transfer of human expertise and gains in the academic-industrial partnerships

The Bologna objective of increased international academic mobility is promoted through institutional partnerships, student mobility development, growth of supporting administrative structures, and credit recognition agreements. But Bologna's vision of the European Higher Education Area goes beyond the sole policies of learner mobility, and encompasses two other elements: mobility of human expertise, and transferability of skills between academia and industry. These pursuits correspond to the early Bologna political objectives of making the higher education market of Europe more competitive internationally, and anticipating future (post-2000) training demands for workers' skills (Parey and Waldinger 2010). Both policy pursuits (international competitiveness and industry relevance) contribute to the gradual marketisation of higher education (Berulava 2005, Martens 2007, Maximova-Mentzoni 2009, 2012, Olssen and Peters 2005, Romankova 2003, Tadaki and Tremewan 2013). The SEXTANT project participated in the development of both Bologna policies of expertise mobility and education-industry partnerships. Below, I explore some of the partnerships that resulted from SEXTANT, and subsequent international development projects. I follow the actors' trajectories, and reveal practices that contributed, in the case of SEXTANT, to this blurring of the border between educational projects and industrial endeavours.

1- SEXTANT as a response to Bologna's call for academy-industry partnerships

Achievement of other Bologna objectives: faculty mobility, academia/industry expertise transfer

Bologna policies develop a discourse of mobility that extends beyond the academia and the university-to-university student exchanges. One of the concepts of mobility that Bologna policies advocate is the transfer of expertise between universities and the private/industrial sectors. The strategy of higher education development is defined by the European Commission as pursuing the creation of 'productive citizens', and closer integration of research and industrial sectors. This promotion of academic expertise transfer towards the labour space reflects the political

construction of the idea that contemporary society has entered into an era of knowledge economy[111]. This vision is pushed by Bologna, and by the Council of the European Union in its November 2011 *Conclusions on the modernisation of higher education*, a document laden with terminologies of 'knowledge' and 'knowledge triangle' (education/research/innovation), where knowledge and citizenship activity are often placed in a linguistic position of proximity with vocabularies of reform, governance, competition and financial growth.

Looking at the SEXTANT project, we can see that a secondary result of the bilateral relationships between university partners was just such a knowledge transfer between university and industrial sectors. While the SEXTANT programme was underway, Dr. de Bruyn, lecturer at University College Ghent in information and communication technologies, served as the principal liaison between UCG and MSPU for the technological implementation of the ECTS and all associated electronic reporting processes, as well as the construction of student databases. A specialist in electronics security, De Bruyn also works at the boundary of the corporate and research sectors. He is president of electronics companies, holds managing interests in various other businesses, and is head of international cooperation at UCG. As such, de Bruyn held an 'actors of interests' (Christopoulos 2008) role in the SEXTANT project: UCG was lead advisor for the TEMPUS development of online course catalogues, ECTS electronic implementation and security, and the e-Student Mobility Support System (e-SMOSS). During the development of the project, he participated in the dissemination of the results among technology conferences. Using the UCG-MSPU partnership and SEXTANT project as example, in 2013 at the EDULEARN conference he presented his conclusions on the possible coordination between industry and academic sectors: 'Education-Research-Enterprise-Centres, a TEMPUS project: a test environment for University-Research-Industry integration and interoperability policies[112]'. After the close of the project, further TEMPUS applications were developed, based on this capacity to bridge the academic sector with the industrial; the project BESTMUP "Building Essentialism and Specify Type or structural Model for University-enterprise Partnership" was proposed. The funding grant application to the EU emphasized in the proposal his position of President of

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[111] This European political rhetoric dates back to the Council of the European Union's 23rd November 2007 *Resolution*, where the modernisation of the higher education system in Europe is oriented towards a higher competitiveness in the "global knowledge economy".

[112] W. De Bruyn, et al. (1-3 July 2013), 'Education-Research-Enterprise-Centres, a TEMPUS project: a test environment for University-Research-Industry integration and interoperability policies', 5th International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies (Barcelona, Spain: EDULEARN13 Proceedings).

Information and Communications Technologies in Agoria, the technology business association. Although this project was not funded, during the same period UCG successfully launched another TEMPUS technology-focused project with industrial links, the *European Qualifications Framework-based Professional **ICT Training** for Russia and Kazakhstan* (PICTET), continuing the models first implemented in SEXTANT.

DSPU: use of SEXTANT's success for other business sector gains

During the SEXTANT years, Dagestan State Pedagogical University (DSPU) was facing an uphill battle for regional development in a geography marked by civil and ethnic conflict, and wartime limitations in structural growth. At the same time as the SEXTANT application, DSPU was participating in a six-country multilateral proposal. This 2008 JEP proposal assembled eleven institutions of Europe, Russia, and the Ukraine[113]. The purpose was to create an "International Networking for Modernisation of Tourism Education and Developing Academic Mobility (INTOUR[114])" over 2009-2011. It was ultimately accepted for funding in the TEMPUS IV "First Call for Proposals[115]". At a time when the university was seeking European integration through technological upgrades and participation in the ECTS system, within its 'natural' pedagogical institution network it was also seeking funding from the very same European funding institutions for a leadership role in the regional tourism development.

2- Conclusion: SEXTANT's appropriation of EHEA policies and educational norms

The 2005-2014 investments by MSPU and its SEXTANT partners highlight an instance of education development where the participating institutions implemented across five universities Bologna norms of 'institutional capacitation', student mobility, and European Credit Transfer System. This effort sought to enable academic mobility through an institutional appropriation of Bologna standards and ECTS procedures, learning outcomes cataloguing, and transparency.

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[113] The two regions of Donbass that are currently in a state of secessionist war with Ukraine (Donetsk & Lugansk) and supported by Russia were represented alongside Dagestan university: Donetsk National Technical University and the East-Ukrainian National University (Lugansk).

[114] JEP project "INTOUR" # ETF-JP-00132-2008. #144641-TEMPUS-1-2008-1-FI- TEMPUS-JPCR.

[115] Source: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/tempus/results_compendia/documents/selection_list_eac042008.pdf

During the course of this implementation, certain Bologna policies were appropriated by the universities, local development projects were formed, and practices of power emerged that supported the appropriation of Bologna standards. I presented the outcomes of the project for MSPU: the development of individual mobility across academia, the growth of higher education networks and institutional affiliations, and the achieved transfer of technologies and expertise. Finally, while some of these outcomes fulfilled the EHEA project expectations, fully or partially, the education development that grew out of the SEXTANT years also permitted, and even promoted, parallel solidification of alternate international development processes.

Over the course of this exploration of the SEXTANT project, the thesis developed several points of analysis that had been introduced in prior chapters. From a sociocultural research standpoint, I described the gradual creation of an educational community of practice (Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009, Mundy et al. 2016, Vandeyar 2013, Wenger 1998) whose nominal purpose is the appropriation of Bologna norms, and whose actors collaborated as far back as the year 2000. This description of the SEXTANT community of practice develops a point introduced in chapter 4, namely that the Bologna process aims to build a community of educational practice that spans both political and 'civil society' actors (Gupta and Ferguson 2002, Haukland 2017, Mundy et al. 2016). Here, these are SEXTANT actors coming from industry and universities. Chapter 4 also introduced the notion that the growth and continued existence of the Bologna process relied in part on the members' capacity to build, over time, a history of collaborative responses to the same problems. The endurance of Bologna relied on its member-states iteratively reaffirming the same educational engagements, and reproducing the same policy rhetoric over years of comparable international agreements. With SEXTANT I present an example of educational practices that participate in this construction of the EHEA, by relying on a long history of common growth and on the actors' iterative engagements with the same policy principles and educational norms. SEXTANT was a network of practice because institutions could rely on decades of prior work together, on the certainty that coordination could be achieved. This reliance on historical partnerships was a fundamental part that allowed the SEXTANT project to develop as a network of practice within the overarching EHEA-TEMPUS "educational development" policy format. Here I present the community of practice, the history of collaboration, and the gradual structuring of the EHEA from the viewpoint of the SEXTANT educational project.

The SEXTANT project also reveals practices of power that emerge from the sociocultural appropriation of Bologna norms. I emphasize Bologna's normative guidance of the actors, notably through a pre-definition of the negotiation norms, rights and expectations. I show how this negotiation bears on a pre-determined model of higher education (convergence, BA/MA, learning outcomes), and benefits from experts who promote a specific Bologna educational language. I further argue that the participating universities used the SEXTANT project to strategically position themselves for later gains, preparing entry into more authoritative positions and political leadership. The previous pages show how DSPU gained a leadership position by transferring its SEXTANT expertise towards other regional development projects; in the upcoming chapter section (5.5) I will present at greater length the political and expertise gains achieved by the MSPU and UCG universities.

Finally, I reveal other practices that emerge during the course of the SEXTANT project, or practices by academic actors that run parallel to the Bologna framework of higher education convergence. The research shows how participants, while engaging in educational mobility, actually fall into an administrative invisibility, or wilfully bypass the EHEA networks. What is demonstrated here is the multiplicity of practices (Bartlett and Vavrus 2014) that coexist within the pursuit of EHEA policy objectives.

By exploring the SEXTANT project, I reflect on a Bologna model of higher education convergence that rests on more than a vertical implementation (Gupta and Ferguson 2002) of European standards in education quality, learning outcomes, and systemic alignment. What the SEXTANT project shows is the practice-based construction of the Bologna policies, the multiple practices of power emerging from the appropriation of its policies, and the complexity of practices that contribute (or not) to the desired educational convergence. SEXTANT expands the analysis scope beyond a vision of normative, top-down authoritative implementation.

5.5 Participation in the EHEA governance

The SEXTANT project's implementation opens a window onto the multiplicity of influences that bear on a Bologna development project. In a context of multiple parties fashioning the process of policy appropriation, the project demonstrated achievements in educational technology, student mobility, transfer of expertise, ECTS, and academy-industry partnerships. I presented the case that the development project did in fact deliver certain tools and systemic changes for the universities that were in line with the Bologna principles of higher education reform. As the project developed, practices of power appeared between Bologna governing institutions and universities, and within universities. The text below explores how SEXTANT further contributed to strengthening the Bologna model of governance and its governing network. Two elements in particular will be examined. I first focus on institutional and actors' practices that strengthen the governance organisation, and then show how SEXTANT helped the Bologna policy discourse become a tool of governance (Fairclough 2013, Lingard 2009, Shore and Wright 1997, Shore, Wright, and Però 2011, Wedel and Feldman 2005, Wedel et al. 2005). In the first segment I review the Bologna governance organisations, and show how the SEXTANT project brought participating universities into the Bologna advisory network. I expand here upon my earlier arguments regarding practices of power in SEXTANT, by presenting concrete examples of political and international legitimacy gains achieved by the project's leading universities (MSPU, UCG). Here, I also explore the role that nodal actors (Ball and Junemann 2012, Castells 2004, Williams 2002) have in creating a global legitimacy and policy coherence (Bodin, Hedlund, and Namli 2012, Mundy et al. 2016) for the Bologna process. In the second analysis segment, I explore policy discourse diffusion practices in the SEXTANT programme, and how those practices project Bologna's education development rhetoric across different geographical, political, and social scales. I show how discursive diffusion builds an authoritative voice for Bologna, creates recognisable referential frames (Freeman and Maybin 2011, Hull 2012a, Navaro-Yashin 2007, Riles 1999, 2006), and establishes a legitimacy for both its message and its soft-law governance model.

1- Bologna organisations, University, and individual actors taking 'actor of interest' roles

Development initiatives such as SEXTANT, and the Bologna policies they implement, are the results of a congregation of 'actors of interest' that temporarily align within a funded project. Ahead I briefly review the multiple organisations that have a stake in the funding and in the definition of the Bologna policies that have been implemented and furthered by the SEXTANT project. I then show how SEXTANT universities gained a policy voice among those very same Bologna governing organisations. I conclude by presenting the roles played by 'actors of interest' (Christopoulos 2008) and 'nodal actors' (Ball and Junemann 2012) in transforming a single Bologna policy into a traveling rationality and propagating an education development project beyond its original scope.

EHEA stakeholders and political partners: an overview

When defining what policy is, Chris Shore sidelines the idea of a singular force or model driving the construction of policy. Instead, he defines policy as a mode of coordination between multiple forces (actors, technologies) within the global assemblage.

> "Instead of an independent force imagined in models of policy transfer or implementation, policy is a mode of connection or alignment (between agents, institutions, laws, technologies, and discourses) within development's assemblages, articulated through political economy." (Shore, Wright, and Però 2011, 8,14)

The congregation of actors around the SEXTANT project corresponds to this policy definition. SEXTANT was the intersection point for a number of universities, Bologna governance partners, and other advisors from European education development institutions. All of these actors are involved, to some degree, in defining the policies behind SEXANT and managing the distribution of funding. The European institutions involved in Bologna education development programmes have a primary role of fund provider. The Bologna committees take up the role of advisors on implementation.

The European programmes *Erasmus Mundus* and *TEMPUS* that funded the SEXTANT programme are managed by the European Union agency the *Directorate General for Education, Audiovisual and Culture Agency* (EACEA) and its *Life Long Learning: Education and Training Activities* division. These agencies are under the supervision of the *EuroAid Development & Cooperation Office* (DEVCO) and the *Directorate-General for Enlargement* (ELARG). This last supervisory group's principal function is the expansion of Bologna process principles outside the European Union countries. For a discussion of the 'external dimension', see Adelman (2009, 168-70). The TEMPUS funds are awarded by the *European Neighbourhood & Partnership Instrument* (ENPI), ultimately under the direction of ELARG, highlighting the peri-European funding objective. The political principles behind the creation of European education policies are therefore tailored not only to the perceived needs of European agencies, but to a concerted objective of reaching beyond Europe towards the global.

Bologna governance advisory system

The Bologna Follow-up Group is the primary advisory structure in the attribution of Bologna education development grants. This group leads the funding and implementation of Bologna processes. It consists of four distinct bodies (political and international organisations): the *Council of Europe*, the *E4* group, the *UNESCO-CEPES*, and the *Social Partner Members* of *EQAR* (European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education). Among the *Social Partners* are the industrial representatives of *Business Europe*. The E4 group, the principal advisor of Bologna policy development, is a conglomerate of university representatives and student representatives[116]. The advising level of the EHEA therefore includes a multitude of voices that merge the social, political, and business sectors. The European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), part of the *E4* group, has been a leader in policy research and Bologna policy development since 2001. A not-for-profit organisation, it was established in 1990 as an international association of educational institutions including colleges, universities, and

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[116] See presentation in chapter 4. The European Student Union (ESU), the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), and the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The Social Partner Members of EQAR are representatives from 'Education International' (E.I) and 'Business Europe'.

professional education institutions. As a conglomerate of higher education institutions, EURASHE provides a forum for over one thousand members. EURASHE's stated role is to collaborate with multilateral organisations towards the structuring of European professional higher education programmes, quality assurance, and fundamental research on higher education. It holds a linchpin position between the educational institutions, the policy defining groups, the funding agencies, and the education quality control institutions. This places EURASHE in a critical governance position. The stated aims of the association are the "contribution to the European Higher Education and Research Area, to transnational cooperation and information exchange, and to cooperation beyond EHERA". In this mediator function, their role was to disseminate the SEXTANT outcomes, during and after the project completion. EURASHE played a central role in the first 2007-10 collaboration of MSPU and UCG. After 2012 both institutions continued their association with the group. One of the governance actors I foreground here is the *Social Partner Members*: the non-governmental civil society actors in the advisory structure of Bologna governance. Here I show that civil society representatives have official, "authorised" decisional powers, and are present at every level of the Bologna process. Earlier sections of the chapter (5.4) already explored the engagement of university actors in practices of power during SEXTANT's appropriation of Bologna policies. The point I contend here is that an analysis of practices of power cannot ignore civil society representatives, solely focus on authorised government actors (Hamann and Rosen 2011, Koyama 2011, 2015, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009), or create a theoretical divide between authorised actors and non-authorised actors (Koyama 2011, 2015, Levinson and Sutton 2001, Levinson, Sutton, and Winstead 2009).

MSPU: growth of university standing and entry in Bologna governance networks

In Russia, MSPU forged a national reputation of education innovation and international ventures, drawing on its history of international student education, its capacity to formulate international partnerships within the larger cadre of international political venues (lately within BRICS), and its standing association with European partner universities. Within the Russian Federation, MSPU stands near the top tier universities of Moscow, and holds a leading role in the pedagogical university association. In 2006, just prior to the first explorations of the SEXTANT

project, MSPU was head of the association. As such, MSPU was designated as one of the pilot universities to explore Bologna development, and mandated at the June 2006 Moscow congress to take the lead in international student mobility programmes[117].

Post-2010, the visibility of the institution continued to grow exponentially by building on the success of its bilateral and multilateral partnerships. At the start of SEXTANT, it was the University of Ghent that held a linchpin role as grant-holder, liaison with the Bologna financiers and with the technology industry, and guarantor of the development project completion. The early reliance of MSPU on Ghent as European liaison gradually changed through the continuity in joint efforts towards the same EU type of partnerships and gains. As I indicated above, the SEXTANT project was followed in 2013 by a second series of five new education development funding calls[118], (TEMPUS as well), by MSPU and its principal SEXTANT partners. This 2013 partnership with European projects once again targeted the development of online technologies, improved labour markets for graduating students, and development of transnational student exchange opportunities. This funding call also marked the fifth year of MSPU's partnership with EURASHE. At present, alongside the Flemish college Ghent, MSPU and Newman University College both gained a stakeholder[119] membership within the Bologna advisory group EURASHE. This acquisition of expert status in Bologna ECTS implementation enabled new positions from which the institutions could advocate for, propagate, and reinforce the Bologna education development model. Both recipients of the Bologna development programmes and constructing agents of its policies, the universities come to take a particular 'actor of interest' role (Christopoulos 2008); that is, play brokerage roles and hold central positions within the education development network.

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[117] "In June 2006 in Moscow [the] new Federal programme was discussed at the Congress of the Rectors of Russian HE institutions, with particular emphasis on ways of achieving its objectives. The Congress set up special interest groups for each type of University (medical, legal, technical etc.) to reflect their distinctive degree structures and relations with the labor market. […] As the leader of the Association of Russian Pedagogical Universities, MSPU was asked to look into ways of increasing international student mobility and to launch a pilot project in this area, with the intention of disseminating results to other institutions. (De Bruyn, Dmitriy Borodin, and Geert Baekelandt. 2010. *How to raise students and staff interest in educational exchange programmes between Europe and Russia supported by a web-enabled European credit transfer system and student mobility support system.* Proceedings of the III international scientific and practical conference: innovation and information technology in education, Lipetsk, Russia.)

[118] See previous section in chapter

[119] The term stakeholder is the official designation of the institutions that hold a role in the definition of the Bologna policy agenda.

The repeated investment by MSPU in Bologna projects led to the creation of a specialty niche and provided the conditions through which the institution was able to gradually gain access to the governance-advisory network upon which the Bologna process rests. Over ten years, MSPU proceeded from a phase of internal structural development and engagement in TEMPUS, to a phase of international recognition as full partner in Bologna consulting committees. By 2014 MSPU had gained sufficient legitimacy in the education quality standards consulting community to transition to a role of consultant, European policy representative in Russia, and donor. Most recently, the university was sponsor of, and participant to, a 2014 Oxford Symposium, the principal meeting of *The Professor Network*. This assembly gathered representatives from the BRICS countries, Oxford University, MSPU, the Oxford consulting group International Academic Quality Consultancy, and members of the Unica Centre for International Education (UCIE). Towards the symposium's objective of "producing recommendations for a working plan for the future of Higher Education in the 21st Century", the individual areas under review were "the link between academia and industry; the potential impact of technology on higher education; and BRICs and the quality gap". In these panels, MSPU Rector A. Semenov, himself a long-standing contributor to UNESCO, presented the university's recently acquired expertise in technology capacitation[120]. These objectives and their formulation openly aligned with the rhetoric of UNESCO and Bologna. The conference results (publishing sponsored by UCIE) exemplify one of those "circuits of power where normative frameworks are produced and globally diffused" (Muller 2013). The participation in multiple forums and the reformulation of MSPU's experience for international audiences is one of the examples where I see the university taking two positions: advocating for its own status as newly minted expert in education development, and advocating for the Bologna model of development that the university now embodies. Today, MSPU reaps the fruits of its successive partnership projects, having finally gained presence in consulting communities. MSPU's history of participation in multilateral development projects enabled it to develop a role of primary interpreter for "Bologna standards": lifelong learning, pedagogy, researcher mobility, social dimensions of education, and transparency. At present, it has taken a place in the EURASHE organisation, which had previously backed several of MSPU's European grant proposals, including SEXTANT, by

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[120] Alexey L. Semenov 'The potential impact of technology on higher education: university of learning', Higher education in a global world in the 21st century (Balliol College, University of Oxford).

offering expertise support. Today MSPU is in a position to project international leadership in global education and expertise in transnational education development[121].

'Nodal' actors: building policy coherence and policy dissemination

Universities involved in SEXTANT gradually gained roles as experts in Bologna education standards, status of advisor to universities newly applying to higher education development projects. The engagement with Bologna programmes also contributed to create similar central networking positions for individual actors. These 'nodal actor' positions, as I will show for SEXTANT actors, create direct communication avenues between the universities and Bologna governing institutions. These roles also provide SEXTANT representatives with new legitimacy as Bologna policy experts, as they reproduce the Bologna programme beyond SEXTANT's original scope.

Vertical mobility of actor, enabling faster policy implementation

Between 2010 and 2015 one of the faculty members involved in SEXTANT worked with both MSPU and the Moscow School of Social and Economic Sciences (MSSES). The latter school holds an even stronger European engagement than MSPU, with greater financial capacity and drive to Bologna-type education reforms (including an earlier transition to the BA/MA framework). During my passage at MSPU, the Professor frequently spoke of the MSSES school, seeing in this institution his primary resource for European outlook on pedagogy development. Another SEXTANT project leader provided an insight into his use of multiple appointments (research university, small teaching college, EURASHE) to test out education development models, thereby increasing their chances of success.

> SEXTANT participant: "On the one hand, I am member of EURASHE council, and besides Jagiellonian University, I am working with a kind of University College in the city of Tarnov. In Tarnov, it is a very nice University College, offering first cycle studies, and only two second cycle curricula. It is a school in a city of one hundred thousand inhabitants and because of this it is a very good laboratory for experiments. Also, because there are academics from Krakow who

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[121] International accreditation:
http://eng.mpgu.edu/news/mspu-educational-programmes-are-internationally-acknowledged/
MSPU educational programmes are internationally acknowledged
http://eng.mpgu.edu/news/mspu-takes-part-in-the-7th-international-congress-global-education--education-without-borders/ 6 febr. 4:31pm

work in big academic institutes and have a kind of second job there. […] So, because of that I have very good laboratory and I can just optimise these things and also, I can see how it would work as the rector and vice-rector are very good friends I have no problem implementing any idea. For example, it is very difficult to implement a good idea at big universities. So, if I have a totally new idea I can just implement it because I go to my colleague who is rector, […] and we can introduce many experimental procedures and ways of doing."

In this example, we see how the nodal actor's mobility between two levels of university enabled faster, freer education innovation. The faculty member was narrating the process that he followed to develop innovative ideas in teaching and learning and bring them all the way into European-level policy. As he described, his multi-university appointments allowed him to test and optimise new education standards in the low political risk setting of the College, before climbing the education hierarchy and bringing them to the attention of the larger, more political, national universities. We can also perceive the influence of interpersonal networks in the development of innovative education reforms. Prior research (Panova 2008) presented similar reviews of governance structures inside the higher education institution, and particularly the influence held by faculty chairs on higher education policy.

Horizontal mobility of actor, enabling diffusion of reform policy

Beyond this vertical actor mobility, the Bologna education standards are also reproduced from project to comparable project by the actors that can be described, in the words of Ball (2012) and Williams (2002), as 'nodal actors' or 'movers and shakers'. This forms what I would define as a type of horizontal mobility. The same Jagiellonian University Professor, one of the key participants in the SEXTANT project, also works in the university's Higher Education Research Centre, from which European integration projects for the institution are elaborated. He is the Polish representative in the London-based *Evidence Informed Policy and Practice in Education in Europe* (EIPPEE) consortium of trans-European universities and education research centres funded by the European Commission. Similarly, he is a liaison for COIMBRA, an association of 38 high-level European universities of 23 countries spanning from Russia to Ireland. COIMBRA's objective is to promote international mobility and influence European education policy. In the Professor's words, this nodal position between Bologna and European policy institutions is what allowed him to offer a perspective rooted in practical experience of international project development. It also allowed him to demonstrate how holding a nodal position between EHEA institutions allowed him to reproduce a cooperative development model

beyond its first occurrence and integrate the Bologna governing institutions into national accreditation agencies and universities. This extends a specific Bologna reform beyond the confines of the initial project.

> SEXTANT participant: "I am member of EURASHE council [and in the COIMBRA group]. When I say that I am a kind of practitioner, it is because I can see how some things can be implemented. Besides, as I also worked as trainer, for example I was in a project for accreditation and quality assurance in South Asia, I was an expert of Lithuanian quality assurance agency, and I am also working with Russians, Ukrainians, and so on and so on."

This expertise and multiple academic and advisory positions were used to propagate SEXTANT's education development model after the close of the project in 2010. In his dual capacity as representative for Polish institutions and Bologna/EURASHE expert, he redeveloped the SEXTANT concepts in four new European projects after 2010 (Pol-EDDA, TEACAMP, CANQA, and ENAGRA). In a presentation for future projects (CANQA and ENAGRA TEMPUS applications), what the Professor proposed to the future participants was the model of interaction that had been user-tested with SEXTANT, not simply the implementation of a preconceived European Credit Transfer System, or the creation of quality assurance mechanisms inside a specific educational programme. More specifically, he offered an expertise in moving from an initial multilateral model of interaction centred around himself and other expert institutions (EURASHE), towards a deeper, more interconnected collaborative multilateral network benefiting the institutions.

Fig. 12: University network improvement, interpretation by Bologna policy expert

What this means for the Bologna process is that its actors-advisors are able to push a model of collaboration to new universities, a model that is oriented towards Bologna-type education

improvement, and yet entirely avoids the idea of standardisation. What is offered is a pathway towards collaboration in education development. Yes, the proposed development is intimately linked to the implementation of Bologna higher education standards (like the ECTS), yet the programme centres the proposal on offering a proven format of university collaboration, rather than an eventual technical outcome. Through the work of the individual expert, it is not solely the credit transfer technologies and the structural developments that endure beyond the completion of SEXTANT. The expert and institutions have a role in creating multilateral communities of practice, and transforming a single Bologna project into a traveling rationale that exports and reproduces a higher education development model at different education levels, in multiple countries, and in different institutions (Singh, Heimans, and Glasswell 2014). Speaking of Freeman's (2012) work on the elaboration of international comparative testing, Grek links experts to mobile, institution-central, but invisible roles:

> "The role of experts is central as their own in-depth and trusted knowledge allows them to be highly mobile; in the name of their specialised expertise, experts have to be numerous; they are employed by different policymaking and research organisations and are accountable to them alone; their expert knowledge suggests the need for them to be present and offer advice at different stages of the policymaking process, yet it is precisely this same trusted and objective knowledge that renders them invisible." (Grek 2014, 273)

For the case of Bologna, many experts' relationships to the institution, and their dual roles of policy-making expert and implementation advisor, take away much of Grek's 'invisibility'. However, I feel it is necessary to point with Grek towards the interpretation that policy appropriation is often the result of an individual's capacity to participate in the reproduction, over time, of the same administrative and collaborative pattern. 'Nodal actors' organise and insert a legitimacy in the 'space of flows' (Castells 2011) that is the Bologna education development process, by holding positions at key points of the Bologna network, by translating development models from one reform project to another, by transposing the expertise gained from one project into another, or by using the reform experience from one educational space towards another. "Development is not a coherent set of practices but a set of practices that produce coherence" (Yarrow 2011, 6). The Bologna process derives coherence from the capacity of its actors to hold their knowledge and models of development at the intersection of multiple networks, institutions, and projects.

Conclusion

The SEXTANT project shows how faculty personnel who transition between universities and Bologna governance institutions can impact the dissemination of Bologna education norms during the elaboration or project implementation phase. Two elements intersect here. First, these actors exhibit a particular kind of mobility that enables policy dissemination, faster appropriation, and adequacy to Bologna governance institutions. Second, these actors are nodes through which Bologna experimentations transition from one project to another, or from one education network to another. They are nodes of transit for Bologna decision-making processes and institutional relations. Both nodal actors and mobile actors participate together in the dispersal of Bologna standards and the strengthening of governance practices.

2- Discursive diffusion

The following pages expand upon the previous analysis, in which I examined how practices of actors and SEXTANT institutions contributed to reinforce the legitimacy of Bologna policies and stability of its governance system. Here, I leave actors aside and follow the documentation and discourse of Bologna, examining how the SEXTANT project strengthened Bologna governance through the diffusion (Bieber 2010) of Bologna education development rhetoric. In chapter 4, I defined the Bologna process as one that is principally rooted in soft-law and participatory principles of governance. This section examines two supports that strengthen the authoritative voice of the Bologna "soft text" and advisory governance: the capacity to build recognisable referential frames, and the ability to embed its discourse in different geographical, political, and social scales (Li 2007). I look at how the use of Bologna policy rhetoric in SEXTANT documents builds a referential framework for the actor, and how this "referencing constitutes a process of reciprocal validation" (Freeman and Maybin 2011, 161) for Bologna educational values.

Constructing recognisable referential frames: use of a designated vocabulary, heteroglossia, and overwording

In the multilateral project co-led by Ghent and MSPU, a Bologna-specific vocabulary has been used repeatedly and diffused across multiple locations: in the proposal to TEMPUS; in internal 'best practices' documentation; in later public documentation, conference papers and publications issued from the project; and in further education development proposals based on SEXTANT. There are several points that I wish to bring to the fore prior to continuing. These are official documents that bear the "authorised" Bologna message. They are also documents that are designed to serve as guidelines for later development programmes. They identify which practices might ensure success, and hold the most implementation efficacy, for similar EHEA-funded projects. Finally, these SEXTANT documents were carefully crafted by a multiplicity of actors, with a consciousness that they would reach the public eye and represent the values of the SEXTANT endeavour. Gerrard and Farrell (2013) see such accompanying texts as "constitutive of the power of governance". They enable the implementation of policy, link it to chosen managerial models, and make it transferable across settings by 'materialising' the implementation model into text, image, or graphic form. I consider this mass of discursive production (advisory papers, reports, numbers, planning agreements and benchmarking) from the point of view of its socially agentive role, as do Harper (1998), Smith(2006), Rottenburg (2009), and Mosse (2011). I draw two immediate observations from reading through the repeated vocabularies of SEXTANT. First, the vocabulary represents the variety of influences and interests involved in SEXTANT, from the educational, to the technologic, to the corporate characterisation of the education development venture. This linguistic diversity is what Lingard names 'heteroglossia' in the policy corpus, the consequence of all the processes (political, negotiation) that lead to convergence.

> "This process/text definition of education policy indicates the politics involved in the production and implementation of a policy and in the actual purposes and language of the policy text. The resulting compromises inevitably mean that policy texts are usually heteroglossic in character, discursively suturing together differing interests to achieve apparent consensus and legitimacy." (Lingard and Ozga 2007, 2)

Beyond the representation of all parties through a choice of heteroglossia, a second factor that marks the SEXTANT documentation (factor that I also find in other Bologna policy documentation) is the adherence to official vocabulary resources and constancy in the repetition

of these vocabularies. For the SEXTANT project, the TEMPUS funding organisation recommended the use of a funding proposal language that would ultimately be used by a total of thirteen institutions[122], two international organisations, two national organisations, and a host of experts participating in the elaboration of the project. The source for this recommended policy rhetoric was the guidebook published by the Education & Culture Directorate, Education and Training Activities: the *European Commission "ECTS users' guide"* (2009, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publication of the European Communities). At the construction stage of the project, the implication by the TEMPUS advisors was simple: use a set language that reflects our values, and enhance your chances of being selected for a six-figure development grant. Do not use it, and lose competitiveness for the grant. This required adherence to Bologna terminology may seem innocuous on the surface, or at the very least expected, in the sense that most financial applications would attempt to reproduce the language of the donor programme to enhance probability of success. But this was given further weight by the SEXTANT institutions' reliance on the services of the Bologna Follow-Up Group representatives during the application phase for the project. These groups assisted, as they assist other grantees, in designing the bid for the grant, in which they guided participants in 'correct' use of Bologna terminology. The words of the SEXTANT project participants[123] show how they consciously employ the standards of Bologna rhetoric to 'produce political visibility'.

> SEXTANT participant: "If we speak about competence matrices and stuff like learning outcomes, you can see that it is like in an orchestra: you know what to teach, and we have a script that will determine how your teaching can be optimised. We can say, OK, you see universities that give very strange certificates like 'confidentiality assured', 'veterinary cybernetics' and so on… So if we want to be sure that our diplomas will be well seen in other countries, […] we can get some labels!"

The repetition of Bologna vocabulary was used knowingly in Russian academic and political circles to produce a politically visible trace of the Russian academic development expertise in the principles of European financiers.

> "In this case, the exercise – the fact of having a policy – is designed for show, more so for electoral advantage than for the value of the policy detail itself. In other words, the impetus to political action, to initiative, policy or legislation, is not the desired end result but the political

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[122] 5 participating universities; 2 European and Bologna organisations (European Commission and EURASHE); 6 individual experts (Association for Development of Pedagogical Universities and Institutes, Russia; European Institutions for Higher Education; Jagiellonian University, Poland; Consortium of Polish higher education institutions; University College of West-Flanders; University Study-Oriented Systems company, Poland).
[123] Pr. Frankowicz, Bologna training centre Ben-Gurion University "The Bologna process and its implementation in Europe (and non-EU Member States)". June 2012.

spectacle of being seen to take action. This phenomenon has been recognised in the educational policy field where the very high public importance given to education renders it particularly susceptible to spin and political spectacle, and so to symbolic policymaking and legislation." (Gillies 2008, 422)

This capacity to achieve political gain through the management of the "space of appearance" was long ago revealed by Arendt (1958, 199), and lately developed by Fairclough (2000) and Gillies (2008, 2011). The repeated discursive diffusion by MSPU of Bologna concepts is matched with a parallel institutional self-alignment with the Bologna themes and vocabulary. The body of SEXTANT documentation therefore carries an official meaning, is the result of multi-party negotiations, and serves the dual purpose of exporting a message towards future Bologna actors, and guiding these actors' practices.

The reliance for grant applications on the funder's language is seen in a variety of other instances, in MSPU's engagement with European education development initiatives. For example, in 2000 MSPU was the recipient of a UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme in *Psychology and Pedagogy of Education **for all throughout life***. Years later in 2013, MSPU renewed this association and won one of the 54 Russian UNESCO Chairs, now named *Musical Arts and Education **in Life-long Learning*** (2013). This happened while UNESCO was advocating for a vision of "life-long learning" that has made its way into every corner of European educational agendas. MSPU accordingly shifted its presentation of UNESCO Chair titles. These Deleuzian "little lines of mutation" (Deleuze 1979) are not done in a vacuum. "Mechanisms are assembled to function in such and such a manner, slipping into the interstices of bigger or older apparatuses, which then undergo a mutation as a result" (Deleuze 1979, xi). Other parallels are visible in MSPU's self-presentation towards European partners, in the multiple references to *knowledge economy*, to the department's activity mandate as *international innovational activity*. All these wordings reference principles heralded by the UNESCO, OECD, and other international organisations in education development. The Bologna governance model is strengthened by the creation of a specific Bologna body of knowledge and the use of policy-specific vocabulary.

> "Textual analysis also makes us aware of what Fairclough (1992) called "overwording," the repetitive usage of certain words and types of words, for example "new," in attempts to justify the need for a policy." (Lingard 2009, 236)

Heightening education integration efforts, student mobility, transparency of competencies, diploma equivalency, and framing of education as a life-long endeavour: each of these themes has been pushed by Bologna organisations, and gradually became domains where MSPU invested, increasing its own EU visibility, networking presence, and national status. Since the early stages of the Bologna implementation in the Russian Federation, and even prior to Russia's entry into the process, MSPU worked in close collaboration with organisations to integrate the European education discourse and agenda into its public relations and official university presentation.

As I explore the texts and discursive management of Bologna rhetoric by the SEXTANT actors, several practices become apparent. The writers who participated in the production of the projects' documentation built a corpus of texts that carefully referenced and appropriated the Bologna rhetoric, and builds a referential frame (Freeman and Maybin 2011, Hull 2012a, Navaro-Yashin 2007) for other Bologna actors. Exploring these documents reveals four characteristics. The texts are constructed around a heteroglossia principle that allows the rhetoric to 'represent' the widest range of actors. The documents adhere to official vocabularies, a conscious rhetorical management by actors to 'produce political visibility' and improve chances of financial success. Finally, exploring this adherence to official Bologna rhetoric also reveals practices of power by EHEA and European institutions.

Normalising, neutralising tool of governance

Looking at the SEXTANT project rhetoric also reveals a capacity to develop a decontextualised, policy-acceptable vocabulary that rephrases local realities into a language entirely focused on the technical objectives of the Bologna process. As stated by Mosse (2013), "Li (2007) considers a key governmental effect of development to be what she refers to as 'rendering technical,' that is, conceiving and rearranging social relations and development processes in alignment with expert designs." Shore and Wright examined the capacity that documents have of "masking the political power under the cloak of neutrality" (2012, 8-9). Other theorists examined the governing power that resulted from the ability to make events or voices disappear from the official knowledge. This was particularly stressed by Yanow (2000) and Lingard's (2009) research as the "silences"

of policy texts. The SEXTANT project similarly reveals how local realities may be obscured by a 'technical' or policy-acceptable language.

One of the SEXTANT participating universities was the university of Dagestan State (DSPU). The SEXTANT project took place in the immediate geographic and temporal vicinity of a war. In August 2008, the Russian and Georgian governments entered into a military conflict in the Abkhazia[124] and South Ossetia regions. This South Ossetia separatist war came on the heels of the 2007 war in Ingushetia, and brought another military conflict in a region marked by the two wars in Chechnya, the second being triggered in part by the invasion of Dagestan itself. The Russo-Georgian conflict thus brought back significant peace-keeping diplomatic and political efforts in the international community agenda. However, reading the SEXTANT project papers, we see a capacity to build a rhetoric that eludes this post-war context and rephrases the conflict into a technical policy language that matches directly with Bologna objectives. The wording that we can see in SEXTANT documents, as a response to the "envisioned difficulties" of engaging with Dagestan, displays a technicalisation of the human conflict.

> "Recently, Dagestan Region on the whole and DSPU in particular faced certain problems with information technologies introduction and international cooperation development due to unstable security situation in the region."

The wording of the SEXTANT funding application highlights Dagestan as a territory central to the stability of the entire region, from Chechnya to Ossetia, Inigushetia and the autonomous but Russian Federation-funded territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. But it places the emphasis on the themes of cooperation and information technology growth, rather than those of conflict or loss of capacity. The result was a framing of the political and military conflicts in Dagestan as a bureaucratic and administrative difficulty.

To recall the larger context of Bologna in which SEXTANT was created, I refer back to Bologna's genesis. At its roots, the Bologna process, namely the Paris declaration of 1999, inscribed itself in an ideology of pan-European society construction to support democracy and conflict prevention through principles of trans-national integration. This mirrored the original post-war vision of Europe. In the previous chapter, I explained that one of Bologna's policy

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[124] I note that Abkhazia is a state whole legal existence is not recognised by all the international community. It is recognised by Russia, and indeed is one of the states with which MSPU has education partnerships.

objectives was a focus on peace, democracy, and cultural integration inside a European social dimension.

> "The European Education Policy Space was not determined merely by the fairly stable geographical boundaries of a common market; as early as the 1960s, it became a shared project and a space of meaning, constructed around common cultural and educational values, such as peace, social equality and solidarity, freedom of opinion, progress and innovation, cultural diversity and tolerance – many of these values are still highly referred to today." (Grek 2014, 269)

While this ideal came as a post-1990 construction, it can be related to the early principles of the European Union that had been laid out by Robert Schumann. The mandates given through the intergovernmental engagements, the texts of the bilateral agreements, the recommendations of the European Council and of other participating agencies, all pursue notions of stability, respect for alterity, and dialogue, principles that parallel the European definitions of democracy and human rights.

> "We strive for the societal goal that the student body entering, participating in and completing higher education should reflect the diversity of our populations. We therefore pledge to take action to widen participation at all levels on the basis of equal opportunity." (London Bologna meeting, 2007)

The genealogy of these Bologna social objectives can be traced through participation in UNESCO. After the Second World War, the UNESCO became a major contributor to the international dialogue around education, and advocated for the ideal of international and multicultural education as a social value. Through UNESCO, the United Nations started pushing an agenda of poverty alleviation and redistribution, particularly targeting the education of economically and culturally segregated populations (special education, minorities education).

In this background of development towards democracy and peace, it is striking to see how the Bologna policymakers and the construction of an international project could impose a rhetoric veil on local Dagestani realities, and transform them into a reaffirmation of the larger, non-conflictual Bologna objectives. This imposition of silence in the official texts reveals to me an imposition of policy power.

> "We also need to recognise the significance of the silences of a policy text; just as a politics of non-decision making can be important in relation to policy, so too can silences in policy texts tell us a lot about power." (Lingard 2009, 236)

Lingard's 'silence' is seen in SEXTANT through the noticeable absence of vocabulary related to conflict, invasion, and civil war. Within the SEXTANT project, the creation of a partnership that contained a Dagestan university member revealed an instance of discursive deployment of a

technical language to normalise/neutralise a political context that had to contend with a post-war and latent civil war situation.

Conclusion

In my analysis of the discursive diffusion of Bologna policy and its role in Bologna governance, I consider the text as a voice that contributes to the construction of trans-European education practices. Discursive diffusion contributes to the reinforcement of the Bologna governance by developing a shared vocabulary through which multilateral project participants are required to frame the 'education development reality' they envision for their institution. In this I particularly consider the construction of a common vocabulary, the practice of overwording (Fairclough 1992), and heteroglossia. Lastly, I examined an instance where the SEXTANT project's discourse transitions from a traveling rationale of higher education development, to a normalising, neutralising tool of governance that can even reframe as a 'technical difficulty' Dagestan context of military conflict. The chapter takes the view that if there is a strength of rhetoric, and a capacity to diffuse a message that "from soft text becomes hard reality" (Muller 2013, 10), that this strength rests not on the inherent validity of the propositions but on the discursive/textual capacity to create a normalising, harmonising, and neutralising discourse. In a context of soft-law and non-normative governance, relaying the Bologna message through discursive diffusion should be seen as a governance tool in itself.

5. Conclusion

This chapter presents the study of SEXTANT, a multi-university development project that pursued some of Bologna's education development goals. It traces the interdependence of its participants and the impacts that this education mobility and institutional development project had on the participating universities and their actors. The SEXTANT project was the meeting ground of a multiplicity of agencies and actors (political and academic institutions), each of them vying for a role or voice in the policy construction of today's EHEA.

Through the SEXTANT project, we can see a successful implementation of Bologna reforms. The policy appropriation seen in SEXTANT brings together disparate but interdependent agencies, whose technologies, goals, and timelines alternate between convergence and divergence. Within this multiyear, multi-institution and multi-policy engagement, a multiplicity of actors intersected, vied for the expansion of their objectives, and shared data, technologies, and personal expertise. Individuals worked in multiple institutions, defining in them the processes of educational and institutional engagement with the European Union and the Bologna higher education policies. They defined which segments of the objectives and discourses would be transported from one institution to the next. The review of the SEXTANT project highlights areas of institutional, educational, and technological development that corresponded to stated Bologna objectives. These were the growth of international networks and bilateral agreements, technological developments linked to the definition of ECTS, and development of knowledge sharing between institutions and academic/private sectors. I outline that the multiple actors (universities and individuals) derived novel positions of leadership, in both Bologna networks and in wholly external networks, from their engagement with the Bologna development project. As I explore this appropriation of Bologna policies, practices of power become apparent: a normative guidance regarding learning outcomes and valuation of learners' competencies, the creation of a negotiation framework to organise the academic actors' interactions, and the promotion of a shared language of education. Local practices of power also become apparent, in their opposition to Bologna standards: practices of discrimination and bribery that stand at odds with Bologna's vision of learning outcomes transparency, and challenge its *social dimension* policy. Here I show the practices of power that participate in furthering the EHEA policies and

participate in their appropriation, but also other local, national practices that emerge during the actors' engagement with Bologna.

The chapter also shows how the SEXTANT project contributed to the growth and consolidation of the EHEA governance structure through practices of discursive diffusion of the Bologna rhetoric, and by the creation of nodal actors and actors of interest. SEXTANT actors utilised a centrally mandated Bologna rhetoric of education reform and distributed this in a variety of texts, allocutions, policy and best practices documentation. In addition to being made public in multiple formats, this rhetoric travels between policy groups, European leadership, and universities, contributing to the diffusion of the Bologna message and reinforcing its legitimacy. Through this construction of a Bologna-specific knowledge and language, I see the founding of a governance power.

> (Foucault 1977, 27) "We should admit rather that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and at the same time constitute power relations" (in Howarth 2010, 315)

I see in the SEXTANT case the same construction of power that Foucault and Howarth identify. There is a construction of power through the constitution of a Bologna-specific terminology of higher education development standards, and a constitution of an official Bologna policy language. The SEXTANT institutions' engagement also resulted, beyond the institutional alignment with ECTS and student mobility discussed previously, in the creation of new members of the governing Bologna agencies (EURASHE, BFUG). SEXTANT contributed to install universities and individual actors into leading educational expertise roles or into brokerage roles between Bologna university networks and industrial concerns. This creation of power-positions went hand in hand with higher education development practices where the new SEXTANT experts became the leading actors in later projects that proposed the same Bologna development model to other universities, and exported the model beyond the academic world towards the industry. In these examples, there is not solely a coordination by participating institutions with Bologna "calculative notions, strategies and technologies, as Wacquant sees Ong's (2005) global assemblage approach" (Mosse 2013). We are facing a multilateral policy-making model that utilises strategies, funding, and concepts in one context (SEXTANT, ECTS implementation), to further the universities' reach to other (industry) contexts, and provide the university of actors

with central political and advisory roles. All this contributed jointly to the renewal, affirmation, and expansion of the Bologna process and of the Bologna governance structure.

Chapter 6: The Russian higher education reforms, deviations from the Bologna process values

6. Introduction

During the first years of Russia's engagement with Bologna, the Russian Federation was pursuing education development on three parallel fronts. A national effort focused on administrative and financial reform. An engagement with European programmes (Bologna) focused on higher education reform, and other engagements with international organisations (World Bank, OECD). These parallel education reforms co-existed, impacted each other, and to some degree overlapped. In chapter four I explore the history, principles, goals and systemic organisation of the Bologna process, with a focus on defining the context, the institutional actors, and the type of participative practices that Bologna policies promote. Here I first review the values of Bologna, and of its chosen model of governance. As such, I provide in chapter four an introduction to the Bologna policies as "practices of power", and show several practices developed or officially supported by the EHEA leadership and its advisory network to guide the EHEA actors towards a multinational convergence in higher education and towards the appropriation of specific educational norms.

In chapter five I explore a multi-university development project that pursued some of the EHEA objectives. This SEXTANT project provides a window into the Russian higher education appropriation of Bologna norms. As I review this appropriation of Bologna norms, several practices of power come to light: how EHEA policies define for its members a shared language of education, or how they create shared negotiation tools, then requiring that all academic actors use these tools as they negotiate Bologna norms for local appropriation. I also present policy practices that diffuse new educational norms such as learning outcomes, and revisit how learners' competencies are valued. Exploring the process of policy appropriation through the SEXTANT example, chapter five continues to reveal other, local practices of power that emerge during the actors' engagement with Bologna. These stand in opposition to Bologna standards, such as practices of discrimination and bribery at odds with Bologna's social dimension policies

and vision of learning outcomes transparency. The chapter finally shows how the SEXTANT project contributed to the growth and consolidation of the EHEA governance, through the actions of nodal actors and actors of interest, and through practices that disseminated the Bologna rhetoric.

Chapter six continues this exploration of practices of power that emerge within processes of educational policy appropriation. It also takes the view that an exploration of Russia's engagement with Bologna policies and practices of power must take into account the larger international context to be accurate in its analysis. This chapter therefore leads an investigation into Russia's participation in other international education reform programmes, and relates it to both the Bologna process and the interpretation of policy as a practice of power. I show that by exploring Russia's international engagements, a more complete understanding of the Russia-Bologna engagement is achieved, and a more contextualised comprehension of the Russia-Bologna practices of power is reached. In the chapter, I explore how non-Bologna educational policies and development programmes were strategically used by Russia and neighbouring states to attain political leadership in the CIS region, to impose practices of unequal resource allocation, and to foster practices of power concentration in the hands of some institutions. I further explore the rise of the World Bank's neoliberal vision of higher education reform, and how Russia's collaboration with international education reform financiers led to Bologna education policies being challenged in favour of neoliberal standards. Particularly, I look at how the early-2000s reforms led to a fundamental rethinking of the authority/legitimacy of the state in the management of national education practices.

In a first movement, I present how the Russian federal government efforts in higher education reform participated in the growth of power differentials and in the concentration of resources around established institutions, focusing large funding resources around a purposefully selected number of universities and research centres. Russian higher education reforms that specifically targeted education quality improvement resulted in a political and economic decentralisation in which the comparative roles of state and regions were profoundly changed. I show how these reforms resulted in a concentration of power in the hands of a small number of new academic-innovation centres and 'elite' institutions.

I then turn to Russia's participation in higher education reform programmes led by the World Bank, during its engagement with Bologna. In these reform programmes, the objective of higher education improvement is used by the World Bank to push an agenda of neoliberalism and education as commerce into Russia. This internationally-funded reform contributed to install, at the government level, monitoring agencies that catered to both the Russian State and the Bologna Process. I present how these reforms, beyond education quality development, in fact represent a push by the international funders to promote inside the Russian education system a very specifically neoliberal understanding of improvement and development in higher education. I look at the multi-million-dollar education development funds awarded by the World Bank, and how these funds promoted the bank and its partners' specific definition of education as a neoliberal commerce.

In the last section of the chapter I present examples where the Russian federal government uses education reform projects and legislation reforms to extend its regional political influence. Specifically, I review examples that show how Russia used its national education reforms and its participation in international unions (CIS, BRICS, Bologna) to create a model of international legislation harmonisation that placed the Russian Federation as the dominant centre of its geo-political region (CIS and Eastern Europe). In this final section, the chapter looks at Russia's leadership in international education reforms (particularly legislation reforms) and how it impacted the Russian regional political power balance. Previous chapters looked at governance in education reform through the Bologna process model (ch.4), then looked at governance in the EHEA through the theoretical looking glass of a specific multilateral education reform programme (SEXTANT). I here look at governance as a form of power that is extended beyond the national state through voluntary strategies (Ferguson, 2002 in Hilgers 2011).

6.1 Quality rise in education: how education improvement efforts create decentralisation, concentration of power, and differential institution growth

The Bologna process seeks to create a new transnational space of higher education, to assemble its member states around a principle of higher education convergence, to improve higher education quality and transnational learner mobility, and finally to define new sociocultural norms of higher education. During the past fifteen years Russia has been engaged with Bologna, but also collaborated with other international partners and promoted with them education reforms that were comparable to Bologna objectives. Among these international partners were the OECD, the World Bank, and other non-governmental financiers. The analysis of the Russian involvement with Bologna must take into account these influences, as their impact on post-2000 Russian higher education reforms. In section 6.1, I explore post-2000 Russian policies for education improvement in quality and international competitiveness that were financed by such international actors, and pursued themes comparable to Bologna. I first show how federal policies to improve educational quality in internationally competitive universities were developed through state-led programmes of regionalisation, deregulation, and marketisation of education, including reinforcement of academia-industry ties. I then show how these policies for education improvement and international competitiveness induced a change in norms of higher education financing, and promoted practices that concentrated financial resources around a small set of individual learners and national research institutions. Through this analysis, I present why and how these policies and reforms generated practices of power at the international, regional, and institutional levels. I further examine practices of power that contributed to impose this neoliberal model of higher education in Russia (i.e. deregulation, devolution of state powers, marketisation of education). In the final part of this chapter section I discuss practices of power that allocated financial and educational resources toward a small group of 'elite' learners, to the detriment of others, and practices of power that segregate some learners out of high-level academic programmes/institutions.

1- Higher education improvement reforms: deregulation, education-industry integration

Post 1992, Russian policy sought to increase its education quality and efficacy through new systems of school empowerment in regional administrative accountability. In their 2014 review of higher education reforms in post-1991 Eastern Europe and CIS, Breskaya and Bresky highlight the multidimensional character of institutional autonomy in higher education, asking whether in Eastern Europe, "universities [are] agents with limited autonomy and do they have no need for complete autonomy?" (Breskaya and Bresky 2014, 20). In this chapter I examine the delegation of powers traditionally held by the state to educational institutions, and the resulting emergence of new practices of power. The new principles of education were pushed forward as early as 1992 with the first post-Soviet education laws. Section 6.1 looks at the Russian policies of improvement in education quality and international competitiveness as neoliberal practices of deregulation, delegation of state competencies, marketisation of education, rise of audit systems, and gradual focus on elite individual learners and institutions. The deregulation and decentralisation processes sought to increase the autonomy of education regions and transfer some of the federal powers to institutions/regions. However, the implementation reality of the government's legislations was far from a straight delegation of central government responsibilities to regions. Rather, implementation was a practical response to a combination of difficulties in national finances, and a complex transitional policy out of the centralised Soviet system. Ultimately, it was a complex redefinition of centre-periphery political relations.

Regionalisation and deregulation: Russian reforms to higher education system

Pre-2008: decentralisation

In earlier chapters I presented the 1992 and 1996 federal laws. The 2000 *National Doctrine of Education in the Russian Federation*, issued by the government on the 4th of October 2000[125], was the first nation-wide policy to follow these overarching 1992 and 1996 legislations. It initiated the reforms in education, higher education, and institution accreditation regulation. The 2000 national framework reflected a policy of change in educational practices, targeting three fundamental changes in the Russian education system. First, the 2000 policy framework outlined

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[125] On the National Doctrine of Education in the Russian Federation: October 4, 2004 #N 751.

a redistribution of decisional powers in the Russian education system: the delegation of education competencies and duties from the federal institutions to the regional education boards and universities themselves - delegation of all that Stephen Ball calls the "practices of government and technologies of policy" (Ball 2015a). This redistribution of education practice powers included annual education institution reviews, devolution of state decision powers on curriculum and degrees, and student recruitment decisions. Second, among this delegation of powers over educational practices from state to regions/institutions, the 2000 *Doctrine* established new norms in financial accountability reporting, and delegated fee-setting decisions to institutions and regional boards. Finally, the *National Doctrine* legitimised at the state policy level a growing discourse that premised the notion of individual international competitiveness on the success of financial deregulation. At the turn of the millennium, the *National Doctrine* therefore initiated shifts in the Russian higher education: new practices of financial deregulation, a transfer of the state competencies to the regions and education institutions (districts, schools, universities), and a focus on competition between institutions or learners. I detail below some of these practices and systemic changes.

As the 2000 *National Doctrine* was enacted, regions gained a new administrative duty and legal competency to maintain the financial and material welfare of education institutions under their charge. Regions and higher education institutions gained many new rights, including: to hire and fire staff; to seek income from non-governmental sources by engaging in entrepreneurial activities; to determine compensation for academic staff within the limits of available resources; to act as a lessor and lessee of assets; to determine the use of revenues; to set up legal entities, and enter into contractual relations with other entities; and to organise educational and research processes at their own discretion (Bain, Zakharov, and Nosova 1998, Butovsky 2004). We can see through this list that the reforms went beyond a simple devolution of financial or administrative duties from the state to regions. As Timoshenko expresses, the impact of the 2000 policy marked a significant ideological shift in the techniques of public administration and state governance.

> "Government initiatives signal a shift in ideology in public administration. They include the Budget Process Reform, the Administrative Reform, and the Restructuring of the Public Network. […] Being accountability-driven, they were expected to deeply alter the scope and function of the Russian State" (Timoshenko 2011, 397)

The 2000 *Doctrine* was not simply a matter of delegating education decisional competencies to the regions. Rather, this national policy foregrounded an emerging discourse by Russian policymakers regarding the expected result of deregulation: an increased individual and international competitiveness. In 2001, the deputy Dean of the law faculty of the Russian University of Peoples' Friendship gave "recommendations to improve the education system" (Groof, Lauwers, and Filippov 2001, 49):

> - "To establish a coordination commission with a regular secretariat within the Ministry of Education for assisting the activities of higher education institutions in view of increasing the ability of Russian graduates to compete in the international market of educational services.
> - To forward recommendations to the governors of the Russian regions, which would induce the regions to pay attention to the support of the educational institutions
> - [To transfer the competence of] minor commissions […] to the competence of the Government"

Dean Fedorov's wording reflects a neoliberal discourse that was slowly becoming accepted in Russian higher education and government administration (Gounko and Smale 2007, Suspitsyna 2005). The neoliberal discourse was slowly becoming a norm that pervaded Russian academia, giving rise to new curricula (Bain, Zakharov, and Nosova 1998, Gillies 2011, McCarthy and Teasley 2008, Pervova 1997, Suspitsyna 2005, Zajda 2007a) and academic departments (on "transitional economics" studies at HSE, MSU, NSE universities, see Suspitsyna 2005). It also corresponded to a normalisation of individual competition in the Russian higher education sector, for later individual gains on the job market. This normative guidance towards valuing individual competition has been studied by researchers, with analyses of new norms of entry in universities based on national exam rankings, focus of financial resources around individual learners, and new courses in which the value of individual competitiveness and entrepreneurship is explored. Citing Zajda (2003a), Sari Eriksson highlights this post-Soviet shift from education based on equity to education based on principles of quality and competition.

> " After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the stated purpose of education policy has changed from the principle of equity to the principle of quality (Zajda 2003). The meanings given to the concept of quality are linked to competition, excellence, merit, selection and the academic elite." (Eriksson 2014, 50)

This shift has been viewed as a significant cultural change and rethinking of the self in post-Soviet Russia, tied to the transition to neoliberalism (self as enterprise Hilgers 2011, subjectivation and competition Matza 2012, self-interest Olssen and Peters 2005). This shift towards individual competition has been viewed by researchers as a significant cultural change and rethinking of the self, tied to the transition to neoliberalism. The transition towards

neoliberal values also corresponded to the government giving increased support the rise of their best universities on the international higher education ranking tables. The foregrounding of the individual market competition (both for individual institutions and the individual learner) thus introduced entirely new paradigms to the education values that had previously drawn the world's students to Russian schools during the Soviet period (11% of international students in 1990, see Forrat 2012).

The section above presented the policy framework and outlined new educational norms that the Russian state pursued at the turn of the century. The triad of marketisation of education (Maximova-Mentzoni 2009, 2012, Timoshenko 2011), deregulation/devolution of competencies, and individual competition (Forrat 2012, Hilgers 2012) was the neoliberal reform paradigm that surfaced in Russia in the early 2000s. I then explored in more detail some of the practices resulting from the 2000 policy framework. Below, I show how the *National Doctrine* policies resulted in a set of power imbalances across the Russian educational regions and fostered the emergence of practices of power in the Russian higher education system.

The Russian government's policy was to improve education by rationalising the finances and the education system, and one of the policy solutions was to delegate duties and responsibilities to regions. However, there has been a disparity between the announced policy and the effective pace of financial, legislative, and administrative implementation. Contrary to an overall improvement of higher education, the delegation of budget responsibilities to regions brought a gradual disengagement of federal institutions from financial support of special education (Groof and Lauwers 2000, 2003) and supplementary forms of education, such as after-schooling, tutoring, support of extracurricular activities (on loss of supplemental education, see Vlasov and Mokretsova 2013). It left such initiatives to the regional and local institutions' control, with financing from students, families, or the institution itself. Eventually this led to a faltering or suppression of educational resources available to the population. Moreover, it led to a growing disparity of education services between Russian regions. The state continued to support a shift towards the delegation of financing to institutions, regions, and education consumers, even when the regions could not demonstrate financial stability (see financial cost sharing of education: Chugunov, Androushchak, and Kluyev 2010). Compounding this problem, when Federal Government did in fact adequately supplement the regions' funds for education, the new

legislative capacities of the regions were occasionally lacking, which did not allow them to fully implement the new government programmes.

> "The growth of subventions to the regional budgets presupposed the increase of the local governments' responsibilities, but municipal bodies were initially unable to fulfil their new functions of financing schools because they needed special proxy from the state and had no administrative rights for the new tasks. Confusion was increased by the fact that many Russian republics promulgated their own laws on education, some of them containing articles which contradicted the federal law. […] The financial system was an instrument through which these disparities were exacerbated" (Bray and Borevskaya 2001, 356)

In this disparity of personnel, financial, and legislative implementation capacities, the financially powerful institutions are advantaged compared to other institutions (Hossler, Shonia, and Winkle-Wagner 2007, Timoshenko 2011). The regionalisation of funding widened the gap between the institutions that were able to self-finance high-visibility research and those who could not, and led to growing disparities between education regions. What I show here is a devolution of responsibilities from the state to new actors, under the rhetoric of empowering the academic actor. I argue with Gupta and Ferguson that the devolution of government responsibilities unto individuals is a hallmark of the neoliberal governing model, that corresponds to a transformation rather than a lessening of governance:

> "This is not a matter of less government, as the usual ideological formulations would have it. Rather, it indicates a new modality of government, which works by creating mechanisms that work "all by Themselves" to bring about governmental results through the devolution of risk onto the "enterprise" or the individual (now construed as the entrepreneur of his or her own "firm")." (Gupta and Ferguson 2002, 989)

The rationalisation of finances by deregulation resulted, in part, in a disparity in quality of education services that challenged the Russian state's aim to improve higher education across all its regions. This also resulted in growth of sociocultural imbalances: in poorer regions, students and families were forced to take up some of the financial burden of education, particularly supplementary education and education related to extracurricular, cultural activities. This uneven support by the state marginalised populations, cultural knowledge, and local identities (including linguistic identities). Numerous Russian reports highlight this retreat of cultural education in less central federal regions, caused by the higher financial strain following educational reforms. Speaking of the politics of representation, multiculturalism and neoliberal school reforms, Viczko and Riveros state that "the particular iterations of identity and recognition, produced and reproduced by neoliberal multiculturalism, fail to deliver on their emancipatory promise. Instead, it creates a system of grouping and sorting that reaffirms difference while denying the possibility

of educational equity" (Viczko and Riveros 2015, 481). Finally, the delegation of financial burden to the regions and the individuals contributed to the increase of institutional imbalance, to the continued benefit of financially powerful national research universities. All of these imbalances were moves away from the Bologna policies' aims to achieve an egalitarian education.

Post-2008: legislation remodelling, further financial decentralisation, and audit systems

In 2012, the Russian Federation Government announced a new policy framework of higher education development. The *State programme: education development, 2013-2020* (22 November 2012, N 2148-r) presents two major axes of education development. First, a continued policy of promoting universities on the international stage, and second, the development of a "pathway to 2020" plan that calls for reductions in federal spending, greater institutional competition (Forrat 2012), and fuller implementation of quality reporting systems for institutions. One of the central elements of this 2013-2020 road map is therefore the continuation of finance reform and decentralisation that was started between 2000 and 2005 with the *National Doctrine*. The new 2012 education development programme expanded the earlier budget cuts and delegation of financial responsibilities to education districts, and increases the number of quality reporting systems.

The new overarching education law seeks stability around the same principles of regional self-regulation that were devised in the 2000 policy framework: new administrative and financial autonomy verified by quality audits submitted to the central government. Divided in three periods, 2013-15, 2015-17, 2017-20, the first part of this development programme is implemented in the 2012 law *On education* (29 December 2012), which came at the end of a two-year development during which the legislation was reviewed multiple times and generated strong pushback from its constituents (Tsyrlina-Spady 2013). Indeed, the 2013-2020 policies were seen to deepen the education inequalities caused by the reduction in federal funding, and by the fact that the withdrawal of federal funding often outpaces the universities' capacity to develop new funding sources.

> "The *On Education* law, which is to become effective September 2013, limits educational guarantees for Russian citizens and shrinks job opportunities for faculty and staff. Already, in late December 2012, Medvedev signed a "road map" that stipulated harsh funding cuts in education

(up to 40%), increased the workload of university staff, and aimed to shut down many universities as allegedly ineffective." (Kurilla, Makarychev, and Lanin 2013)

The Russian Federation developed higher education reforms to increase the universities' educational quality. It was done through neoliberal principles of deregulation to promote institutional autonomy and financial independence. The result has often been a growth in quality gaps between institutions.

Beyond the new funding responsibilities of regional centres, the post-2008 legislations and policies continued the reinforcement of audit systems for the assessment of quality standards. In the 2012 law, quality control is gradually being transferred to the universities, but the templates and systems are still developed and distributed by the Federation. This practice of governance through audit systems is similar to the governance model that had been pushed by Bologna, with the establishment of EQAR. Further, the reports on education quality standards that are filed by Russian universities directly contribute to the databanks of the Bologna process and other international organisations. In the UNESCO and OECD reports, a majority of the higher education statistics for Russia are attributed to the Russian federal statistics services. The audits are generally not done directly from the international organisations to the Russian institutions. The salient point is that the kind of information, the statistics that arrive in the hands of European institutions, including those that participate in Bologna, are conditioned by the audit model that prevails and the questions that are given to the universities. What we see in a large proportion of statistics that reach the European institutions is a prevalence of audits that have been put in place by the World Bank or by the OECD. For instance, in the statistics that are delivered to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics Data and Eurostat tables by the Russian Federation, there is a focus on economic viability of the universities and market relevance of the curriculum. While the Bologna process does advocate for the market relevance of higher education, the questions that have been given post 2000 to the universities and collected by the federal statistics service (through the Moscow Higher School of Economics) often come directly from the OECD tables, or from World Bank audits on higher education. These institutions drive the neoliberal reforms in higher education. What is seen in the implementation of education quality standards audits is a confrontation of models: which international organisation has driven the data collection, set the questions? Audits show that a large proportion of the information on the Russian higher education that is made available to the European and Bologna institutions was defined by the

OECD and the World Bank. With the financial contributions of the World Bank and the subsequent development of Russian audit structures aligned with the World Bank model of education reform, two things happen. First, neoliberal quality standards and international norms of higher education audit and are being promoted. Second, because the World Bank was able to build the networks through which educational data was collected in Russia, and audit statistics were distributed to Europe, the World Bank's vision of Russian education filtered through to the EHEA advisory institutions. It became one of the principal referential sources of information and models of higher education. We see here a practice of power whereby the World Bank's management of information resulted in the diffusion of their valuation (audit) of the Russian higher education quality.

The new poles of higher education: development model focused on integrating academia and industry

The drive to decentralise the system of education spurred a delegation of financial, administrative, education programming, and education quality-reporting duties to the regions. The post-2000 reforms also set the stage to some practices of power, through an increase of inequalities in education resource distribution. Finally, the reforms meant that universities had to develop new economic models to ensure their economic stability. Higher education institutions had to seek out new financial resources, and for some, combine forces - that is, merge establishments. This led to changes in the education sector: a new education-innovation-industry paradigm designed to bring new income, a consolidation of institutional forces through closing of peripheral sites, and university mergers designed to lower expenses. Gillies noted in his study on neoliberal governance that "across the European Union a much closer alignment between the university sector and the world of business and commerce is emerging, [since] the Lisbon Agreement" (Gillies 2011).

Maximova-Mentzoni (2009) presents the development of Russian higher education marketisation policies as gradually orienting themselves towards three poles: first, create an MIT-Industry type link that joins international education and industry; second, revisit the role of education institutions as creator of the "productive citizen"; and third, redefine political geographies through the development of academic mobility. In 2005, the Russian State education

development project *National Priority Project Education*[126] was created. A core aspect of this policy was the push for emulating Harvard and MIT models of education. The government decree (#1226, 2005) pushes forward three agendas: integration of science and education, the repatriation of western knowledge[127], and the creation of a select class of 'elite' universities. This triple association of pedagogical purpose, research, and building initiatives around educational excellence is a recurring trio in many contemporary Russian education development projects. It is also the same orientation to higher education reform that is being applied today throughout the EHEA space, and a steadfast point of Bologna rhetoric on education development.

Later, the 2013-2020 education development policy incited the higher education institutions to become pilot sites for development of new technologies, and to take a central position in the development of regions by increased cooperation with emerging technology businesses. In order to remedy the withdrawal of federal financial support to institutions, the Russian Federal Government pushed an education economy model where the institution acts as an enterprise, derives financial benefits from innovation-industries commercial collaborations, and where innovation centres are housed inside the education institution. The Russian Government's call was to target infrastructure and technology development, join together the education sector and industrial groups, renew the pursuit of marketable high-end innovations, and develop academic-industrial collaborative research centres. For example, in 2007, Siberia Federal University and Southern Federal University were born (Timoshenko 2011), products of the recombination of smaller universities, with the ensuing loss of research specialties, changes to educational access for local populations, and downsizing of administrative personnel.

> "The university was founded by merging 4 major Krasnoyarsk institutions of higher education. […] Among the members of the University Board of Trustees are representatives of large companies, politicians and scientists. The Chairman of the Board is Dmitry Medvedev. […] For the 3-year period the University has been consecutively pursuing the policy of close cooperation with the largest Russian and international companies functioning in the Krasnoyarsk Territory. […] The pilot project of human resources development for the largest oil producing company "Rosneft" could be considered as a striking example of such partnership. The company has been constructing […] the University campus. […] At the same time the company supports training of schoolchildren - the University prospective students - by organising special "Rosneft" classes."[128]

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[126] Source: http://eng.mon.gov.ru/pro/pnpo/
[127] Via incentives to Russian graduates that study abroad with federal funding: full repayment conditions if they stay out of country, no repayment if they return to Russia in their field of study.
[128] Source: Siberia federal University, http://www.sfu-kras.ru/en/presentation

These new institutes became hallmarks of the new integrated relationship between state-backed industrial groups and regional research centres, making state-backed industrial complexes central to the region's education life.

I presented above examples of Russia's early education reforms and national policies towards education improvement. As I explore the policies and practices that emerged during the Russian higher education reforms, three elements come to the fore. First, a neoliberal model of higher education improvement emerges, under the influence of powerful international financiers. These policies were focused on large-scale systemic, economic, and legislation reforms. They were defined with post-Soviet international openings in mind: adaptation to new market ideologies and legislative agreements. The policies and corresponding laws worked to redistribute the administrative and legislative powers from the State to the education districts (Hashim 2005), and towards a complete review of the economic model supporting the education system (Suspitsyna 2005). The neoliberal norm of education improvement then pervaded the EHEA space through a dispersal of audit data organised by World Bank expert networks. Both the neoliberal evolution of Russian education and this principle's entry into the EHEA space speak to practices of power that developed during the 1990-2005 period of education reform in Russia.

Second, the deregulation, financial decentralisation, and distribution of powers from state to educational regions create imbalances between education districts. While some regions suffered from university closures or merging and saw reduction in cultural education, other centres and national research institutes consolidated their positions as dominant forces in the Russian educational landscape. Finally, the reforms' focus on improving the international competitiveness of the Russian higher education system resulted in two fundamental changes. It brought about a reinterpretation of the self, with increased value placed on individual competitiveness and marketisation of one's competencies. The focus on international competitiveness also resulted in development of the audit culture. Ultimately, as they installed a new nation-wide political and legal framework for education improvement, the Russian policies of the early 2000s contributed to a fundamental redefinition of the Federal State's function in education (Kaplan 2007, Timoshenko 2011), of the regions' scope of action in education matters (Zajda 2003a, 2007a), and engaged the education sector with a new neoliberal ideology (Gounko

and Smale 2007). Finally, these reforms resulted in the creation of a policy framework that ultimately brought about a polarisation of the education system, and the growth of power contention between institutions and regions.

2- National Research Institutes: concentration of resources around select universities

Over the first decade of reform, Russia has implemented education reforms designed to increase its international education status. It did so through large-scale, state-led deregulation and regionalisation reforms, and through changes of its education financing norms. One of the reforms that I introduced in the previous section was Russia's policies enabling a rapid climb of its strongest research universities in world rankings. In the coming pages I further explore the policies which aim to develop and strengthen the Russian National Research Universities. Part of the strategy was to focus federal funding around a selected group of research institutions and higher education collaboration centres. This development of higher education quality with the creation of internationally recognised research centres is something that also stands at the core of Bologna.

Creation of National Research Universities

In Russia since 2005, there has been a growing investment of federal funds towards mega-grants projects, to fund a higher education institution rise in the international rankings. These grants are distributed to a reduced number of state-sponsored research universities. From 2008 onwards in particular, there was a gradual concentration of means around a small number of *National Research Universities* (NRU). The Russian federal government sought to redefine existing top-tier higher education institutes as "excellence centres", funnelling significant federal funding towards those universities. The NRU designation is awarded by presidential decree to selected universities after a competitive process. Universities receive NRU status for a term of 10 years, with guaranteed state support (for up to 1.8 billion roubles each) during the first years of their programmes. Overall, the federal programme allocated 10-12 billion roubles per year for a 5-

year support to NRUs, over the 2009-18 period (Maximova-Mentzoni 2012, 165). The first competitive selection of NRUs took place in 2009, with 110 participating institutions.

> "According to Igor Fedyukin, the deputy minister of education, this year 15 universities will receive special state grants and at the initial stage the subsidies will be worth RUB9 billion (US$270 million). The action is being taken under an existing state programme to develop education from 2013-20 and a special plan to improve leading universities, which was approved by Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev. The initiative is a response by the government to world rankings of universities. None of Russia's leading universities appear in the top 100 of the rankings."[129]

The presidential decree that created the NRU statuses identified specific educational objectives relating to the integration of sciences and education, with focus on new technologies and on reversing the exile of highly qualified Russian academics. In the words of President Medvedev[130], the objectives were "to increase the status [the Moscow] universities"; "to promote more sustainable integration between science and education"; "to invest in new equipment and new programmes"; "to pay considerable attention to mobility, academics who travelled to the west [and are interested in] returning and participating in the development of higher education and science in Russia". The government transcript highlights the importance of investment in technology, a position described by Forrat (2012) as the core of the Russian neoliberal education model. The transcript reveals the continued effort by the state to support education institutions' modernisation, while disengaging from day-to-day financial support: the federal NRU funds were designated for new technology acquisition, and steered away from normal institutional operating budgets, as they were specifically "not to be used for current expenditures". Lastly, the documents also highlight the objective of bringing back to the Russian nation "western" competencies. In the NRU case, Russian engagement with 'mobility' focused more on inward-facing repatriation of national scholars than on the export of national expertise. This inward mobility differed from the learner mobility policies of Bologna. Despite this divergence, it converged with Bologna's educational improvement model, as both the EHEA and Russia recognised the positive impact that international learner mobility had on the global standing of a national education system. Combined, all these elements provide a blueprint of the rhetoric that pervaded Russian education policies at its time of engagement with the international community.

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[129] Source: http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20130208141810400
[130] official transcript of the working meeting between President Medvedev and Education and Science Minister Andrei Fursenko published in 2008 {See Appendices, 07.10.2008 Working Meeting \Education Ministry, 2008 #566}

Looking at the NRU programme opens a window into how the values driving education reforms among neoliberal advocates made their way into Russian education politics. It also presents us with a case study to see how Russia engaged with the notion of mobility and globalisation.

Regarding the objective of attaining higher international standings, NRUs were to be integrated to the international competitive scene of institution and rise in the rankings, in part because they corresponded to the international benchmarks of education-innovation-industry model. Similar strategies to attain international prominence in the education rankings are found in other countries. In France, for example, the government has initiated a strategy of merging recognised elite higher education institutions (Science Politiques, Ecole Normale Supérieure) with other regional university centres. The result in Paris is a regrouping of diverse universities in a large *Pole Universitaire d'Excellence* (university excellence initiative), and its association with research units (Paris IDEX). Amsler and Bolsmann note that "global competition is thus used as a policy instrument, and 'world-classness' in universities has become signifier of national productivity, power and prestige" (Amsler and Bolsmann 2012).

Concentration of power towards the NRU: financing practices, and economy woes undermining federal efforts in equalitarian education improvement

Throughout the first decade of the 2000s, diminished budgets and unequal financial distribution across the Federation led to a misalignment of economic reality with the policies in place. The State faced a high funding expenditure for creating National Research Universities. Further costs were incurred with other, more extensive programmes that were supposed to spur growth in education quality and sustain the Russian institutions' rise through the international rankings.

The overall federal funding provisions of the 1992 and 1996 laws on education and higher education provided for a norm of 170 students per 10,000 pop. being funded by federal entities (i.e. 3% of the federal budget). Over the next years, with cuts and economic downturns, the funding did not reach these goals. At present, the Russian Federation is spending 3.9% of its GDP on education and 1.2% on tertiary education alone (2009). The expenditure on education is well below the OECD average.
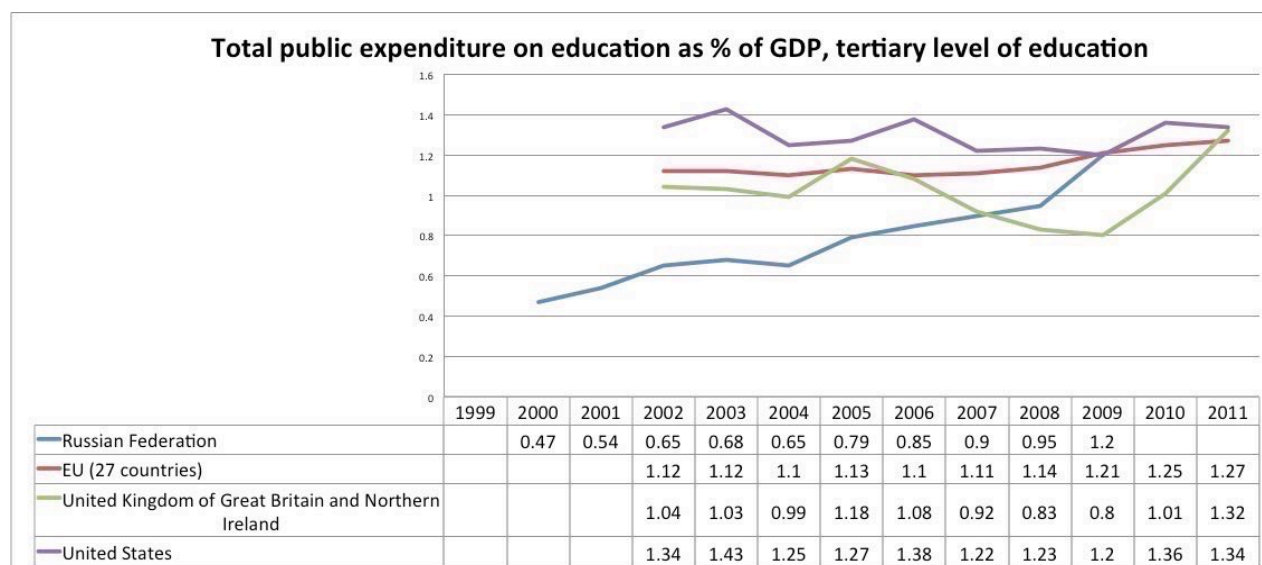
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Russian Federation		0.47	0.54	0.65	0.68	0.65	0.79	0.85	0.9	0.95	1.2		
EU (27 countries)				1.12	1.12	1.1	1.13	1.1	1.11	1.14	1.21	1.25	1.27
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland				1.04	1.03	0.99	1.18	1.08	0.92	0.83	0.8	1.01	1.32
United States				1.34	1.43	1.25	1.27	1.38	1.22	1.23	1.2	1.36	1.34

Fig 13: Comparative public expenditure on higher education[131], Russia, EU, UK, USA

Unable to benefit from long-term central funding, smaller-scale institutes concentrated their resources by merging establishments. More often than not, it resulted in the closing of centres and diverting of the most high-visibility and economically viable resources into single education centres, correspondingly cutting down educator's positions. This also led to depreciations in salaries (already low since the 1990s, see Pervova 1997), devaluation of higher education, lowering standards in quality of education, and obsolescence of teaching material (see Maximova-Mentzoni 2009, Galanov 1997). This left many educators and communities of students by the wayside.

The Russian Federal State concentrating finances in the hands of a few elite NRU institutions reinforced the geographical imbalances brought out by the federal deregulation reforms. Centres that were already leading economically, academically, and politically continued to accrue larger shares of grant resources compared to peripheral regions. Financing practice for NRUs reveal a further concentration of power around the Russian capital. Hossler (2007) remarks on the lack of guaranteed State support leading to perpetuating elitism and reduction in equity and access in higher education. Of the 12 institutes chosen to be the first NRUs out of 110 contestants, 6 were located in Moscow and St. Petersburg[132]. In 2008, a further two Moscow universities were

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[131] Source: Eurostat, UNESCO, HSE. Expenditure at tertiary level, years 2005-09: *secondary professional education* enrolment was added to *tertiary education* enrolment from federal state Statistics Services 2013 data book(see note Fig 3.1).
[132] source: http://eng.mon.gov.ru/pro/ved/niu/

awarded NRU status even before the official 2009 start of the competition. In these two examples we see the co-construction of political clout and education reforms: the NRU statuses were awarded with the presidential decree of 7 May 2008 (the day of inauguration of President Medvedev) to the national nuclear research university (Moscow Engineering-Physics Institute) and the national research technological university (Moscow Institute of Steel and Alloys). The government's effort to achieve international competitive status through the creation of National Research Universities and large collaborative centres that merged academic research centres and industry/technology enterprises produced a growing regional disparity in education quality. While central institutes in Moscow and elsewhere were awarded the financial and administrative benefits of the new National Research Universities status, other regions were required to pool their resources to increase their competitive capacity. In the infrastructure investment for the education sector, the call for funding towards the development of research university excellence often resulted in consolidations through closing of old sites, merging and liquidation of university centres. The underlying workings of such mergers bring a host of problems that may be less than apparent on the surface. The pages below will examine these underlying problems.

Russia's engagement with education improvement reforms therefore contributed to the rise of new nexus of powers and hegemonic processes. The new legislations and policies created the conditions that allowed a concentration of growth potential in already strong institutions, placing other peripheral institutions on a much more uncertain economic and administrative footing. This polarisation was due to economic disparities between regions and the difficulties in keeping an even pace of implementation across all the political, legal, administrative, and academic aspects of reform.

3- Individual learners: state support for elite students, and access to NRUs conditioned by learner's socioeconomic capital

In sections 6.1 and 6.2, I outlined the Russian state policies of quality improvement in higher education. These policies were developed through reform programmes of decentralisation and deregulation, and through financing practices that concentrated resources around a narrow set of research universities. These policies and reforms generated practices of power, contributed to

uneven distribution of educational resources between regions, and to a concentration of resources in the hands of 'elite' universities. This redistribution of educational and financial means, in the name of developing the quality of education, exemplified neoliberal principles. Increasing education quality was not solely pursued through the decentralisation programmes, or through financial concentration around select institutions. The focus on institutional improvement, regionalisation and financial regulation efforts was also supplemented by initiatives that placed individual learners and scholars at the centre of the drive for education quality and efficacy. Individual students or academics were placed at the centre of the education reform towards greater competitiveness and marketisation (Matza 2012). In this final section, I present an analysis of the actors' capacity to access these concentrated resources, and reach quality education centres. I explore below a Russian policy programme that focused financial and educational resources around a small set of 'elite' learners, to the detriment of others, and practices of power that segregate some learners out of high level academic programmes/institutions.

Concentration of resources on elite students for international representation

Education development grants targeted the selection and financial support of 'elite' high-achieving students through competition, providing international study awards to a select few, sending them to represent the federal system abroad and bring back new competencies. While this strategy is common to many countries' education systems, it also corresponds to the neoliberal model of focusing on the development of "individual self-realisation" (Ball 2015d, Hilgers 2011, Olssen and Peters 2005). This governmental strategy also runs contrary to the policy objectives of the Bologna process, where the pursuit of international mobility is conceived in terms of augmenting the numbers of transient students on a large scale, not focus on a small elite learner population.

The 2005 *National Priority Project Education* project created several incentives for educators and scholars, for example the promotion of "Best Educators" prizes. This programme continues to be funded today and has been extended by the 2010 presidential decrees to the recognition of "Best Young Researchers" through various prizes and awards. With the 30 July 2008 decree (N 1144), President Medvedev awarded young scholar prizes for extraordinary achievement,

pushing forward an ideal of high achievement recognition. Further initiatives targeted high-performing students and funded them to become representatives of the Russian education system abroad. In April 2012, president-elect Putin launched one of his first term's initiatives by proposing to fund certain students' international studies, provided they return to Russia.

> "Under this programme, anyone enrolling at a foreign university to study a subject we need, can apply for a loan covering tuition fees, accommodation and meals. If they return to Russia and work in their field for at least three years, they won't have to pay it back. But if they don't want to return, they'll have to pay back the loan plus interest."[133]

The ensuing development plan provided financial planning for sending a number of selectively chosen Russian students abroad with state funding. Conversely, the plan pursues an increase in Russian higher education institutions' visibility with a rise of financial incentives for foreign students.

> "quota for training foreign students in Russian universities at state expense is to be raised from 10,000 to 15,000 students" (M. Koloss on 2013-2020 policy, Conference on bilateral Russian-Norwegian cooperation on education Koloss 2013).

Education access tied to ascription and learner's socio-economic capital

In the lines below I look at evidence of correlations between the learner's economic capital, social capital, and his or her ability to enter a desired university and complete the most competitive curriculum available. I draw information from fieldwork experiences at Moscow's MSPU university, interviews with MSPU students, and from exchanges between Russian and Chinese students. I also look at a specific Russian university, MGIMO, whose international partnerships create a network of 'elite' schools that provide the same education: specifically educate students to take postings at the highest levels of the state administration and diplomacy.

University entrance: impact of students' economic resources

For incoming foreign students in Moscow, university choice and fees mean that they may have limited access to the schools that offer better alignment to Bologna standards and/or larger international exchange networks. Konstantinovskiy (2012) speaks of this economic barrier to accessing education of quality in Russia. This issue applies beyond Russia, but is particularly

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[133] Source: Dmitry Peskov, Strategic Initiatives Agency. http://thepienews.com/news/putin-plans-to-fund-top-students-abroad

relevant to Moscow students for several reasons. As explained in previous chapters, the Russian economy and government higher education funding politics created pronounced inequalities in teaching and learning resources and education quality between universities. Adding to this, the cost of living in Moscow is high compared to other locations. Last, the financial weight of university fees bears most heavily on the foreign students, as they do not benefit from Russian federal support. As one Chinese student from MSPU expressed:

> "Initially, I took preparatory courses - CIE.[134] After the CIE, I decided that I want to get admitted into the Moscow State University, but education at the Moscow State University is very expensive. For example, Moscow State University costs ten thousand (10,000) Roubles a year. It is expensive. It costs two thousand (2,000) a year at MSPU. First of all, I chose MSPU because it is cheaper, secondly because I have a lot of free time."

Here, the student was not referring to 'free time' for leisure, but rather expressing the need for non-study time to work for pay outside of the university. The Chinese student's economic conditions and economic survival had a direct impact on his access to education. Education quality is attained by those students who possess the necessary financial means.

This differential access to instructional quality, based on the student's economic capital is compounded by the unequal distribution of welfare resources inside the institution. As I previously indicated (ch. 4.2) the MSPU university dormitory was in a very uneven state of repair. None of the dormitory floors between levels 5-9 have internet access. Floors up to 14 can be connected, but the time it takes to install the routers seems to routinely extend past two or three months, ensuring that most of those students use wireless keys and access internet via the general Moscow wireless network. Download speed in the lower levels is so poor that most students take periodic trips to the upper floors searching for whoever might be amenable to socialise, and hopefully become an internet resource. Floor 17 has broadband internet or can get access to it within two weeks. The Belgian scholar with whom I shared the apartment had gained access within two weeks. A visitor from England at the other end of the 17th floor obtained her connection within five days. I had to renew the connection twice for myself, never waiting more than ten days. Other students, however, were not so fortunate, with a typical waiting time of three weeks to a month. This reminded me of Weis' (2010) reflection on Raftery and Hout's

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[134] Centre for International Education at Lomonosov Moscow State University. Established in early 1950s, it is a pre-University department for foreign students in Russia. CIE provides language and literature courses, Russia culture and history courses, pre-university training, and teaching Russia as foreign language courses.

theory of "maximally maintained inequality" and class-based inequality persistence: "under this theory, as the privileged classes are generally better positioned to grasp new opportunities than their non-privileged counterparts" (Loi Weis, Foreword, in Howard and Gaztambide-Fernandez 2010). This difference was later brought home to me by a young Chinese student I came to know, as he explained that his request for a connection had been met with a timetable of three months for installation, which never materialised despite countless visits to the IT offices. He eventually came to ask me to vouch for him to the administration, in hopes that the 'patronage' of a European student would ease his request through the slow-walking administration. The issue at stake here is not just the impact that speedy internet access might have on the learning experience (though in the Russian university, with minimal access to printed resources and a paucity of documents in the library, it certainly had an effect). The point that is relevant here is that the best resources were distributed unequally among the student cohort, with privileges clearly given to the "European" population. Welfare resources and services seemed awarded along ethnic or racial lines.

Beyond the contingency of university choice on financial resources, even once university entrance is gained, Russian Federation student funding is organised as incentives towards a particular career track.

> AS: "In any Russian university you have people who are on the [state stipend], you know, there is still this, the state pays your tuition, you receive a modest stipend and that is about it. The stipend varies, based on your major. Someone, an acquaintance of mine, with a more technical major received twice as much as I did. All the same, what we did receive didn't really help so much. I received 1500 RUB a month which translates to $30 (USD), 40, perhaps a little less than $40. […] In Vladimir I could pay for most of my dormitory with that. Boarding. No food."

On top of the impact the state subsidies have on students' choice of learning path, researchers have identified enduring gender-based patterns in degree choices. Gerber (2004) notes a pattern of 'horizontal variation' that pushes students to take up traditional fields according to gender. Even if the overall cohort of university students more or less reflected the diversity sought in the *social dimension*, it does not mean that ascription patterns would be absent from the education choices of the students. Authors also remarked that Bologna's 'new diplomas[135]', with 'equal

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[135] For MSPU, these were identified as Computer sciences, Information technologies, Management, and other courses, as well as the courses that offered a 'translation certificate'.

chances' of competition, are in fact camouflage for higher fees in specific 'new' disciplines' (Trubina 2012, 210).

University entrance: continued ascription practices, and the case of an elite university. The example of MGIMO/Sciences Politiques

The willingness of Russian families to pay for entry into education establishments has been well documented by researchers. Fursova and Simons indicate that:

> "A part of the public consciousness is to widely believe that today no one can be admitted to the universities without an acquaintance or certain connections or without a fee. Such practice is regarded as quite usual and "normal," which is why it does not cause internal protest or disapproval. Thus, the study of Roshchina (2002) shows that 57 percent of the parents are willing to give a bribe, since it is regarded merely as a form of costs related to education of their children–normally they would pay formal fees for the education itself, and informal fees as an admission fees for the chance to get free education." (Fursova and Simons 2014, 27)

Their 2010 survey of Kazan universities, for example, reveals that of the 400 students interviewed or called in a focus group,

> "Only a half of the respondents (46.6 per cent) presume that it is easier to enroll a higher educational institution in the standard way ('to take an exam and win the competition'). The number of choices between the following responses were practically even: 'to prepare for the academic competitions and win the first prize'–15.3 per cent, 'pay the right person from the admissions board'–13.6 per cent, 'use your connections or those of your parents'–11.9 per cent. It means that 25 per cent, which is a quarter of the total number of respondents, believe that illegal methods of entry are required. And only a small number of respondents speak frankly about the idea of buying for money: the Unified State Exam results–5.9 per cent, medical statement showing your disability–5.1 per cent, and first prize in the academic competition–1.7 per cent. […] Thus, we can make a conclusion that 40 per cent of respondents prefer to use illegal methods of enrolling in the universities." (Fursova and Simons 2014, 27)

According to this research, a large number of students believed in a practice of entry to universities based in part on the social and economic resources that can be brought to bear. This certainly matched what I had heard from students, particularly regarding the highly selective, 'elite' universities. Early in the chapter, I indicated that during the course of my fieldwork I ended up sharing a flat with a French exchange student who came from the *Science Po* school of government in Paris and was attending the Moscow MGIMO diplomacy university less than a mile away from MSPU. Both universities are considered highly selective, elite institutions. They focus on curriculum specialisations in diplomacy and state administration, and are renowned for producing in their graduates an overwhelming majority of high-level government actors and

diplomats. During one of the interviews with the Russian MSPU student, as we spoke of education quality, elite universities, and equality in higher education access, he took MGIMO as the example of an elite university caught in this practice of 'paid entry'.

> RS: "You know, […] through the results of the Unified State Exam,[136] anyone could get into MGIMO. Of course it would be quite hard, just without money, but if you can sustain [the required academic level], it is a big deal. But still, even those who don't get high results on [the Unified State Exam], semi-elite, those could get into MGIMO. Because they have money, they pay, so they enter MGIMO."

Later, the student followed this observation by reminding me of the selective schools that cater exclusively to the families of high-level state administrators.

> RS: "Here, of course we have selected schools for children of government members. But I don't know, it is not universities. Not colleges. But for sure, for example - we also do it."

What he indicated at the time was the known link between the student population of the selective, high-fee preparatory schools, and the student population of universities like MGIMO. He had observed the power of ascription practices in the selection process of students of MGIMO or similar universities. There is here a correlation between prior education, parentage, inherited financial power, and outcomes of education access.

4- Conclusion

During the first decade of the 2000s, improving education quality, system efficacy, education metrics international comparability, and international competitiveness were primary objectives and collaboration points between the Russian Federal Government, education actors (educators, schools, regional administration, NGOs), international financiers, and international policy processes like Bologna. This chapter section examines the Russian state's educational reforms during this decade, and reflects on resulting practices of power. I show how the reforms contributed to an appropriation of neoliberal norms for educational improvement, a resource/power concentration around NRUs, and to imbalances of educational quality and access.

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[136] Unified State Exam, the Federal examination that is taken by all students in Russia, and upon which results the universities select the students. Equivalent of the GRE in the USA…

Throughout the reforms of the Russian state, quality and efficacy were consistently benchmarked through standards that have been defined by anthropologists as hallmarks of the neoliberal education model. Reforms targeted individual and institutional competition, the creation of new financial models and administrative regulations, deregulation reforms, new accountability processes, and the predication of this accountability on international benchmarks and ranked self-valuation events (PISA, see chapter 4.3). This fundamentally altered the role of the state, created new centre-periphery relations, altered the provenance of education's financial resources and education's ties to the industry, and reinforced the valuation of education as a marketable good. I present how the federal deregulation reforms and alignment with neoliberal models of education improvement contributed to a growth of new education centres where resources are concentrated, and a rise of the political and economic power-differential between these centres and peripheral regions. I then show how the Russian state's deregulation practices contribute to promote neoliberal norms of education as the new quality standards, and how international practices of higher education audit help disseminate the World Bank's data on Russian education towards the EHEA advisory institutions. I see through these policy examples a reconstruction of the state's political role, vis-à-vis the regions and the international community. The state devolves burdensome administrative competencies to the regions, and focuses its funding/interventions on programmes that mirror the neoliberal model of growth advocated by international institutions. Doing so, the state takes on a new global actor role, while consolidating its national role by allocating international visibility through systems rewarding neoliberal reform precepts and individual achievements.

The Federal Government in Russia further used education development to promote a concentration of funds and visibility around a reduced number of 'elite' institutions. The drive to achieving 'elite education' by funding a select number of institutions further increased the Russian academy's regional divides and economy imbalance occasioned by the above-mentioned deregulation reforms. International opportunities and development funding came to concentrate around a small number of federally selected institutions and individuals, fostering a growing gap in education quality and opportunity. Examples of education reform projects demonstrate this shift from a pursuit of education improvement for all to an open politic of concentration of power and benefits (financial and other) in the hands of a small number of education institutions. In the final analysis of this chapter section, I show practices of power in the Russian university that

contribute to segregate some learners out of these high level academic programmes/institutions, and deprive them of equal access to educational resources. I explore practices of ascription and payment for entrance exams that bind educational access to the learner's socioeconomic status. Finally, I examine discrimination practices that unevenly allocate welfare resources inside the institution according to sociocultural characteristics of the learners.

6.2 Neoliberalism / education as commerce: new model of education improvement

Russia's internal policy efforts aimed to raise the competitiveness and international standing of its education system and to align it with international models of higher education development. One such model of higher education development was the education reform/development that was advocated by the World Bank, OECD, and other international donors (on the World Bank and OECD's impact in spearheading and propagating neoliberalism as a model of thoughts and reform approach, see Bøyum 2014, Bray and Borevskaya 2001, Forrat 2012, Hilgers 2012, Lingard 2011, Olssen and Peters 2005, Suspitsyna 2005). During the years in which the Russian Federation sought to raise the quality and international ranking of its education institutions, it was pushed by these international aid organisations to engage in education improvement efforts that mirrored their new neoliberal model. Ahead, I present the impact of multi-million-dollar education reform projects funded by the World Bank, and the practices that contributed to assert the international donor's neoliberal model of higher education reform as the established norm.

1- Neoliberalism imposed by international donors as 'education improvement' model

After World War II, the UN, OECD, UNESCO, World Bank, GAAT, WTO, have all engaged at various times and at various levels with education development (Timoshenko 2011). Prior to 1998 and during the Bologna years, the Russian federal administration received large grants for education development from the World Bank, the OECD, Soros Foundation, and importantly, Bologna process partners such as UNESCO. Suspitsyna (2005) notes that "the *actor network* of economics in Russia is connected to actor networks of economics in other countries, notably, in Western Europe and the U.S., forming common projects, resources, and expertise". It is in this context that the World Bank pushed forward its vision of education reform. Three changes occurred during this period of educational reform. First, there was an influx of foreign capital into Russia that correlated with the creation of networks of influence and practices of power, to the benefit of international donors. International financiers like the World Bank thus gained, through financial means and through their participation in the Russian economy, a consequential influence on the restructuring of the federation's educational system, and on the promotion of new educational practices. During the early-2000s period for example, three international multi-

million-dollar projects for education development in Russia were funded by the World Bank. These programmes contributed to gradually install the World Bank's values in Russian higher education governance. The World Bank projects and the financial assistance of other international donors also contributed to the installation of a model of education in Russia in which knowledge and education became a marketable capital. From the end of the 20th century to around 2006, many of the international development groups advocated for restructuring the Russian Federation's higher education system towards a new education economy based on the concepts of "knowledge economy" and management of "human capital". They offered readings of education improvement that advocated for interpreting the education institution as a "knowledge capital" resource that should be brought into close association with the industry (Olssen and Peters 2005, 331). I note that Bologna policies also operate within this paradigm of "global knowledge economy" in which higher education is seen to play a central part. Finally, the new marketisation of Russian higher education entailed a significant social shift, in which the learner became a 'client' of the institution. Education quality and education improvement grants funded by the World Bank and others were predicated on the forced implementation of a new education 'per-capita funding' model (funds awarded to an institution proportionally to the number of enrolled students). Here, the institutions' survival depends on serving a maximum number of students with minimal resources. The higher the number of students, the more federal funding (and international grant funds) will be directed to the university. Similarly, the efficacy and success of a Russian university was judged by the international donors through audits of the institutions' financial capacity/management. In this model, the student becomes in effect the 'client' of the state's education system.

2- World Bank projects example: World Bank projects: overview & ties to Bologna

In the early 2000s, the World Bank proposed a series of financing plans to Russia for education system reform and quality improvement. Of those, the World Bank led three multi-million-dollar education reform projects between 2000 and 2016.

From 2001 to 2006, the ***Education Reform Project #P050474*** ($71.1M) funding was granted to the government of Russia. The four objectives of the *Education reform project* were, in order of stated importance: (i) promoting the efficient and equitable use of scarce public resources for

education, (ii) modernising the education system (structure of network and institutions), (iii) improving quality and standards, and (iv) improving the flexibility and market relevance of initial vocational education. From 2004 to 2008, a second project, the *e-Learning Support Project #P075387* ($145.44M) was awarded to the Russian government. The purpose was to "set up enabling conditions to assist with the system-wide introduction, and enhanced use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT[137])". From 2010 to 2016, the *Financial Education and Financial Literacy Project #P120338* ($113M) aimed at improving the financial literacy of Russian citizens in secondary and college education.

These projects both converge idealistically with the Bologna process and diverge from it in their implementation. Through these grants, the World Bank funded reforms that converged with some ideals of the Bologna process: to improve quality of education, develop a principle of equity in higher education, and create an international convergence of educational standards. Such principles overlap with the ideals of Bologna, even if the selected standards diverge. For instance, equity in higher education is pushed through Bologna's social dimension policies, while the World Bank defines the principle of equity as the equal distribution of financial resources, advocating for it through its "per-capita" funding policies. Some of the World Bank's projects also enabled the Russian federation to engage more efficiently with EHEA education development programmes. The *e-Learning Support Project*, for instance, had such an effect. The grant had direct legislative consequences in the 2012 new education law, a law that brings higher education and distance learning into the same funding category. This legislation augmented the capacity of Russian universities to gain immediate national benefits from Bologna development projects focused on information and communication development. On the basis of a university developing new online tools to support distance learning, e-learning, or learner mobility, the institution could apply for an increase in federal funding. The SEXTANT project of MSPU examined in the previous chapter was one such example that later resulted in more federal funds.

The World Bank projects also contributed to the importing of western economic principles into Russia. In her volume "Adaptation of Western Economics by Russian Universities" (2005), Tatiana Suspitsyna discussed in detail the integration of western economic paradigms into the

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[137] World Bank project presentation, #P075387

Russian curriculum, and the contribution of world financiers behind this integration. Both the *Education Reform Project* and the *Financial Education and Financial Literacy Project* contributed to Russian appropriation of Western economic models.

Finally, due to the large sums of money involved, the World Bank development programmes had the ability to rapidly develop influential practices of power. The scale and globalisation capacity of the World Bank project, far greater than that of education development projects found in the Bologna process, allowed the implementation of nation-wide projects on very short timeline, and the creation of entire ad-hoc bodies of legislation or advisory committees at the governmental level. For any single reform initiative, these ad-hoc legislations and advisory/audit committees have a much larger systemic impact than the Bologna processes could. As I will present in the coming pages, for the three grants a national structure of expertise was created to guide project development and lead local negotiations. Legislation was made to legitimise and ensure the sustainability of the reforms, and audit structures were created to assess Russian 'compliance' with the international standards foregrounded by the World Bank.

3- Per-capita model of education economy: new model of finance rationalisation

Objectives of the "Education Reform Project"

One of the first education reform programmes to be funded by the World Bank was the 2001 *Education Reform Project*. This project was designed to increase the **financial efficacy** of the Russian national education system, the **standards of quality** in schooling, and the **relevancy of Russian education to the international market**. If we situate these objectives in relation to the Bologna project, the 2001 *Education Reform* sought to act upon similar concerns: raising educational quality and positioning education in the global world. But the impact of the reform also went beyond the improvement of quality. I will present that by pushing for new funding principles (financial efficacy) in Russian education, the reform also impacted the social dimension of the schooling in Russia - that is, the standards of access to education. It did so in ways that were significantly different in both results and policy principles from the Bologna process. Here I am arguing that the 2001 reform is acting upon a policy agenda that is both concerned with the same issues than those of Bologna, and diverging from them in implementation practices. In order to achieve the *Education Reform Project'*s aims, the World

Bank pushed forward two core implementation principles, two levers that were supposed to ensure successful modernisation of the Russian education system: first, installation of the fee-paying education economy model; and second, a "per-capita" institutional funding (that is, the funding of universities and schools according to the number of students they serve, rather than through any other financing model). The World Bank defined this transition to per-capita funding model as a criterion of success for their *Education Reform Project*. It was also this transition to per-capita funding that was identified as the demonstration that the Russian higher education system had improved and been modernised to contemporary international standards of efficacy.

Policies of the "Education Reform Project": fee-paying and per-capita funding

As Russia's education system was introduced to the market post-1992, so was it to two higher education economy principles. First, the principle of fee-paying students (Bray and Borevskaya 2001, Zajda 2007b): part of the higher education's funding was re-directed from the State to the individual student and his financial backers. Today, over 60% of Russian students are enrolled for a fee. The second lever for the success of the Russian education system modernisation was the transition to the per-capita model of federal funds distribution. For the World Bank, "The need to undertake these [per-capita] reforms was dictated by the population dip, the financial crisis of 1990s, and the need for improving quality of education in general, and in rural schools in particular" (World Bank report, World Bank 2007a, 10). In the 2001 World Bank project proposal and the final 2007 report, we see that the project aimed to improve education quality and equity, and to modernise higher education by applying just such per-capita financial tools and resource rationalisation.

> "The Education Reform Project aims to provide assistance to the Ministry of Education and competitively selected regions of Russia to reform general and initial vocational education in order to improve quality and standards; promote the efficient and equitable use of scarce public resources for education; modernise the education system; and improve the flexibility and market-relevance of initial vocational education. The project has two main components. At the federal level, the project will build capacity to support the education reform strategy of the Russian government through the development of new policies, services, and procedures. The sub-components include: education policy reform, quality monitoring and statistics, training and retraining, and courses for new professions and teaching and learning materials to develop work-related core skills. At the regional level, the project will pilot essential reforms in general and initial vocational education in three regions selected on a transparent basis: Samara Oblast,

Yaroslavl Oblast, and the Chuvash Republic. A third component, Project Management, will fund effective project coordination" (Education Reform Project, World Bank 2007b)

Here, it is not the re-evaluation of the pedagogy quality, or the adaptation of the institution's capacity to respond to the local educational needs, that are the crux of the 2001 education reform project, but rather a large-scale, government-led and international organisation-approved effort to apply a very specific neoliberal model of education funding. This was predicated on the World Bank's definition of their financial model as uniquely conducive to improvement and modernisation. The per-capita funding of higher education was further extended with the Federation's 2005 *National Priority Project Education* (NPPE). The NPPE goal was to augment the education districts' functionality and cost-efficacy by widely imposing the per-capita reform, and expand the reforms to 50 regions by 2007 and all regions by the end of 2009. But NPPE also established the financial power of the central government. For example, adhesion to per-capita funding became one of the selection criteria that determined whether an institution could gain access to any of the *Grants for Education Development* awarded by the government, under the NPPE. For a chance of success, the per-capita funding reform had to be implemented by the applying institution. With this, the government started translating the federation's transition to per-capita funding parameters into other higher education policies and reforms.

Practices of power: imposition of a global/local power differential, redefining educational equity as financial equity, and defining policy appropriation as 'social acceptance'

With the three development grants, the World Bank proposed a policy of education improvement that was founded on a reformulation of the parameters of efficacy and oversight. Beyond the economic rationalisation that it was supposed to bring to the Russian educational system, the transition to per-capita funding corresponded to an imposition of international rhetoric and market economy values on the Russian education culture. The financial rationalisation and market relevancy predicated on "per-capita" funding did not simply correspond to a review, by World Bank standards, of spending practices in the Russian higher education system. It was also the imposition, by the World Bank and associated agencies, of their own model of growth and 'best practices' in higher education development. What was efficient for the international development donors (UNESCO, World Bank) was a funding system where budget appropriations could be traced. Where the funding lines could be explained, losses were

rationalised, and financial or development benchmarks could be defined. This very different definition of efficacy became the standard through which future participation in the internationalisation of the Russian Federation higher education was decided. In short, it became a signal through which the adequacy of the Russian education system to the international community was judged. This model was, at the time of the early 2000s, not native to the Russian national system (on neoliberalism as imposed discourse and knowledge economy arriving as concept with World Bank and OECD, see Olssen and Peters 2005). Russian institutions' compliance was nonetheless taken as an indicator of the World Bank reform projects' positive outcome. Upon the completion of the 2001 *Education reform project*, we can understand from the *Implementation completion report* (World Bank 2007a) that the World Bank considered the Russian government's compliance to the principle of per-capita funding as an "indication of commitment to reform process" (2007a, 8,13). Applying the per-capita reform increased the chances of Russia to reach the international financial actors. The reason advanced in the World Bank's evaluative reports is the following: the application of per-capita standards of finance will necessarily give greater confidence to potential international donors. The application of the new per-capita model was therefore seen as an indicator of success in the 2001 education reform World Bank grant, as it contributed a needed stepping stone for continued international funding. It was an indicator that corresponded to both an economic parameter (financial rationalisation) and a push from international funding agencies towards neoliberal rhetoric. The 2001, 2004, and 2010 education grants that were supposed to promote higher education quality, initiated changes in the Russian higher education structure that actually set the stage for locking in a power differential between global organisations and Russia. The Russian system was asked to conform to the language of the international donors, to guarantee further donations. Here we see the same governance technique at work than the one seen in the *SEXANT* project. In the Bologna project the recommendation had been to use EHEA-approved language to describe the purposes of the education development project, and to root the project proposal in a type of vocabulary that had been developed by the EHEA agents, and distributed to potential grant applicants via an online dictionary. The message here is the same as with the EHEA: if you want to talk to us, use our language.

This assessment of the project's success occurred within an administrative and financial context that officially sought to bring a higher level of equitable fund distribution between schools. After the first legislations and implementation of the project, an assessment was made that "variation between per-capita costs of schools [had] narrowed and resource allocation has become more equitable" (World Bank Implementation and completion and result report, World Bank 2007a, 13). Here, equitability occurred because resources were distributed to schools proportionately to student numbers. The belief that resource distribution between schools was more "equitable" seemed predicated solely on an economic rationale. However, while per-capita funding may seem to increase equitability de facto, it in fact reduced funding for small schools, affecting their capacity to sustain themselves. It also redirected funds to larger schools. This also happened within the university sector, as some higher education schools that had not previously been awarded the appellation of university clustered and gained access to the appellation. We see that per-capita funding does not directly address educational quality but rather is a response to a perceived need to rationalise the education funding system. While the World Bank projects post-2000 advocate for increased education quality and availability for all, similar to what which Bologna advocates, the implementation of the project developed fundamentally divergent processes. Principally, what has been achieved is to gradually integrate the Russian higher education system into a financial language managed by the international organisations. Culturally, it corresponds to the parallel creation of the new context of educational life (material, financial, relational), and to the creation of referential concepts (financial efficacy) that the participating parties will rely on to stabilise the collaboration. Building from an objective of education development and quality improvement, the end result was unambiguously the development of benchmarking assessment metrics that established the pre-eminence of the World Bank's financial and neoliberal criteria of education quality.

Finally, the assessment of the 2001 *Education reform project* effectively eliminated the social impact of the project from becoming an indicator of the success or failure of the project. While ethnographers might look to the sociocultural changes as a means to gauge what happens during a policy project's appropriation, the World Bank foregrounds wholly different criteria to assess the state of their project's appropriation, or "implementation" in policy parlance. Anthropologists

identified this discounting of cultural impact as characteristic of neoliberal reform projects (Bebbington et al. 2004). As Hilgers explains,

> "[Theorists] apply the term [neoliberal] to a radicalised form of capitalism, based on deregulation and the restriction of state intervention, and characterised by an opposition to collectivism, a new role for the state, an extreme emphasis on individual responsibility, flexibility, a belief that growth leads to development, and a promotion of freedom as a means to self-realisation that disregards any questioning of the economic and social conditions that make such freedom possible." (Hilgers 2011, 358)

Although this definition of neoliberalism has merits, I caution with David Mosse (2013) that neoliberalism "cannot be explained by a single simple narrative". Stemming from this observed clash between radical capitalism and social/cultural shifts, multiple strands of research were born. Anthropologists have debated at length the growth of 'social insecurity' as a political construct tied to neoliberalism, and the arguably corresponding rise of the penal/securitarian state (Collier 2012, Foucault 2004, Hilgers 2012, Wacquant 2012). A large research domain was devoted to the construction of 'social capital' and 'human capital' as concepts by the World Bank (Bebbington et al. 2004, Bøyum 2014, Hall 2007, Harriss 2001). These diverse avenues of research approached the neoliberal reform's social and cultural impact, particularly on social equity.

> "Whether neoliberalism is analysed as a depoliticised form of a capitalism that seeks to be scientific and does not fulfil its promises (Ferguson 2006), as an ideology that serves the dominant group (Bourdieu 1998; Harvey 2005), or as the most recent mode of governmentality (Foucault 2004; Ong 2006), neoliberalism appears as the common denominator in the production of inequalities in our contemporary societies." (Hilgers 2011, 360)

The metrics chosen by the World Bank to measure the success of the 2001 project not only pushed aside cultural data impact, but also focused on post-implementation metrics that were inherent to the project's own implementation proposal. Essentially, this meant measuring not the educational, cultural, or social outcomes of the project, but whether the community's practices themselves corresponded, by the completion date of the project, to what had been announced in the initial project proposal. Researchers analysed such production of 'truth', as the attempt to render visible a sole interpretation of what progress is (Ball 2015a, d, Matza 2012). As Stephen Ball indicates,

> "The World Bank sees equity as one of the residual concerns of governments in marketised education systems. However, as a part of the logic of the new orthodoxy the social and welfare purposes of education are systematically played down directly (as in the World Bank) or, in effect, education is increasingly subject to exchange value criteria" (Ball 1998, 126).

For the 2001 World Bank project, the indicators of success went from the envisioned outcome indicators (education quality, market relevance) to a focus on measurable data that were inherent to the project: to measure the 2001 World Bank project's success, counting how many schools were closed became the indicator of the programme's success in establishing per-capita reform and rationalising the financial model. "The output and outcome indicators envisaged for the monitoring of project outcomes have been supplemented by other indicators like class occupancy rate, number of schools closed, and number of teachers made redundant for the purpose of evaluation of project objectives" (World Bank 2007a). The data does not in itself indicate the programme's pedagogical success but, rather it measures the efficacy of the project in implementing its own announced actions.

> "Although the project was assessed as a project not triggering socials safeguards, it did contribute to […] affect livelihood of staff made redundant as a result of implementation of project supported reforms. Efforts were made to minimise the negative impact of redundancies by helping to find alternate jobs, and by targeting staff eligible for a pension. To assess social acceptance of project outcomes, an assessment of the social impact of the project was made in 2005. The assessment revealed that the stakeholders have accepted the consequences of the reforms" (World Bank 2007a, 10).

This last sentence is particularly revealing: in order to judge the 'social acceptance' of the project's outcomes, the assessors asked whether the main participants accepted the **consequences** of the project (school closing, relocations, redundancies among them). Studying corporate literature, specifically on "agile companies", Gillies (citing Cheese, Silverstone and Smith 2009 2011), notes that the World Bank had developed by 2009 a predictive model to help companies anticipate their constituents' "change acceptance". Metrics of this model include poverty levels, income, overall economy, literacy rates, education levels, access to education, government-mandated education, enrolment levels, societal inequality, comfort with ambiguity, and need to belong. The *education reform* project constituents' acceptance of the material consequences of the education development project was defined as the indicator that the project was successful.

4- Audit structures

Beyond financial restructuring, the World Bank also used the multi-million-dollar projects to gradually install a network of audit agencies. These agencies monitored the implementation of

the new education reforms. Developing the administration that stands behind the new standards and the audit agencies was a key objective of the World Bank's grant fund. In each of the World Banks' three reform projects, a significant proportion of the funding was dedicated to the reorganisation of the administration: 30% of funding for the *Education Reform Project* and the *e-Learning Support Project*; 65% for the *Financial Education and Financial Literacy Project*. Specifically, this proportion of funding was devoted to the creation of monitoring and evaluative agencies. The creation of these audit organisations ensured the political sustainability of the policy changes that were brought by the World Bank to the Russian higher education system. What the World Bank project advanced was the creation, on top of what the Soviet system had developed, of a large number of agencies that are able to produce the kinds of statistics that were intelligible to the international organisations, and capable of rendering the quality of Russian higher education legible to international partners. But the financial and organisational resources provided to the Russian Federation by the World Bank also targeted the development of the very tools/agencies through which it will evaluate the success of said education reform projects. The 2001 *Education Reform Project* was implemented by the National Training Foundation (NTF), which holds two positions. First, it is the Russian Government agent for the implementation of the Bologna process, in charge of Russia-Bologna coordination. Second, the NTF is the implementing agency of the *Priority National Education Project* through which, as seen above, the Russian government awards *Grants for education development* on the basis of the application of per-capita funding by the institutions and academic administration. Thus it is the lead implementing agency for higher education reforms in Russia that followed the international drive towards the marketisation of higher education.
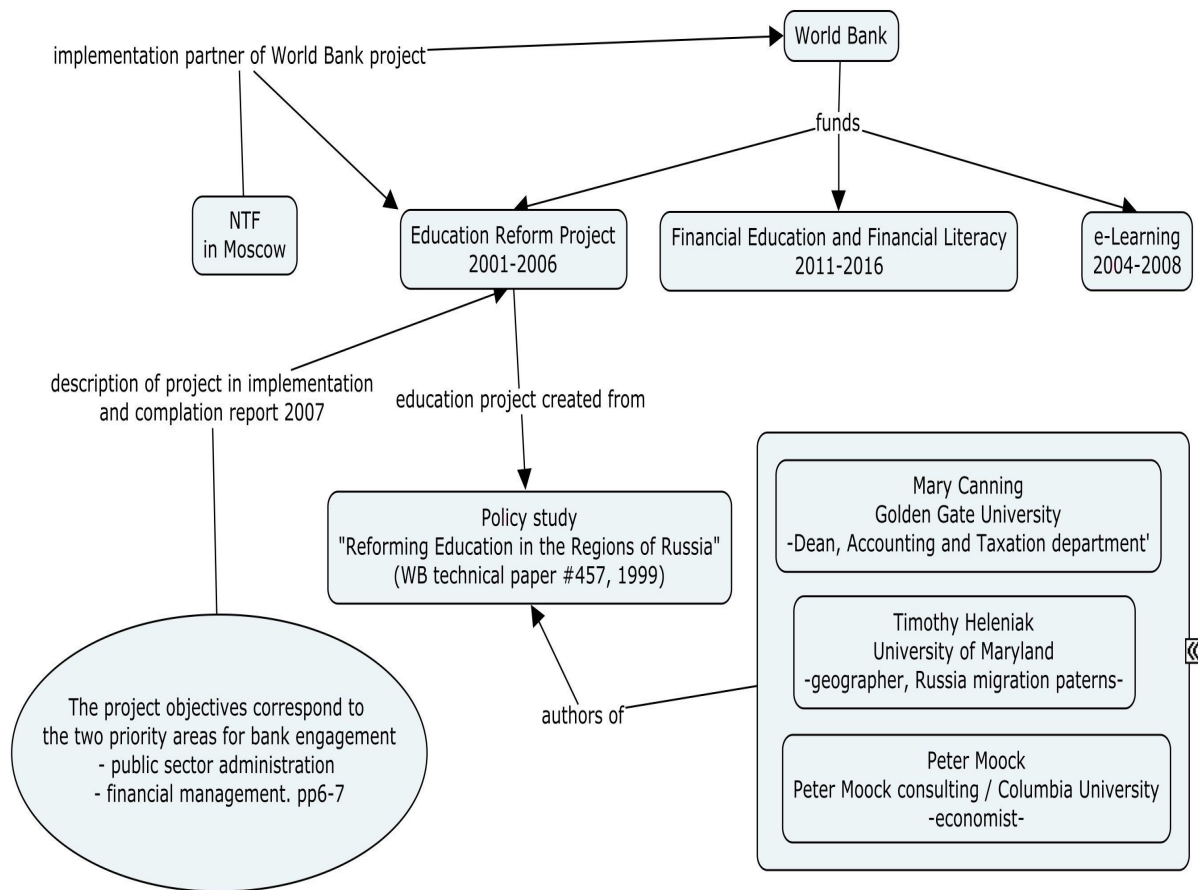
Fig. 14: World Bank reform projects and EHEA implementing agency

NTF is both an agent of the economic principles at the core of the education reforms of the World Bank and other large-scale international donors, and also a coordinator for the Bologna Process. This co-creation of an administrative structure supporting implementation and of a monitoring network assessing the implementation has been noted by ethnographers as symptomatic of Russian participation in international aid and development efforts (Gray 2011, Mawdsley 2012, Maximova, Gray, and Murphy 2013, Piattoeva and Takala 2014). The key notion here is that the creation of an education development effort that integrates Russian and world agencies becomes seemingly contingent on the capacity to build frameworks of co-supervision. The World Bank projects were primarily an effort to orient the financial survival and sustainability of the Russian education system along neoliberal and internationally accepted criteria. Further, it was an effort in systemic integration, whereby all the financial evolutions of the Russian higher education system, and these evolutions' perceived effects on standards of

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quality, were comprehensively tied into a network of international organisations and audit structures that was part-and parcel of the international organisations' power structure.

5- Conclusion

Above I expanded the analysis of higher education reforms and quality improvement beyond Europe, to Russia's collaboration with global financial partners that support neoliberal reform models. The World Bank promoted in the 2001 project a turn towards the market and towards an education resting on fee-paying students that was indicative of a reconceptualisation of efficacy in education. The notion of reliance on fee-paying students and per-capita funding are the financial notions behind the wording we see above in the project description: "promote the efficient and equitable use of scarce public resources for education". This efficacy was predicated on the individual, on a management of resources per capita, and on an input-based rather than outcomes-based model. Here I perceive the recurring creation of a method where neoliberal processes come to symbolise and/or replace other considerations (pedagogy quality, cultural specificity) in an education reform process. The 2001 project evidences a shift away from a Bologna-led rationale of education amelioration, towards the installation of neoliberal values and structures. With this shift towards educational reforms predicated on neoliberal values, I expose a focus on individual competition, a shift in standards of educational access, and a focus on financial factors and 'social acceptance' to determine the success of policy appropriation. I have also shown practices of power that developed during the course of the Russian education reforms that were financed by these global financiers. The World Bank reforms led to growing educational inequalities between the Russian regions, with a concentration of funds in the hands of a small number of internationally competitive universities and individual academics. The effects of the reforms veered away from the objectives promotes by the Bologna process, even if it invested at the start in development objectives compatible with the process: promotion of research, promotion of institutional quality, use of audit and reporting system as a governance tool, development of international presence and international academic mobility. In the coming pages, I present how the Russian federal government used education reform policies to pursue strategies of regional and international dominance.

6.3 International engagement: from legislation harmonisation to new political centres/peripheries and hegemonic processes

This chapter examines Russian development programmes that were officially designed to improve higher education quality and align the federal system with international standards, including Bologna standards. It looks at how these programmes gradually established practices of power, including the imposition of a neoliberal economic model, the concentration of resources around a reduced number of institutions, and hegemonic practices to establish regional political dominance. Previously I examined the policies that led to practices of deregulation, decentralisation, and concentration of financial, administrative, and legislative power in the hands of a few education centres. In this final section I continue the perspective developed previously, and look at education internationalisation as existing in and contributing to a set of centre-periphery relations of power. I explore the development of Russian education legislation after the fall of the Soviet Union, focusing on two points: how the legislation mirrored European educational policies, and how the federal legislations pursued a goal of regional legislative harmonisation throughout the ex-Soviet states (CIS), a convergence of norms that was reminiscent of what was happening in the Bologna process. I then explore how this legislative frame of harmonisation transformed into, or enabled, practices of power whereby Russia sought to establish a new position of geopolitical leadership in the CIS region. Examples below show how the Russian federal government used higher education reforms and legislation reforms similar to those initiated in the Bologna process, to extend its regional political influence. In this context I use the term 'region' in response to the growing border studies that have brought together the research themes of boundary making, power inequalities, and global market actors, all within the multi-dimension of region/cities/communities (Brunet-Jailly 2004, 2010, 2012, Kolossov 2005). Kolossov in particular highlights the erosion of traditional centre-periphery world-system in the face of the globalising economy and the development of new methods of communication. "In [border studies], the [centre - semi-periphery - periphery] concept means, first, a need to study boundaries at three territorial levels – the global, the national and the local. Second, it means that the notions of 'centre' and 'periphery' are relative" (Kolossov, Vendina, and O'Loughlin 2002, 616). In this new regional political and economic context, Russia used its education reform process to create a model of governance and legislative harmonisation that placed the Russian Federation at the centre of its extended geo-political region. The legislative

reforms presented below should be read in the present-day context of the policy and regulatory forums proliferation. This multiplicity of political forums permit practices of power-plays and regional political competition through forum-shifting strategies, as will be presented in the cases of Russia, WTO, and BRICS.

1- Legal framework of harmonisation efforts and multi-state engagement

There are several international political unions that contribute to higher education development. Among the principal international unions or agreements are the European Union, the European Bologna process, the Common Economic Spaces (CES: EU-Russia integrated market), and CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States). Each of these features concerted political efforts in educational matters (Made 2004), and many nations belong to more than one group. The 11 countries represented in the CIS are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. All of these (barring Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan) are also members of the Bologna process. This overlap of international political unions, in terms of membership to education processes, is important. In all of them, there is a recurring political push to create common spaces marked by joint legislations, open avenues to trade and human mobility. Each of the political unions participates in higher education reform and attempts to define a common pace of socio-economic development, or use education in political programmes of citizenship and social cohesion[138]. There is therefore a coherence of agenda, and an overlap of memberships. Below I describe education legislation reform in the post-Soviet Commonwealth of Independent States, showing how these processes relate to the European Bologna process and how they advanced a legislation harmonisation model that mirrored the education harmonisation policies being put in place in Europe.

Legislative framework for education: a transforming but burdensome Russian legal system

In the earliest stages of the post-Soviet period, the principal legislations on education had been designed with a triple objective in mind: ensuring the continuity of fundamental education rights

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[138] In chapter 7 I will outline the Bologna process' programme for social cohesion: the *Social Dimension* policy.

through the constitutional transition; re-defining the education regulations in the wake of the fall of the Soviet Union (Bain, Zakharov, and Nosova 1998, Forrat 2012, Gounko and Smale 2007, Hossler, Shonia, and Winkle-Wagner 2007, Kaplan 2007, Starodubtceva and Krivko 2015, Zajda 2007b); and lastly, opening up the education legislation and system to the international community (International College of Economics and Finance ICEF, 2014). The majority of the Russian education sector was shaped by the law of the Russian Federation *On Education* of 10 July 1992[139], and the federal law *On Higher Education and Postgraduate Education* 22 August 1996[140]. A first reform effort towards internationalisation, these education laws came in a new context of post-1992 Russia-international collaboration. I wish to highlight three characteristics of this early collaboration of Russia with international partners, as it related to educational laws: the themes of collaboration with European and international partners (as defined in international agreements/treaties), the international/national legislative hierarchy, and the legislative instability during the first decade of the century.

Mobility, creation of common spaces for economic and intellectual exchange, and the rapprochement of education and cultural sphere with economy and industry were cornerstones of both Russian and European engagement with international education development programmes (Butler 2002, 2013, Zimnenko and Butler 2007, Zimnenko 2007). The new Russian Federation constitution provided one further element in the framing of this collaboration, which impacted the educational laws. The constitutional cadre recognised the preeminence of signed international treaties over federal law (Ginsburgs 1998). This is an important and complex point of law, particularly as we look to the implementation of education legislations in Russia. In the following pages I will explore this hierarchy in greater detail, exposing a legislative insulation between the national level and the regional levels, resulting in the international laws being recognised by the federation and 'recommended' to the regions. Appropriation of international legislative norms, as we will see, goes only so far. Finally, the new Russian education legislative apparatus suffered from instability and an accumulation of amendments. Both the 1992 and 1996 laws formed the central posts of a long list of nascent education regulations, both within the Federation and the newly emerging Community of Independent States (CIS, ex-Soviet States). However, these legislative cornerstones proved to be far from stable over the ensuing years of

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[139] 'On education' N 3266-1
[140] 'On higher education and postgraduate education' N 125-FZ (amended 28.02.2008)

education system reform. The 1992 *On Education* law was amended forty-eight times between 1997 and 2009, at which point the decision was made to launch a new drafting process that led to the 2012 federal law. Four major education development plans marked the years 2000 to 2008. The legislative system that grew out of the first decade of education reform post-2000 was characterised as burdensome, unstable, and controversial (for a snapshot of the starting situation, see Pervova's article, A view on the current situation in Russian education 1997). It is within this domestic context of rapidly shifting legislations, and complexity in administration, that the Russian foreign policies were developed. In reviewing the examples of early Russian legislations that paved the way to a common set of education legislations and wider collaboration on European legislations, we must take into account that these laws, in the cases of both Bologna the nascent Russian Federation, were entirely new. Not only were the legislations novel, but so were the legislative forums and associated development plans. The early transitions from the Russian legislative arena to the European arena were a series of development steps, rather than an attempt to play legislative forums against each other for the purpose of advancing an agenda. This creates a vastly different context than the one in which Russia, the CIS, and the European Union debate today.

Legislative framework for education: a CIS harmonisation model that mirrors Bologna convergence efforts, and enables EU/CIS legislative integration

The creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States in December 1991 pushed forward a political construction parallel to that of the European free trade area, if not as bound as the Schengen agreement (on attempts to create a Eurasian Economic Unions, see Urnov 2014). In these international political and economic unions, there is a shared history and practice of legislative harmonisation and dissemination of shared policy templates that form the foundations for future collaboration.

CIS legislation: creating a regional convergence in education with legislation that aligns with European education policies

The CIS Charter adopted in Minsk (22 January 1993) and the Bologna process pursue comparable objectives of member state cooperation. The official rhetoric is very similar for both

assemblies. For example, articles 2 and 19 of the Charter define the CIS members' agreement to cooperate in the "political, economic, environmental, humanitarian, cultural and other spheres", "promotion of free movement", and "common projects and programmes in science and technologies, education, health, culture and sport". These objectives are also at the core of the Bologna agreements (on high degree of convergence in foreign policy between EU and Russia, see Made 2004). Articles 4 and 19 of the CIS Charter further propose an engagement with European economic and intellectual space. They enjoin the "cooperation in building a common economic space, common European and Eurasian market, customs policy", and "establishment of the common economic space based on free market, free movement of goods, services, capital and workforce; promotion of the common information space". We see in the CIS foundational documents the seeds of cooperation with European actors in policy making, in the construction of common economic spaces, in the domains of education and mobility - all central to the Bologna process. Further, Gracienne Lauwers notes that, prior to 2005, "CIS initiatives often preceded an interaction between Russia and the EU" (2005).

> "The CIS has little real power or legislated responsibility and has often been seen as more of a symbolic organisation that works to promote cooperation and coordination among the former Soviet bloc. It has, however, served as both a foundation and a forum for further collaborative efforts in the region" (Moscow, International College of Economics and Finance (ICEF) 2014)[141]

A review of the legislations' historical sequence bears out Lauwers' analysis. The *Commonwealth of independent states convention on human rights and fundamental freedoms* signed in Minsk (26 May 1995) preceded Russia's signature of the *Convention for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms* (28 February 1996). The IPA *Draft Convention of Recognising Courses of Studies, Syllabi, Certificates of Education, Scientific Degrees and Titles in CIS Countries* (2 November 1996) was a precursor to the signature of the Lisbon *Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region* (07 May 1999). The *Decision about the project on the international programme for the realisation of the conception to the forming of a single (common) educational space of the commonwealth of independent states* (Minsk 31 May 2001) predated the accession of Russia to the Bologna process (September 2003). In September 2003, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia and Ukraine signed an Agreement on the formation of a CES (*Common Economic Space*). Here is a pattern of co-

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[141]   Source: http://monitor.icef.com/2014/02/new-survey-illustrates-drive-to-internationalise-among-universities-in-the-commonwealth-of-independent-states

development of education legislation in the different political geographies and alliances (Breskaya and Bresky 2014, Groof and Lauwers 2000, Groof, Lauwers, and Filippov 2001, Laurukhin 2014).

IPA legislation: develop legal standards for entry into European common spaces for education

I now focus on a specific political component of the CIS, the *Interparliamentary assembly of member nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States* (IPA. 27 March 1992: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Ukraine). As a legislative advisory body, the IPA develops legislative templates that can then be distributed and applied within the legal framework of each member state. The advisory role of the IPA consists of four principal efforts. First, to harmonise national laws across the CIS; second, to create model legislative acts and recommendations that mirror prior legislative acts of CIS members and other international organisation; third, to develop legal standards that can be recognised by the European Union as valid basis for entry into common spaces, trade agreements, shared education legislation and diploma recognition treaties; and fourth, to align national legislations with European standards.

Through the permanent commission on education and science of the IPA, several efforts have been made to create a common educational space and set shared education legislations within the CIS. The 18th March 1994 saw a first *Recommendations on a common educational space and the social status of students in education and sciences*, followed by the 13th May 1995 act *On the Common Educational Space and Improvement in Social Status of Education and Science System Students within CIS Member Nations*. The 8th plenary session of 1996 saw the first act on course-setting, the *Convention to Recognise Courses of Studies, Syllabi, Certificates of Education, Scientific Degrees and Titles in CIS Countries*, and in 1999 the act *On Education* was passed. The 7th December 2002 parliamentary session saw the adoption of four new acts, *On Graduate and Postgraduate Professional Education*, *On Adult Education*, *On Education for Physically Handicapped Persons*, and *On Educational Activities*. In 2004, legislations *On Secondary General Education*, *On Pre-School Education*, and *On Non-School Education* were adopted. We see in these examples the foundational role of the IPA and the relations in the legislative systems between the CIS and the EHEA. On proposal from a members' parliament or experts, the IPA

influences the development of education laws within the whole of the CIS region, within the legislative setup of each member state, and similarly influences the CIS interaction with European legislations. The work of the CIS, IPA, and Russian legislative bodies should be understood as tending towards the creation of a framework that led to the development of coordinated educational policies, rather than the supervision of implementation of national education reforms.

This legislation and policy harmonisation opens the door to two political processes. First, the political construction of shared or comparable policies offers the capacity to one leading state to impose its policy and legislative vision on the other members of the international union (Urnov 2014). Below, I present how the Russian State used, in the CIS, a favourable context of policies and laws for its own education development purposes. Second, the harmonisation of legislation and policy in the large international collaborative unions mentioned above (CIS, Bologna) allows participating nations to engage in forum-shifting practices and to strategise their participation in international accords. As stated by Stephen Ball, "The current framework of global educational reform and the necessarian logics of standards and competition is fertile ground within which to explore 'complementarity and conflict'" (Ball 2015e, 310). States participate in multiple international political unions, as in the case of the CIS members who also took part in the Bologna process. By belonging to multiple agreements, states can push particular interests or further specific policy agendas in one forum or another, and gain advantages that they might not have achieved by pursuing a policy plan only in one of the international unions. This ability rests on two points: the capacity of a national system to navigate from one international forum to another (what is called 'forum shifting' in political analyses), and the fact that international unions work on comparable development topics. By sharing a similar development agenda, international unions offer competing development models to participating nations.

2- Practices of power: development of hegemonic strategies

As presented above, common grounds for education reform and for harmonisation of educational legislations were reached across the European spaces and the ex-Soviet spaces (CIS). A template

for common legislation and for convergent educational reforms was defined by the Russian federation, the IPA, and European instances. Beyond this legislative normalisation and inter-conveyance of laws across multiple administrative and political spaces, the past ten years have also seen a complexification of international relations on matters of education. In the past 15 years, an arsenal of international legislations and political forums have grown. States are now given a choice of how and with whom they pursue their education development/legislation projects. This ability to create strategic programmatic or political alliances within the international movement for education reform sets up agenda competitions and strategic associations, through which states vie for political dominance. It is within this international political context that higher education development projects can become tools for regional political hegemony. This struggle for political hegemony goes beyond the Bologna process' vision of higher education convergence, particularly regarding Bologna's policy of preserving national higher education specificities.

Practices of power that use education harmonisation: gaining regional political prominence

In reviewing examples of early Russian legislations that paved the way to a common set of education legislations and wider collaboration on European legislations, we must take into account that these laws, in the cases of both Bologna the nascent Russian Federation, were entirely new. Not only were the legislations novel, but so were the legislative forums and associated development plans. These early transitions from the Russian legislative arena to the European arena were a first series of development steps, rather than an attempt to play legislative forums against each other for the purpose of advancing an agenda. This creates a vastly different context than the one in which Russia, the CIS, and the European Union now debate. I explore below the practices of power that occur as the states engage with multiple existing legislative forums and international partnerships, with a view to further national agendas or gain global political prominence.

Complexification of the common spaces, and how governments strategically use international legislative forums to gain access to more international resources: cases of Georgia and Ukraine

The map of legislative partnerships between the former Soviet region and Europe has grown increasingly complex. Taking the CIS as an example, we see an explosion of political alliances due to the armed political conflicts that were instigated in recent years for geo-political dominance of the region. On the 9th of August 2009, Georgia finalised its withdrawal from the CIS organisation. Their initial request to secede in August 2008 was a result of the incursion of Russian military into south Ossetia. This was the first such separation from the CIS, but the political separation did not correspond with a full withdrawal from CIS accords.

> "In accordance with the Vienna 1969 Convention on the Law of Treaties, Georgia remains part of the 75 multilateral agreements the participation in which is not conditional on CIS membership, including the agreement on visa-free movement of nationals of the CIS member states, agreement on the creation of free trade zone."[142]

> "Georgia will also forge a number of bilateral agreements with its former CIS partners. Georgian officials have said that it will make a priority of signing new agreements with its two main economic partners, Ukraine and Kazakhstan."[143]

This capacity to remain a participant in CIS treaties while seceding from the organisation reinforced the understanding that non-participation to the CIS did not necessarily mean a separation from previously entered agreements and treaties. This political explosion did not necessarily translate into a withdrawal from prior engagements, particularly in areas of education cooperation. On the contrary, it left a more complex legislative situation, wherein States are offered a wider range of possibilities in negotiating accords and full or partial participation in development efforts. In the words of Stephen Ball (1998), citing Linda Weiss: "the proliferation of regional agreements suggest that we can expect to see more and more of a different kind of state taking shape in the world arena, one that is reconstituting its power at the centre of alliances formed either within or outside the state" (Weiss 1997, 27). The Georgian conflict continued the fragmentation of legislative forums and multiplied the avenues through which a State could individually pursue partnerships beneficial to the development of a common education area. The CIS States have at this point not only an established set of common legal resources and development plans to draw from, which was not the case in 1990s, but also find themselves more emancipated than ever, able to pick and choose which legislative forum will offer the best

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[142] Source: Ministry of foreign affairs Georgia
(http://www.mfa.gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=95&info_id=10783)
[143] Source: http://www.rferl.org/content/Georgia_Finalizes_Withdrawal_From_CIS/1802284.html

international support for each educational legislation project. For a nation, resource gains from forum-shifting practices are made possible by participation in multiple international unions. These unions vie for international leadership with competing but often similar agendas, and they gain and lose political and financial clout from their members' participation (or not) in said agendas. With multiple representation forums, states are also partially relieved of the burden to develop their own new education legislations.

The recent conflict in Ukraine, creates a political context of two similar legislative situations, where States may benefit from past CIS agreements as well as gain new capacity to engage with European Common Spaces. Today, Ukraine nominally holds the presidency of both the CIS and the Chairman position for the *Permanent Commission on Science and Education*. With the recent changes in Ukrainian government, Chairman Samoylik Ekaterina (People's Deputy of Ukraine, Rada Secretary of the Committee on Science and Education) has been replaced by current Secretary Zubchevskyi Oleksandr Petrovych. Further, Ukraine recently filed (March 20ᵗʰ) a motion to the CIS Executive Committee to suspend the country's presidency of the Commonwealth of Independent States (Rada act #0074, 14.03.2014). Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the CIS Ivan Bunechko established the possibility that it might seek the one-year release period, subsequent to the Rada act. At the same time, a similar agenda to that of Georgia has been envisioned, in that "Ukraine would like to keep building its partner-like relations with all countries, including CIS member states" (Foreign Ministry spokesperson Perebiynis[144]). The ongoing conflict already has impacted the education bills inside Ukraine, with the amendment of several laws developed in partnership with the CIS frameworks (bill Reg. No. 4648) (*On Education, On out-of-school education, On General Secondary Education, On Higher Education*) in order to preserve financial viability (on Ukraine education policy-making, see Fimyar 2008). These amendments must be placed within the context not only of the conflict with Russia, but also the recent advances of Ukraine in the European region through the signature with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, and Moldova of the *Eastern Partnership* project. Currently, Ukraine holds a median position, between the CIS common economic space and the European Union. For four years, the EU and Ukraine have been in talks to finalise a comprehensive bilateral agreement that would extend the free-trade area of the European Union eastwards. The *EU-Ukraine deep and comprehensive free-trade area* targets a lowering of transit

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[144] Source: http://en.itar-tass.com/russia/724591

good tax regime, an integration of intellectual property, and a recourse to WTO procedures for dispute settlement. This in effect would draw Ukraine away from CIS legislative processes, and potentially open an unregulated market and intellectual property trading avenue between Russia, the CIS, and the EU. Ukraine, as WTO member, could not enter into the customs union of Belarus, Russia and Kazakhstan because of conflicting legislations with WTO. This is one of several examples of a state utilising different legislative forums to access a multiplicity of resources.

Forum shifting practices and multi-level dialogue to achieve national policy gains: case of Russia, BRICS, and the Nordic-Russian cooperation programme

Russia's recent accession to two organisations (WTO and BRICS) contributed to further complexity of the legislation apparatus around education. The creation of the BRICS (16 June 2009 − 21 September 2010) international cooperation heightened the tendency to legislate in different forums and thereby gain traction in education development objectives that have proven to be otherwise difficult to attain. Entry into these two international cooperation entities faced Russia with an established negotiation strategy of forum shifting, as a way to rapidly advance policies favourable to the Federation and gain pre-eminence by pushing legislation strategically in different international forums. Following the Russian push for a development programme foregrounding the need to place its leading universities in the top 100 world institutions, a rhetoric of high university ranking within the BRICS structure has emerged, competing to that backed by the WB and WTO. In this race to attain top-100 status for higher education institutions, BRICS developed a new ranking rhetoric that competes with the rhetoric of the WTO. The world ranking designations are locked in by American institutions, due in part to the number of American journals and publications, as well as to the highly bound nature of American institutions with education research (Carnegie, etc.) and education outcomes evaluation centres that influence the definitions of the criteria of excellence in higher education. Rather than pushing through these rankings, the BRICS countries set another standard. This capacity to be ranked highly in another scale impacts the world ranking, and as the BRICS international stock climbs, so does the Russian Federation university rankings. This is not the only challenge proposed by the BRICS to the established forces in development efforts. In a

move to gain some measure of independence in these matters, a new development bank (*New Development Bank BRICS[145]*) was created by BRICS countries in July 2014, and set in position to rival the World Bank. Looking specifically at the statements on education development, one can perceive that a new, contrasting rhetoric is coming to light.

> Declaration of the II Meeting of BRICS Ministers of Education: Brasilia Declaration
>
> Brasilia, March 2, 2015. Articles 3/4
>
> 2- We stress the paramount importance of the **development of joint methodologies** for education indicators to support decision making in BRICS member states and we commit ourselves to collaborate and provide technical support to the National Institutes of Statistics in this task.
>
> 3- We recognise that the **indicators for the post-2015 agenda should be based primarily on national assessments**, administrative data and national household surveys **instead of extension of existing international surveys**. We emphasise that all indicators should be capable of measuring equity, inclusion and quality improvements in our education system.
>
> 4- We also recognise the **significance of sharing best practices in terms of assessing learning outcomes** and how to report them in order to be useful for policy makers, teachers and schools.

The World Bank imposed its neoliberal economic model on education development and demanded compliance and use of its established metrics to measure performance, education development success, and gains in education quality. It moved from 'education quality' towards 'market sustainability'. In the above Declaration, the rhetoric is markedly different, presenting first a principle of collaborative development of metrics; second, a dissociation from international surveys and metrics (the PISA and others); and lastly, a foregrounding of learning outcomes, as opposed to 'institutional inputs'. We see here that the BRICS members developed an agenda and rhetoric that competes with two current global hierarchies. On the one hand, BRICS challenges the currently dominant university ranking standards, with the goal of establishing the international education credibility of its member states. On the other hand, BRICS members challenge the neoliberal standards of the World Bank's vision of education and education financing. Extensive study of the growing competition in international education governance has been conducted by Karen Mundy and co-author Antoni Verger, as they explore the complex power struggle between the BRICS nations and the World Bank organisation:

> "At the same time, rising powers, such as China, India, Brazil, and countries in the Middle East (among others), are increasingly powerful on the global stage. They also became influential development actors: annual concessional flows from emerging economies to low income countries was roughly estimated to be between US$12–15 billion by 2011, equivalent to about 10% and 15% of the aid provided by developed countries (World Bank 2013a). […] Observers note that it is important to remember that these countries are primarily focused on expanding their

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[145] Source: http://ndbbrics.org

spheres of geo-political influence on a bilateral basis. They have sharply different approaches to economic, political, and social development and share a limited appetite for international regimes that constrain national sovereignty (including in such putatively domestic spheres as education); and they are not satisfied with their representation within the Bank (Güven 2012; The Economist 2014).

Going forward the Bank will have to address the concerns of rising powers, such as China and India, who are in transition from being "clients" of the Bank to "powerful principals" and who along with Russia and India have expressed dissatisfaction with the pace of reforms in the Bretton Woods institutions (Bracht 2013). As illustrated by the creation of a new international development bank by the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) at their annual summit in 2013, as well as by the growth of bilateral aid from the BRICS, emerging economies are beginning to destabilise the Bank's hegemony as a development policy setter and lender." (Mundy and Verger 2016, 348)

Russia's participation in BRICS also brought a renewed capacity to jointly push for international political and education partnerships. This capacity to lead a joint effort can be seen in Russia's engagement with a regional development programme, and a cooperation with Norway to further the Bologna programme. Recent efforts have been made by BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) leadership to build an education development platform in partnership with UNESCO. "III(5) Establish, at UNESCO, a BRICS-UNESCO Group, aiming at developing common strategies within the mandate of the Organisation" (Sanya declaration, China, 14 April 2011 BRICS 2011). Following on this plan, the first BRICS-UNESCO ministerial consultation meeting on education took place in Paris on 6 November 2013. BRICS constitutes yet another partnership and international agreement base from which to interact with European legislation, policy developers, and the Bologna process. For instance, the *Nordic-Russian cooperation programme* is the creation of an international state-level partnership structure that is funded in part by the BRICS international political union, and supported both the rapprochement of Russia and Norway, and the promotion of EHEA policies within this new Russia-Norway-BRICS alliance. The *Nordic-Russian cooperation programme in higher education and research 2012-2015* was established through a memorandum of understanding (29 September 2011):

"In the field of higher education, the joint project activities should be related to some of the following thematic priority areas:

- […] transition from education to labour market;

- Higher education aimed at strengthening long-term cooperation in the field of industries and innovation;

- […] reform of higher education structures with regard to the aims of the Bologna Process, such as developing the degree programme structure, increasing compatibility of degree structures between the Nordic countries and Russia, institutional management, funding of higher education, quality assurance, and the system of international collaboration".

Through this bilateral Russia-Norway memorandum, supported by BRICS, the Bologna process is strengthened, and elements of its rhetoric in higher education (education-market, institution management, audit) are highlighted by the international policy agenda. The memorandum also gives Russia a new level of access to international political and economic partnerships. It places Russia in proximity to an international union in which it is not a signatory member: Norway is part of the European Economic Area (EEA). The Russia-Norway memorandum is a tripartite network between Russia, Norway, and the BRICS organisation; it also positions Russia closer to a new European economy cooperation area, and advances the Bologna process policies. The memorandum advances an agenda where potentials for political, economic, or policy influence are **prepared**. I am not presenting practices of power here such as those I previously explored in the implementation of educational policies. What I present here instead is the legislative and international cooperative organisation that enables these practices. This memorandum reveals how international partnerships are used strategically to advance multiple agendas, to position states in new proximity to transnational economic cooperative spaces, to gain a foothold in the international debates on education reform, or to advance specific educational policies. These are political and policy practices of power played out at the international level.

Reading further through the Russia-Norway memorandum, we can understand how other practices of power, or imbalances of power, are prepared through policy design. The programme's structure demonstrates the premises of a widening gap for higher education access between the two countries: while Norway's students are state-sponsored, Russia's must draw their own funds from the university.

> "Nordic participants in higher education projects should apply for funding to the Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education (SIU). Funding for Russian participants will be realised as own contributions (in kind or cash) of the participating institutions".

Such accords have the impact that well-funded institutions gather yet more benefits and can repatriate knowledge faster than resource-poor institutions that are gradually alienated from international access. The knowledge and resource (including human resource) gap widens between institutions. We see at play the concentration of elements that have been presented in each of the previous sections of this chapter, from growth of education inequality to implementation of neoliberal standards, to the interplay between international accords and multinational unions (EEA, Bologna, BRICS). In this memorandum, we therefore see the aggregation of all of the aspects that have been discussed previously: advancing one policy

agenda within an unrelated international agreement; divesting state financing burden onto education institutions; pushing for distance learning; the importance of language standards in transnational accords; and gradual augmentation of higher education access inequality.

Development of the national expertise as a medium for participation in other nation's regulation of education

I return now to the narrower Russian-CIS common space to examine some education development policy practices that contribute to the growth of Russia's political dominance in the CIS region. In the process of harmonising legislations across the CIS, we see clear examples of political dominance playing out in favour of Russia. The evidence of political power-play surfaces upon examination of the 2005-2010 IPA *legislative models* "*in the sphere of science and education*". These are legislative templates used by CIS partners to ensure that there is a degree of coherence across all members' development efforts. Out of 13 *law models* (on subjects compatible with Bologna: from **distance education** to **adult education** to **pedagogical standards**), one was drafted by a CIS members committee, one by a European expert panel, and one by Ukraine's parliament. Ten were proposed and drafted by Moscow experts, Academy of Education, or the State Duma. Parallel to this pre-eminence of Moscow in the proposal of legislations, the Russian language's role in education is being actively redefined. This practice of exporting legislation models extends to quality assurance systems -the capacity to define quality standards in another nation's educational system. As indicated by Eriksson, "Russia is eager to increase the export of quality assurance mechanisms especially to the Commonwealth of Independent States—countries (CIS)" (Eriksson 2014, 57).

Konstantin Zamyatin (2012) examines the Russian education reform's impact on minority languages, the marginalisation of titular languages[146] and literature through the nation-building policy efforts, and concludes that "it seems that the weakening of the institutional position of languages in the education system was not a by-product of the reform, but was instead the result of deliberate action aimed at diminishing the role in education of languages other than Russian"

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[146] Titular language is the reference term for an ethnic language, or a language associated to a particular national-territorial formation. In the Soviet Union, 'titular' was used to indicate those nations that later became autonomous in the CIS.

(Zamyatin 2012, 40). Looking back to the 2005 *National Priority Project Education*[147], several incentives contained in the project contributed to this imposition of the Russian language over titular languages. These policies were expanded in the presidential decrees of 2010. In the Russian federation, 2013-15 was set as the implementation timeframe for newly tested language teaching methods to be integrated within distance learning programmes of Russian language in CIS states. This timeframe is reinforced with a national objective: the federation developed the 2013-2020 distance-education language program, coupled with a new technology acquisition plan, for "*provision of all Russian schools with access to the Internet*".

> "[To] increase the availability of special use of distance technologies in teaching Russian language and literature for people of the states - members of the Commonwealth of Independent States - from 22 percent to 38 percent. [A] growth in the number of teachers who received training on teaching Russian as a foreign language and foreign - from 3400 to 12 thousand people"

Here we see the federally planned association of distance learning, emphasis on technology, and support of a linguistic basis for international integration. In addition, large efforts have been made in the expansion of Russian language training. New education access regulations are extended to the CIS region through the "Development for education 2013-2020" plan:

> "As part of the activities initiated under the federal programme "Russian Language" in 2011-2015, from 2016 onwards […] will continue to implement measures to develop the Russian language. […] executive in charge of the main activities is the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, the party - the federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States." (Основное мероприятие 5.5. подпрограммы 5)

The controversial disengagement from local language studies follows a re-investment in Russian studies as prerequisite to entry into higher education. Preservation of local languages and cultures was set in stone during the Soviet period as a State responsibility of "preservation of the languages and cultures of all the peoples of the Russian Federation". Now, it is a marginalised effort, delegated to regional and CIS governments and dependent on local financing (primarily personal student capital) for those desiring to invest in local language/culture education.

The object has been to seek a model of governance that ensures control over the direction of societal development, yet remains sufficiently "hands-off" to not hamper the economic deregulation forced by the financial deficits and need for industrial competitiveness. The model offered by the IPA fulfils this role: it creates template legislations adapted to Commonwealth

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[147] Source: http://eng.mon.gov.ru/pro/pnpo/

realities, and offers States' legislatures the capacity to adapt the acts further, yet retains a Russian design.

6. Conclusion

This chapter explores Russian higher education reforms that align with Bologna policies, as well as with other international financiers' vision of higher education development. The chapter highlights two dimensions of these reforms. A first dimension that is shown is by the research is that these Russian higher education reforms contribute to advance the Bologna higher education precepts (mobility, research-industry networks, quality standards), while at the same time orienting higher education quality towards economic neoliberal standards of efficiency and accountability. I show in particular that in this appropriation of neoliberal standards for education reform, some of the sociocultural norms of Bologna policies are challenged or even pushed aside in Russia. The international higher education development programmes backed by the World Bank and other international donors divert Bologna's stated humanist objectives of improving education quality and accessibility-for-all, towards practices of power that are incompatible with this equalitarian vision of education improvement. Among these, I explore the concentration of financial and educational power around few select universities, the imposition of neoliberal standards of education 'efficacy', and an implementation of education reform that fosters regional imbalances in education quality. In a second dimension of the analysis, I look at Russia's engagement with the same international partnership and transnational education legislation, and explore how these are diverted away from a policy of education convergence, towards objectives of political hegemony. In this I look at Russia's use of international education development policies to pursue institutional, regional and international political dominance.

This chapter first looks at the Russian efforts to implement the recommended per-capita funding system in higher education and in parallel to this, develop elite research institutions. These institutions are typed on the world leading research universities that stand as the highest standards of education in the eyes of both the Bologna process and other global organisations such as the UNESCO and World Bank. These reforms contributed to improve the financial autonomy of the universities, delegate some of the decisional powers from the state to the regions and education districts, and ameliorate the viability of several universities through institution mergers. However, by focusing the resources in the hands of a reduced number of schools and universities, the Russian reforms funded by the World Bank also contributed to a growing imbalance of pedagogical quality, financial means, and educational resources between

the Russian regions. These National Research Institutions, primarily benefiting from the federal reforms, are also the universities that advocate as experts on behalf of the Russian state in international education partnerships, or that collect statistical data on the Russian higher education system for purposes of international ranking and OECD evaluation. This practice of concentrating resources in the hands of institutions that are also international advocates for the Russian state confers vast powers of influence upon this select few research universities.

While the Russian reforms were rooted in a rhetoric of education quality amelioration, what we see happening is an investment in neoliberal logics. I present the shift that occurred, away from rationales of education amelioration, towards the installation of neoliberal logics and structures. In many of the Russian reform projects funded by the World Bank, a significant proportion of the funding is allocated to the reorganisation of the administration, the creation of monitoring and evaluative standards, and the creation of consulting and evaluative groups. I show in the research that a significant portion of the financial and organisational efforts put forward by the international funding agencies contributes to an administrative rationalisation that moves away from a humanist amelioration of education standards towards a drive for the installation of administrative and audit hegemony. What we see in this installation of audit systems is a reformulating of the parameters of efficacy. What is efficient for the international development donors (EHEA, UNESCO, World Bank) is a funding system where budget appropriations can be traced, where funding lines can be explained, losses rationalised, financial or development benchmarks defined. This very different definition of efficacy contrasted with that of the Bologna process, and became the standard through which the Russian Federation higher education reforms' success were decided. In short, it became a signal through which the adequacy of the Russian education system to the international neoliberal community was judged. I advance here that the ways in which international higher education reform is implemented, specifically in those programmes that correspond to World Bank multi-million-dollar financing, contribute to side-lining education quality standards of pedagogy and cultural specificity, and replace them with neoliberal standards of economic viability and accountability. I also argue that during these higher education development efforts, what rises to the fore are the neoliberal norms - norms promoted by international financial powers, norms that implement a 're-valuation of the human capital' in higher education, and a novel proximity between education as a humanist value and the market as an economic sphere. Here I explore a competition between EHEA norms

of education and neoliberal norms of education, and how reform projects contribute to favor one norm over the other.

Lastly, the chapter explores political and legislative practices, including forum-shifting practices, that create regional political hierarchies or ensure that a nation gains greater access to market resources and regional political influence. I focus on how Russia invested in education development and education legislation reforms, and through these efforts reached for a model of governance and legislative harmonisation that installed the Russian Federation as the central force its extended geo-political region (CIS). I investigate the legislative context inside which the new Russian higher education programmes that are born from Russia's engagement with the international community are disseminated across different geo-political regions, from the CIS to the BRICS region. This is a form of expertise dissemination, in which the expert knowledge is that of higher education improvement and alignment with European/International education standards. The Russian Federation's promotion of 'elite education' and regulatory power aimed to raise global standing in higher education and regional dominance in legislation and education standards.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

The Bologna process engages multiple actors and institutions in a programme of higher education convergence. This transnational policy, political, and educational effort traverses a vast geography, from Western Europe to Central Asia and Russia. Bologna also traverses systems of higher education and multiple international political unions, from the European Union to the CIS, to the Northern Dimension[148], as well as multiple economic contexts. Within this diversity of systems, populations, polities and economies, the thesis provides an ethnographic inquiry into the engagement of Russian higher education actors with the Bologna policies, and with the Bologna process' international network of institutions and actors.

Over the course of the research, I sought to present two results. First, I provide an ethnographic review of the institutions, policies and practices that constitute the Russian-Bologna engagement in higher education reform. In this review, I show who the actors are, how and where the Bologna policies became part of Russia's higher education, where the appropriation shifted away from the initial objectives of Bologna, and where practices opposed the stated goals of the process. With this examination of successes, negotiations, divergences, and resistances, I also show the institutional and actor collaborations that we see taking place in the Bologna process.

Second, within the context of the Russian-Bologna engagement, I offer an analysis of the practices of power that emerge and contribute to the construction of the Bologna policies and the EHEA as we know it today. To do so, I present analysis of how the actors' and agencies' interactions, the actors' mobility, and the multiple legislations contribute to the expansion and affirmation of the Bologna process. Within this analysis of the governance model, I provide a review of what soft law means for the Bologna process. I further explore the practices, networks, and legislations that ensure the continued stability, expansion and endurance of the Bologna governance model, through the diversity of social, economic, and political contexts, and through the failures of or resistance to the Bologna policies. Finally, I present an analysis of the practices of power that focused resources in the hands of specific institutions and actors, contributed to

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[148] Northern Dimension: joint policy between EU, Russia, Norway and Iceland.

processes of segregation and hierarchy, and limited the appropriation of some Bologna education norms.

Policies and practices that make up Bologna

Institutions, actors, history and systemic description

The thesis starts with a descriptive analysis of the Russian higher education system and of the Bologna process' origins and evolution through the years 2000-2010, as it became the European Higher Education Area. Contextualising my first inquiry on which practices and policies constitute the Russia-Bologna engagement, the thesis first gives an overview of the history, political systems, institutions and actors involved in defining the Bologna policies.

For Bologna, I review the principal historical stages of its development, foregrounding the fact that the Bologna project was built on a foundation of pre-existing European Union regulations for higher education and adult education. I also review current European legislations which support or run parallel to Bologna's international higher education reform effort. Further, chapter 4 of the thesis outlines the EHEA organisational structure and political affiliations. I notably present the actors and the institutions that constitute the executive branch: the consultative members of the BFUG[149] (particularly the E4 Group), supported by the representatives of the 48 partner countries, by the Bologna partner groups, and by the European Commission advisory council. Through this initial review and the later example of the SEXTANT project, I outline the overlap between Bologna executive branch and the European Union institutions, and explain how the appropriation of Bologna policies depends in part on the European Union's funding from the External Action committee. Through the presentation of education audit processes, I explain how the E4 group was contracted to create the first European level quality assurance system, the EQAR. All these governance units form the executive branch of the Bologna process, creating the policies and advising countries on implementation strategies.

For the Russia-Bologna encounter, I present the Russian higher education system and legislation, paying particular attention to identifying the changes and principal legislations that reformed the previous Soviet higher education model. I further show how the Russian and European

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[149] Bologna Follow Up Group, see chapters 4, 5, 7

legislation built on a long history of bilateral treaties and common spaces agreements that, similarly to Bologna, wove the higher education collaboration inside international industry collaboration. In doing so the thesis research sheds light on how Russian federal legislation recognises the primacy of international agreements, while at the same time preserving the effective autonomy of regions in matters of education. Finally, I explore other international actors that impact the Russian educational reforms, focusing particularly on global financiers such as the World Bank. The thesis explores the impact that these actors have on educational reforms in Russia, and how their programmes both compete with, and pursue objectives compatible with, the Bologna process. This presentation of Russian higher education history, systemic changes, and international actors that financed nationwide reforms offers to the reader a more complete contextualisation of the Russian-Bologna engagement.

Through this systemic and policy description, I offer four observations on the actors, the institutions, and the policies. First, through this systemic and historical review I demonstrate that Bologna is more than an international higher education convergence reform. It is an international sociocultural normative effort that officially seeks to transform European sociocultural and knowledge transmission practices, and build a new pan-European culture.

Second, I present Bologna's official governance model, and the political, administrative, and regulatory tools that Bologna selected through ten years of growth, to guide the participating actors (governments, educators, learners, policymakers) towards convergence around new higher education norms and knowledge values. I particularly present the reliance on soft law and Open Method of Coordination, the EHEA's proximity to European legislative power, and the growing model of governance through audit and evaluation practices. I describe how Bologna agencies have gradually defined niches and domains of competency within this governance structure: advisory work, representation of students' voices, representation of the industry, or assessment and audit-focused work. However, the thesis also shows that despite this definition of competencies and mandates of roles, some of the Bologna policies run through the spectrum of the governance institutions, with some lack of clarity regarding ownership of said policies. For some (social dimension), this results in decreased efficacy of policy construction and message diffusion.

Third, the thesis' initial exploration allows me to foreground two characteristics of the Bologna process, and the Russian engagement with it: diversity and mobility. The thesis starts by uncovering the diversity of objectives that coexist in the practices of Bologna educational and political actors, and the diversity of motives that underlie their participation. This diversity forms the backdrop to the practices of power explored through the rest of the thesis. I also show the impact that actors' institutional mobility has on the success of the Bologna process. Interviews with members of the SEXTANT project introduce policy experts who hold multiple roles in different institutions, including policy expertise and faculty roles. The interviews show how these mobile actors knowingly and strategically use their distinct institutional capabilities to enhance the chances of successful appropriation of Bologna reforms, minimising political exposure in the early stages of an implementation project, or using the transnational reach of their affiliations to replicate a successful Bologna programme, beyond the scope of the original project. The thesis further shows a mobility on the part of the advisory groups. Examination of the 2000-2012 Russian higher education reforms shows that advisors assisting in the implementation of Bologna may also serve other education reform efforts financed by entirely different international partnerships. These reforms may promote different ideologies of education, sometimes contradictory to those of Bologna. I present one example with reform programmes financed by the World Bank, promoting neoliberal interpretations of higher education efficacy, in which a part of the advisory structure also served the Russia-Bologna reforms.

Lastly, this exploration of the World Bank education reform programmes in Russia, and of the Russian economic reforms of the educational sector, reveals the complex interplay of neoliberal and non-neoliberal influences/practices that impacts educational and sociocultural reform efforts inside the EHEA. The thesis identifies practices of power and institutions that contribute to establish the neoliberal norms of education, but also demonstrates that the Bologna process is not solely directed by a neoliberal logic.

Appropriation of Bologna educational norms, negotiation, and resistances

Having provided the historical and systemic description of the Bologna process, the thesis turns to analysis of the appropriation of Bologna higher education and convergence norms.

Through research on the SEXTANT multi-university capacitation project co-led by the Moscow State Pedagogical University and the University College of Ghent from 2007 to 2011, the thesis explores the appropriation by 5 universities of the following Bologna educational norms: learning outcomes transparency, diploma recognition (ECTS), academic staff and student mobility (knowledge mobility), and network growth. The review of this project highlights the growth of international networks, bilateral agreements between institutions, technological capacitation, and knowledge transfer between the academic and the private sector. Other Russian higher education reforms implementations that correspond to stated Bologna objectives are shown in the following chapters, such as changes towards the BA/MA tiered system, and modifications to the university entry requirements with the creation of the national examination process. Here, I acknowledge the successes of these appropriation efforts.

Going beyond the successful appropriation of Bologna education precepts, the thesis also shows practices that limit the effect of the reforms, and practices through which institutions, educators, and learners negotiate the Bologna norms, adapting them to local contexts or diverting them towards other purposes. Regarding the new BA/MA system, I show students' perspectives on the lack of clarity as to the real difference that exists between the former Soviet 'specialist' diploma and the new format. Similarly, I expose the length of implementation time of the official transition to the BA/MA: the government joined Bologna in 2003, announced the full transition to the new degree structure in 2007, but its effective arrival in the fieldwork university, still in parallel with the old degree format, was not until 2011.

As I explore the Russian appropriation of Bologna norms in social dimension, learning transparency and learning outcomes, I show practices and social stratifications inside the institution that prevent these Bologna policies from fully permeating the university's community. I show practices that contribute to the stratification of the campus community, challenging the implementation of Bologna's desired social cohesion and creating the systemic conditions for unequal distribution of higher education resources. I also show events in which the very notion of segregation starts to be built into the self-identification of the students, placing further doubts on the capacity to achieve a cohesive student cohort, as advocated in the Bologna social dimension policy. Lastly, the research looks at education access and describes practices of corruption that contribute to differentiating between students on the basis of socioeconomic background. In particular, I relate students' perceptions of purchasing access to education, and

how this and other ascription practices affect the capacity of students to access higher education with comparable opportunity. The learning path created fundamental divisions in the student cohort, based on the students' racial and economic backgrounds; similarly, the learning experience and skill acquisition during the learning period is fundamentally different between groups. It is this combination of practices, this multiplication of small events and discriminations, that contribute to an overall inability to fully implement the learning transparency and social dimensions norms advocated by Bologna.

Following the presentation of the SEXTANT programme, the thesis turns to other instances of education reform where Russia utilises its engagement with the EHEA, and diverts its new higher-education reform expertise towards regional political power-plays. The Bologna message is rooted in a rhetoric of education quality improvement and higher education system convergence. But what we see happening during the implementation of similar education reforms in Russia is a shift away from the Bologna rationales. I show how Russia invested in similar higher education reforms, and through these efforts reached for a model of governance and legislative harmonisation that placed the Russian Federation at the centre of its extended geopolitical region. Here I look at questions of geopolitical dominance, and show how the Russian education reform programs born from its engagement with Bologna are used to extend the new Russian 'educational expertise' across the CIS and BRICS regions. I present this as a form of knowledge economy dissemination, in which the knowledge is that of education capacitation expertise, and expertise in European/International education standards. The thesis shows the Russian Federation's use of Bologna reforms and regulatory power to attain global standing in higher education, and regional dominance through the definition of legislative and education standards.

Practices of power in the Bologna process, and in the Russian engagement with the Bologna process

Bologna creates a consensus in education development in the context of non-binding agreements. This is an exercise in other types of governing power than the traditional centralised and normative power of a state or other international governing body. Turning to the second question of this thesis, I present a review of the Bologna policies as practices of power, and of the

collaborative practices that contribute to the continued growth and strengthening of the EHEA international governance in education. I further present the role that texts and rhetoric plays in the diffusion of the Bologna norms, in the legitimation of the Bologna message, and in organising the ways the actors negotiate the Bologna policies. I finally present the practices of power that contribute to create hierarchies of power and concentration of resources in the hands of institutions and individuals.

The thesis shows that the Bologna process does not rely on the same mechanisms that a state would to ensure the application and implementation of its recommended higher education reforms. The thesis shows how the Bologna process is carefully constructed a governance model based on principles of soft law, proximity to European Union governing authority, and weight of the advisory/audit apparatus. I show how these elements were defined through years of gradual political construction, and repetition through multiple policy documentation, public pronouncements, and inter-ministerial meetings. But these are systemic structures and theoretical models of governance. The thesis shows practices that stabilise, strengthen, and extend the governance model of Bologna through the diversity of its member states, economies, cultures, and higher education systems.

I show the creation, during the implementation of Bologna policies, of positions that place specific actors at the centre of a network of education institutions and policy agencies. These actors take on roles described by theorists as those of nodal actors and actors of interest, inside Bologna's multi-institution and multi-policy engagement. The research shows how these actors vied for the expansion of their chosen Bologna objectives, and helped define which segments of the Bologna process and its discourse might be transported from one institution or one network to the next. In this sense, the thesis shows how the nodal actor role contributes to strengthening the Bologna governance model. Through the examination of the SEXTANT project, I show how universities and individual actors gained new leadership positions in the Bologna governance network, and achieved expertise status that allowed them to promote Bologna objectives to new countries or institutions. I show how the legitimacy of Bologna is reinforced at each step of project reproduction.

Having explored the official governance model, the creation of the governing institutions, and the practices of nodal actors that participate in the diffusion of the Bologna norms, the thesis

shows the construction of an authorised and centrally mandated rhetoric of higher education reform by Bologna governing institutions. Exploring this rhetoric reveals how discursive diffusion practices contributed to the expansion of the Bologna message, and to reinforcing its legitimacy. Through the analysis of policy documentation and implementation practices, I outline the role that language has in the reaffirmation of the Bologna process higher education policy: the construction of a specific Bologna rhetoric by the BFUG, the requirements made of universities to use this centrally and politically defined rhetoric in funding applications, the requirements made to states to advocate for these policies, and the processes of discursive diffusion and overwording. I show that these discursive practices gradually bind the diverse national actors and institutions to the BFUG's specific vision of higher education. A specific language of higher education assessment permits the construction over the years of a shared lexicon that becomes the practiced policy language around which policymakers collaborate year after year. I contend that it is upon this language that the successes, the trustworthiness, and the adequacy of national education systems is judged by the international community with regard to the Bologna process. Examples are offered for Russia in both Bologna implementation programmes and other reforms. This rhetoric construction, layering of expert and audit systems, development of standards and the corresponding benchmarking during reforms, all contribute to a 'good governance' concept in higher education, which in turn confers a quasi-legislative power to the Bologna soft-law governance model.

Lastly, the thesis presents the practices of power that contribute to concentration of resources in the hands of institutions and individuals. As I explore the appropriation by Russian universities of educational norms such as learning outcomes transparency and the appropriation of Bologna's social dimension, I show the dynamics of power within the Russian university that run contrary to these sociocultural and educational norms. Notably, the thesis demonstrates the contention between ascription and attainment at Russian universities, and how this limits equalitarian access to education. I also show practices of discrimination against Asian student populations, negating the effects of learning outcomes transparency and the efforts to attain a growth of education quality for all learners. Similarly, I show practices of resource ascription that focus educational resources in the hands of a limited set of national research universities, and contribute to a discrepancy of instructional quality between Russian regions. The thesis completes the examination of practices of power within the Russia-Bologna engagement by widening the

analytical scope and showing how Russia used its new education reform expertise to create a model of international legislation harmonisation that placed the Federation as the dominant centre of its CIS and Eastern Europe geopolitical region. I reveal political and legislative practices, including forum-shifting, that create regional political hierarchies, or ensure that a nation gains greater access to market resources and regional influence.

Summary

This thesis presents a review of the practices and policies in the Bologna process, and its integration with the Russian higher education system. The research explores the history, the policy construction, and the governance system of the Bologna process. It shows, through examples of policy appropriation, the work that is done by the actors and the higher education groups created during the Bologna-Russia encounter. The review of this work and implementation programme reveals processes of discursive diffusion, the growth of the governance structure through the actions of nodal actors, and the enduring existence of resistance factors to Bologna in Russia. It reveals that despite attempts to pursue a social dimension and egalitarian, transparent access to quality education, processes of segregation and ascription still endure inside various education institutions. It reveals that some processes of political and institutional hegemony are fostered by the manner in which Russia uses Bologna's higher education development and convergence model. Through the thesis, one question underlies the research: if we approach the Bologna policy as a set of practices of power, what relationships, negotiations, and sociocultural transformations would it reveal? This thesis provides an initial body of responses by describing the legislative contexts and practices of power that emerge within the EHEA. I describe and trace the impact of discursive dissemination as a policy tool, outline which actors participate in the growth of the Bologna process and how they do so, and expose instances in which the implementation converges with, or diverges from, the initial Bologna educative message. In this, the thesis initiates what could become a larger investigation. Further ethnographic research into the choices made by the actors to promote the Bologna discourse at each level of policy implementation, and examining how the Bologna rhetoric is transformed at each of these levels, would continue to contribute towards understanding of the

practices that allow the present-day EHEA policies to grow and expand through its 48 member states.

Appendices

Appendix 1: EHEA Membership

1- Signatory members

Albania	France	Netherlands
Andorra	Georgia	Norway
Armenia	Germany	Poland
Austria	Greece	Portugal
Azerbaijan	Holy See	Romania
Belarus	Hungary	Russian Federation
Belgium - Flemish Community	Iceland	Romania
Belgium - French Community	Ireland	Serbia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Italy	Slovak Republic
Bulgaria	Kazakhstan	Slovenia
Croatia	Latvia	Spain
Cyprus	Liechtenstein	Sweden
Czech Republic	Lithuania	Switzerland
Denmark	Luxembourg	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
Estonia	Malta	Turkey
European Commission	Moldova	Ukraine
Finland	Montenegro	United Kingdom

2- Consultative members

Council of Europe	UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education
EUA: European University Association	EURASHE: European Association of Institutions in Higher Education
ESU: European Students' Union	ENQA: European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
EI: Education International Pan-European Structure	BUSINESSEUROPE

Appendix 2: Russian higher education and EU-Russia bilateral agreements
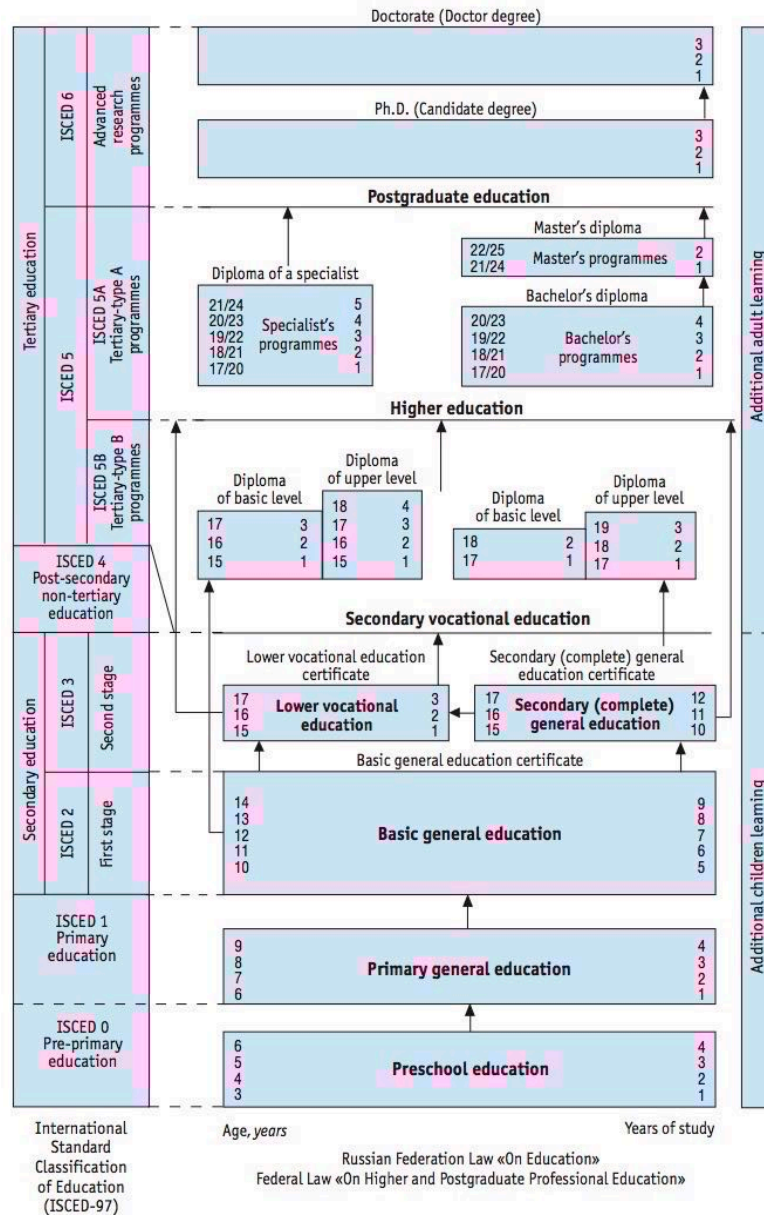
1- Russian higher education system

Fig. 2: Education system in the Russian Federation[150]

2- Principle of competence: uniform application with capacity to adapt to local situation

During the overview of the legislative setup regarding education in Russia, I focused on making explicit the hierarchy of laws surrounding education regulation, and the roles attributed to each interactant. I here reduce the scope to the notion of competence, as defined both in the Constitution and in the federal laws on education. There are five levels of competence (see Volovhova, in Groof, Lauwers, and Filippov 2001).

- Russian Federation (as defined in Art. 71 & 76.1 of Constitution and Art. 6 of federal law *On education* 2012). Among others, "organisation of higher education, including state guarantees the right to receive on a competitive basis a free higher education"; "organisation of additional vocational training"; "develop, adopt and implement national programs"; "approval of the federal state educational standards"; "licensing of educational activities"; "develop forecasts training requirements for training based on a forecast of labour market needs"
- Joint competence Federation/Region (as defined in Art. 72 of constitution and 7 of federal law on education). Among others, "provides a federal executive body exercising functions of control and supervision in the field of education"; "licensing of educational activities"; "prepare proposals for improving the education law"
- Russian regions (federal law on education Art. 8). Among others, "development and implementation of regional development programs of education, taking into account regional socio-economic, environmental, demographic, ethnic, culture"; "financial support for pre-school, general, basic general, secondary education in state-accredited private educational institutions"; "organisation of vocational education"
- Local authorities (federal law on education Art. 9). Among others, "organisation of […] basic general education programs in the municipal educational institutions"; "organisation of additional education of children in municipal educational institutions"
- Educational institution (federal law on education Art. 28.3). Among others, "development and adoption of local regulations in accordance with this Federal Law"; "development and approval of educational programs"; "implementation of ongoing monitoring of progress and interim evaluation of students"; "determine the list of textbooks in accordance with the approved federal list of textbooks"

3- EU-Russian Federation bilateral agreements and 'common spaces' agreements

Period	Name	Date / Date in effect		Details
pre-1990				
	Germany - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation	7/7/87		Agreement on S&T, including on education
	Trade and Co-operation Agreement between the	30/11/89	13/4/90	Economic, Industrial and Technical Cooperation

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ISCED levels 5-6. ISCED 5B is excluded and counted as "secondary professional education" in HSE statistics. See OECD thematic review of tertiary education 2007.

	USSR and the European Community			Agreement. Regulated relations EU-Russia until 1997 and the PCA
1991				
	Launch of the EU-Russia cooperation programme			
	Opening of the Delegation of the European Commission to the Russian Federation	2/91		
1992-97				
	Partnership and Co-operation Agreement (PCA)	24/6/94	1/12/97 (see 21st Summit)	"Agreement on partnership and cooperation establishing a partnership between the European Communities and their Member States, of one part, and the Russian Federation, of the other part" (see appendix)
	France - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation Italy - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation United Kingdom - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation	28/7/92 1/12/95 28/5/96		
1998-00				
	Individual Agreements with EU countries Italy Cultural and Educational Collaboration Agreement Norway-Russia: agreement on S&T Cooperation	10/2/98 26/5/98		
	Adoption by the EU of the Common Strategy of the EU on Russia	4/6/99		(see appendix)
	Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology between the European Community and the Government of the Russian Federation	5/10/99	13/4/00	(see appendix)
2001-02	…			

	7th EU-Russia Summit, Moscow 8th EU-Russia Summit, Brussels 9th EU-Russia Summit, Moscow 10th EU-Russia Summit, Brussels	17/5/01 3/10/01 29/5/02 11/11/02		Agreements on international trade, economic cooperation, security, nuclear cooperation. For educational development impact, see appendix (support of Northern Dimension)
	Netherlands - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation Spain - Russia: Agreement on S&T Cooperation	23/1/01 15/11/01		
	Action Plan to enhance Science and Technology	2002		
2003				
	11th EU-Russia summit, St Petersburg	31/5/ 03	10/5/0 5	Agreement to create 4 Common Spaces (see appendix)
	Signature of the Agreement renewing the agreement on cooperation in science and technology between the Government of the Russian Federation and the European Community	6/11/ 03		
	12th EU-Russia Summit, Rome	6/11/ 03		
2004				
	Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on relations with Russia	9/2/0 4		
	Joint Statement on EU Enlargement and EU-Russia Relations	27/4/ 04		
	13th EU- Russia Summit, Moscow **14th EU- Russia Summit, The Hague**	21/5/04 25/11/04		
2005-06				
	Protocol to the Partnership and	01/3/ 05		

	Cooperation Agreement to take account of enlargement of the EU enters into force			
	15th EU- Russia Summit, Moscow 16th EU- Russia Summit London **17th EU- Russia Summit, Sochi** **18th EU- Russia Summit, Helsinki**	10/5/05 4/10/05 25/5/06 24/11/06		
2007				
	19th EU-Russia Summit, Samara	18/5/ 07		
	Agreement between the Russian Federation and the European Community on the facilitation of the issuance of visas to the citizens of the Russian Federation and the European Union enters into force	1/6/0 7		
	Memorandum of Understanding for establishing a dialogue on regional policy between the Ministry of Regional Development of the Russian Federation and the European Commission	2007		
	20th EU- Russia Summit, Mafra	26/1 0/07		
2008				
	21st EU-Russia Summit in Khanty Mansiisk **22nd EU-Russia Summit, Nice**	26/6/08 14/11/08		Launch of negotiations on a New EU-Russia agreement (Frozen from August to November 2008: Georgia war)

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