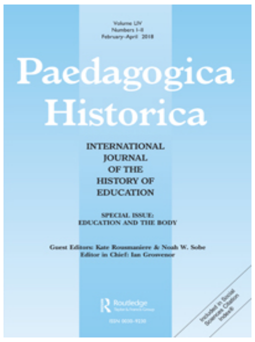

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Controlling the image of the teacher's body under authoritarianism: the case of Soviet Latvia (1953–1984)

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ABSTRACT

The ideal of the Soviet teacher can be revealed in Soviet mass media, but historians are challenged by the question "what was the actual reality"? Therefore, we addressed the reality of the Soviet school using two research questions: 1) What teacher image was cultivated by Soviet propaganda, and what did the average teacher actually look like? and 2) How did Soviet power try to counteract the "incorrect" image of the teacher? Our research is based on visual sources and written texts created between 1953 and 1985. The image of the ideal teacher appeared in textbooks, while the real teacher could be found in photographs. In both sources, characteristics such as gender, age, hair type, and facial expressions were identified. We compared the typology of Soviet teachers with teachers from other societies, as well as changes in teacher image in a political and social context. Our research shows that the ideal Soviet teacher was a modest, serious, asexual young female. The reality differed only in age – the teacher was actually a middle-aged woman. Rarely did a "real" teacher step out of conservative boundaries in terms of modern hairstyles, outlandish clothing style, or the use of cosmetics – these actions would result in the teacher being publicly chastised. The image of the ideal teacher reveals contradictions in Soviet ideology: on the one hand, communists heralded the equality of the sexes, but on the other hand, it relegated women to roles traditionally associated with the female sex. The identity of the young teacher was declarative only, as the youth of the Soviet Union actually implemented the agenda set out by the older generation. The actual image of the teacher was also tied to political correctness and the realities of the economic situation in the USSR.

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Introduction

The Soviet Union certainly does not have a monopoly on control over teacher image. For centuries, the ruling order, both religious and also secular, has determined how a teacher should appear.[1] Even today, education administrators, parents, and researchers are concerned with the outward image of educators. For example, US researchers of teacher image believe that in many American school districts, teacher dress codes are a way to promote

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[1] Antonio Nóvoa, "Ways of Saying, Ways of Seeing: Public Images of Teachers (19th – 20th Centuries)," *Paedagogica Historica* 36, no.1 (2000): 21–52; Malcolm Vick, "What Does a Teacher Look Like?," *Paedagogica Historica* 36, no.1 (2000): 247–63.

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professionalism, improve the classroom learning environment, and emphasise the need for teachers to consider their status in the educational hierarchy.[2]

Yet, the manner in which teacher image was controlled in the USSR has its specificities. In a society totally controlled by the state, any misstep, including "incorrect" appearance, could be politicised to indicate a challenge to the ruling order. Such implications can be found in a letter, written in 1950 by a director of a school in Riga, Latvia to the Ministry of Education:

> Girls come to school with curled hair, modern hair styles, plucked and shaded eyebrows, and frequently with painted nails and silk stockings – the girls from Grades 11 and 12, in particular. The number of Komsomol[3] members is especially low in these grades. Upon closer inspection of these "modern-style misses", who do not resemble pupils, I began to ponder their political beliefs, as well.[4]

This indicates that following fashion and artificially improving one's outward appearance was cause for doubting one's political reliability. Therefore, the personal appearance of the Soviet citizen, including that of the teacher, was no longer a private matter, but was evaluated as a reflection of one's attitude towards state ideology. Challenges to loyalty could result in punishment appropriate to the then current Soviet mindset, ranging from extermination during the Stalinist era to public humiliation during the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s.

The Baltic States, including Latvia, were incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940 – the bleakest period of Stalinisation – which continued after the Second World War. Upon marching into Latvia, the communists did not hesitate to interrupt and replace existing economic, social, and cultural ways of Latvian life with the foreign order used in Soviet republics. Because ideological systems, whatever their nature, have always tried to manipulate education,[5] an important role in the communist plan was given to teachers.

After the Second World War, there was a serious shortage of teachers in the Baltic republics – their numbers had been dramatically reduced as a result of war activity, many had fled as the Soviet army re-entered Latvia in 1944, and yet others had been fired for political reasons. The vacancies were filled with new pedagogues or re-educated former teachers.[6] At the centre of teacher education and re-education were political and ideological questions.[7] However, the communist order focused not only on disciplining the mind, but the body as well. The teachers of the new Latvia were required to be perfect, internally and externally. Heroes, like saints, are products of crises or conflicts.[8]

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[2] Jane E. Workman and Beth Winfrey Freeburg, "Teacher Dress Codes in Employee Handbooks: An Analysis," *Journal of Family and Consumer Sciences* 102, no. 3 (2010): 9–15.

[3] Komsomol (All-Union Leninist Young Communist League) was the political organisation of the USSR, which accepted members from the age of 14. It was teachers' responsibility to involve pupils in Komsomol.

[4] Cited from Daina Bleiere, "Vispārējās izglītības sovjetizācija Latvijā: padomju cilvēka veidošana mācību procesā (1944–1964)" [Sovietization of comprehensive education in Latvia: shaping of the Soviet people (1944–1964)], *Latvijas Vēstures Institūta Žurnāls* [Journal of the Institute of Latvian History] 1, no. 86 (2013): 109.

[5] Marc Depaepe and Karen Hulstaert, "Demythologizing the Educational Past: An Attempt to Assess the 'Power of Education' in the Congo (DRC) with a Nod to the History of Interwar Pedagogy in Catholic Flanders," *Paedagogica Historica* 50, no.1–2 (2015): 14.

[6] Leonards Žukovs, "System of Teacher Preparation under Soviet rule," in *History of Pedagogy and Educational Sciences in the Baltic Countries from 1940 to 1990: An Overview*, ed. Iveta Kestere and Aida Kruze (Rīga: Raka, 2013), 187–92.

[7] Teacher instruction was organised by the many institutions of the Communist Party, which published articles in the press and delivered lectures and seminars for educators. See Roberts Miķelsons, "Pedagoģiskās domas attīstība," [Development of pedagogical thought] in *Skolas un pedagoģiskās domas attīstība Padomju Latvijā* [Development of schools and pedagogical thought in Soviet Latvia], ed. Roberts Miķelsons (Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1969), 51.

[8] Roy Fisher, Ann Harris, and Christine Jarvis, *Education in Popular Culture: Telling Tales on Teachers and Learners* (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), 24.

Yet, there are no official documents indicating precisely how a Soviet teacher should look. Communist party and government officials passed on information to teachers through the mass media which, under strict censorship, delivered information that had the weight of official documents.[9] Indicators for the creation of the ideal teacher image could be found in the press, and similar information was presented in textbooks meant for pupils and teachers, as well as at events held at schools, clubs, and libraries.

In all these sources, the image of the teacher was explained in the "must-be" form, but the role of the historian is to reveal what actually happened. Since the development of the Leopold von Ranke (1795–1886) school of history, the most pressing question is: what was the actual reality? Thus, what was the Soviet teacher image in real life? It is precisely Soviet school reality that is the biggest secret and the most difficult question for historians to answer, because it continues to be entwined with censor-created misconceptions. Therefore, this paper studies the following research questions: What teacher image did the Soviet system cultivate and what was the reality? What deviations from the official teacher image did teachers dare to attempt? How did the Soviet ruling order deal with teachers who had an "incorrect" image? And finally – considering that all societies have high standards regarding teacher image, what was specific to the image of the Soviet teacher?

Over time, the demands on teachers changed, along with changes in leadership of the communist party, as well as changes in fashion and the values of Soviet society. In historiography, the Soviet era in Latvia is divided into several periods: 1) Stalinism (1940–1941 and 1945–1953), when the teacher, along with other members of society, lived in deep poverty under fear of physical repressions; 2) the post-Stalin and Khrushchev era (1953–1964); and 3) the stagnation period (1964–1985) until Gorbachev's perestroika. We chose the latter two periods for our research because the teacher's image was no longer dependent on postwar hardships, and this was the period in which the basis for modern Latvian collective memory of the Soviet teacher was formed.[10]

Our case study adds to the body of work about life in Soviet society, where outer appearances revealed not only gender identity, religious views, and socio-economic class,[11] but also the individual's relationship with political power, the ability to survive in the Soviet centralised economy, and the specific identity afforded to Soviet teachers. This research on Latvian teachers, in particular, will help to correct common misconceptions resulting from Soviet propaganda that the Soviet Union was uniformly Russian, rather than a country made up of 15 individual republics.[12]

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[9] Mara Irene Lazda, "Gender and Totalitarianism: Soviet and Nazi Occupations of Latvia (1940–1945)" (PhD diss., Indiana University, 2005), 97.

[10] Iveta Kestere and Baiba Kalke, "Teacher's Visual Image: The Latvian Student Perspective," in *Comparative Education, Teacher Training, Education Policy, Social Inclusion, History of Education*, ed. Nikolai Popov et al. (Sofia: Bulgarian Comparative Education Society, Bureau for Educational Services, 2011), 409–17; Iveta Kestere and Baiba Kalke, "Obraz ucitelya v Sovetskoy Latvii (1945–1985): ideal protiv realnosty?" [Teacher's image in the Soviet Latvia: ideal against reality?] in *Dorogoy drug. Socialniye modelyi i normi v ucebnoy literature. 1900–2000* [Dear friend. Social models and rules in teaching/learning literature. 1900–2000], ed. Vitaly Bezrogov et al. (Moskva: Pamyatniki istoriceskoy misyi, 2016), 49–66.

[11] Jodi Minning, "The Sociology of Hair: Hair Symbolism among College Students," *Social Science Journal* 10, no. 1 (2011): 35.

[12] For example, Ewing's title presents the topic "Soviet Education", but the Soviet Baltic republics are not mentioned in the book, despite the fact that the Baltic republics had distinct specificities within the Soviet system. See E. Thomas Ewing, *Separate Schools: Gender, Policy, and Practice in Postwar Soviet Education* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois Press, 2010). For the negation of Soviet republics, see Iveta Kestere, "The 'Nation' in the History of Education from an European 'Postness' Perspective," *Bildungsgeschichte. International Journal for the Historiography of Education* 6, Jahrgang, Heft 1 (2016): 109–11.

Research methodology of visual image

US social anthropologist Margaret Mead (1901–1978) was the first scholar to describe the importance of the visual image of teachers.[13] Since the 1950s, a body of research has been published in Europe and the United States which describes the historic and modern perspectives of the appearance of the teacher. An important contribution was the "visual turn" in the history of education that took place in the 1980s, which acknowledged the use of images, photographs, and films as respectable historic sources.[14] Now, "historicism no longer has to be understood as a phenomenon that deploys exclusively temporality, narrative and events, but rather a multi-media discourse, which entails a plurality of conceptual and representational modes of history".[15] Following this "visual turn", many academic conferences and journal articles have focused on the historic image of the teacher. For example, *Paedagogica Historica* published Novoa and Vick's analysis of teacher image since the latter half of the nineteenth century in Europe, describing research methodology of teacher image, as well.[16]

Publications about the image of the teacher, which have unified several research approaches, can be found in Weber and Mitchell's book,[17] as well as Joseph and Burnaford's edited collection.[18] Research, dominated primarily by British and American studies, has been supplemented by a 2011 study of 10 nations (Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Pakistan, Serbia, Slovenia, England, South Africa, Turkey, and Latvia), in which the drawings and descriptions of the "typical teacher" by 1053 15-year-old pupils were analysed.[19]

This body of work was the basis for developing the methodology for our current research – identifying and comparing the main visual components resulting in identification of the specificities of the image of the Soviet teacher.

Teacher image is composed of the following elements: body (gender, age, skin colour, height, weight, hair, health, and adornment); attire (clothing, jewellery, accessories, and shoes); verbal communication (vocal characteristics, including tone); and non-verbal communication (body language, including gestures and facial expression, position in the classroom). Following ISCHE 38's theme, we chose to research some corporal elements of the Soviet teacher, namely, gender and gender identity, age, hair, and facial expressions of the purported and actual teacher.

We used primary visual sources for our research. Although words evoke images for the speaker, listener, and reader, it is pictures that most clearly demonstrate one's appearance.[20] Dekker notes that portrayals of people reflect reality and also send a "moral message".[21]

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[13] Margaret Mead, *The School in American Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1951).

[14] Sjaak Braster, "Educational Change and Dutch Classroom Photographs: A Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis," in *The Black Box of Schooling: A Cultural History of the Classroom*, ed. Sjaak Braster, Ian Grosvenor, and Maria Del Mar Del Pozo (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2011), 25.

[15] Kathrin Maurer, *Visualizing the Past: The Power of the Image in German Historicism* (Berlin/Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2013), 3.

[16] Nóvoa, "Ways of Saying, Ways of Seeing," 21–52; Vick, "What Does a Teacher Look Like?," 247–362.

[17] Sandra J. Weber and Claudia A. Mitchell, *That's Funny You Don't Look Like a Teacher: Interrogating Images and Identity in Popular Culture* (London, Washington, DC: The Falmer Press, 1995).

[18] Pamela Bolotin Joseph and Gaile B. Burnaford, eds., *Images of Schoolteachers in America* (Mahwah, NJ and London: Lawerence Erlbaum Associates Publishers, 2001).

[19] Iveta Kestere, Charles Wolhuter, and Ricardo Lozano, eds., *The Visual Image of the Teacher: International Comparative Perspectives* (Riga: RaKa, 2012).

[20] Mead, *The School in American Culture*, 1.

[21] Jeroen Dekker, "Mirrors of Reality? The Significance of Image Based Symbol Systems for Research into Long-Term Educational Processes," in *Material Culture and the Representation of Educational Research*, ed. Paul Smeyers and Mark Depaepe (Leuven: KU Leuven, 2012), 49.

First, we researched the visual image of the teacher as accepted by state censors and, therefore, acknowledged as “official”. That image appeared in textbooks and the press. The images, as Burke notes, often illustrate a generalisation.[22] Soviet school textbooks included the entire Soviet world and this world was represented as ideal and correct.[23] Therefore, the teacher in textbook illustrations can be considered as an idealised generality.

Researched textbooks were located at the Georg Eckert Institute for International Textbook Research in Braunschweig, Germany, the Riga School Museum, and the collection of the University of Latvia Museum of Pedagogy. However, the image of the teacher was rarely illustrated in textbooks. In total, we analysed 39 illustrated Soviet-era primary school textbooks, of which only 18 books (46.1%) contained images of teachers.[24] We found 36 images of teachers in primers, readers, and song books, as well as in German, English, and Russian language textbooks published in Riga and used in Soviet Latvian schools.

A description of the image of the teacher was found in four pedagogy texts, which were used in teacher education for many years. For example, Ilyina’s *Pedagogy* was first published in 1968 in Moscow and reissued for the last time in 1990.[25] The 1969 edition was translated into Latvian and published in Latvia in 1971. Her work was part of the teacher preparation syllabus in Latvia for 20 years.

The view of the Soviet teacher image was supplemented with press publications. We found 20 articles devoted to the outward appearance of teachers in the communist party’s main gazette *Cīņa* [Struggle], education journal *Padomju Latvijas Skola* [Soviet Latvian School], regional newspaper *Padomju Kuldīga* [Soviet Kuldīga], youth publications – newspapers *Padomju Jaunatne* [Soviet Youth] and *Padomju Students* [Soviet Student], as well as the magazine *Liesma* [Flame].

In order to understand how specific the image of the teacher was, in comparison to other professions, we analysed the women’s magazine *Padomju Latvijas Sieviete* [Soviet Latvian Woman]. This magazine’s target audience was the average citizen and did not feature *haute couture*, but rather gave insight and suggestions for everyday fashion for both women and men. In 1977 and 1985, articles were published, including a fashion page, featuring suggestions specifically for teachers.[26]

Secondly, in order to determine how and whether the propagandised image of the teacher actually transferred to the classroom, we compared printed sources with unpublished photographs. We collected photographs, which depict primary school teachers in classrooms with their pupils, e.g. in the same location depicted in textbooks. There are not many such photographs, because taking photos in the 1950s to 1980s was not a regular occurrence, and picture-taking usually took place outdoors in better lighting conditions. We found 93 photographs taken in both Latvian and also Russian-language schools in rural areas and various cities around Latvia.[27] Thus, we believe that this collection gives credible insight into the actual image of the Soviet Latvian schoolteacher. We gathered our photo collection in the Latvian State Archive of Audiovisual Documents, Riga School Museum, Latvian National History Museum, archives in the local museums of Valmiera, Liepāja, Dobele, and Daugapils, personal archives, and two school websites.[28]

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[22] Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Use of Images as Historical Evidence* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 187.

[23] Pjotrs Vails and Aleksandrs Geniss, *60.gadi. Padomju cilvēka pasaule* [1960s. World of Soviet people] (Rīga: Jumava, 2006), 77–8.

[24] In this article, we use textbooks for the first six grades for pupils aged seven to 12.

[25] Tatjana Iļjina, *Pedagoģija* [Pedagogy] (Rīga: Zvaigzne, 1971).

[26] S. Jaunarāja and I. Drāzniece, “Gaumīgi, moderni, vienkārši” [Stylish, modern, simple], *Padomju Latvijas Sieviete* [Soviet Latvian Woman] 7 (1977): 28; Natālija Prošuņina, “Uz jums skatās skolēni” [You are observed by pupils] *Padomju Latvijas Sieviete* [Soviet Latvian Woman] 8 (1985): 24.

Images as a historic source – illustrations in textbooks, as well as photos – need the same literacy to be analysed as written sources.[29] It is widely accepted that the context is seminal for understanding the ways in which visual materials function as documents and how they can participate in the process of meaning-making.[30] Rousmaniere offers an alternate way to view visual materials: "By looking at historical images free from historical context, we might raise the kinds of questions we need in order to develop a history that can relate to the contemporary context."[31] Thereby, we analysed our image collection as a reflection of social reality, as well as a system of signs.[32]

Any image, as Sontag notes, is "commerce between art and truth".[33] The visual image of a person is created from the perspective of artist and/or photographer, and then this visual information is looked upon through the researcher's analytical perspective. Thus, the image of the teacher can be viewed from various perspectives, none of which can be considered the final truth. Grosvenor also warns that we view school pictures from our own memories of schooling.[34] Yet, pictures are valued because they reveal phenomena that could remain hidden in written or oral sources,[35] namely, images provide researchers with specific information.[36] The job of the historian is to discern, analyse, and interpret messages hidden in visual sources. After all, as noted by Braster, every method has its advantages and disadvantages.[37]

Images of the Soviet teacher in textbooks, press, and photographs

Expectations in general

In written sources about the Soviet teacher in the time period being studied, the words "simple", "tidy", and "modest" stand out. An article with the notable title "Carriers of the Flag of Lenin" described teachers' "simple and old-fashioned clothing",[38] with a nod to the fact that this modest appearance attests to loyalty to communist ideals.

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[27] In the Soviet Union, all schools were state paid and controlled. Private and religious schools were illegal. As of 1954, all schools were co-educational. The only differentiator was the social and national setting, i.e. location (rural and urban, Russia, and other republics) and the ethnicity of the pupils. Soviet Latvia had Russian and Latvian language schools, which were known as "Russian schools" and "Latvian schools".

[28] The scope of this article did not allow for research into the historical image of the teacher as portrayed in literature, film, and oral histories (interviews and autobiographies).

[29] Francis Gasparini and Malcolm Vick, "Picturing the History of Teacher Education: Photographs and Methodology," *History of Educational Review* 35, no. 2 (2006): 16–31.

[30] Joan M. Schwartz, "Negotiating the Visual Turn: New Perspectives on Images and Archives," *American Archivist* 47, no. 1 (2004): 107–22; see also Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, 178.

[31] Kate Rousmaniere, "Questioning the Visual in the History of Education," *History of Education* 30, no. 2 (2001): 116.

[32] We have borrowed this phrase from Burke's *Eyewitnessing*, 183–4.

[33] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Rosetta Books LLC, 1973 [2005]), 4.

[34] Ian Grosvenor, ""To Act on the Minds of the Children": Paintings into Schools and English Education," in Braster, Grosvenor, and Del Mar Del Pozo, *The Black Box of Schooling*, 55.

[35] Braster, "Educational Change and Dutch Classroom Photographs," 36.

[36] Sontag, *On Photography*, 16.

[37] Braster, "Educational Change and Dutch Classroom Photographs," 36.

[38] "Ļeņina karoga nesēji. Prasme atdot sevi," [Carriers of the flag of Lenin. The ability to give oneself] *Cīņa* [Struggle], March 28, 1980.

Pedagogy textbooks contain more pragmatic explanations of the demand for the simple appearance of the educator. Firstly, the teacher should set an example for the pupils: "It is common knowledge that children imitate the people with whom they have frequent contact […] Therefore, the teacher must be orderly, and dress must always be neat and hand-writing must be accurate."[39]

Secondly, gaudy attire could detract pupils from their studies: "The main thing is moderation, refraining from diverting pupils' attention by wearing garish or flashy clothing, teaching pupils good taste, avoiding heavy make-up (brightly coloured lips, nails, etc.), and chasing after the latest clothing fad and hair styles."[40]

These quotes indicate that simplicity and modesty in a teacher's outward appearance are synonymous with professionalism and political trustworthiness.

Teacher gender and gender identity

Gender equality is not apparent in textbooks – only 34.2% of the illustrations show male teachers, which is quite a common situation for the teaching staff in primary schools. Weber and Mitchell note that "[w]riting about images of elementary teachers thus necessarily means writing about women and women's culture".[41] However, unlike other countries, gender balance in Soviet Latvia was directly and intentionally controlled by state power. During 1940–41, Soviet authorities in Latvia purposefully rid the teaching profession of male teachers. The official mantra was that "there is no job at school that cannot be completed by women" and, therefore, men were steered into work in factories, which held a particularly important role in the Soviet economy. In truth, this plan was unsuccessful as it became clear that only 13% (171 of 1299) of the men who taught in schools could be transferred to other jobs. The remainder were non-transferrable because of their professional skills or because of the significant resources that had been devoted to their education.[42]

After the Second World War, the absolute number of men had dropped in all professions, including education, due to war casualties.[43] This afforded men a wider opportunity for career choice and professional growth. Men who were engaged in the teaching profession did not spend much time in the classroom and were quickly promoted to leadership positions. A photo depicting the opening of the Soviet Latvian Teachers' Congress in 1960 shows the presidium, comprised of 14 of the leading state and education functionaries, of whom only two are women.[44]

The teaching profession was considered less desirable for men, in large part because the Soviet authorities had not chosen the male teacher as an example of the ideal Soviet man. That role was afforded to Red Army soldiers,[45] who were always depicted as "real men" – strong, brave, handsome, and with smiles on their faces.[46] In contrast, the male teacher in textbooks is presented as an unassuming man in a suit, who could be more specifically categorised as "intelligent" (Figures 1 and 2). The same could be said of photographed male teachers.

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[39] B.P. Jesupovs and N.K. Gončarovs, *Pedagoģija. Mācību grāmata pedagoģiskām skolām* [Pedagogy. Textbook for teacher training schools] (Rīga: Latvijas valsts izdevniecība, 1948), 391.

[40] Iļjina, *Pedagoģija* [Pedagogy], 212; N.J. Kovaljov i dr., *Vvedenije v pedagogiku* [Introduction in Pedagogy] (Moskva: Prosvescenije, 1975).

[41] Weber and Mitchell, *That's Funny You Don't Look Like a Teacher*, 10.

[42] Lazda, "Gender and Totalitarianism," 94–5.

[43] In 1959 in the Latvian SSR, of the employees in the field of education, science, and the arts, 74.9% were women and only 25.1% were men. See *Itogi vsesojuznoi perepisi naselenija 1959 goda. Latvijskaja SSR* [Soviet Union 1959 census results. Latvian SSR] (Moskva: Gosstatizdat CSU SSSR, 1963), 37.

[44] Latvijas Universitātes Pedagoģijas muzeja krājums [University of Latvia, Museum of Pedagogy collection], inv. no. 70.

[45] Lazda, "Gender and Totalitarianism," 105, 107.

This gender imbalances is quite ironic, given that the Communist Party had declared absolute equality between men and women, which the Soviet system propagated very directly – all women were required to work, and they could do the same jobs as men. Public Soviet discourse, including textbooks, did not lack images of women dressed in the same work clothes as men, holding drills, pliers, or rifles.[47]

However, the image of the female teacher differed greatly from the images of other female workers. The female teacher never lacked a feminine aspect: illustrations indicate she always wears a skirt or a dress with a white collar (52.1%). (Figures 3 and 4). Fashion columns suggested the teacher wear "feminine suits"[48] and, at festivities, be "particularly romantic".[49] Photographs also show distinctly feminine attire, usually dresses and suits that do not lack the ubiquitous white collar (15.5%). Although trousers for women became fashionable in the mid-1960s,[50] not a single female teacher is depicted wearing trousers in illustrations or photographs.

Although attire is distinctly feminine, the clothes hid the teacher's knees, arms, and breasts. Mini-skirts appeared in magazines in the 1960s, but skirts above the knee were found in only one photograph taken in 1982 (skirt length was discernible in 41.3% of the photographs). Sleeveless dresses are seen in one photograph from 1974, and an illustration in a 1955 textbook depicts only one teacher in a sweater with short sleeves. Blouses, dresses, and sweaters are buttoned up to the neck. Articles in the press note that highlighting the figure of teachers attracts unwanted attention and is not desirable.[51]

Teacher age

The Latvian pupil newspaper *Pionieris* [Red Pioneer] published in 1940, has two illustrations entitled *Old and New School*. The "old" school depicts communist impressions of bourgeois schools with an old teacher asleep at the front of the classroom, but the "new", Soviet school shows a young man standing in front of the class.[52] The images reveal an unmistakable interpretation – the new Soviet schoolteacher must be young. "Young" was synonymous with "good"; it was full of optimism and in Soviet rhetoric, united with spring and the sunrise.[53] Soviet propaganda widely utilised people's enthusiasm for everything new, or as Burbles ironically notes: "New is innovative. New is exciting. New is cool. New is unprecedented."[54] Soviet authorities were also guided by the belief that young people are more easily trained and attracted towards communist ideology. In addition, communist propaganda stressed

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[46] See L. Šprunka, *Latviešu valodas mācība II un III klasei skolās ar krievu mācību valodu* [Latvian for 2nd and 3rd grade for Russian language schools] (Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1955), 99; V. Citoviča and E. Arbitere, *Russkaja recj, 1 klas* [Russian for 1st grade] (Rīga: Zvaigzne 1982), 41.

[47] For example, A.S. Landa and M.I. Ļebedinska, *English. Angļu valodas mācība vidusskolai* [English. English textbook for secondary schools] (Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1947), 3, 70.

[48] Jaunarāja and Drāzniece, "Gaumīgi, moderni, vienkārši" [Tasteful, modern, simple].

[49] Prošuņina, "Uz jums skatās skolēni [You are observed by pupils]," 24.

[50] "Modes lapa," *Padomju Latvijas Sieviete* [Soviet Latvian Woman] 6 (1965): 25.

[51] Prošuņina, "Uz jums skatās skolēni [You are observed by pupils]," 24.

[52] *Pionieris* [Red Pioneer] 2 (1940): 24.

[53] Vails and Geniss, *60.gadi. Padomju cilvēka pasaule* [1960s. World of Soviet People], 73.

[54] Nicholas C. Burbules, "Technology, Education, and the Fetishization of the 'New'" (paper presented at Research Community Conference, KU Leuven, Belgium, November 13–15, 2014).

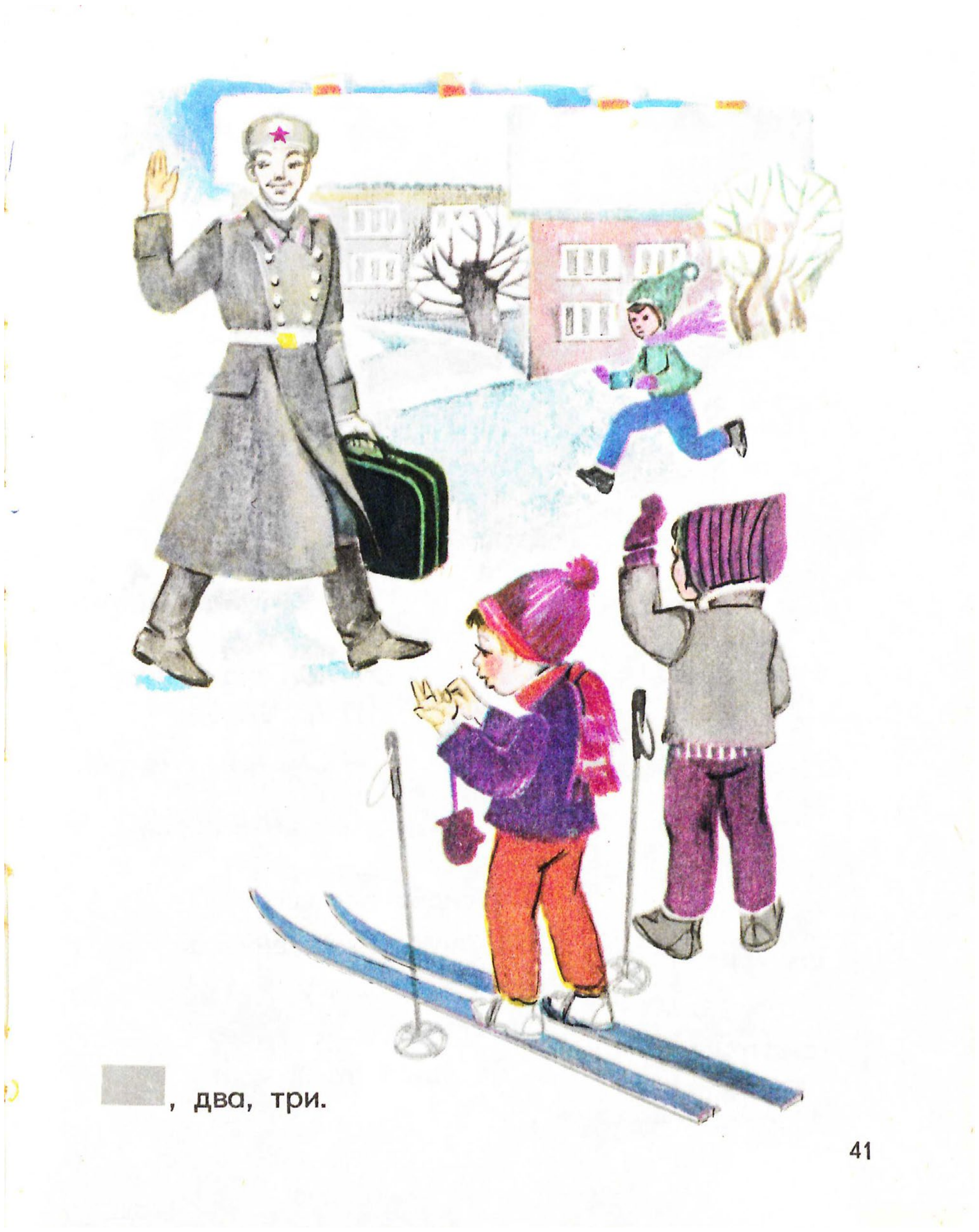

Figure 1. Red Army soldier. (Illustrator: Eiženija Haniša).
Citoviča and Arbitere, *Russkaja recj, 1 klas* [Russian for 1st grade], 41.

an active and energetic outlook on life (within the accepted ideological framework, of course), in which physical education and sport were key concepts. Physical activity was of national concern – it prepared tomorrow's workers, defenders of the country, and healthy and active members of society.[55]

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[55] Iļjina, *Pedagoģija* [Pedagogy], 168–71.

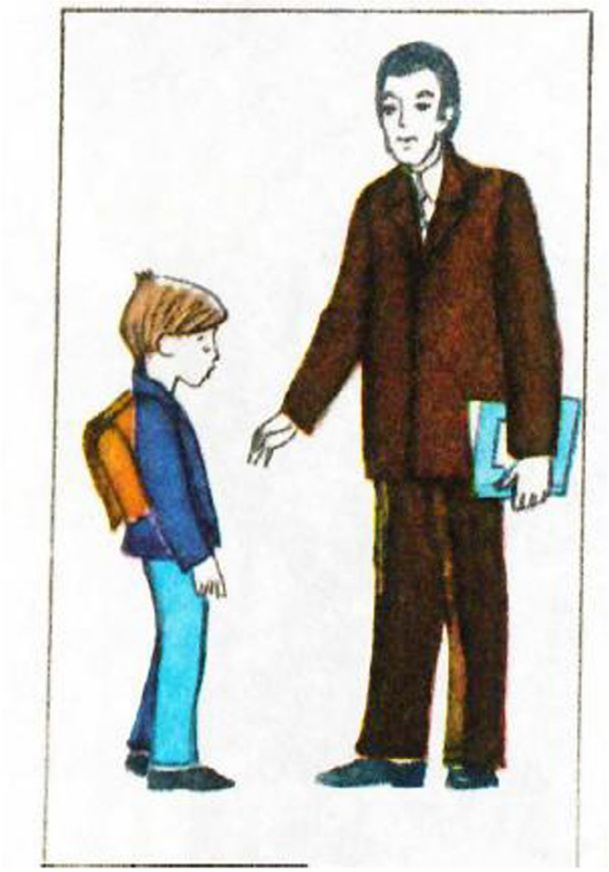

Figure 2. Male teacher. (Illustrator: Eiženija Haniša).
Citoviča and Arbitere, *Russkaja recj, 1 klas* [Russian for 1st grade], 30.

Physical and mental activity is traditionally associated with young people. Thus, the image of a young person became a symbol for the changes that were implemented by Soviet power in the Baltics. This was precisely why the image of a young teacher was acknowledged as the ideal representation in textbooks (Figures 3 and 4). It should be noted that determining a teacher's age, both in illustrations and photos, was not an easy task. Based on the research of Cash and Pruzinsky, we divided teacher age into three broad groups: young (under 30); middle-aged (30–60); and older (over 60).[56]

Textbooks feature mostly young teachers (68.5%). It was difficult to categorise age in 20% of the images, because the illustrations were too small or age was indiscernible. However, photographs reveal middle-aged teachers in 64.8% of the pictures. Older teachers were not to be found in books and, in reality, older teachers appear in only 7.6% of photographs analysed. Photographs reveal the reality of the Soviet classroom where the majority of teachers were middle-aged women.

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[56] Thomas F. Cash and Thomas Pruzinsky, eds., *Body Image: A Handbook of Theory, Research, and Clinical Practice* (New York: Guilford Press, 2002).

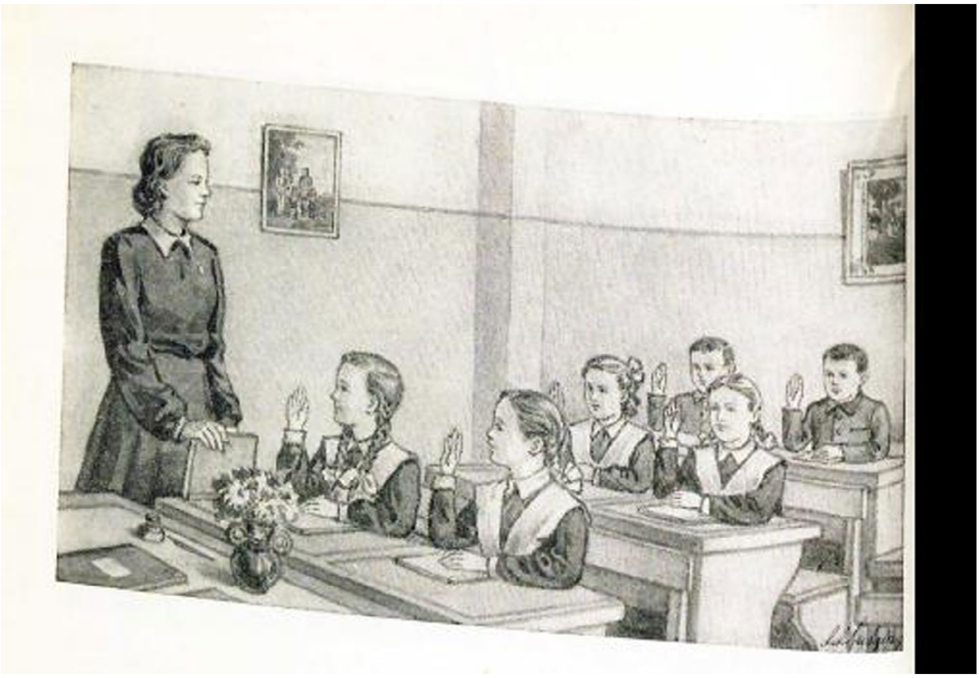

Figure 3. The ideal Soviet teacher I. (Illustrator: A. Duburs).
Z. Lubāniete, L. Bērzāja, and L. Vuškalne, *Ābece 1.klasei* [Primer for the 1st Grade] (Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1955), 8.

Hair

Hair, like attire, can be given a personal touch. It is a symbol of self-presentation and, therefore, in social language reflects personal identity: it indicates age, gender, profession, lifestyle, intelligence, and many other human characteristics.[57] Thus, hairstyles became a significant aspect of the image of the Soviet teacher.

Hairstyle analysis fell into the following categories: long, short, medium length, arranged in a bun, straight, curly, light, brown, dark, black, red, grey, bald, and beard and moustache.

Illustrations show teachers in traditional hairstyles – in a bun (43.4%) or medium length and curly (34.7%) (Figures 3 and 4). Medium length and curly hair appears in 75.5% of the photographs, but buns in only 5.1%. Even though the fashion pages had been displaying short, straight, and styled hair since the late 1960s and long, straight hair during the 1970s, teachers maintained the standard non-styled, medium length curly hair. Neither illustrations nor photos show teachers with long, loose hair or very short hair (for women). True, a bun would indicate long hair, but carefully pulled back. The lack of long flowing hair for teachers may hearken back to long hair as a symbol of sexuality,[58] but arranging it in a bun attests to a deliberate suppression of sexual attractiveness.

Conversely, short hair was a symbol of intelligence, a transition from a pig-tailed girl to adult woman status.[59] Yet, extremely short "boyish" hair could make a woman appear

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[57] Minning, "The Sociology of Hair," 35–47.

[58] Minning, "The Sociology of Hair," 37, 47; Elizabeth C. Hirschman and New Brunswick, "Hair as Attribute, Hair as Symbol, Hair as Self," *Gender and Consumer Behavior* 6 (2002): 363.

[59] Minning, "The Sociology of Hair," 37, 47; Hirschman and Brunswick, "Hair as Attribute," 363.

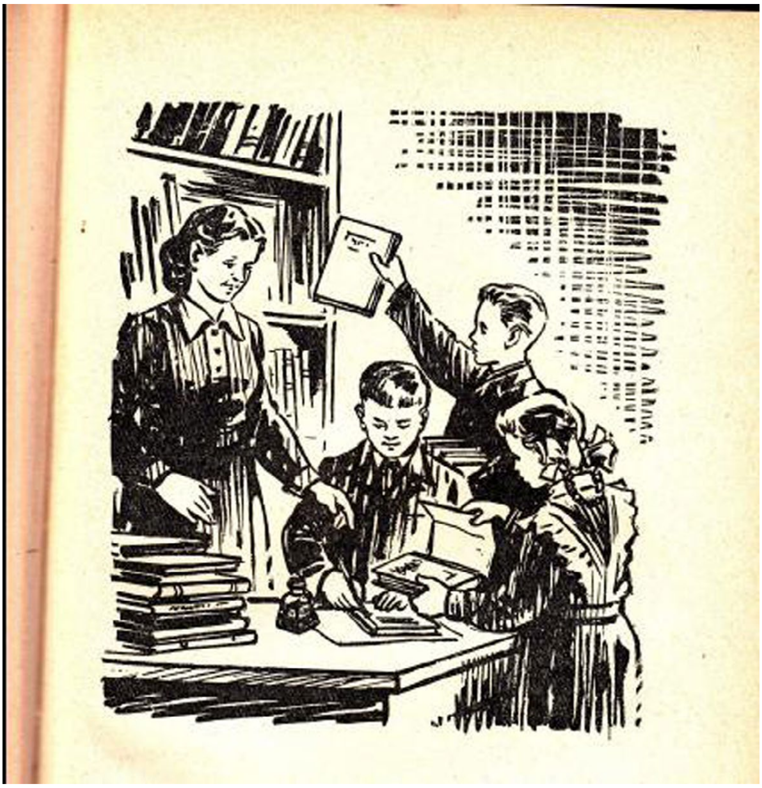

Figure 4. The ideal Soviet teacher II. (Illustrator: O. Urbans).
Z. Lubāniete, V. Avotniece, and A. Beķere, *Lasāmā grāmata IV klasei* [Reader for the 4th Grade] (Rīga: Latvijas Valsts izdevniecība, 1962), 15.

masculine and in heterosexual society, could lead to doubts about feminist and/or lesbian orientation.[60] Suspicion of "incorrect" sexual orientation in the Soviet Union was considered just as dangerous as "incorrect" political views – one could be jailed for homosexuality.[61]

The 1970s saw the beginnings of the fashion for long hair for men.[62] Followers of this fad in the USA, as well as the USSR, were considered particularly attractive, more independent, and less conforming and recognising of authority than their shorter-haired brethren.[63] Of course, the authoritarian Soviet system did not want an independent teacher, so illustrations and photographs do not reveal long-haired males in classrooms. Fashion magazines noted that teachers must have "proper hair styles" or they could not ask the same of their pupils.[64] Haircuts were like a uniform used to control and discipline men, with soldiers and monks being clear examples.[65] Control over teacher hairstyles, as well as those of pupils and students, was one Soviet method of disciplining Soviet society.

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[60] Hirschman and Brunswick, "Hair as Attribute," 361.

[61] According to the Latvian SSR Criminal code, Paragraph 124, section 1 issued in 1961, homosexuality was a crime punishable by imprisonment for five years.

[62] "Modes lapa [Fashion Page]," *Padomju Latvijas Sieviete* [Soviet Latvian Woman] 8 (1975): 29.

[63] Hirschman and Brunswick, "Hair as Attribute," 357, 360.

[64] Jaunarāja and Drāzniece, "Gaumīgi, moderni, vienkārši," [Stylish, modern, simple], 28.

[65] Hirschman and Brunswick, "Hair as Attribute," 360.

It is interesting to note that the Soviet female teacher had curly hair, as witnessed in textbook illustrations as well as in reality. Curly hair was attributed to princesses and was considered attractive and feminine.[66] In addition, curly hair was easily maintained. However, chemical permanents for curling hair were attainable with some difficulty for teachers, because the Soviet Union had a shortage of hairdressers and women might wait in line for two hours before being seated in the hairdresser's chair.[67] But after this long procedure, maintenance required only water, soap, and a comb.

Hair colour was not easy to determine, as photographs are primarily black and white, so we use three designators – dark, light, and grey. The Soviet teacher, both in illustrations and also photographs, appears dark-haired (Figures 3 and 4). In textbooks, dark hair appears in 91.4% of illustrations and in 74.7% of photographs. Light-haired male teachers do not appear at all, and only 7.5% of female teachers appear to be light-haired.

Soviet teachers could not be blonde largely because of lingering stereotypes of blonde women as frivolous, weak, incompetent, and less intelligent, yet more attractive.[68] Obviously, this image did not suit a proper teacher. Additionally, blonde hair, as with curly hair, was difficult to achieve in the Soviet economic circumstances. Hydrogen peroxide, a basic component of hair bleach, was in short supply, even in health institutions,[69] but the centralised economic system gave access to this basic substance only to hairdressers (and their friends), as well as the Soviet elite – categories to which teachers did not, or could not, belong.

As older educators were not welcomed by Soviet power, images of teachers with grey or no hair, indicating adherence to the stereotype of the lack of vitality,[70] are missing in textbooks. Beards were also considered a sign of old age, because many Soviet books attributed beards to grandfathers. No bearded men appear in photographs and only 3.2% are grey-haired.

Emotions

Soviet teachers, as noted in Soviet textbooks, needed to be people with "great will", "reserved", "composed", and "not easily irritated or nervous", because emotional control creates teacher authority.[71] In the press, too, propaganda stressed the correct teacher image as "appropriate attire, unpretentious stature, serious, business-like",[72] which does not stand out with "dubious originality in behaviour" or speech.[73] To use the terms of Hagedorn and Vails and Geniss, the human body had become an organised space,[74] and the teacher had become as solemn as the Kremlin.[75] Clearly, the emotions of teachers are never an entirely private matter,[76] yet Soviet teachers were told explicitly to control their behaviour. This may be due to the overwhelming majority of women in the profession and, historically, emotions have been associated with the female sex.[77] The tighter the control over emotions, the more masculine the person. And the term "masculine" in the Soviet lexicon had a distinctly positive connotation, because it was associated with bravery during the war, as well as conquering difficulties in life during peacetime.[78] A serious person also implied wisdom, competence, and respectability, more so than a smiling and happy one. Thus, the Soviet teacher had to portray a serious image.

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[66] Ibid., 357, 361.

[67] Daina Beleiere, *Eiropa ārpus Eiropas … Dzīve Latvijas PSR* [Europe outside Europe … Life in the Latvian SSR] (Rīga: LU Akadēmiskais apgāds), 152.

[68] Minning notes the example of Ancient Roman law that required prostitutes ("ladies of the night") to wear blonde wigs. See Minning, "The Sociology of Hair", 37, 42, 46–7. A similar, yet more positive characterisation of women with blonde hair can be found in Hirschman and Brunswick, "Hair as Attribute," 357.

[69] Ingrīda Sokolova, *Ideālu meklējot* [Searching for the ideal] (Rīga: Liesma, 1979), 18.

[70] Hirschman and Brunswick, "Hair as Attribute," 356, 362; Mead, *The School in American Culture*, 6.

[71] J.N. Medinskij, *Prosvescenije v SSSR* [Education in USSR] (Moskva: Gos.ucebno-pedagogicaskoje izdatelstvo, 1955); Kovaljov, *Vvedenije v pedagogiku* [Introduction in Pedagogy].

[72] "Gribu vingrot pie Māra Tropa," [I want to train with Māris Trops], *Padomju Jaunatne* [Soviet Youth], December 21, 1977.

[73] J. Alksnis, "Vēlreiz par pedagoģisko praksi," [Again about teacher training practicums], *Padomju Students* [Soviet Student] September 4, 1958.

[74] Jörg Hagedorn, "Körper und Raum. Raumerschliessungs- und Raumeneignungsprozesse Jugendlicher in narrativen Selbstpraxen," in *Räume bilden – pädagogische Perspektiven auf den Raum*, ed. Constanze Berndt, Klaudia Kalish, and Anja Krüger (Bad Heilbrunn: Verlag Julius Klinkhardt, 2016), 155.

[75] Vails and Geniss, *60.gadi. Padomju cilvēka pasaule*, [1960s. The world of Soviet people], 60.

[76] Joakim Landahl, "Emotions, Power and the Advent of Mass Schooling," *Paedagogica Historica* 51, nos 1–2 (2015): 109.

While researching facial expressions, we divided them into the following components: smiles, pleasant facial expressions, neutral expressions, unfriendly expressions, and undetermined. In textbooks, a serious or undetermined facial expression was found in 37.1% of the illustrations, unfriendly in 8.6%, and smiles in 17.3% of the illustrations. In photographs, serious teachers dominate in 73.6%, unfriendly in 8.7%, and smiling teachers appear in 15.3% of the photographs. It should be noted that teachers were often photographed during festivities in school, yet these situations did not encourage happy facial expressions. Five teachers, who look expressly unhappy, even though they are wearing fancy dress, appear in a fashion magazine (Figure 5). Yet, we must consider Braster's assertion that sadness in school pictures does not always reflect daily life in school.[79]

A completely different image in the gallery of teacher portraits appears in the one and only picture of a teacher on the cover of the magazine *Soviet Latvian Woman*. In September 1985, when Gorbachev was already in power, the magazine cover shows as previously a young female in a dress, but now with long loose hair and a big smile (see Figure 6).

Resistance and punishment

Soviet pedagogy, since the time of pedagogue Makarenko, has widely used collective discussion of a person's behaviour as a form of punishment in schools and work places.[80] During special meetings the "sinner" received public shaming by schoolmates and colleagues. As noted by a leading educationalist, "We must make it so that the entire collective struggles for the realization of communist ideology".[81] Active public humiliation of improper outward appearance was encouraged by the totally state-controlled press:

> Every concerned citizen should openly admonish these lovers of excess: citizen, your taste is warped – it is unacceptable and offensive to us. Only through combined effort will we eradicate from our midst these "guys" and "Johnnies", who drag in chewing gum and other unacceptable lifestyle and behavior norms.[82]

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[77] David Knights, "Binaries Need to Shatter for Bodies to Matter: Do Disembodied Masculinities Undermine Organizational Ethics?," *Organization* 22, no. 2 (2015): 203.

[78] During the 1970s and 1980s, special "masculinity lessons" were organised in Soviet schools, where pupils met with people (mainly soldiers), who spoke about their service or hero-like accomplishments.

[79] Braster, "Educational Change and Dutch Classroom Photographs," 28.

[80] Anton Makarenko (1888–1939), Ukrainian Soviet pedagogue who published works that stressed upbringing for the collective and in the collective. Makarenko's views were interpreted as the subjugation of individuality for the will and good of the collective.

[81] Izidors Meikšāns, "Psiholoģijas zinātnes attīstība Latvijā" [Development of psychology as a scientific discipline in Latvia], in Miķelsons, *Skolas un pedagoģiskās domas attīstība Padomju Latvijā* [Development of school and pedagogical thought in Soviet Latvia] (Rīga: Zavaigzne, 1969), 25.

[82] Kļava, "Parunāsim atklāti par gaumi," [Let's talk openly about taste], *Padomju Kuldīga* [Soviet Kuldīga], April 6, 1956.

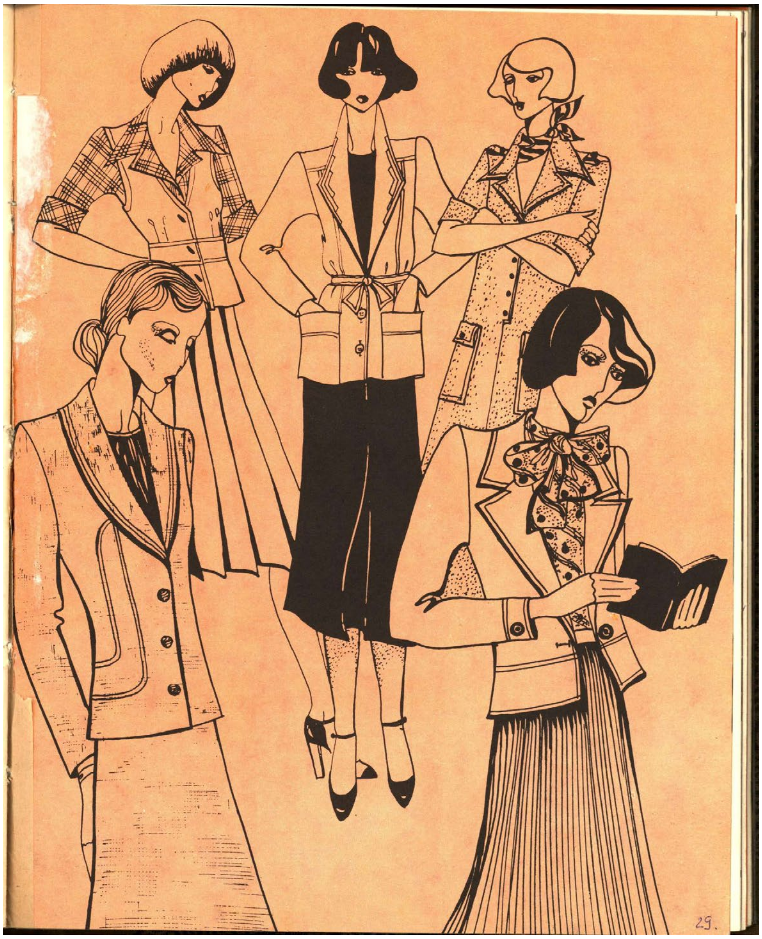

Figure 5. Sad teachers in a fashion magazine. (Illustrator: Drazniece).
I. Drāzniece, "Modes lapa [Fashion]," *Padomju Latvijas Sieviete* [Soviet Latvian Woman] 7 (1977): 29.

In fact, the journalists were inviting collective condemnation of all those who followed "malevolent" western culture, thereby associating outward appearance with politics and ideology.

The collective opinion was heralded as the only correct opinion and the individual, even in something as personal as taste, was required to comply: "Harmoniously embracing the surroundings – this also means that the individual notes, or better yet, submits to societal rules regarding attire. Precisely these rules dictate fashion."[83] This statement defined collective dress style as fashion, without any bright individualistic traits.

The press notes, however, several incidents of straying from acceptable norms. Teacher Gaida Peika "is frequently seen with brightly-coloured lips",[84] and the same "fault" was attributed to another teacher who had gone into the classroom with "garishly-drawn lip lines" and "eyes lined with black eye liner". Teachers were reprimanded because of their

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[83] Dzidra Andiņa, "Uzvedības un sadzīves estētika," [Aesthetics of behaviour and daily life], *Liesma* [Flame], April 1, 1967.
[84] Kļava, "Parunāsim atklāti par gaumi," [Let's talk openly about taste].

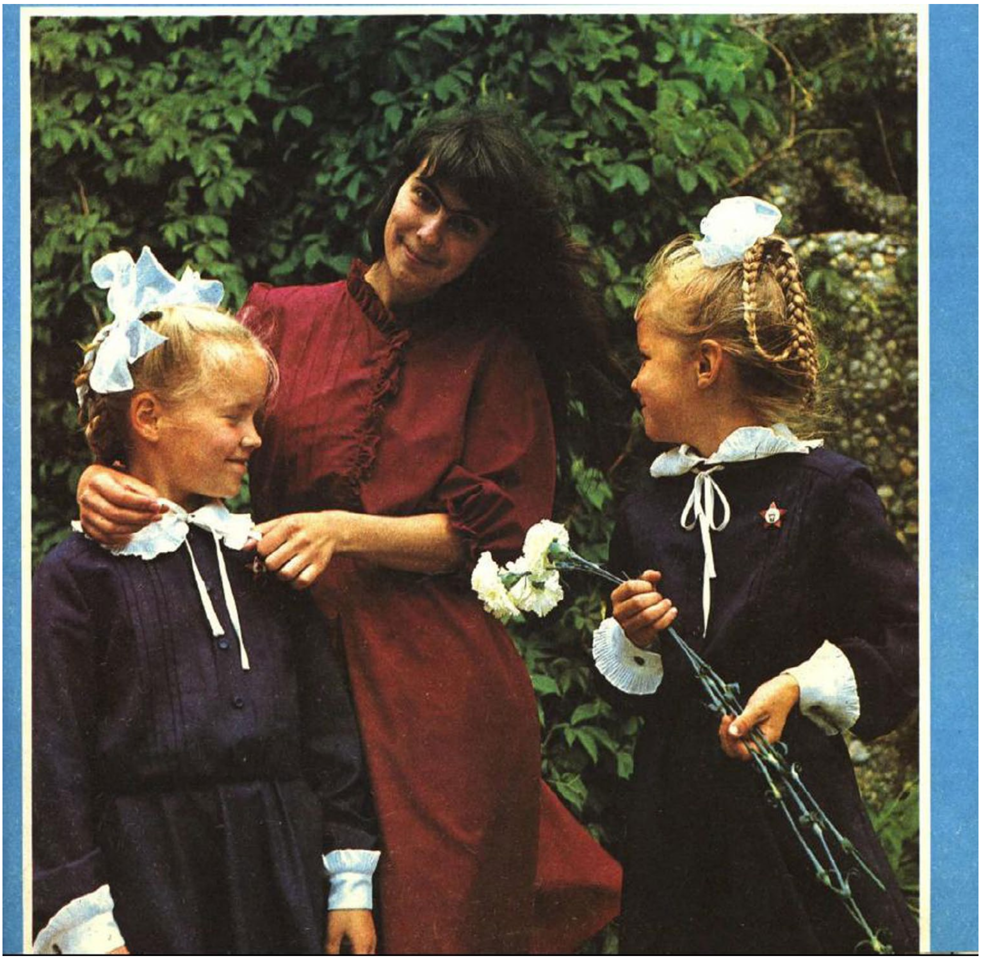

Figure 6. Teacher from Gorbachev's era. (Photographer: Atis Ieviņš).
Padomju Latvijas Sieviete [Soviet Latvian Woman] 9 (1985): cover.

hairstyles, which were "overly modern" and taken "straight from a fashion magazine"[85] or "improper",[86] without explanations as to how this was to be understood. Teacher Ārija Jakoviča was chastised for wearing a dress with a slit and buttons on the back.[87] The press also condemned teachers for wearing overly colourful, modern, or dressy attire.[88]

Young teachers were singled out. For example, one young teacher arrived wearing jeans from the West, not available in Soviet shops, for which she was reprimanded by the school director.[89] Other young teachers were chastised for wearing earrings or having brightly painted nails.[90]

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[85] L. Deiča, Rīgas 6. vidusskolas direktore [Principal of Riga Secondary School no. 6], "Ieskatieties spogulī!" [Look in a mirror!] *Padomju Students* [Soviet Student], April 21, 1960.
[86] "Kad samaina skolu ar klubu [Switching the club for school]," *Padomju Students* [Soviet Student], April 9, 1958.
[87] Kļava, "Parunāsim atklāti par gaumi," [Let's talk openly about taste].
[88] D. Prūse, "Modē māka ģērbties [Fashion skills]," *Padomju Students* [Soviet Student], March 6, 1980.
[89] Rita Blaumane, "Jaunajiem nav tik viegli," [The youth don't have it so easy], *Cīņa* [Struggle], October 2, 1983.
[90] "Kad samaina skolu ar klubu" [Switching the club for school].

Pupils and students were also not immune to public criticism of their appearance, but teachers were reprimanded for not having sufficiently educated their charges. One pupil had arrived at school in non-standard attire (narrow trousers and a monkey or parrot on his tie) resulting in a journalist questioning the teacher: "Here, [at school], do you do everything possible to instil in the youth norms of behaviour and taste that are acceptable in Soviet society?"[91] Things had not changed in the mid-1980s: teachers continued to be reprimanded when pupils propagandised "incorrect, undesirable views and lifestyle", such as wearing t-shirts displaying the US flag or "hanging razors, a drug-user symbol, around their necks".[92] The press usually mentioned the offenders by name and publicly shamed them.

Conclusions and discussion

This paper argues eight main points.

First point: one of the criteria of teacher professionalism during the Soviet era was a neat and modest outwardly appearance. Teachers and their pupils who stood out and were different received criticism, e.g. those who used cosmetics, styled their hair, and those who attempted to follow the latest fashion trends.

Yet, it would be unfair to claim that communist ideology alone required teachers to be modest. History shows that the teaching profession has long been tied to the popularisation of religious virtues, of which modesty was key. A modest, yet proper-looking teacher has always been a convenient model for youth, which indicates that material goods are not of importance, but rather intellectual achievements. This view has been sympathetic to parents and to society as a whole.

Second point: the propagandised image of a young teacher was fiction. The adoration of youth sent a clear message about the ideology of the new Soviet political order, with its progressive changes and stress on active physical and intellectual life. At the same time, the ideal was a teacher who distanced herself from fashion, sex, and emotions, that is from everything that was important to and characteristic of young people. The young teacher was expected to be a representative of the older generation, who would proselytise the ideology created and developed by them.

Third point: the propagated femininity led to secret gender discrimination. The ideal Soviet teacher was reserved and adhered to patriarchal society's leading views of what women are "supposed" to look like: medium length curly hair; feminine, yet well hidden under the confines of attire, skirts, and white collars. A feminine woman in the teaching profession attested to hidden discrimination that was rife in Soviet society: words declared equality of the sexes, but in reality, women were steered towards traditional female/mother roles. This is also indicated by the lack of women in positions of leadership in the field of education.

Fourth point: the Soviet teacher should be completely asexual. Stress on youth, modesty, and femininity reminds one more of girls than women as teachers, or even the iconic virginal image. Noteworthy is a Latvian story published in 1979 about a doctor's love for a 40-year-old teacher who, although once married, was still a virgin, because her husband, whom she married 22 years prior, had died immediately after their wedding. This teacher is a model of restraint – she survives appendicitis without a moan, wears calf-length skirts, keeps a tidy home, is interested in opera and poetry, and quotes the pedagogy classics to her beloved doctor.[93] The fate of this ideal Soviet teacher is just as it is in a fairy tale – her hardships are rewarded with marriage to a prince – in this case, a doctor.

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[91] Kļava, "Parunāsim atklāti par gaumi," [Let's talk openly about taste].

[92] Prošuņina, "Uz jums skatās skolēni" [Pupils are observing you], 24.

However, asexuality, like modesty, is not just a Soviet ideal. Sexuality has always been a taboo in the teaching profession.[94] This is primarily for the protection of children from any sexual interest exhibited by the teacher. In order to allay any fears in this regard, the teacher is divorced from the concept of sex altogether. Mertes writes that teachers, in their work life, borrowed something from the concept of a eunuch, who must look after the "harem" of children.[95] Atkinson notes that teachers choose to look neutral and bland in order to prevent any suspicions about them as sexual beings.[96] An added factor is the ingrained stereotype that sexuality is not associated with wisdom, particularly for women.[97] Thus, society's impression of a smart professional does not include a flamboyant and sexual individual. Finally, primary school teachers are presented as virginal, yet motherly beings, who not only teach, but also care for children. Motherhood, too, is traditionally separated from sexuality.

Fifth point: the teachers are held to a double-gender role: on the one hand, she has to be very feminine in her appearance; on the other hand, she must suppress her emotions like males to maintain her classroom authority.[98] As Knight puts it, "mind over body" was required.[99] Strict requirements to regulate emotions masculinise the female body to a degree because, as Knight claims, the male body is by nature contained and restrained, while the female body flaunts and flows.[100]

Next to the feminine, yet internally strong young woman, the male teacher is a bland image in textbooks, almost the "male version of a role which is felt to be feminine".[101]

Sixth point: the teacher propagates the idealised image because: (1) teachers were required to convince Soviet authorities and society that they were reliable; and (2) they feared being publicly humiliated.

Teachers were continuously looked upon with suspicion – what really happens behind those closed classroom doors? The fact that this needed to be controlled was agreed upon by all members of society, not least by the political authorities. Yet, the Soviet Latvian teacher was also required to negate the doubts that were created by the Soviet political and economic situation. Soviet society stressed, above all, the working class, and the intelligentsia was never truly considered a trustworthy partner in the building of communism. Therefore, an

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[93] Sokolova, *Ideālu meklējot* [Searching for the ideal], 13–40.

[94] Weber and Mitchell, *That's Funny You Don't Look Like a Teacher*, 71.

[95] P. Klaus Mertes SJ, "Tabus im Lehrberuf, oder: die Würde des Lehrberufs," in *Metamorphosen der Bildung. Historie – Empirie – Theorie*, ed. Edwin Keiner et al. (Bad Heilbrunn: Verlag Julius Klinghardt), 419.

[96] Becky Atkinson, "Apple Jumper, Teacher Babe, and Bland Uniformed Teachers: Fashioning Feminine Teacher Bodies," *Educational Studies* 44, no. 2 (2008): 98–121.

[97] Diane Reay, "The Paradox of Contemporary Femininities in Education: Combining Fluidity with Fixity," in *Investigating Gender: Contemporary Perspectives in Education*, ed. Becky Francis and Christine Skelton (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2001), 157.

[98] Fisher, Harris, and Jarvis, *Education in Popular Culture*, 10; Mead, *The School in American Culture*, 6.

[99] Knights, "Binaries Need to Shatter for Bodies to Matter," 211.

[100] Ibid., 207.

[101] Mead, *The School in American Culture*, 6.

"aura of suspicion"[102] surrounded the teacher as a representative of the intelligentsia, and it was more prudent for educators to show, at least with her or his modest visual image, affiliation with the working class.

The situation in Soviet Latvia was also special. Latvia was only incorporated into the USSR just after the Second World War and remained a "suspicious" republic in the eyes of true communists – it was too western, too intelligent, too prosperous.[103] Although the element of fear had diminished in the minds of Latvian citizens by the 1960s, the memory of recent deportations, arrests, and executions was still fresh, and wariness in the public space was exhibited particularly by ethnic Latvian families.[104] Cautiousness was a characteristic of ethnic Latvian teachers. A bright outfit would be too visible a declaration of the difference of Latvians.

Official requirements of authorities were transmitted to teachers by way of authoritarian ruling orders – through propaganda and through punishment. Our research reveals that teacher image was regularly watched by journalists, school directors, university staff, "correctly" thinking students, and other peers. If a teacher's appearance did not comply with accepted standards, s/he would be chastised publicly by colleagues and the press. Offenders would be named in accusatory or humiliating ironically written articles. As a result, diversions from the officially accepted image happened rarely. The propagandised image successfully transferred to reality and continues to live in the collective memory of Latvians today.[105]

Seventh point: Soviet economic circumstances contributed to the pale image of the teacher. Even though the salary for teachers with many years of experience was not considered low,[106] shop shelves were empty, hair salons had long lines, and teacher status in Soviet hierarchy did not afford them the privilege or means to dress stylishly and a modern way.[107] If a teacher did manage to stand out with her or his appearance, s/he would attract suspicion – by what illegal or suspect means had s/he attained goods unavailable to the average Soviet citizen?

However, we must stress again that the modest and reserved, feminine and asexual teacher is not uniquely a Soviet ideal. The ideal person, "the embodiment of morality",[108] in the teaching profession is an age-old requirement. However, our eighth point argues that the peculiarity of the Soviet system is the reflection of the specific political and social agenda in the image of the teacher – the two-faced declarations, the reasons teachers tried to imitate the propagandised image, and the methods through which teachers were punished.

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[102] Soviet attitudes towards teachers are exemplified by Pauly's description of the Ukrainian situation. See Matthew D. Pauly, *Breaking the Tongue: Language, Education and Power in Soviet Ukraine, 1923–1934* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2014).

[103] "Latvia is Very Different from the Rest of the Soviet Union," written in 1964 in a travelogue published in London. Cited in Andrejs Veisbergs, "Formation of the Image of Latvians in Anglophone Sources (16th–20th centuries)," *Humanities and Social Sciences. Latvia* 23, no. 1 (2015): 19.

[104] See Aija Abens, "Effects of Authoritarianism on the Teaching of Latvian History" (PhD diss., University of Latvia, 2011).

[105] Kestere and Kalke, "Teacher's Visual Image," 409–17.

[106] In the1960s and 70s, the average teacher salary was about 110 rubles per month, but by the 1980s, teachers with many years' experience received about 300 rubles per month. In comparison, in the 1960s and 70s, an engineer earned 135 rubles and an unskilled labourer earned 80–100 rubles. A loaf of bread cost 12 kopeks (1 ruble = 100 kopeks), 1kg of coffee 4.5 rubles, a man's shirt 5–20 rubles, a suit from 70 rubles, women's boot 75 rubles. Rent consumed about 5–10% of a family's income. See Juris Pavlovičs, *Padomju Latvijas ikdiena; mūsu vienīgā vakardiena* [Soviet Latvian daily life: our only yesterday] (Rīga: Jumava, 2012), 72, 75, 79, 83, 89, 96.

[107] The centralised economy of the USSR created a system whereby quality goods could only be purchased in places other than a shop or by waiting for hours in line, not knowing whether there would be any goods left when your turn came around. Other methods of attaining goods were: 1) bartering for services (e.g. shoes for hair colouring); 2) the black market where goods were brought in mainly by sailors; 3) packages sent from relatives in the West, and many Latvians had this source of goods; or 4) trips abroad, which was a rare occurrence. Party and government elite shopped in special stores that had a much wider assortment of goods then ordinary shops. See Bleiere, *Eiropa ārpus Eiropas … Dzīve Latvijas PSRS* [Europe outside Europe … Life in the Latvian SSR].

[108] Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Notes on contributors

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