Global Policies and Vernacular Politics in Education

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Abstract

This paper addresses a set of conceptual problems and an agenda of empirical questions related to the emergence of a new paradigm of educational governance. These concerns articulate with a more general debate around the issue of globalisation. The author rehearses briefly the sinews of that debate and examines what is sometimes called ‘policy convergence’ or policy transfer or policy borrowing. The article tries to understand to what extent are we seeing the wearing away of nation-state specific policy making, in the education, social and economic fields, and concomitantly, the collapse of these fields into a single over-riding emphasis on policy-making for economic competitiveness. That is, an increasing neglect or side-lining (other than in rhetoric) of the social purposes of education.

Resumo

Este artigo abarca um conjunto de problemáticas conceptuais e um quadro de questões empíricas relacionadas com o surgimento de um novo paradigma de governo educacional. Estas preocupações articulam-se com um debate mais geral em torno da questão da globalização. De forma breve, o autor analisa os aspectos mais importantes debate, e mais especificamente examina aquilo que por vezes se denomina “convergência de políticas” ou transferência de políticas ou ainda empréstimo de políticas. O autor pergunta-se ainda até que ponto estamos assistindo ao desaparecimento da concepção de políticas específicas ao Estado-Nação nos campos econômico, social e educativo e, concomitantemente, o abarcamento de todos estes campos numa concepção única de políticas para a competitividade econômica, ou dito de outra forma, o crescente abandono ou marginalização (não no que se refere à retórica) dos propósitos sociais da educação.
This paper addresses a set of conceptual problems and an agenda of empirical questions related to the emergence of a new paradigm of educational governance. These concerns articulate with a more general debate around the issue of globalisation. I will rehearse the sinews of that debate very, very briefly. More specifically I am interested in what is sometimes called ‘policy convergence’ or policy transfer (Dolowitz, with, Hulme., Nellis & O’Neill, 2000) or policy borrowing (Halpin & Troya, 1995; Whitty & Edwards, 1998). Or, to put it another way, to what extent are we seeing the wearing away of nation-state specific policy making, in the education, social and economic fields, and concomitantly, the collapse of these fields into a single over-riding emphasis on policy-making for economic competitiveness. That is, an increasing neglect or side-lining (other than in rhetoric) of the social purposes of education. Cowen (1996) writes about this as the ‘astonishing displacement of “society” within the late modern educational pattern’. Education is increasingly subject to ‘the normative assumptions and prescriptions’ (Lingard, Ladwig & Luke, 1998 p. 84) of ‘economism’ and ‘the kind of “culture” the school is and can be’ (p. 84) is articulated in its terms. This is now sometimes referred to as ‘joined up government’, within which skills formation or what Ainley (1999) calls ‘learning policy’ is the driving and integrating principle. As Green (1996) notes this kind of emphasis within different nation states has resulted, certainly across Europe, in the development of a common policy language which is articulated in government reports. Reflecting this, Avis, Bloomer, Esland, Gleeson & Hodkinson (1996), in relation to post-compulsory education and training, describe what they call a ‘new consensus’ and indeed the European Union White paper on education and training, Towards the Learning Society (Union, 1995, p.22) announces; ‘The end of the debate on educational principles’. Concepts like the ‘learning society’, the ‘knowledge based economy’ etc. are potent policy condensates within this consensus. They serve and symbolise the increasing colonisation of education policy by economic policy imperatives. Similarly, Levin (1998 p.131) identifies what he calls a ‘policy epidemic’ and within this six themes ‘which seem common across many jurisdictions’ (p.131) adding the point that: ‘The general tone underlying much reform is negative....’ (p.132).

A further question is whether we are now entering, what might be called, the ‘end of politics’. That is, it can be argued, that it is increasing difficult to distinguish between the education policies of rival, mainstream political parties and that in many respects national politics are now defined in terms of different manifestations of the globalisation of ‘ideological discourses which frame education policies at the national level’ (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry, 1997 p.61). The differences are matters of emphasis rather than distinctiveness. As Giddens (1994) puts is, we have moved ‘beyond left and right’. The ‘post-politics’ position is presented as essentially pragmatic and by implication free of ideology. But I am running ahead of myself. Let me return to the general context of all of this and sketch in the basic outlines of the globalisation thesis and the responses of its
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Globalisation

The nub of the globalisation thesis rests upon the question of the future of the national-state as a political and cultural entity. The thesis is articulated through four closely interrelated literatures addressing respectively; economic, political, cultural and social change. In the case of the first two the focus is upon whether, within the context of global economic change, individual nation states retain their capacity to steer and manage their own economies in the face of the power of ‘rootless’ multi-national corporations, the ebb and flow of global financial market and the spread of modern industrial production? Alongside this whether individual nation states are also losing their political and economic autonomy to the increasing range of and influence of supra-national organisations? It may be that no state can be really said to be in control of anything! Alongside this some writers have suggested that a new kind of world citizenship may be emerging. Further, is there the emergence of a new transnational elite, those whom Reich (1991) calls ‘symbolic analysts’, prime beneficiaries of global enterprise, with little or no allegiance, political or economic, to nation-states? In terms of culture, again the main issues revolve around the question of the continuing relevance of national and local cultures in the face of the unifying and homogenising effects of westernization or Americanisation or hollywoodization and the production of a generic consumer. That is, are we experiencing the creation of a ‘MacWorld’ driven by the interests of the global cultural industries and disseminated by global media - television, film and the InterNet? And, finally, socially, has the nature of personal social experience been fundamentally altered by the space-time compressions of globalisation? Giddens (1996 p.367) makes the point that ‘Globalisation is not just an ‘out there’ phenomenon. It refers not only to the emergence of large scale world systems, but to transformations in the very texture of everyday life’. Harvey (1989, p.286) suggests that the rhythm and content of daily life has become both more ephemeral and volatile, commodity production increasingly emphasises ‘the values and virtues of instantaneity and disposability’ and is increasingly focused upon ‘sign systems rather than with commodities themselves’ (p. 287). The latter, among many other factors, has contributed to a ‘crisis of representation’ (p. 298). All of this provides a context for the `crack-up of consensus’ (p. 286). It constitutes in part of what (Pfeil, 1988) calls the ‘postmodern structure of feeling’ and forbears `the terror of contingency from which all possibility of eventful significance has been drained’ (p. 386).

In thinking about these issues we need to be wary of what Harvey (1996) calls ‘globaloney’. The ‘globalisation thesis’ can be used to explain almost anything and everything and is ubiquitous in current policy texts and policy analysis. And in particular, the analysis of the flow and influence of policies between nations needs to be addressed
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with care; Popkewitz (1996, p. 47) argues that: ‘we can find a particular internationalisation of ideas as well as the particular “national” reflexivity about how such ideas are realised’. Furthermore, nations are positioned differently in relation to the structures and effects of globalisation. As Lingard and Rizvi (2000, p.2100) express it: ‘globalisation does not impinge on all nation states and at all times in exactly the same way’.

Both empirically and conceptually many of the basic tenets of the globalisation thesis have been subject to stern criticism (e.g. Weiss, 1997) and with some over-simplification the outcome of the debate around globalisation has been the development of a relational position. That is, a move away from a deterministic logic (Lingard & Rizvi, 2000), to a recognition that, as Giddens puts it, that:

Globalisation invades local contexts it does not destroy them; on the contrary, new forms of local cultural identity and self-expression are causally bound up with globalising processes. (1996, p.367-8)

This is, in Robertson’s terms, ‘the simultaneity and the interpenetration of what are conventionally called the global and the local’ (Robertson, 1995) - or what he calls ‘glocalisation’. Or what Reus-Smit (Reus-Smit, 1996) p. 183) calls ‘mutually-constitutive’ effects. National policy-making is inevitably a process of bricolage; a matter of borrowing and copying bits and pieces of ideas from elsewhere, drawing upon and amending locally tried-and-tested approaches, cannibalising theories, research, trends and fashions, and not infrequently a flailing around for anything at all that looks as though it might work. Most policies are ramshackle, compromise, hit and miss affairs, that are reworked, tinkered with, nuanced and inflected through complex processes of influence, text production, dissemination and ultimately recreation in contexts of practice (Ball, 1994). As Bernstein (1996, p.24) puts it: ‘Every time a discourse moves, there is space for ideology to play’. Recontextualisation takes place within and between both ‘official’ and ‘pedagogic’ fields. The former ‘created and dominated by the state’ and the latter consisting of ‘pedagogues in schools and colleges, and departments of education, specialised journals, private research foundations’ (p.48). These fields are constituted differently in different societies. In short, national policies need to be understood as the product of a nexus of influences and interdependencies, resulting in ‘interconnectedness, multiplexity and hybridisation’ (Amin, 1997) p.129); that is, ‘the intermingling of global, distant and local logics’ (p.133).

Now I do not want to mount a counter offensive upon this position of relational or vernacular globalisation. I do not want to reassert a deterministic logic. I do not want to deny what Green (1996, p. 23) describes as the ‘deep-seated historical traditions now institutionalised in structures, practices and institutional cultures which are peculiar to each nation’. I do not want to obliterate the overall significance of differences between the continental state-centric and anglo-american market-liberal education systems. But I do want to suggest that we can identify, what one of my students calls ‘commonality within difference’ (Marques Cardoso, 1998) or what (Sweeting & Morris, 1993) call ‘exogenous
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trends’. And furthermore, I want to argue that if these commonalities can be identified, they need then to be interrogated not simply in terms of their structural variety but also in terms of their inter-relationships and the resulting political and subjective effects over time. What I am trying to do is very nicely expressed, as so often is this case, by Micheal Apple (1996 p.141). He writes of the ‘difficult problem of simultaneously thinking about both the specificity of different practices, and the forms of articulated unity they constitute...’.

The ‘articulated unity’ with which I am concerned is embedded, in education and public sector services generally, in generic reform strategies which in turn rest upon the installation of a set of policy technologies which ‘make up’ or bring about new values, new relationships and new subjectivities in arenas of practice. I am not arguing here for ‘simple’ convergence - detailed policies at the level of structure or pedagogy or curriculum but I am making a bold claim here, or rather two claims. First, that at the micro-level, across different nation states, new policy technologies are producing new forms of discipline (new working practices and worker subjectivities) and second, at the macro-level, across different nation states, these disciplines provide one basis for a new ‘settlement’ between state and capital and new modes of social regulation, operating across state and private organisations. While, clearly, the pace, degree of intensity and hybridity of the deployment of these new policy technologies varies. They are typically part of a loose policy ensemble, parts of which are emphasised and enacted somewhat differently, in different vernaculars, in different locations and as Elmore (1996) points out policy is always additive, layered and filtered.

As a mechanism for making my argument at little more concrete I want to make reference to and use of a recent OECD report, Governance in Transition: Public Management Reforms in OECD Countries (OECD, 1995). The OECD, with an odd but telling blend of description and imperative, summarises these reforms as what they call a ‘new paradigm for public management’:

- a closer focus on results in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and quality of service;
- the replacement of highly centralised, hierarchical organisational structures by decentralised management environments where decisions on resources allocation and service delivery are made closer to the point of delivery, and which provide scope for feedback from clients and other interest groups;
- the flexibility to explore alternatives to direct public provision and regulation that might yield more cost-effective policy outcomes;
- a greater focus on efficiency in the services provided directly by the public sector, involving the establishment of productivity targets and the creation of competitive environments within and among public sector organisations; and,
- the strengthening of strategic capacities at the centre to guide the evolution of the state and allow it to respond to external changes and diverse interests automatically,
The central figure in all of this is a relative new actor on the stage of public sector organisations - the manager. The purpose of devolution, as the OECD put it ‘is to encourage managers to focus on results by providing them with flexibility and autonomy in the use of both financial and human resources’ (p. 8). This is what Clarke & Newman (1992) call ‘the right to manage’. Throughout the installation of this new paradigm into public service organisations the use of new language is important, the new public management organisations are now ‘peopled’ by human resources which need to be managed; learning is re-rendered as a ‘cost-effective policy outcome’; achievement is a set of ‘productivity targets’ etc..

The scope and complexity of these reforms are breath-taking. They ‘stitch’ together an ensemble of policy technologies that relate markets to management, to performativity, to changes in the nature of the State. And crucially it is a mis-recognition to see these reform processes as simply a strategy of de-regulation, they are processes of re-regulation. Not the abandonment by the State of its controls but the establishment of a new form of control; what Du Gay (1996) calls ‘controlled de-control’. As stressed by the OECD, a new relationship of the State to the public sector is envisaged, especially in ‘exploring alternatives to direct public provision’ and making service provision ‘contestable and competitive’ - ‘Corporatisation and privatisation are important policy options in this context’ (p. 9). In the UK these options have been persued with particular vigour. First under the Thatcher and Major Conservative governments and subsequently by Labour in the terms of the ‘Third Way’ through the use of surrogate or ‘quasi-markets’; contracting-out/out-sourcing; privatisation; and various forms of public/private partnership (see Ball, 2000a).

The new paradigm is a reform ‘package’. This is important in two senses. First, while at certain times in different locations particular aspects of the package may be emphasised and others played down, as noted already, the processes of enactment of reform have to be viewed over time and in terms of the relationship of various elements. Again as the OECD put it: ‘A “selective radical” strategy for implementing reform may be the preferred solution... complete re-design of governance structures is impossible’ (p.9). They go on to make the point that ‘reform is a journey rather than a destination’ (p.9) and that reform involves ‘trade offs’. Again these journeys and trade-offs will differ between countries. The extent or significance of these trade offs in any location is an empirical question. Second, as indicated already, these reform processes are not just a matter of introducing new structures and incentives but also it requires and brings about new relationships, cultures and values. The OECD note that ‘This fundamental change in outlook has engaged all Member countries in a difficult process of cultural change’ (p. 8), central to which is ‘developing a performance-oriented culture’ (p.8). Perhaps disingenuously then the OECD
note that concerns have been raised about ‘an erosion’ of ‘traditional public service values’ (p.8)

The installation of the new culture of competitive performativity involves the use of a combination of devolution, targets and incentives to bring about institutional redesign. This draws both on recent economic theory and various industrial practices ‘linking the organisation and performance of schools to their institutional environments’ (Chubb & Moe, 1990 p. 185). In education the impact of such ideas is evident in the myriad of ‘site-based management’ initiatives in countries and states around the world and the social-psychology of institutional reinvention is proselytised in texts on ‘The Self-Managing School’ and ‘School Improvement’.

Let me try and clarify the notion of policy technologies by drawing out the key elements of the ‘new paradigm’ being proselytised by the OECD. There are three: the market form, management and performativity. These are set over and against the older technologies of professionalism and bureaucracy. As I have indicated my particular focus here is not upon structures but on values and cultures, and relationships and subjectivities, and the forms of discipline to which these give rise. Policy technologies involve the calculated deployment of techniques and artefacts to organise human forces and capabilities into functioning networks of power. Various disparate elements are inter-related within these technologies; involving architectural forms, relations of hierarchy, procedures of motivation and mechanisms of reformation or therapy. Some examples of the key elements of power/knowledge embedded in these technologies are presented in Table 1.

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Now I want to briefly sketch in some of the ways in which these technologies work to transform and discipline public sector organisations and to link the processes and endeavours of such organisations to the political economy of global competition.

The market form

The new policy framework, and the market form in particular, constitutes a new moral environment for both consumers and producers - that is, a form of ‘commercial civilisation’ (Benton, 1992 p.118). Within this new moral environment schools, colleges and universities are being inducted into a ‘culture of self interest’ (Plant, 1992 p.87). Personal motives are given preference over impersonal values. The ‘procedures of motivation’ embedded within the new paradigm of public management elicit and generate the drives, relationships and values which underpin competitive behaviour and the struggle for advantage. What we are witnessing then in the celebration of competition and the dissemination of its values in education is the creation of a new ethical curriculum in and for schools and the establishing of a moral ‘correspondence’ between public and business provision.

The role and effects of self-interest within ‘re-forming’ organisations are ‘marked’ by appeals to ‘pragmatism’. This might be seen as a way of adjusting to the incentives of the market in terms of actions and practices while retaining a sense of ‘distance’ from the values of the market - that is, it is a resolution of dissonance. Self-interest is also manifest in terms of survivalism. That is, an increased, often predominant, orientation toward the internal well-being of the institution and its members and a shift away from concern with the more general social and educational issues within ‘the community’. ‘The Decentred Market (D.C.M.) position constructs an outwardly responsive identity rather than one driven by inner dedication. Contract replaces covenant’ (Bernstein, 2000 p. 1941).

Survival in the educational market place becomes the new basis of common purpose - pragmatism and self-interest rather than professional judgement and ethics are the basis for new organisational language games. As Willmott (1993 p. 522) suggests ‘employees are simultaneously required, individually and collectively, to recognise and take responsibility for the relationship between the security of their employment and their contribution to the competitiveness of the goods and services they produce’. New administrative procedures are generated which ‘make individuals “want” what the system needs in order to perform well’ (Lyotard, 1984 p. 62). All of this resonates strongly with Du Gay’s notion of the ‘post-entrepreneurial revolution’ which ‘provides the possibility for every member of an organisation to express “individual initiative” and to develop fully their “potential” in the service of the corporation’ (Du Gay, 1996) (p.62). We are encouraged to see our own ‘development’ as linked to and provided for by the ‘growth’ of our institution.
Advocates of the market tend to approach the issues of values in one of two ways; either seeing the market as simply value-neutral, as a mechanism for the delivery of education which is more efficient or responsive or effective - US writers Chubb & Moe (1990) for example; or presenting the market as possessing a set of positive moral values in its own right - effort, thrift, self-reliance, independence and risk-taking or what Novak (1982) calls ‘virtuous self-interest’. Those taking the latter view clearly acknowledge, indeed proselytise, the market as a transformational force which carries and disseminates its own values. As such markets and systems of competition and choice through which they operate re-work their key actors - in our case, families, children and teachers and require schools to take on board new kinds of extrinsic concerns and in consequence re-work and re-valorise the meaning of education. Put crudely, the education market both de-socialises and re-socialises; it creates new identities and destroys sociability, encouraging competitive individualism and instrumentality. The spaces within which reflection upon and dialogue over values were possible are closed down.

Free market economics rest upon two basic assumptions ‘The first is that the market, and hence competition between people, is natural to the human condition... The second assumption is that humanity is composed of individuals, who are basically selfish... The market, then, merely gives expression to a basic urge...’ (Bottery, 1992 p.86). However, like Bottery, I would argue that ‘market-place institutions, instead of providing a structure for natural inclinations, in fact produce the conditions under which the mentality occurs’ (Bottery 1992 p.87).

Within this new moral environment the student is increasingly commodified. Individual students are positioned differently and evaluated differently in the education market. That is, the processes of institutional competition in the market calls into play ‘an economy of student worth’. In systems where recruitment is directly related to funding and indicators of performance are published as ‘market information’ then the educational and reputational ‘costs’ of the student rather than their needs and interests, become central to the ‘producers’ response to choosers. This also occurs where exclusivity is a key aspect of a school’s market position. There is the potential in all of this that the dynamics of choice and competition produce a new ‘hidden curriculum’. The sense of what education is and is for, the nature of the social relationships of schooling, teacher-student, teacher-parent and student-student relationships, are all changed by the forces and micro-practices of the market and their realisation in specific localities and institutional settings.

Management

Management has been the key mechanism in the political reform and cultural re-engineering of the public sector in northern countries over the past 20 years. It has been the primary means ‘through which the structure and culture of public services are recast. In
doing so it seeks to introduce new orientations, remodels existing relations of power and affects how and where social policy choices are made’ (Clarke, Cochrane & McLaughlin, 1994 p.4). Management represents the insertion of a new mode of power into the public sector, it is a ‘transformational force’. It plays a key role of the wearing-away of professional-ethical regimes in schools and their replacement by entrepreneurial-competitive regimes. While the market works from the outside in, management works from the inside-out.

The manager is the cultural hero of the new paradigm. The work of the manager involves instilling the attitude and culture within which the workers feel themselves as accountable and at the same time committed or personally invested in the organisation (as indicated above). In Bernsteinian terms these new invisible pedagogies of management ‘open up’ more of the managed to control. To para-phrase Bernstein, the weaker frames of new managerialism enable a greater range of the workers’ behaviour to be made public (Bernstein, 1971 p. 65) - this is ‘the covert deep closure of mechanical solidarity (p.66).

The act of teaching and the subjectivity of the teacher are both profoundly changed within the new management panopticism (of quality and excellence) and the new forms of entrepreneurial control (through marketing and competition). But within all this two apparently conflicting effects are achieved; both an increasing individualisation, including the destruction of solidarities based upon a common professional identity and Trade Union affiliation, as against the construction of new forms of institutional affiliation and ‘community’ - corporate culture - which involves a re-working of the relationships between individual commitment and action in the organisation, what Willmott (1993 p.517) calls ‘the governance of the employees soul’.

Through the cultivation of ‘corporate culture’ managers ‘seek to delineate, normalise and instrumentalize the conduct of persons in order to achieve the ends they postulate as desirable’ (Du Gay 1996 p.61). Again such developments are deeply paradoxical. On the one hand, they represent a move away from ‘low-trust’ methods of employee control. Managerial responsibilities are delegated, initiative and problem-solving are highly valued. On the other hand, new forms of very immediate surveillance and self-monitoring are put in place; e.g. appraisal systems, target-setting, output comparisons. This is what Peters & Waterman, (1982) refer to ‘simultaneously loose and tight’

Through the micro-disciplines of management public sector organisations become part of a ‘bigger picture’, ‘part of a larger ideological narrative and organisational strategy of the “enterprise culture”’ (Kirkpatrick & Martinez-Lucio, 1995 p.10-11). In this and other ways educational institutions are now being expected to take on the qualities and characteristics of ‘fast capitalism’ (Gee & Lankshear, 1995).
Performativity

Performativity is a culture or a system of ‘terror’, in Lyotard’s words, that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change. The performances (of individual subjects or organisations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of ‘quality’, or ‘moments’ of promotion or inspection. They stand for, encapsulate or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organisation within a field of judgement. ‘An equation between wealth, efficiency, and truth is thus established’ (Lyotard 1984 p. 46). Clearly, the issue of who controls the field of judgement is crucial.

Within the working of performativity the organisation of power within definite forms of time-space (factory or office production systems) is of lesser importance. It is the data-base, the appraisal meeting, the annual review, report writing and promotion applications, inspections, peer reviews that are to the fore. There is not so much, or not only, a STRUCTURE of surveillance, as a FLOW of performativities both continuous and eventful - that is SPECTACULAR. It is not the possible certainty of always being seen that is the issue, as in the classic panopticon, it is the uncertainty and instability of being judged in different ways, by different means, through different agents; the ‘bringing-off’ of performances - the flow of changing demands, expectations and indicators that make us continually accountable and constantly recorded - ‘giving the position of any element within an open environment at any given instant’ (Deleuze, 1992 p.7). This is the basis for the principle of uncertainty and inevitability, for ontological insecurity: - ‘Are we doing enough? Are we doing the right thing? How will we measure up? Increasingly, we operate within a baffling array of figures, performance indicators, comparisons and competitions - in such a way that the contentments of stability are increasingly elusive, purposes are contradictory, motivations blurred and self worth slippery. Constant doubts about which judgements may be in play at any point mean that any and all comparisons have to be attended to ‘which assures the automatic functioning of power’ (Foucault, 1977 p. 201) at the intersection of government, organisation and self formation. Crucially, all of this has a social and interpersonal dimension. The disciplines of performance are folded into complex institutional, team, group and communal relations (the academic community, the school, the subject department, the University, for example) (See Ball (2000b) for an extended discussion of these issues).

Together, management, the market and performativity have effects of various sorts on inter-personal and role relationships (vertical and horizontal) within schools, colleges and universities: (a) increased emotional pressures and stress related to work; (b) the increased pace and intensification of work; (c) changed social relationships. There is evidence of increased, sometimes deliberately brought about, competition between teachers and departments. There is a concomitant decline in the sociability of school life. ‘Professional relationships are becoming individualised as opportunities for communities and professional discourse have diminished’ (Seddon, 2000 p. 2018); (d) an increase in
paperwork, systems maintenance and report production. (e) increased surveillance of teachers’ work and outputs (Reay, 1998); (f) there is a developing gap, in values, purpose and perspective between senior staff, with a primary concern with balancing the budget, recruitment, public relations and impression management, and teaching staff, with a primary concern with curriculum coverage, classroom control, students needs and record-keeping (cf. Bowe, Ball & Gold, 1992).

Conclusion

As I have suggested, underlying the new paradigm is the dissemination of the market or enterprise form as the master narrative defining and constraining the whole variety of relationships within and between the state, civil society and the economy. As far as public sector activities are concerned: ‘... the emphasis shifts from the state as provider to the state as regulator, establishing the conditions under which various internal markets are allowed to operate, and the state as auditor, assessing their outcomes’ (Scott, 1995 p. 80).

Within the public sector this process of ‘exteriorisation’ also involves a profound shift in the nature of the relationship between workers and their work - ‘service’ commitments no longer have value or meaning and professional judgement is subordinated to the requirements of performativity and marketing - although I recognise that there is an important element of ‘cynical compliance’ in play in the processes of individual and institutional fabrication. This is part of a larger process of ‘ethical retooling’ in the public sector which is replacing client ‘need’ and professional judgement with commercial decision-making. The space for the operation of autonomous ethical codes based in a shared moral language is colonised or closed down. Embedded here is what Hanlon (1998) calls ‘a struggle for the soul of professionalism’ (p.50) - a contest over the meaning of professionalism which has at its centre the issue of ‘trust’ - ‘the issue of trust, who is trusted, and why they are trusted is up for grabs’ (p.59). The ethos of ‘traditional’ professionalism is no longer trusted ‘to deliver what is required, increasing profitability and international competitiveness’ (p.52) and is being replaced by a ‘new commercialised professionalism’. Within all this new opportunities are created for some service-class members whilst the well-being other others is threatened, but the divisions created are not simply between the public and private sectors. This struggle, based within the relationship between the service class and its employers is currently underway in education, social work and the Probation and Health Services, as well as in auditing, law and the civil service. There are winners and losers in each of these economic sectors, ‘and indeed within the same professions’ (p.57). In the public sector one group of winners are those who take on the responsibility of changing the culture and controls of public sector organisations, termed by May (1994) as ‘the technicians of transformation’ and one of the crucial components of
cultural and political struggle over the public sector in various states around the world has been the separation off - especially for purposes of pay bargaining - of ‘new hero managers’ from other professional-workers.

The new structures and roles for organisational management with a central ‘core’ for policy, audit and regulation and separate ‘service delivery units’ (Thomson, 1998), as called for by the OECD, mirror the ‘steering at a distance’ role of the ‘small state’ or what Neave (1988) calls ‘the new evaluative state’. “Overall, their purpose is to institute a new framework of incentives, remove unnecessary constraints, a bring about a radical change in culture and performance’ (OECD 1995 p. 29). In this way, the state also provides a new ethical framework and general mode of regulation, a much more ‘hands-off’, self-regulating regulation, which nonetheless enables and legitimates the dissemination of the commodity form as we are required to commodify ourselves and our academic productions. This is in Aglietta’s (1979 p. 101) terms a new ‘regulative ensemble’ or a ‘particular mode of social coherence’, an historically distinct form of labour organisation. That is to say, the new paradigm, in all its aspects, plays a crucial role in ‘the ensemblement of institutional forms, networks and explicit or implicit norms which ensure compatibility of market behaviour within a regime of accumulation’ (Lipietz, 1985 p. xvi-xvii). This ensemble of policy technologies is an improvised mix of physical, textual and moral elements which ‘make it possible to govern in an “advanced liberal” way’ (Rose, 1996 p. 58).

I am not suggesting, despite the efforts of agencies like the OECD, that national education policies now can be simply read-off in their entirety from a global educational agenda or that nation states have lost entire control over their policy decisions, set as they are within the logic of the global market. Education has a complex set of relationships to and within processes of globalisation. However, I do want to suggest that there is a process of convergence of education and social welfare policies between countries which have very different political and social welfare histories - the OECD do note that: ‘There is not a strong tradition of performance management in the Nordic countries’ (p. 57). I do not intend to invoke what might be called ‘simple convergence’, that is exactly the same policies being installed in very different national settings, but rather a ‘paradigm convergence’ - the invocation of policies with common underlying principles, technologies, similar operational mechanisms and similar first and second order effects (see Ball, 1998 and Ball, 2000c).

Thus, in ‘English speaking’ states we are seeing moves towards greater uniformity and central determination and a return to liberal policies of nineteenth century and an opening up of education as opportunities for profit. In ‘continental’ states we are seeing moves towards greater devolution and institutional autonomy and the introduction of the new paradigm of public management and the development of competitive relations between public providers and the proliferation of private, for-profit education providers.
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