

DIFFERENT ROLES, PURPOSES AND OUTCOMES OF NATIONAL AND REGIONAL MODELS OF EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT: This paper discusses the currently changing nature and roles of education through distinguishing between the roles, purposes and outcomes of educational models at national and regional (supra- rather than sub-national) levels. It proposes the emergence of a new kind of regional model of education, that differs from national models in content, role and purpose, and where the relationship between the two models is neither hierarchical, converging or scaled-up. The two models are compared in terms of their role in the social contract for education, and the national education system is taken as the 'default' model. While both models are part of education's contribution to the means of production and distribution of wellbeing, they play different roles. As examples, the paper examines the EU Bologna Process, and the nature and possible consequences of its projected 'export' to Latin America, suggesting that in both cases key outcomes involve the 're-construction' of both the region and, especially, higher education as a sector. The paper concludes by suggesting that such developments may culminate in functional, scalar and sectoral divisions of labour of education.

Key words: Regional model of education. National model of education. Social contract in education. Construction of higher education sector. Functional, scalar and sectoral division of labour of education.

A quarter of a century ago, education was seen as an exclusively national issue, a view that had been strengthened by the growth of national education systems in effectively all of the former colonial territories that had gained their independence since the late 1940s. Yet today, the possibility of a range of models of education, diversified across as well as within geographical scales, seems quite plausible, to the point where we do not argue so much about *whether* there are regional models of education, as about what forms they take, and how they relate to national models. However, it is important to recognize that what might be understood by 'regional models of education' is changing, as a result of wider changes in the global political economy. In a sense, what has been understood by regional models is essentially empirical generalizations based on geographical proximity and assumed 'cultural' similarities. Hence, for instance, we find references to European, Asian, Latin American, models of education. What I want to outline in this article is something a little different. I start from taking 'regulatory regionalism' (Jayasuriya 2000, Robertson 2009) itself seriously as a new moment of global governance. Associated to a degree with that is regionalism as a political strategy. And I will focus on one attempted realization of that strategy in education, the European Union's attempt to 'export' the strategy to the field of higher education in Latin America. I will aim to demonstrate the growth of regional models of education, primarily referring to Europe, the most 'advanced' example of a regional

education model, to suggest how and why they came into prominence, and to consider how they relate to national models of education.

It is also crucial to ask what kind of ‘solution’ a regional model of education represents. The fundamental argument will be that it is possible to distinguish regional and national models of education, but that that process itself opens up the need for a reappraisal of our ways of thinking about the nature and objectives of education. The need for this rethinking rests on a view of the nature and extent of the changes that have brought the possibility of regional models into prominence. While the ‘obviousness’ of the possibility of models of education rooted at other than the national level indicates that significant changes have taken place, put very broadly, the tendency has been to see these as changes *in the content* of education models, rather than changes *of the nature* of education models. Rather than seeing the arrival of new models of education as only a reflection of wider changes, I will attempt to use it as a lens on *what* has changed and *how*. Are the different models based on different answers to the same questions, or are they answers to different questions? In a sense, I shall be aiming not so much at comparing the models as examining the basis of comparing the models, in particular how they conceive of the relationship between education and the social contract, and how education contributes to the means of production and distribution of well-being.

My argument for why regional models have become more prominent is based on the view that what we have been witnessing in the last quarter of a century is the beginnings of a broader *paradigmatic* change in the nature of economies, politics and societies, rather than an *incremental* change, albeit quite a large one, in those areas. The theoretical basis of this argument is that the current neoliberal era is underlying a tendential separation of the trajectories of capitalism and modernity, where the twin pillars of the state, regulation and emancipation, are becoming fused (See Santos (2002) and Dale (2008) for elaborations of this argument, and its possible meanings for education). This is creating perceptions of both obsolescence and excess (Santos, 2002) in the institutions and discourses of modernity in education. Put succinctly, this means that the institutions of modernity, including education as we have known it, no longer provide the ‘best possible shell’ for capitalism in its current phase.

However, it is especially difficult to analyse these issues effectively, since not only are the institutions and discourses of education thoroughly imbued with the assumptions of modernity, but so, too, are our means of understanding them. I have referred elsewhere to some instances of this; the difficulties caused by methodological nationalism — the equation of societies with nation-states — and methodological statism, the matching tendency to assume that a common state *form* — typically that of post war social democracy — is in place across the globe (see Dale 2008). Most important for present purposes, is what I refer to as ‘Educationism’, the tendency to see ‘education’ as a single category for purposes of analysis, with an assumed common scope, and a set of implicitly shared knowledges, practices and assumptions. It occurs when education is treated as abstract, fixed, absolute, a-historical and universal, when no distinctions are made between its use to describe purpose, process, practice and outcomes (see Dale and Robertson 2008).

It is in order to get beyond such ‘isms’ that returning to education’s relationship with the social contract is so central in this paper. One of the most fundamental elements of any education system is its relationship to the basic ‘social contract’ on which societies are based. It is through its relationship with the social contract, which lies at the heart of the social imaginary of modernity (see Taylor 2002), that the institutional relationship between education and modernity has been most extensively developed and circulated around the world. It is here that we find conceptions of what education is for, of how it relates to the social contract. Very crudely, what does society expect from education? Why are populations and/or individuals willing to pay for education, or to accept the obligation to send their children to schools? Such questions may be

always implicit in educational discourse, but tend to be assumed by, or subsumed under, the existence of national education apparatuses. Indeed, such assumptions constitute the major obstacles to comparing regional and national education models, since they imply a single necessary basis for such comparison; however, the question is not the nature of the social contract, but how it is played out. I will suggest that regional and national models — and it needs to be made clear that ‘models’ here are seen as representational rather than explanatory — can be seen as particular representations of the social contract for education and of contributions to the means of production and distribution of well-being, and that it is in their relationships to the social contract that we will find the fundamental differences between the models of education. Interrogating the different conceptions of social contract that underlie national and regional models of education suggests that they might be expected to differ not so much in content, but in orientation, scope, governance and representation.

The paper begins by considering the nature of models of national, education, systems, as the ‘benchmark’ against which we have learned to appraise other models of education. In doing this, it will focus not so much on how national education systems are organized, and how that may be changing, as the basis of comparison between models, but on (a) the relationships between education models and the social contract — that is, on why we have education systems and models at all — and (b) the political-economic institutional conditions in which the models arose, and the political projects to which they were attached

National models of education

Perhaps the best initial point of entry into these issues is to examine how the dominant ‘default assumption’ about education, and models of education, has fared over the past two decades. That assumption was that education is, fundamentally and necessarily, exclusively a national matter. Education systems are tied to, and have had a not just a symbiotic but a co-constructive relationships with the nation-states of which they are part (see Green, 1990); education systems build states just as they depend on them for their own existence. This is associated with the taken for granted assumption that nation states and their boundaries are the ‘natural’ containers of societies and hence the appropriate unit of analysis for social sciences. As John Agnew puts it,

The major social sciences in the contemporary Western university – economics, sociology and political science – were all founded to provide intellectual services to modern states in, respectively, wealth creation, social control and state management. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that they find difficulty in moving beyond a world unproblematically divided up into discrete units of sovereign space. (Agnew 1998, 66)

More than this, the national is the level at which statistics of all kinds are collected; methodological nationalism operates both *about* and *for* the nation-state, to the point where the only reality we are able to comprehensively describe statistically is a national, or at best an inter-national, one. This, too, has reinforced and been reinforced by the closeness of the relationship between education and nation-states.

However, especially in times of deep and uncharted change, we need to be aware that, as the anthropologist Gavin Smith puts it, ‘a whole series of key concepts for the understanding of society derive their power from appearing to be just what they always were and derive their instrumentality from taking on quite different forms’ (Smith, 2006: 628).

A basic premise of this paper that this is very much the case when we look at the ‘nation-state’ and at education. Nation-states still exist, with the same names, and they are still hugely powerful

and influential — but not in the same ways that they were twenty years ago. Existing forms do not necessarily have the same meaning as they had previously. That education systems are still ‘national’ in the sense that decisions are still taken at national level does not necessarily imply that that is where the power over those decisions lies; that existing forms and models of education continue apparently more or less unchanged does not alter the fact that their meanings have changed, and that new forms, located at different scales, are coming to exist beside them.

There are a number of reasons for these changes, which there is no space to elaborate here, but they include the decline of ‘national’ economies; the spread of neoliberalism and New Public Management; the ceding by nation states of many areas of previously national authority to international organizations (albeit that this is done to advance their national interests); and the development of a ‘global Knowledge Economy’ as a hegemonic project, of which all individual states are members. (see Jessop, 2007, Dale 2005). So, while there are still undoubtedly ‘national’ models of education, and while they may be directed towards what appear as the ‘same’ ends, objectives and purposes, both the nature of the ends and the nature of the models have altered in the context of the changes just alluded to. This is not a ‘passive’ process. There is clear evidence of efforts to develop new supranational forms and models of ‘education’ that consciously seek to undermine and reconfigure existing national forms of education, even as they run alongside them, or in their shadow.

Four critical bases of the arguments about the nature of, and relationships between, regional and national models of education are that (1) there is no suggestion that regional and national models of education have some kind of hierarchical relationship; (2) while it is important to examine closely their mutual relations, straightforward conceptions of the ‘diffusion’ of such models across scales should be resisted; (3) regional models of education are not ‘scaled up’ versions of national models; and (4) most importantly for the argument of this paper, we should not assume that the respective models of education have matching conceptions of what constitutes education and its objectives and purposes, or that these can easily be made commensurable. This means that we should not begin this analysis with an assumption of the tendential ‘convergence’ of these models. Rather, we should be alert to the possibilities that the basis of their differences may also mean that we could be dealing with distinct or parallel, as well as hybrid, discourses (see Dale 2008). In some moments, we may expect the relationship between the different models to take the form of a functional and scalar division of labour (see Dale, 2003)

Education and the social contract

Lee and LiPuma talk of the social contract ‘in which individuals engaging in the reciprocal performative acts of promising and agreeing create a quasi-objective social totality that then governs their actions, and they go on, ‘increasingly for the world as a whole, the public sphere, the modern citizen-state, and the market are the basic components of the social imaginary of modernity’ (2002, 193, 194).

These three elements will be taken as framing more or less directly the social contract for education. In terms of the market, Fourcade and Healy (2007) have extended Hirschmann’s (1982) discussion of the relationship between markets and morality, that contrasted conceptions of markets as ‘civilizing’, ‘destructive’ and ‘feeble’ in their effects on society. In the first, which Fourcade and Healy refer to as the ‘liberal dream’, markets encourage personal virtues of honesty, integrity, trust, civilized and cooperative behavior, consumer sovereignty and freedom in the public sphere, and provide incentives and opportunities for innovation. We might see a social contract based on this view of the relationship between market and morality justifying

education as giving opportunities to all to advance on the basis of their talents. The public good it delivers is the aggregation of the private goods (exchange values) that the social contract enables to be accumulated. The second conception, referred to as the 'destructive nightmare', in many ways inverts the claims of the liberal dream. Markets reduce justification for actions to the pursuit of self interest. They are associated with competitiveness, corruption and maximization of consumption; rather than allowing individuals to flourish, they commodify and dehumanize them.¹ The public good contributed by Education here is essentially compensatory, seeking to provide the life chances that the market cannot provide for all. It is about combating social exclusion, and inbuilt barriers to access. It involves a conception of education as use value, for public as well as private benefit. The third view, of 'feeble' markets, reverses the direction of the relationship between markets and morality as seen by both the liberal dream and the destructive nightmare, where markets shape societies. Here, markets are the product of societies and cultures. We can see fairly clear echoes here of the 'world polity' argument about global models of education (see Meyer et al 1992) which sees a fundamental 'modern' script, emphasizing progress, science and individualism, shaping the institutions of societies; the morality of modernity shapes all the institutions of society, and social and cognitive arrangements that underlie them, including markets.

Substantively, we can see here the basis of fracture lines between national and regional models. For instance, for most of the last half century, certainly in Western Europe, the social contract for education has been informed by a destructive nightmare conception of the relationship between markets and morality. The job of education has been to inoculate populations against the attitudinal and organizational dangers of the market, to display in its processes an alternative set of values, to protect against and compensate for the 'destructive' characteristics of the market. This *orientation* towards the significance of education is clearly currently under threat in many places, and it is quite distinct from that of the European models we will discuss below, whose neoliberal assumptions place them very firmly in the liberal dream version of the relationship between markets and morality.

However, the differences do not derive only from their orientation towards the role of education in the social contract. A second crucial difference between regional and national models of education is their conception of their educational clientele and their relationship with them. We intend to relate this more directly to the *scope* of the social contract. Who does it include and on what basis?

Put very simply, the basis of the social contract in national models of education is essentially one between state and citizen. This is not the place to go into extended discussions of what is meant by citizenship, or what it entails, but crucial to those definitions are that the relationship is both formal and reciprocal. One effective elaboration of issues concerning citizenship has been provided by Jane Jenson, through the idea of 'citizenship regimes'---'the institutional arrangements, rules and understandings that guide and shape concurrent policy decisions and expenditures of states, problem definitions by states and citizens, and claims-making by citizens' (Jenson 2007, 55). She distinguishes four components of citizenship regimes. The second, third and fourth refer respectively to identification of those entitled to full citizenship status; the institutional mechanisms giving access to the state and the legitimacy of specific types of claims-making; and definitions of membership and identity. The first, and most important in this context, '(defines) the boundaries of state responsibilities and differentiat(es) them from those of markets, of families and of communities...*The result is the definition of how to produce well-being, whether via the market, via the reciprocity of kin, via collective support in communities, or via*

¹ We see the contrast between the liberal dream and destructive nightmare interpretations of the relationship between markets and morality very clearly represented in arguments for and against private education.

collective and public solidarity, that is state provision and according to the principle of equality among citizens (which) establishes a place for citizenship...' (55, emphasis added). What makes this so important is that it not only defines the boundaries of state responsibility, but incorporates the definition of, and responsibility for, indeed, the means of production and distribution of, 'well being'. And this provides with a clear conception of the scope of national education models, in terms both of the extent and content of their coverage.

This not only produces a definition of citizenship that is crucial in this context, but at least equally importantly, directs us towards alternative sources of the production of well being, specifically markets, families and communities. The production of well being is not a 'state-or-nothing', zero-sum game. This is a crucial but neglected element of discussions of the nature and benefits of citizenship. Effectively, it shows that the crucial issue at stake here is not so much 'citizenship', but *the means of production and distribution of well being*, a distinction that has been obscured in the dominance of the discourse of citizenship. Once we recognize that citizenship is one, albeit highly normatively and politically loaded, response to the problem of the distribution of well being, we are able to open up the means of distribution of well-being, and what groups are involved in it, as the 'real' issue, which we may see as basically one of *representation* in the social contract around education. Who does it represent, and who is represented in it, and how? And this is fundamental to understanding the differences between national and regional models of education. In a nutshell, in so far as they are not related to the production of well being through collective and public solidarity, or state provision, it is neither possible nor desirable — but indeed, potentially misleading — to see regional models of education as related to citizenship. This does not mean that they can make no useful contribution to well being, but these should be seen not as *forms of citizenship*, but as *alternative means* of the production of well being.

So, it is also necessary also to consider what are the relationships between regional education models and their conceptions of their clientele and their relationship with them. *Just because there is no 'citizen-like' relationship between regional models of education and those to whom they are directed, we should not assume that there is no relationship at all.* This is a major argument of this paper, for it signals and embeds a key possible difference between existing education systems and models, which have been at some level all linked with a social contract between state and citizen, and possible future education systems. Who, then, are the partners to the social contract in regional models of education?

This has been obfuscated rather than merely obscured in many recent debates around the area. These debates have quite recent roots in the simultaneous and equal distaste for both 'state' (unresponsive bureaucracy) and 'market' (deregulated greed) solutions that emerged in the aftermath of the decline of the social-democratic welfare state, and the desire to find a 'middle way' between state and market, less harsh and more 'human' than both².

We suggest that these partners take two forms — consumers and stakeholders. The idea of 'consumers' of education is not as strange as it would have appeared twenty years ago. For better or worse, we have become accustomed to the idea of the 'privatisation' of education, or education as a 'commodity'. While we may not be sufficiently aware of the extent of the activities generated in this area of commerce (for examples of the truly amazing developments of private involvement in state education, and of the development of 'education industries', see Ball (2007) and Meyer and Rowan (2007), it is well established that these are global industries, that are to some degree regulated through global bodies such as the GATS (see Robertson et al 2004). There

² In a paper entitled 'State, market and...?' on the topic of the 'third sector' (the most useful umbrella term I could find) that I presented as part of a conference to celebrate the 'year of the family', I distinguished twelve different 'soft' alternatives to state and market. See Dale (1992).

has, however, been correspondingly little attention paid to the 'producer-consumer' basis of the relationship of the social contract for education. It is quite distinct from and not reducible to, the relationship between state and citizen as a basis for educational models, and while this kind of relationship may be found at regional and national levels, it is clear that, in combination with the other elements of the models we are discussing here, this relationship may further increase the difficulty and complexity of comparing those models.

The term 'stakeholder' is intended to act as an umbrella for an increasingly diverse and extensive array of concepts whose basis and focus is 'thickening' in various ways relationships between states and their populations that seek to go beyond the relationships of formal political citizenship. On the one hand, formal citizenship is represented as too passive, as confining opportunities to participate in a society to voting in widely spaced elections. To oversimplify massively, it assumes the relationship between state and citizen to be based on reciprocal responsibilities. Citizens owe responsibilities to, as well as derive rights from, states. This takes a very wide range of forms, from 'active' (as implicitly opposed to passive) citizenship, to the need to foster social capital, and taking a stake in some aspect of the society. It seeks to extend the bases of citizen participation, in ways that vary from the hortatory, to the formal (for instance at one extreme, workfare), to the use of targets and benchmarks (as we see in the case of the EU and its promotion of 'civic competences' as key elements of its model of education). Other versions of this approach privilege 'communities' as the appropriate level for citizen participation, or promote conceptions of ethical universals as alternatives to locally responsive social contracts.

However, it is not enough to point to the greater normative appeal of such relatively 'warm and fuzzy' terms, of which 'citizenship' itself is a very prominent example. It is important to recognize that a central plank of the project of neoliberal globalisation is precisely to curtail the role of the state in the economy, to privatize state activities, and, most significantly for current purposes, to depoliticize such things as the production and allocation of well being, making them subject to technical calculation, and the processes governing them subject to non-financial audit (in a word, the project of New Public Management). On the one hand, this leads to the embedding of such a-, or even anti-political discourses as citizenship and social capital, but on the other hand simultaneously exposes their intrinsically political nature.

The argument I want to make very briefly here is that two related but under-analysed consequence of the series of projects and processes we refer to as globalisation are that (a) nation-states were not responsible for the problems that befell them and (b) they did not understand them, and there was no 'obvious way' for them to tackle them, though they remained their responsibility. This opened up a major opportunity space for 'political advice entrepreneurs', and particularly international organisations such as the OECD, World Bank and EU. However, there is no single agreed interpretation of the dominant paradigm among the IOs; rather, they compete with each other on the knowledge/expertise terrain they consensually agree, which is based on: the cognitive assumptions of the dominant strands of the economics profession, (see Fourcade 2009), the existence of a global market and the need to expand it to create further opportunities for the preferred market-based solutions, the need to minimise and focus the role of the state, and the central but different contribution of education to economic development, and its importance as a part of productive social policy.

What results is a model of education that, partly based on the statistical categories through which it is given substance and purchase, tells us the nature of the world we are living in, and how it needs to be changed. It tells us what kinds of knowledge are of most worth in that world, and how that knowledge should be developed and distributed. These projects are not intended to replace existing national forms, though they may be expected to influence them, but they do also offer a

distinct set of alternatives aimed at improving the contribution of education to the Knowledge Economy in ways that cannot be achieved through the efforts of individual nation-states alone.

A key point here is that the substance of the opportunity space involved not so much IOs providing *responses* to the new challenges of 'globalisation', as most approaches to the work of IOs in education implicitly assume, but that they *framed and defined the nature* of those new challenges through both discourse and statistics. That is, they specify and formulate the nature of the problems faced by national systems through the nature of the solutions they provide.

IOs were able to specify the nature of the changes addressed to education by neoliberal capitalism, largely because existing education systems interpreted them in incrementalist, or path dependent ways, or lacked the domestic capacity or political will to address them. Here, loose definitions of 'globalisation' provided both spaces for IOs to specify them more closely, and justification for national governments to 'bow' to their inexorable logic. These projects are not intended to replace existing national forms, though they may be expected to influence them, but they do also offer a distinct set of alternatives aimed at improving the contribution of education to the Knowledge Economy in ways that cannot be achieved through the efforts of individual nation-states alone.

One major form taken by such work was to 'frame', rather than respond to, or solve, educational problems at a national level, *by representing them as problems that can/should be addressed at a different scale – that is the regional scale or level*. It is crucial to note that to a degree, such regional models of education at the same time necessarily frame and construct regions themselves in new and different ways. The 'Europe' of 2009 is very different from the 'Europe' of 1999 and 1989, though its overall territory has scarcely changed.

Such framing had a clear plausibility outside the framing of the IOs. Dale and Robertson (2002) pointed out the growing significance of regionalism in education. They argued that while the three major regional organisations they looked at—the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation agreement, and the European Union — had different modes of operation, and interest in education, their *raison d'être* were essentially the same — to seek collective protection against the threats of globalisation, on the one hand, and where particular social and political forces use the threat of the global to the national interests to advance a new scale on which to further particular kinds of projects and interests, in turn constituting that platform. The primary objectives and problems of regional organizations are access to the world economy and how to improve it, asymmetries between members and how to neutralize them, and adjustment and how to pay for it. Together, these mean that "a trade bloc... needs a strong set of non-market regulatory institutions to counter market imperfections and failure' Drache 2000.

Moreover, competition between the regional blocs is a significant contributor to what we know as 'globalisation'. However, this does not mean that the consequences of 'global governance' were, or are, confined to the triad, that there are economic, political and ecological limits to competition, or that regional blocs are merely 'responsive' to the vagaries of the global economy. It does, though, attach a new importance to the idea of regionalism. As Charles Oman (1994, 12) pointed out more than 15 years ago,"... "Globalization and regionalization constitute a dual challenge for firms and governments in developing countries.

Both phenomena are creating opportunities for strengthening North-South integration, and for enhancing productivity growth, competitiveness, and living standards in developing countries. But, for many countries they also raise the spectre of involuntary exclusion from the emerging tri-polar world", and the recognition of this threat has acted as a spur to the development of regional organizations across the world — even those that had not previously recognized that they were a 'region'.

Constructing regionalism, then, has been represented as a major problem facing nation-states, and one to which they have to apply themselves. This has inevitably been most prominent in the area of trade, but it is by no means confined to that. In part this is because it is clear that over that period, Europe has become, as it were, the 'model' for the 'regional model', in education as elsewhere. It has taken the importance of regionalism much more seriously and extensively than any other area, especially in its efforts to compete economically and politically with the United States, and it claims success for such an approach.

More particularly, in the case of Europe at least, regionalism has moved from being a defensive strategy to being a model to export across the world. Robertson argues that embedding new regionalising activity within and beyond Europe should be viewed as involving a combination of activity and mechanisms that operate within and across nations and region, including:

Europe's claim to contingent territorial sovereignty (Elden, 2006) and state-hood; Europe's extension of its political project in relation to other geo-strategic claims; the attractiveness to domestic actors in neighbouring and more distant economies of the usefulness of Europe's higher education tools for brokering internal transformations; the desire of globally-oriented export and import higher education institutions and domestic economies beyond the borders of Europe to align their architecture and regulatory frameworks to maximise market position; and emergence of Europe's normative power on the global stage. (Robertson, 2009: 1)

This is clearly the case in higher education. Europe has made major efforts to construct an education policy, largely in pursuit of economic and geo-political goals, though with mixed results (see Dale and Robertson 2009), insisting that a European dimension to education is a crucial part of its contribution to the MPDWB. Crucially, including in the case of higher education in Latin America that we are considering, it has also sought not just to exhibit and disseminate itself as a model to be more or less passively emulated, but to actively pursue the 'export' of the European *model* as a geo-political project. We should be very clear here that this is not to be seen as merely an extension of 'export education', an attempt to improve Europe's share in the commodity market for higher education. That is certainly an element of the strategy, but it by no means exhausts it.

The Bologna model of higher education is effectively a tightly knit package, consisting of a 'degree architecture', made up of a 3-2-3 sequence of bachelor, Master and Doctoral degrees; a credit transfer system; an incipient quality assurance system; and in particular as experienced in Latin America, a heavy emphasis on learning outcomes and competences as the basis of progress. The last is based in the Tuning America Latina Project, which was first launched in 2003 and supported by the European Commission. This is an ambitious initiative. It involves 18 countries (including Argentina, Bolivia, Cuba, Mexico and Venezuela) and 180 universities. The subject areas that are being dealt with include Education, History, Medicine, Geology, Physics and Mathematics. The venture has involved surveying students, employers and universities views on learning outcomes and competencies in the specified subject area, and then assembling these competencies so as to develop a tool of translation within the Latin American region, and in relation to the EU (Wagenaar, 2006). This initiative has been followed by a thickening, embedding and recontextualising of European activity in Latin America, including the deployment of the Bologna architecture for higher education across the continent to reorganise and make more 'efficient' the higher education sector.

Two basic and easily overlooked features of this project are that it was necessary to construct anew the conceptions of both the idea of a regional model of higher education and higher education as a sector. In terms of the first, , while there are many examples of the construction of 'Latin America' as politico-economic space (see Rodriguez-Gomez and for a very interesting account of how four international organisations –World Bank, UNESCO, ECLA and attempted

this, in different ways, that appear to have had in common that they (especially the first two) treated Latin America as a collection of separate states in the same geographical space, rather than as an entity in itself), it never attained the kind of regional ‘density’ and range of activities that the EU model contains and promotes. And there is also a history of ‘development assistance’ from the EU to Latin America, for instance in the ALFA programmes. However, what is implied by the Bologna model for higher education goes far beyond technical assistance. In a sense, that is what makes the EU important in this area; it has demonstrated the possibility of a regional space. In terms of the second, the traditional discourse around the development of the University in Latin America has been just that; it focused almost exclusively on the University as an institution rather than on higher education as a sector. This, too, has a changing history, especially in response to changes at the global level (see Torres and Schugurensky 2002), but the specification of a regional *higher education* sector appears to be a new departure. The shift is from debate around the model of a national university to one around a model of regional higher education.

This does not, of course, mean that the model has been fully, or even partly, implemented. Indeed, while there has been considerable resistance to the idea that anything like a ‘Latin American Higher Education Area’, could be contemplated, for a host of complicated historical reasons, (Brunner (2009), Bernasconi (2007)), this may not be the whole point. It is not only in the outcomes of the process that we may expect to find the effect of the Bologna model of higher education in Latin America, and both these scholars have recognized its wider significance. Brunner, for instance, argues that the Bologna process has had its greatest impact in raising new issues, such as the relevance of curriculum for employment and the importance of quality assurance. He argues that it is the conversations that Bologna has stimulated that make it important, and he goes so far as to suggest Bologna ‘is in part responsible for the most enthusiastic debate about the future of tertiary education institutions since the 1960’s’ (2009, 18).

Differences between national and regional models of education

Finally, I want briefly to draw attention to the salient differences between national and regional models of education, drawing on the paradigm case of the EU. First, it is crucial to note here that Europe is not a ‘state’ in the Westphalian model, nor is ‘Europeanisation’—to which a ‘European Education model’ might be expected to contribute-- a ‘state-building’ project. While Europe may have some ‘citizenship’ features, such as voting for a parliament, its citizens have few other rights, and no duties

Second, the spaces and policies of European education should definitely not be regarded as equivalent to, or upscaled versions of, national education spaces and policies; they are qualitatively, and not just quantitatively, different. They rest on the claim that the European Education *Space* can be seen as an opportunity structure framed *formally* by Treaty responsibilities, which make Education formally a matter for member States, and subject to subsidiarity, *substantively* by the goal of making Europe the most competitive and socially cohesive economy in the world, and *organizationally* by the education activities of the European Commission.

Third, what crucially distinguishes the European Education Space from national education spaces is that it is concerned with Education *only in so far as it may be seen as related to those specific (Lisbon) purposes and implications*. That is to say, the EES is characterised by its relatively abbreviated and concentrated scope and purpose. Many of the issues that press most directly on national Ministries of Education — social contract issues like access, equity, efficiency,

effectiveness — are relatively peripheral to the EES, on grounds of both substance — their relevance to Lisbon — and form — education as a MS responsibility.

Fourth, the limitations imposed by subsidiarity on the one hand, and the relatively narrow scope of ‘education’, on the other, mean that in terms of a model of education (1) anything ‘policy-like’ would be in the form of ‘policy paradigms’ which are ‘likely to reflect a very different process, marked by the radical changes in the overarching terms of policy discourse’ (Hall, 1993,279) rather than policy reforms (*within* policy discourses); (2) education models would take the form not of ‘programmes’, but of ‘programme ontologies’, which aim to account for *how* programmes, policies, etc, actually work; they are essentially the ‘theory’ of the programme as opposed to its content (Pawson (2002, 342)); (3) that such outputs, though necessarily ‘political’, will be ‘depoliticised’; and (4) that they will be directed at the level of MS education *systems* (where MS may be more amenable to ‘European’ advice that may strengthen their own plans for change) rather than at education *policies* (which need to address wider social contract issues) in MS.

European models of education, then, are qualitatively different from national models in their scope, their governance and their representation, while their orientation may be seen as much narrower and more focused than that of most national models.

Conclusion

This paper has attempted to develop four main themes have derived from the problematic of the emergence of regional and national models of education, exemplifying them in the case of the putative ‘export’ of the European model of higher education to Latin America..

First, it has tried to show why and how comparing models at different scales is not as straightforward as it may appear on the surface. The reason for this is that the ‘models’ at different scales are both different in kind and not necessarily associated with the same conceptions of ‘education’. We tried to show this through highlighting the main features of ‘national, education, systems’ as the ‘default’ model, against which the others might be judged. We argued that this was not the case because the specificities of the national level are closely associated with a conception of a social contract between state and citizens for which there is no equivalent at other levels.

Second, the paper has tried to show that the regional and global models differ from the national model in terms of their orientation (their stance towards the relationship between market, and morality), their scope (who was included within the model, and with respect to what range of activities), their governance (the means of coordination of education and other policies), and their representation (the nature of the relationship between producers and recipients of well being).

So, regional models of education, as conceived in this paper, with the EU/Bologna system taken as a paradigm case, might be seen as *sui generis*. In this, they represent a distinct and relatively new contribution to thinking about the nature and forms of education policy in a globalising era.

Finally, we tried to show the nature and importance of the political and economic conditions under which regional models of education were framed, and the ends to which they were directed. This reinforced the earlier arguments about the difficulty of finding bases of comparability and commensurability between the models. It also suggested a tentative conclusion, that the models might be seen as parallel, but potentially mutually influential, discourses, operating with different purposes, with different clienteles, and shaped by different conditions, that might possibly form the basis of a functional and scalar division of labour.

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