Enlightenment, Creativity and Education
Polities, Politics, Performances
Lennart Wikander, Christina Gustafsson and Ulla Riis (Eds.)

Enlightenment, Creativity and Education: polities, politics, performances presents some outcomes of the 24th Conference of the Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE), held in Uppsala, in summer 2010. Bringing together studies related to knowledge and educational policies, the volume deals with the role of knowledge, globalisation and new trends what have an effect of identities and policies. Changes in societies have changed the rhetoric concerning the position and function of education. What – In comparative perspective – are the historical forces and sociological and economic structures which are influencing our ideas and assumptions about identity and wisdom and the future of polities and economies? So the conference asked: what are the contemporary and emergent nature of polities, and the politics of the future – and who says so? This publication is structured along three themes for the purpose of giving illustrations to some of the questions asked. The themes are I. Comparative Education – The role of Knowledge and Educational Research, II. Globalisation and New Trends, III. New Knowledge – Identities – Policies.

Lennart Wikander is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Education at Uppsala University. His field is Higher Education including its relations to the labour market. Educational policies in a comparative perspective have also been a major part of his lecturing and research. He is President of NOCIES (Nordic Comparative and International Education Society). He is also member of the CESE Executive Committee.

Christina Gustafsson is Professor of Education at Uppsala University and Director of Research in Educational Science at the University of Gävle. She started as a classroom researcher, and spent some years working on evaluation as a research practice. For the past fifteen years, she has been oriented towards higher education research, especially research related to teacher training and newly qualified teachers.

Ulla Riis is Professor of Education at Uppsala University and Director of the programme Studies in Higher Education (SHE) at the Department of Education. She also has publications in Science Education and Computer Education in school as curriculum issues. Her latest report deals with the outcomes of a reform of the promotion system for Swedish university professors.
Enlightenment, Creativity and Education
The Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE) is an international non-profit making association of scientific and educational character. CESE was founded in 1961 in London and is a founding society of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES).

CESE has traditionally promoted a space for dialogue amongst scholars, specialists and young researchers from the field of education and other disciplines. More specifically, its purpose is to encourage and promote comparative and international studies in education by:

- promoting and improving the teaching of comparative education in institutions of higher learning;
- stimulating research;
- facilitating the publication and distribution of comparative studies in education;
- interesting professors and teachers of other disciplines in the comparative and international dimension of their work;
- co-operating with those who in other disciplines attempt to interpret educational developments in a broad context;
- organising conferences and meetings;
- collaborating with other Comparative Education Societies across the world in order to further international action in this field.

Every two years CESE organises an international conference of high scholarly standards which attracts academics, scholars, practitioners and students from all parts of Europe and around the world. Throughout its history, CESE has organised twenty-four such conferences, a special conference for the 25th anniversary of the Society, a symposium, and two ‘CESE In-Betweens’. In-Betweens are international symposia organised between the biennial conferences. A web site of CESE is maintained at http://www.cese-europe.org/

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Enlightenment, Creativity and Education

Polities, Politics, Performances

Edited by

Lennart Wikander
Christina Gustafsson
Ulla Riis
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CHRISTINA GUSTAFSSON, ULLA RIIS AND LENNART WIKANDER

PREFACE

This volume presents a selection of paper contributions from the 24th Conference of the Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE), August 16–19, 2010 at Uppsala University, Sweden. The theme of the conference was “Enlightenment, Creativity and Education: Polities, Politics, Performances” which is also the title of this book. However, the subsections of the book have been reformulated according to the selection of papers, which at the same time, illustrates the various perspectives and ideas presented at the conference.

The themes for the working groups were:

1. Enlightenment and Wisdom
2. Social Models and Economies
3. Identities and Polities
4. Creativities and Competences
5. Education and Educational Governance
6. Teachers and Teacher Education
7. The New Scholars’ Working Group

At the conference, 120 delegates from 29 countries from all parts of the world were present. In total, 100 papers were presented in 35 working sessions. Nine of these papers have been selected for the present volume. Also included in this book are three keynote lectures. This anthology, in evident ways, brings together contributions which have been elaborated on and written from different intellectual traditions and approaches.

We express our gratitude to those whose generous participation made it possible for the 24th CESE Conference to be organised in Uppsala. First of all, Miguel Pereyra, President of CESE, and Robert Cowen, Past President of CESE have always been willing to help, and they have been truly stimulating throughout the process of organising the conference, and in finalising this publication.

Secondly, we extend our thanks to the coordinators of the working groups who efficiently coordinated the core work of the conference and contributed in the selection of the texts included in this book: Elisabeth Buk-Berge, Robert Cowen, Vlatka Domovic, Zlata Godler, Hans-Georg Kotthoff, Donatella Palomba, Yiannis Roussakis and Thyge Winther-Jensen.

Finally we also would like to express our gratitude to Rosa Lisa Iannone who has made a very professional and much appreciated proofreading of the draft manuscripts for this publication and Lena Larson Johannesson who did the very arduous work of preparing a print-ready copy and print-ready layout for the publisher, within the rules of SENSE.
Economic support for the 24th CESE Conference was granted by The Swedish Research Council, by The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation, by the Vice Chancellor of Uppsala University and by the Faculty of Social Sciences, Uppsala University. The realisation of the conference would not have been successful without the committed, varied and continuous work of our colleagues at the Department of Education at Uppsala University.

To all who contributed to the conference and this anthology, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude.

Christina Gustafsson  Ulla Riis  Lennart Wikander
Professor  Professor  Senior Lecturer

The Uppsala Local Conference Organising Committee; and The Editors.
INTRODUCTION

Today the borders of the national states of Europe are more open to flows of people and businesses, to ideas and to information, to innovations and to new rules which frame common action within the EU. These processes are regional, but they also take place on a world scale. Thus, a conventional policy question (on which a great deal of money and political effort have been spent) has been how ‘Europe’ can adjust to ‘globalisation’. The most general form of the question (of ‘adjustment’) is, “What can be done to strengthen European competitiveness in the future and create a stable economy within the European community?” The task of transformation, in an official voice, dates back at least to the European Council Meeting in Lisbon in the year 2000. Since then a great deal of reform effort has had political visibility – notably, the Bologna process. Educational research of the PISA-sort has also attracted political attention, mobilised Ministries of Education to discuss reform, and caused a flurry of anxiety in the mass media of several countries.

In other words, the classic question in comparative education, “How far may we learn anything of practical value from the study of foreign systems of education?” has retained – mutatis mutandis – some of its awesome attraction and its implicit assumption about our social relevance in the contemporary period: we, as social scientists, could be useful.

However, as members of universities, we also have other duties; notably, to think and teach, research and write. What should we teach our students and what should we be thinking about? We could of course – and we should of course – teach about ‘globalisation’ and ‘policy reform’ and TIMSS and PISA: we can tell the stories of contemporary educational reform shaped by the urgent anxieties of contemporary public and political understandings of economic globalisation and the educational demands of knowledge economies. The rhetoric and policies of ‘the knowledge economy’ apparently point us forward to a confidently defined future in which we know the kind of information and creativities and applied knowledge needed for economic success.

Thus – by extension – the challenge to us as comparative educationists is to invent such a future and write the educational small print, because the political and professional demands for reform are urgent in schools and colleges and universities. However, the stark simplicities of such a constrained role cause at least a frisson of anxiety. Are we merely the educational transcribers, the educational clerks, of agendas written by ‘globalisation’? Hence, instead of accepting the agenda and rushing into writing the small educational print of a pre-specified, large-lettered, future writ of economic globalisation, the theme of the
conference stayed open, in order to permit for some broad questions and questionings.

The theme of the conference was chosen so as to try and retain a sense of the non-determined, of the sociologically complex, and of the historically puzzling, through its title: “Enlightenment, Creativity, and Education: Polities, Politics, Performances”. This title welcomes questions such as, “What are the contemporary and emergent nature of polities?”; “What are the politics of the future – and who says so?”; “Against the agenda of competences and performativities, what in our vision of the future should be the performances we expect in schools and universities and teacher education systems?”; “What are the delicate or forceful patterns of educational governance and supervision and assessment which will encourage those performances?”; “What – in a comparative perspective – are the historical forces and sociological and economic structures which are influencing our ideas and assumptions about identity and wisdom and the future of polities and economies?” Such questions are inherently complex; difficult to answer. Some possible answers and most of the contributions in this publication were conceptualised— as is the CESE tradition – within a number of seminars; in the 24th CESE Conference in Uppsala, this took place in the Working Groups.

Their rubrics and themes were:

**WG 1. Enlightenment and Wisdom**
Enlightenments: Swedish, Scottish and others; the State and Church and secularisation; Bildung, Ausbildung, formation/formación; Socrates, Confucius and the Buddha as paradigms, past – and – present; doxa, episteme, sophia; information, numbers, evidence; new technologies and wisdom and digital Bildung; universities, think-tanks, research institutes and innovation; scientific/technological development and new dependencies; the state and the control of information and knowledge; and ‘wisdom?’.

**WG 2. Social Models and Economies**
The collapse of the neo-liberal state; welfare states, market states, developmental states, theocratic states; issues of social capital, social cohesion, harmony and competition; inclusion and exclusion; public and private education; ideologies of sustainability, of lifelong learning, of youth and age, of equity, and of skill formation.

**WG 3. Identities and Polities**
Identities: changing and stable, muddled and multiple, internalised, mobile, internationalised, schooled, and gendered identities; Differenzlinien; national and global citizenship; social cohesion; religion, family and state; intercultural education and intercultural understandings; political education.

**WG 4. Creativities and Competences**
The politics of originality: a contradiction in terms?; the concept of competent knowledge – and competent wisdom?; imagination and the schooling system; the music of the mind and rules of creative order and universities; theoreticians of creativity; humanities and sciences and skills and competences; skill
formation and the labour market: creative attitudes and critical values, or compliance?; technical vocational education, including techne and art; competences of political, economic and social identity and notions of the ‘good society’.

WG 5. Education and Educational Governance
Educational autonomy and governance; ideologies of surveillance, assessment, knowledge transfer; PISA, TIMSS and ‘governance by numbers’; actors and systems; evaluation, quality assurance and development; leadership and management; school autonomy, choice, diversity and competitiveness; institutional, sub-national, national, regional, international governance and curriculum and school structures.

WG 6. Teachers and Teacher Education
New professionalism?; standards and competences and quality assurance; research on, and in, teacher education; ideologies of the teacher as a researcher and as a reflective practitioner; teacher education reform in crisis; status, the teaching profession, universities and the state; Socrates, Confucius and the Buddha as paradigms; teacher training and teacher education; teacher identity; teacher mobility; the Bologna process; national/European/international models; teacher autonomy; lifelong learning.

WG 7. The New Scholars’ Working Group
In this group, new scholars were invited to explore, in a seminar format, their work-in-progress. The New Scholars’ Group was different from the other working groups and was not thematically framed.

In this book, Working Group themes have been restructured into three sections:

Section I: Comparative Education – The Role of Knowledge and Educational Research
Section II: Globalisation and New Trends
Section III: New Knowledge – Identities – Policies

In the first section, “Comparative Education – The Role of Knowledge and Educational Research”, some of the main questions of the conference are covered; e.g. a discussion of the role of comparative education and the role of scientists in the field. This theme’s reach is from a discussion of the role of educational science to the role played by education in new societies. The theme links to the keynote lectures by S. Karin Amos, Inga Bostad and Ulf P. Lundgren and a contribution by Robert Cowen.

In Section II, “Globalisation and New Trends”, the authors illustrate the consequences of globalisation and challenges for the concept of quality. The contributors are María José García Ruiz, David Coulby, Hans-Georg Kotthoff and Katharina Maag Merki and Christina Segerholm.

In the final Section III, “New Knowledge – Identities – Policies”, the relations between new knowledge, identities and the consequences of new policies are
L. WIKANDER

examined. The contributors are Aljona Sandgren, Carla Roverselli and Anselmo R. Paolone, Eleftherios Klerides and Jason Beech and Ana Bravo-Moreno.

The lines and borders between the sections are not clean-cut. There are overlaps between the sections, which in themselves illustrate the complexity of the object of study. The Editors have deliberately chosen to keep that complexity visible.

Lennart Wikander
Department of Education
Uppsala University
SECTION I

COMPARATIVE EDUCATION

The Role of Knowledge and Educational Research
ROBERT COWEN

1. ROBUSTLY RESEARCHING THE RELEVANT

A Note on Creation Myths in Comparative Education

INTRODUCTION

I had initially intended, with the themes of the conference title in mind, to offer some reflections on the remarkable biographies of Joseph Lauwerys and George Bereday. Thereafter, stimulated by the questions of Marianne Larsen (2010a, pp. 179–193)1 about the future of academic comparative education,2 this chapter would have reviewed some of our earlier ‘performances’ in academic comparative education.

The core task would have been to clear away the dulling clichés in ancient articles (and in some recent writing) that academic comparative education is defined by its method; that academic comparative education ‘compares’ i.e. juxtaposes similarities and differences in education in two societies; and that the crucial problem in academic comparative education is to understand ‘context’.

I had intended to finish with two cheering thoughts: academic comparative education has a permanent agenda – its ‘unit ideas’ (Cowen, 2009a) and, second, that academic comparative education is currently very creative as it explores new moments of enlightenment (Cowen & Kazamias, 2009, pp. 961–1296; Larsen, 2010b).

Unfortunately (as is the way of these things) the more I thought, the more worried I became. Yes, we know our intellectual lineages; we possess intellectual perspectives; and we have an iconography (Brickman, 1960, 1966, 1988; Cowen, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c; Epstein, 2008; Fraser, 1964; Fraser & Brickman, 1968; Halls, 1990; Hausmann, 1967; Higginson, 1979; Kazamias, 2001, 2009; Ninnes, 2008; Paulston, 1994, 2000; Phillips, 2006). It would indeed be possible to murmur, elegantly, about enlightenment and creativity and ourselves.

However, what if our identity and our past and our future are made ambiguous and problematic not by the absence of historical knowledge about ourselves but by our refusal to notice that comparative education, in some of its forms, is politics and, in all of its forms, is embedded in a range of politics?

For example, we are probably too silent about the ways in which favoured modes of academic ‘performance’ in comparative education are constrained by individual (and institutional) power. For example, comparative education becomes politics when, partly through historical memories about what we used to say we wished to do, we leave unchallenged the implication that we should and could

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provide a science of effective and efficient schools, or could construct a successful repertoire of techniques for the creation of world class universities, or can offer a sure and neutral way to develop ‘the Third World’. For example, we insist on failing to notice that comparative education was political in England or the USA between 1945 and 1965. That is, academic comparative education was written within gradualist notions of social amelioration and the expansion of education at secondary and tertiary levels. There was a political consensus about the axiomatic goodness of democratic liberal societies. The spat between George Bereday and Edmund King in the journals (about race and class) suddenly revealed the almost invisible political contextualisation of comparative education in this period, with its loud silence about historically-based class conflict and deeply rooted structures of racial discrimination. In contrast, comparative education is currently extremely visible (and vulnerable) as a political position when we emphasise that we, as social technicians, can close gaps between low and high levels of ‘development’.

The more I thought about such themes, and the relationship between information and understanding, concepts of professional training and the social role of ‘science’ currently, as well as our conference themes of enlightenment, creativity, politics, politics and performances, the more anxious I became. How is academic comparative education affected by political contexts: what are some of the routine, almost invisible, constraints on our knowledge, our aspirations, and our intellectual horizons? In what senses are those taken-for-granted horizons limited by political valuations of knowledge: valuations which we work within, rather than think about?

I am not, here, hastening back to the comforts of familiar territory: the purposes and the uses (and abuses) of comparative education as these have been proposed by George Bereday (1964), Brian Holmes (1986), Edmund King (1965, 1968), Harold Noah (1974) or Martin Carnoy (2006). Nor do I wish to review the ‘statements of purpose’ made in the constitutions of the major professional societies of Comparative Education (or Comparative-and-International Education). Even the excellent and recent rebalancings of what comparative education is, has been, and should be (Epstein, 2008; Kazamias, 2009; Mitter, 2009; Ninnes, 2008; Ninnes & Burnett, 2003; Ninnes & Mehta, 2004; Rust, Johnstone & Allaf, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2009), are left unexplored. This is because my theme is not, primarily, the politics of the social uses of ‘comparative knowledge’ after it has been created.

Instead, I wish to puzzle about the politics of the creation of academic comparative education knowledge. What constrains the genesis of academic comparative education knowledge: not least, the political messages at the intersections of “social structures, historical forces, and biographies of individuals” which begin to shape competence and creativity in comparative education? Unfortunately – and granted that there are ways to think about such things (Collins, 1998; Friedrichs, 1970) – the comparative history and comparative sociology of the multiple forms of comparative education have yet to be written, though the new work of Maria Manzon (2011) is excellent and will be of major value for future rethinking.

At best, then, what is offered here will be illustrative; almost literally so. The strategy will be to assemble a collage. The technique of assembly will be to have
one central pictorial narrative and then add two smaller motifs of different moods, colours, and textures. The juxtapositions are awkward – but they are used in the conclusion to make what is obvious less obvious. The main painting, whose theme is sharply lit and centred, concentrates on structural change and illustrates the ‘programming of quality’. (In its visual form, it is a mobile mosaic of the glittering and moving shapes of English universities.) Within the collage, one small stuck-on photograph offers glimpses of time-past: the brilliant early scholars moving on the field of comparative and the subsequent perils of our conventional iconography. Time-present and its promises are a sharp arc across the painting, etched by career trajectories. Time-future is the conclusion, a darkly illuminated formal framing of the collage whose formal title is “Enlightenment 2010”.

The meanings of the title blur in translation but the pictures as a whole suggest the need for some rethinking of the social structuring of competence (Illeris, 2009) and creativity (Larsen, 2010a) within our own field of study, academic comparative education.

THE PROGRAMMING OF QUALITY

Robust and Relevant

In the last decade or so, insistence by British politicians that university academics must do ‘robust and relevant research’ has become normalised, in the sense that the phrasing is very often repeated as a specific injunction within a broader reform agenda for the universities (Cowen, 1996, 2000). *A priori*, the demand by democratically elected politicians for research that addresses difficult areas of decision-making in contemporary life seems sensible. What should we do about climate change; the complexities of health care; nuclear power; congested cities? In each case, it seems reasonable to ask what is the scientific evidence about the problem and what, based on scientific research, are the viable value-for-money solutions to the problem.

Universities do scientific research. Universities in the UK need a lot of public money. Therefore, they should meet their social responsibilities. These – within a broad thesis offered by all of the main political parties about the demands of ‘globalisation’ – include the need to prepare the UK to compete in a world economic market. Thus, universities are now seen as more central to the nation’s economic survival and future than at any other time since the creation of new universities in the industrial cities of the north in the 19th century (Sanderson, 1972, 1999). It is all a matter of commonsense; is it not? Contextualised in this fashion, ‘robust and relevant research’ is merely a memorable alliterative phrase, useful as a sound-bite for rapid communication with the media.

However, the phrase is rather more than that: it signifies a shift in the political and economic position of the university in England. The shift is large and historically important: academics now live within a changed model of university governance in the UK (King, 2007). The discursive demands associated with this new model of university governance emphasise, in academic work, skills and competences and innovation within a framework of ‘quality control’.4
Quality Control and its Institutionalisation

The new systems which define the accountability of universities to the state in the United Kingdom (with variations between England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) cut to the core of our academic work because the new concepts of what counts as ‘quality’, in teaching and learning systems and in scholarly production, have become working practices. In university courses, creativities and skills-and-competences must be specified as part of the aims and objectives of the course. Doing a doctorate has been simplified: there are a series of steps, such as short training courses in research skills and academic writing, thesis-proposal procedures, mandated tutorials once a fortnight, and formal annual reviews which facilitate and organise completion within a tight timeframe (Leonard, 2001). Similarly, the scholarly productivity of academics is regulated. Internally it is planned, guided through in-house training courses, and double-checked by a range of internal assessment systems before it is officially reported to an external national ‘quality-control’ agency. In other words, teaching-and-learning, forms of advanced training such as the doctorate, and academic productivity are now managed and measured (Becker, 2004; Cowen, 2000; Deem, Hillyard & Reed, 2007).

The surveillance system for those tasks has gradually become carefully organised. Externally, agencies are in place to ensure delivery of outputs from the university system. For example, the Quality Assurance Agency defines and checks teaching standards in higher education, including standards in master’s level teaching. The Higher Education Funding Council (England) (HEFC(E)) – or Scotland, as the case may be – defines what counts as good research and ranks it. This surveillance system has a peer-review element. Inside universities, there are now quality assurance and enhancement committees, and Deans. They work to ensure that internal quality assurance systems are ‘transparent’, ‘fit for purpose’, able to ‘drill down’, ‘going forward’ (etc.).

The managerialist vocabulary should not be permitted to distract attention from the sociological process it labels: institutionally, the structures of control import into the university externally-mandated rules of quality. Academics less and less define and judge quality; more and more, they manage its organisation and delivery, and then make judgments on criteria of quality defined by external evaluation agencies. Academics – accustomed to governance by an oligarchy of professors legitimated by cultural invocations of collegiality, academic freedom, and ancestral memories of the Humboldtian University – are now confronted by written, quasi-contractual, rules of performance (Cowen, 2000; Hoecht, 2006). In-house and nationally, there are detailed definitions of role-competence for academics, definitions of good learning-and-teaching, and clear definitions of correct forms of research ‘output’. Externally, phrases such as ‘quality profiles’ and ‘enhancing excellence’ can be found on the websites of the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) and the HEFC(E).

These are the discursive and institutional instruments of a shift in the politics of knowledge creation and knowledge transmission in England.

National agencies express ‘official’ expectations for knowledge creation and transmission rules in the universities. The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) and
the HEFC(E) indicate how successful performance will be judged and rewarded and poor performance punished. Standardised criteria are published and used to judge ‘good knowledge’, the latest addition being the necessity for academics to make claims about the ‘impact’ of their research on the economy and society.8

Reading the Runes

It is important to stress that none of the definitions of good teaching-and-learning at the master’s level are casual or thoughtless. The account, for example, of what should be taught as Physics is clear and comprehensible.9 Perhaps the most obvious change from our traditional assumptions, as academics, about what we are teaching when we teach ‘our subject’ is the need to list skills, which include what are called ‘generic skills’. These are specified in all master’s-level course books that I have seen (including my own) and usually include problem-solving skills; investigative skills; communication skills; analytical skills; ICT skills; and personal skills. Illustratively (for Physics) ‘personal skills’ include the ability of students to work independently, to meet deadlines, and to interact constructively.

Similarly it is important to stress that efforts at national criteria for the measurement of the quality of academic (research) production are carefully construed: the basic model of the RAE was clear.10 The current version of the principles of judgment (offered for the Research Excellence Framework (REF)) is also serious and strategic:

The REF will be a process of expert review, informed by indicators where appropriate. Expert sub-panels for each of 36 units of assessment (UOAs) will carry out the assessment, working under the guidance of four broad main panels. Institutions will be invited to make submissions to each UOA, to be assessed in terms of:

The quality of research outputs: This will continue to be the primary factor in the assessment. The quality of research outputs will be assessed by the expert panels against international standards of excellence. We expect that some of the panels will make use of citation information to inform their review of outputs.

The wider impact of research: The four UK funding bodies have now set out the features and weighting for this area of assessment, following a pilot exercise.

The vitality of the research environment: The outcomes of the overall assessment will be fine-grained enough to identify excellence wherever this may be found. Panels will produce a sub-profile for each element (outputs, impact and environment), to be combined into an overall excellence profile. The profiles will show the proportion of submitted work at each point on a five-point scale (1* to 4* plus Unclassified)11 (Research Excellence Framework, 2012).

The system of surveillance (for ‘research’) is thus reasonably transparent. For other reasons too, the interpretation of what is happening cannot be a simple assertion
about oppressed academics and the evils of state interference. Universities remain legally independent entities; they are not part of the British State. There have been very few occasions in recent years in which ‘academic freedom’ has become a public issue. The QAA draws its funds from the university sector, and HEFC(E) (which is indeed working to a framework set by the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation, and Skills but is not a Department within that sector of the government) is understood officially as a regulatory agency. The official perspective (the public presentation of HEFC(E) by HEFC(E) is that it is merely guaranteeing that the already excellent standards of English universities are supervised, maintained, and improved in a context in which transparency about quality and value for the expenditure of public money must be guaranteed. However, official perspectives – which tend to emphasise the obvious – are not always the best way to understand social phenomena.

A more complex analysis can be offered.

Deciphering the Runes

First (although the theme was illustrated by details from England), the phenomenon of ‘quality control’ of the universities is now widespread. Variations around the mix of universities, quality assurance and enhancement, regimes of quality surveillance, and discourses about ‘globalisation’ and the knowledge economy can readily be identified in Europe, in Australia and in New Zealand, and in parts of East Asia and Latin America (Altbach & Balan, 2007; Besley, 2009; Besley & Peters, 2009; Epstein, Boden, Deem, Rizvi & Wright, 2008; Harris-Huemmert, 2010; Peters & Besley, 2007; Rizvi, 2009; Ursin, 2008; Vidovich, 2002). Africa, at the moment, has been construed as a special problem (Naidoo, 2008). Secondly, the theme of the changing relationship between universities and governments, and changing forms of governance, has been traced in the literature for over 20 years now, not least through Guy Neave’s original aperçu of ‘the evaluative state’ (King, 2009; Neave, 1988, 2009; Neave & van Vught, 1991).

Thirdly, the new theme of the international ranking of universities is itself a sociological framing of universities and national competition within a ‘global’ scenario. These positionalities (on global scales) are becoming a form of self-surveillance by universities. Analyses of why some systems of universities do well and how to become a ‘world class university’ are already part of the academic literature and part of emerging agendas for action (Marginson, 2007a, 2007b; Marginson & Wende, 2007; Salmi, 2009). Fourthly, evaluation systems are part of the spread of an ideology about governance and ‘new public management’ and the knowledge economy. Thus, as an initial summary, it can be suggested that:

− ‘evaluation systems’ for universities and the measurement and reward of their ‘quality’, are now widespread, are spreading further, and are being steadily refined;
− evaluation systems are penetrative: they look at teaching-and learning; and define good research; and affect – as they are intended to do – the careers of institutions (and individuals); and

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the political discourses of individual states emphasise quality and excellence (as in the phrasing in England: ‘The Research Excellence Framework’; or via appeals to ‘international standards’ or demands for the creation of ‘world class universities’).

However, even those points continue to gloss over an obvious contradiction. Evaluation systems (in their present mode) define how to measure and regulate competence and it is definitions of competence which permit the classification and ordering of universities by national agencies.12 Such a policy is rather less glamorous and politically much trickier to handle than offering an official rhetoric about the pursuit of quality but it is – depending on how well the elision between quality and competence is handled – an excellent disciplinary device. It permits universities to be regulated and ruled: that is, rewarded and punished on the basis of visible and explicit managerial criteria.

This interpretation is worrying enough (for constraining the range of quality of academic work in comparative education) but there is a possibility that anxiety about evaluation systems and their trivialisation of quality is hiding something even more historically significant.

The core and most worrying point, not least in terms of our field of study, is that what we are seeing is a contemporary redefinition of knowledge and its social and political and economic relations.13 It is suggested that we are in a transnational moment in which international and regional discursive shifts, direct (if nuanced and non-identical) national political action, and the invention of new kinds of evaluation institutions and new modes of university governance mean there is a wider and wider geographical dispersal and an increasing and patterned coherence between:

– new social technologies for knowledge management in a knowledge economy with, crucially, the university being an institution that is being refocused to address new social responsibilities;
– systematic redefinitions of innovation and originality by national knowledge agencies and regional agency discourses;
– a newly sharpened, carefully managed and politically focussed revision of the relationship of universities to ‘society’ through a range of disciplinary technologies (e.g. ‘impact’);
– the displacement of the university as the definer of what is ‘important’ originality and the marginalisation of several forms of knowledge in which the university has specialised for some centuries;
– the routinisation of academic labour in both the production and transmission of knowledge; and
– an increasingly rapid separation of the production of knowledge from its transmission.

So, What is Wrong with that?

Obviously, these changes offer opportunities for work in ‘comparative education’. In times of globalisation, we have become highly ‘relevant knowledge workers’
We can do robust research, notably comparative analyses of policy (Lewin & Akyeampong, 2009). We could tell governments why PISA results are as they are; but also how to improve them. We have major professional networks which stretch into UNESCO, the OECD, the World Bank and institutions such as IIEP and regional agencies in Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa south of the Sahara. We can act on the world through consultancy and contract research work. Potentially, we are poised to develop as a major applied social science, in a range of political contexts in which (it might be claimed) we are much needed actors.

I have considerable reservations about such possible developments if they are seen within a scenario of optimism about the condition of the field of academic comparative education. I personally tend to see these ‘opportunities’ as matters which raise ethical and political questions that we have not answered and are not answering (Cowen, 1973, 2006).

The alternative interpretative perspective is even less cheerful. The argument being outlined is that universities are being re-thought and – very creatively and intensely – managed to become coherent and efficient parts of knowledge production systems for knowledge societies. Valued knowledge in earlier forms (Wissenschaften, or knowledge as ‘beauty-and-truth’, or even Mode 2 knowledges) is being displaced by an ideology which is emphasising the production of research-with-impact captured within a rhetoric about ‘excellence’. It is being suggested that such ideologies (institutionalised and linked with surveillance structures) are starting to define some of our terms of work. New modes of academic productivity are becoming a replacement for our ‘real’ work (which is here taken to mean a re-reading of the global and the world of education, within perspectives framed by complex theoretical and intellectual problématiques that encourage, in Stephen Carney’s term, ‘defamiliarisation’).

In the new circumstances (even if there are variations in Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark and so on) the crucial problem is that the quotidian ‘politics of our knowledge’ in academic comparative education are changing rapidly around three motifs: gate-keeping; accountancy; and the institutional location of creativity.

Narratively, for example, criteria for the judgement of ‘excellence’ – such as ‘impact’, measurement by metrics, the display of relevance, the quality judgements demanded from national panels working rapidly to judge selections of published papers, and the constraints on academics to publish only in journals which score well in the Social Science Citation Index – construct a new and complex sociology of gate-keeping. This kind of ‘structuring of quality’ is not support for the identification and reward of the brilliant in academic work but a conservative (and potentially conserving) form of academic accountancy. That accountancy is concerned to work out institutional averages – at considerable cost in terms of diversion of effort. Inside the university, major resources of human energy and cash-cost are allocated to creating and handling the knowledge management systems within which the performances of academics are constrained and measured. Sociologically, of course, this is perfectly understandable. The astonishing creativity of a John Nash or a Richard Feynman, a Tim Hunt or a James Lovelock is not something which national measurement systems are
concerned about. Institutions such as a Cambridge in which Crick and Watson did part of their thinking, or the University of Cambridge or LSE currently, can survive considerable bureaucratic interference.

But what about the rest of us (in England and elsewhere)? We probably need to ask about our own support structures for seriously creative work in academic comparative education if ‘our’ universities shape-shift with us inside them. What are our resources? The creation of new digital journals such as that of David Phillips, the re-vitalisation of old journals (such as European Education) or fresh epistemic alliances such as those being created in Miguel Pereyra’s CESE ‘In-Betweens’? Almost certainly, these are steps forward. Maybe our most serious work should be done in our Societies? Perhaps. However, it is noticeable that while CIES welcomes and rewards such work – for example, in awarding the George Bereday Prize to the Comparative Education Review article of Carney (2009) – its members as a group are not dedicated to work of that kind (Cook, Hite & Epstein, 2004). WCCES has increasingly allied itself with some of the world’s educational and development agencies and has recently come close to seeing itself as one (Masemann, Bray & Manzon, 2007). BCIES is also strongly linked, currently, with the motifs of development and aid and the policy work of the British Government overseas (Sutherland, Watson & Crossley, 2007).

It is also true that many of our professional Societies are small and long-lived or small and new. Even if they are probably a more delicate arena for creative thinking than the mega-Societies of AERA or EERA, perhaps they are not in themselves a sufficient base from which to do our ‘real’ work – the intellectual construction of an academic comparative education (which re-thinks our theoretical apparatus almost as rapidly as the transnational world itself changes). Therefore, we probably must think again about the terms on which, inside our universities, we are able, and will be able, to retain some space for thinking original thoughts.

At first glance, all this seems a long and sad way from the promise and early excitement of the institutionalisation of academic comparative education about 50 years ago with people like George Bereday and Bill Brickman, and Joseph Lauwerys and Brian Holmes (and Idenberg and Robinson and so on) leading the field. However, it may also be possible – depending on future research about our past – to show in detail that things were never that simple.

THE PRICE OF ICONS

One of the problems left to us by our increasingly – but not sufficiently – detailed history is that we earlier had wanted a brief, stable history with which to legitimise ourselves. We needed (for obvious reasons) A History of The Regiment; rather than an historically complex account of our intellectual work and institutional creation in socio-economic and socio-political contexts. Until we generate a complex, contradictory, history of ourselves, it may be wise to treat the iconography we have created with greater caution. The idea that ‘things were different’ when persons such as George Bereday and Bill Brickman, and Joseph Lauwerys and Brian Holmes were contributing to creating ‘the subject’ is true, of
course. However, we need a harder-edged historical picture. Iconographies
normally contain touches of romance.

Certainly, it can immediately be accepted that Bereday, Brickman, Holmes and
Lauwerys were charismatic teachers; all available remembrances shine with
conviction on that theme (Cowen, 1993; McLean, 1981; Noah, 1984; Silova &
Brehm, 2010b). Certainly, it can be immediately accepted that they were all
institution-builders, in the sense that they all created (or individually contributed a
great deal) to the establishment of qualification structures, advanced seminar
groups, professional journals and Societies. They recruited and encouraged young
people with an interest in comparative education who wrote Ph.D. theses and tried
to create careers in the field of study. One obvious example is Lauwerys recruiting
Edmund King and Brian Holmes as potential comparativists: one of them had a
degree in classics and the other had a degree in physics. That has its charms, but a
harder-edged history would stress that neither of them fully recovered,
intellectually, from those initial identities.

Clearly, Bereday, Brickman, Holmes (and King) and Lauwerys were all creative
and original, although in very different ways. However, understanding the modes
of their creativity and their relationship with structures is not just a matter of
distinguishing Holmes (who was from Yorkshire and migrated to London) from
the other scholars who, as international migrants or as members of migrant
families, changed their country of residence. Nor is it sufficient to note, with or
without unkind intent, that when one is defining a field there is a lot of space for
creative activity – as Brickman wrote: “The field was wide open, and anyone who
so desired could leap into the vacuum” (quoted in Silova & Brehm, 2010a, p. 21).
The broader question remains: what were the relationships between social
structures (in this instance, academic ones), historical forces, and individual
biographies? It is here that we can see interesting divergent epistemic and
institutional moments.

One fascinating illustration of these themes is George Bereday himself.
Autobiographically, he was a polymath, and not only in terms of his delight in
languages. His early academic career and perhaps his continental European
assumptions about epistemology meant that he also had acquired a working
knowledge of a wide range of the social sciences. He was a brilliant lecturer (albeit
totally different in personal style from Lauwerys – Bereday was much more
flamboyant), but he took a great interest in doctoral supervision and systematised
the preparation of doctoral candidates in Teachers College, Columbia University.
Indeed that became one of the most famous doctoral programmes in the world
because its epistemic principles were made very explicit in a book on ‘method’
(Bereday, 1964).

Thus, there was a fascinating closure of the theme of autobiography and
academic structure and historical forces. The programme at Teachers College
aimed at ‘creativity’ because it institutionalised an autobiography: the academic
trajectory of a creative man whose own personal life had been shaped by the forces
of war. That autobiographical creativity, that personal way to brilliance, underwent
a stabilisation. The creativity was translated into a programme of doctoral
education. And the paradox? The paradox is not a paradox, but a contradiction: the
translation of individual creativity into an institutionalised training programme defined competences that were ‘obviously’ necessary to do comparative education: knowledge of languages, knowledge of a range of social sciences, the necessity to reside overseas and so on.

In some simple ways, Lauwerys was similar to Bereday. Autobiographically, Lauwerys too was a polymath (in the natural sciences, in languages, and in his range of knowledge in history and sociology). He too was noticeably ‘European’ in the elegance with which he spoke English and in the range of referents in his lectures. In addition, of course, he had been deeply involved in World War II, though the international migration of his family and himself was a consequence of the Great War of 1914–1918.

However, although Lauwerys, in a number of very senior leadership positions, had major influence on the new Academic Diploma in Education and the master’s programme in educational studies in the University of London in the mid-‘60s, he made no especial effort to systematise the ‘training’ aspects of the master’s programme in comparative education itself. He remained unconvinced about the necessity to develop special methods for doing comparative education, and he was even less convinced about the possibilities of a creating a ‘predictive method’ for comparative education. He placed some emphasis on trying to understand new phenomena (such as the growth of cities, the growth of science, and demographic pressures) while sustaining a view of the moral significance of comparative education as being linked with the themes of war and peace (“Since war begins in the minds of men…”). He tended to construe the Institute of Education’s taught courses in comparative education around the themes of Nicholas Hans. The typical lecture programme covered Hans’ factors of geographic and economic circumstances, language and race, religions and political belief systems, along with a parallel lecture course which permitted specialisation on France or the USA and, later, the USSR. A brilliant lecturer, he did not personally dominate the doctoral supervision of most of the students in the Department.

Thus, the closure between autobiography and academic structure in the Institute’s comparative programme was not through the intellectual biography of Lauwerys but through that of Holmes. At the master’s level, the teaching (if not the Final Examinations) stressed understanding methodological positions, not least through philosophies of science. At the Ph.D. level, Holmes became the main supervisor in the Department and the crucial test of a good Ph.D. became the extent to which students followed ‘the problem approach’.

A considerable systematisation of the doctorate (in comparative education) thus occurred – by a different mix – in the Institute of Education in London as well as in Teachers College, New York. What had begun as creativity – Holmes’ own doctoral thesis, which became the text Problems in Education (1965), was an extended justification of an agenda of approach in comparative education based on post-relativity science and the thinking of Popper and John Dewey that was intended to liberate the field – became an orthodoxy, a set of competences. More and more doctoral theses in the Department were set up within this frame. Some talented students refused the agenda of approach; some accepted it reluctantly and
did not handle it well and were referred in their first viva; but generations of students graduated. Holmes was brilliant at doctoral supervision and ran a tough-minded and occasionally dramatic doctoral seminar. The irony was that he worked within the increasingly confident orthodoxy of a specific scientific approach which he had created in 1965 and which he continued to celebrate in terms of refining its techniques (1981). Twenty years later, he was writing of his ‘paradigm shift’ – convinced of its liberating potential for comparative education as a field of study (1986). One does not get the same impression (about institutionalisations, about orthodoxies, about the translation of the creatively autobiographical into the programming of competence) from the literature on – or the literature created by – Brickman (Silova & Brehm, 2010b).

Clearly there are no automatic sequences here. We need to know about the ways in which, for example, Hans, Kandel, King, Ulich and so on turned their autobiographies into legitimations not merely for their own comparative education but also for the teaching and the supervision of others. How does a personal ‘politics of knowledge’ become, inside institutions, a ‘sociology of knowledge’ – and when does it not (and why)?

The point is not merely antiquarian. The significant and continuing historical and contemporary theme is the tension, in academic comparative education, between creativity and competence and the changing social structures (here, universities), autobiographies, and the historical forces of politics and economics which shift the relations of creativity and competence.

Right now, for example, the ‘superstructure’ of academic life is changing: new criteria for and forms of ‘success’ increasingly define competence as the ability to attract funded research or to attract consultancy work. This competence is – *per se* – a measurable and institutionally approved form of ‘creativity’ (in England, at least). However although this form of creativity should contribute to rethinking the intellectual capital of the field of academic comparative education, there is no guarantee it will. Rather, the question shifts to: how much does the existing intellectual capital of the field earn (in cash terms, as income) in the outside world? For individual academics there is currently a desperate treadmill of grants or consultancies under application, grants being researched and consultancies conducted, and grants or consultancies for which reports are being written. A technical, managerialist, vocabulary for this kind of consultancy and contract-research market exists; ‘knowledge transfer’ or ‘third stream income’. Within such pressures, the relationship between busy and urgent action to deliver research results and the renewal of the intellectual capital of the field becomes problematic.

Overall then, we are in a situation in which new definitions are emerging of the relationships between what counts as ‘competence’ and what counts as ‘creativity’ in the university; and new balances of trade are developing between universities and think tanks and consultancy firms which are involved in trading (literally ‘trading’, as well as metaphorically trading) competence and creativity. Oddly enough, this creates a fascinating new problem. Whereas in the past we have argued furiously over our agenda of approach (our methodologies) and had anxieties (Noah, 1974) over our agenda of attention (the topics we should study),
we probably now need to make more explicit our agenda of agglutination (who we should associate with; before we get stuck to them).

In these circumstances, we are left with one of our ancient anxieties: inside universities (and for us in academic comparative education) what are the sources for the intellectual renewal of the field? One obvious answer is, of course, the young.

THE COSTS OF CAREER TRAJECTORIES

Unfortunately, the young, through no fault of their own, have special problems which (i) constrain and (ii) frame their competences and creativities.

The constraints include the availability of academic work, in times of economic recession and of intense competition for academic jobs from a massively expanded number of higher education students with advanced qualifications. The simple counter-argument – that such developments are excellent because such pressures will mean that universities select only the best and most creative talent – is not merely simple. It is simplistic: such a proposition ignores the politics of appointment to specific positions to specific universities at specific times and the proposition takes for granted that what is always being sought, in appointments, is the ‘most creative’ talent.

The ‘frames’ include the career structures within which young academics are being invited to work. The frames include: specialisation; elongation; and routinisation.

The academic ‘profession’ now has highly specialised roles, such as professors who specialise in contract research, or professors who serve the university via their consultancy roles, or professors who almost never teach but are specialist authors. Other academics clearly choose a parallel career – to do a great deal of work in ‘management’, sustaining elements of an academic role up to a mid-career point, before finally shifting into very senior managerial positions that suddenly define the main career.

Each of these ‘lines’ constructs role models and multiple career paths which diverge and message systems about promotion possibilities. For each there is an apprenticeship. Thus, the academic profession in places such as England fractures (as was always the case) because individuals discover they prefer some kinds of work to other kinds of work. However the academic profession also fractures because diverging career lines (towards divergent models of ‘a professor’) are becoming part of the structures of promotion and its management in universities.

Currently the details of promotion criteria are writ smaller and smaller and tighter and tighter. Partly the details are intended as a statement of ‘transparency’ – linked to anxieties about possible law suits about discrimination. However the details are also made visible because the role profile of academics is changing and these changes are being managed. Thus the role changes are given explicit specification by academic managers, not least ‘Officers for Human Resources’.

The managerial detailing of role profiles is analytically useful: the detailing captures structural changes. For example, criteria for promotion in mid-career in the social sciences now, almost always in England, include the necessity to have
R. COWEN gained a series of research grants (covering, in technical terms, the Full Economic Cost of an academic’s work). Initially the research grants do not have to be large. Indeed, in the early stages of a career, it may be sufficient to have made (unsuccessful) applications for a small number of small research grants. Later, successful applications become a criterion for promotion. In England, such problems are increasingly compounded by the shrinking of the size of the ‘grants-market’; the growth of training courses in grant-application skills in almost all universities; the increasing dominance by a small number of large institutions (such as the Institute of Education) of the national pool of research funding; and the saturation of the market by competition. Even large and very successful institutions are starting to doubt whether they can push their percentage share of the research grants market much higher. At the moment, the response is increased specialisation within the professoriate, together with a great deal of flexibility in arrangements about who is hired (at what prices) to reach which institutional targets (until recently, REF targets; but suddenly and simply – financial targets).

However the growth of the ‘industry’ of contract research has added another layer to the steps within a conventional academic career. This form of elongation has been the growth of a category of worker known as a ‘research officer’ (of various ranks, including ‘senior research officer’). Such persons are drawn from a relatively large group of well-qualified persons who move from research project to research project on short-term contracts. Certainly at the junior level they simply apply for such positions – the themes and the sub-themes having already been decided by the funder and the grant holder (the Principal Researcher who is typically a senior academic). Thus the research officer, after appointment, is allocated specific tasks within a project, with deadlines. In other words, the emphasis is on research competence.

The growth in this sector within the broader category of ‘knowledge worker’ has been remarkable. Moving through a hierarchy of ‘research officer’ positions and then sideways into a senior academic position was, two decades ago, very rare. However, at the moment, the ‘research officer’ is a new layering within the academic hierarchy, to be understood partly as an academic in extended training. In other words, it is becoming more and more normal to think of ‘research officer’ as a step within an academic career; rather than as a parallel, alternative, career.

The emergence of a category ‘the researcher’ is an important form of career elongation in itself – but that is an extra layer on top of an extra layer: a normal career move now is gaining a ‘post-doc’. The point of a post-doctoral position – some sort of funded scholarship which permits one or two years of full-time study and writing – is to create a personal record of published research and scholarship. The ‘post-doc’, common enough in the natural sciences for quite some time (Simson, 1983), is a development of the last decade or so in the social sciences including educational studies.

The only part of the academic career which has been shortened is the doctorate. Except for the fact that now everyone needs a doctorate for academic work, the academic career has not been specifically elongated by developments at the doctoral level. On the contrary, a broad set of changes across Europe loosely linked with ‘the Bologna process’ has organised the doctorate (Palomba, 2008) and, in
general, shortened it. Within a broad 3-2-3 pattern of first, second and third
degrees, the career-time of the doctorate has – in principle – been routinised.

However, something even more important is happening, at least in England. The
long tradition of the doctorate being something like a life-work in itself, certainly a
crucial defining career moment (as with Durkheim or Weber), has been altered.
Now the doctorate, as a piece of knowledge-work, has been routinised. The
doctorate has increasingly become a performance of an act of empirical research,
calling for the display of research technique and the careful reporting of research
results. Currently, standardised regimes of doctoral training place stronger
emphasis on introductions to methods and ‘academic writing’ skills; on systematic
tutorials which are supported by written summaries of what was discussed and
what were the problems and what action needs to be taken before the next tutorial;
and on theses tightly controlled for word length – for the Ph.D. degree as well as
‘professional’ degrees such as the EdD. It is also noticeable that the traditional
emphasis on ‘originality’ in the Regulations for the Award of the Doctorate in
English universities has increasingly been qualified by cautious phrasings of the
kind: ‘a contribution to knowledge… on the basis of the amount of work which a
student might reasonably be expected to do in a period of three (or four) years of
full time study…’. For the doctorate, the emphasis would seem to have shifted to
confirmations of the display of research competence within broader social
processes that are standardising the preparation of reliably-skilled research labour.

Such a view is coherent and sensible – once the conventional discourse about
economic globalisation, economic competition, robust and relevant research,
skilled and competent knowledge work, and good knowledge management, leading
to ‘innovation’ is accepted.

And if that view is not accepted? Obviously then, creativity has been crushed,
routinised competence rules, and – as we watch the collapse of the university – we
are close to the end of an era? We may be; but before we agree to all or any of
those propositions, let us take a step backwards and rehearse the formal themes of
the argument.

THE CONCLUSION

The theme of the chapter was to wonder about what were, and are, the ‘politics of
knowledge’ in comparative education. It was suggested, right at the beginning of
this wondering, that comparative education in some of its forms is politics and, in
all of its forms, is embedded in a range of politics. In the literature of comparative
education we know about this theme through the question of the uses and abuses of
academic comparative education – the social uses of comparative education
knowledge.

However, I refocused the topic to permit myself to think about the politics of the
creation of comparative education knowledge in universities. There were implicit
questions. For example, what passes into academic comparative education as
competence and creativity at specific moments of time and in specific places?
What are the structures of our universities and the surveillance regimes in which
they operate currently defining as preferred forms of competence and creativity?
The orienting argument of the chapter drew on the vocabulary of C. W. Mills to suggest that social structures would combine with biographies and historical forces to shape competence (Illeris, 2009) and creativity (Larsen, 2010a) in the field of study.

The longest and most formal argument was that we are experiencing a new politics of knowledge. The contemporary creation myth is embedded in a discourse about ‘quality’ and political talk about robust and relevant research and a specific notion of social science as ‘facts’. In practice, the political and managerial rules about creativity and competence in universities are changing: the surveillance systems created to evaluate the English (and other) university system(s) stress very precisely calibrated forms of ‘performance’–including, by extension, the performance of the field of study of academic comparative education. The measuring systems emphasise ‘quality’ (of teaching and of research), the ‘quality’ of individual performances and of institutional performances, within a discourse about robust and relevant research. As the discourse and the measurements pass from outside to the inside of universities, universities undergo what I once called an ‘attenuation’: the locus ‘the university’ is no longer a space-box and its definitions of ‘quality’ are no longer constructed in its own space-box. National messages about quality, articulated by agencies, penetrate it and the surveillance mechanisms are writ small in the interior procedures of each university.

In counterpoint, in this chapter there was an older illustration of a creation myth. The argument (metaphorically, a ‘photograph’) was that Our History, notably our iconography, might be permitting us to assign magic and romanticised moments to our past when, by the earlier distinguished scholars in the field, creativities were massively encouraged and a whole field of academic endeavour was to be filled with new ideas. In ways that were not completely visible at the time – and which are still not fully documented in accounts of, say, Danish and French and German and Japanese comparative education (Wolhuter, Popov, Manzon & Leutwyler, 2008) – what occurred was a translation of the biographies of very creative scholars into intended institutional creativities, that is to say, into master’s courses, into doctoral programmes and so on. It was argued in this chapter that there were indeed uneasy moments in this creation myth: in other words, that sociologically there is some evidence that the biographic creativity was institutionalised and made programmatic and routinised. That is understandable and probably, at a time of institution-building, necessary; but the process needs analysis and not merely admiration.

The most contemporary version of a creation myth (suggested by many vocal politicians in times of ‘globalisation’ as a necessary job of the universities) was the implicit claim that the academic career is being professionalised. In contrast, the argument offered here was that ‘the academic career’ had been elongated and that many of the stages in the elongation process confirm research competence and techniques, efficiency in completion of projects, and the reporting and presentation of results. The career structures for the academic and for the apprentice academic are becoming specialised and routinised and carefully managed – with no obvious bias towards the construction and celebration of ‘creativity’.
Thus – it might seem logical to conclude – all is doom and gloom. More precisely, that we are moving backwards. We have moved from moments at the birth of the field marked by an emphasis on creativity to duller times which are marked by an emphasis on competence (at best); the routinisation of research; and (at worst) the production of research which measures gaps between what should be and what is, so that decision-makers may make decisions.

Not quite. The analysis can be made more nuanced than that.

Certainly, one of the most interesting shifts in the politics of knowledge in the field was how creativities in scholarship were turned into routines in training programmes. However, it can also be noted that some instances produced unexpected reactions – the rejection of iconic approaches, as for example in Holmes' sharp rejection of the epistemology of Hans. Equally clearly, this was and is far from being a standardised process. There are no suggestions which I know about that claim the creativities of William Brickman or Rolland Paulston, for example, became programmatic training competences.

Certainly, one of the most interesting shifts in the politics of knowledge in the field is the insistence on ‘robust and relevant research’ (under a range of synonyms) in a range of countries. However, what then needs explanation is the creativity of Australia-based or Australia-linked academics whose papers in academic comparative education are a pleasure to read: illustratively, Jane Kenway, Bob Lingard, Fazal Rizvi, and Tony Welch.16

One key, probably, to understanding some of the politics and sociology of these processes is an alertness to the separation of knowledge from the knower. This theme has been brilliantly opened up by Basil Bernstein (2000).

*Mutatis mutandis*, this explains a great deal about creativities in comparative education. At the simplest level of autobiography, it was the rigidity of the epistemic identity of Holmes (as a physicist) which made it impossible for him to accept the ‘creativity’ of Hans, who was a sort of historian; and of course the epistemic identity of King, so strongly that of a classics scholar, helped to construct the mutual incomprehensibility he and Holmes lived through with difficulty, together, for more than 20 years.

More importantly, the point permits us to re-locate how we think about HEFC(E) and QAA and about the elongated academic careers of young academics, with their apparent emphasis on routine research, and the perennial display of competences and a range of efficiencies and iconic professors who insist on specific methodological positions or assert that comparative education is a particular and permanent form of ‘science’ or ‘a comparative science’ or an ‘interdisciplinary social science’ (or really ‘anthropology’ and so on).

All of these forms of invasion, which separate the knowledge from the knower – in extreme form, in the massive claims for the output of ‘quality’ in the name of robust and relevant research – are crucial in the construction of creativity. As with methodologies, it is not their acceptance but their thoughtful rejection which releases creativities. It will be the rejection of the doctoral model of training – by individuals – which will guarantee creativity. HEFC(E) does not and cannot create creativities. It will be academics and advanced students inside universities finding
ways to cope with HEFC(E) – or their international equivalents – while rejecting the official instrumentalities who will create ways to be creative.

Overall, however, the situation is a little gloomier. It cannot be expected that the overconfidence of politicians – English ones, anyway – and that they know what universities are for will diminish. The English politicians are – to borrow a phrase – paying the piper. They wish and, since the abolition of the University Grants Committee, they are increasingly determined and able to name the tune the piper will play. This simplistic notion that because the state (in some countries) pays for the universities, the state can and should determine research agendas – a situation into which the English are edging – is startling in a mature democracy. Manifestly, it is difficult to routinise competence – the work of the English university surveillance agencies already stretches over decades. It is strange in the extreme to try to routinise research agendas and even stranger to try to routinise the production of creativity.

Let us see how much damage is done before an older and wiser view re-emerges: only some very special institutions, which insist on the merging of knowledge with the knower, which insist on integrating the identity of the institutions and the identity of the knower around the possibilities for disputation and competition to know, brilliantly, certain forms of knowledge, seem to be able to create startling outbursts of creativity. Among such very special institutions, in most societies, are some universities.

Labelling them unicorns (or worldclass universities) and setting out to manage their construction may not be an act of wisdom. Universities are not research machines. They are not assembled, like certain children’s toys. They grow and, like creativity in comparative education, they take a while to grow. Managerial force-feeding is perhaps not the wisest way to treat them.

NOTES

1 At the time of the preparation of the talk on which this chapter is based a number of books and papers were ‘forthcoming’. These citations have been changed if such material is now in print.
2 This phrasing is used to distinguish academic comparative education (as a field of study in universities) from ‘consultancy comparative education’ or the ‘comparative education’ done by the OECD, the World Bank, PISA, and so on. It is tempting to use the acronym ACE, rather than write out ‘academic comparative education’ every time the intended referent is ‘a field of study based in universities which works to understand theoretically and intellectually the shape-shifting of ‘education’ as it moves transnationally amid the interplay of international political, cultural and economic hierarchies with domestic politics and forms of social power’. However, the temptations to call the field ACE – and to repeat my definition of ‘academic comparative education’ – have both been resisted.
3 The phrasings are taken from C. W. Mills (1959).
4 This unfortunate expression (presumably taken from the work-world of business and industry) was subsequently softened to stress, for the university world, ‘quality assurance and enhancement’. It is this phrasing which is now routinely used inside universities, in internal memoranda and so on.
5 http://www.qaa.ac.uk/
6 http://www.hefce.ac.uk/
7 http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/reform/
There were severe complaints about ‘impact’ as an indicator of the quality of research, in terms of the simplistic politics of the intent to measure it, the criteria for its measurement, and anxiety about its corrosive potential for damage to some fields of study, such as the humanities. Overall, however, in the last two decades, resistance from academics has not been audible, except for very sharp, early complaints from the London School of Economics and Political Science about the quality of ‘the peers’ who visited it to look at its teaching. There were also early complaints from Vice-Chancellors about the high economic cost of ‘measuring quality’ in the ways demanded by the external agencies. By 2006, the complaints about the financial and direct labour costs of collecting information for the agencies had began to have some effect. Some rethinking occurred. A new Research Excellence Framework, a little more linked to the measurement of quality by metrics (which reduces some costs), will make its judgements in and after 2014. The REF replaces the evaluation system called the Research Assessment Exercise whose first ‘exercise’ was undertaken almost 20 years ago.

“Definitions of quality levels:
4*: Quality that is world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
3*: Quality that is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which nonetheless falls short of the highest standards of excellence.
2*: Quality that is recognised internationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
1*: Quality that is recognised nationally in terms of originality, significance and rigour.
Unclassified: Quality that falls below the standard of nationally recognised work. Or work which does not meet the published definition of research for the purposes of this assessment” (Research Assessment Exercise, 2008).

At the risk of repetition, it will be recalled that the English definition within the RAE of the highest two levels of quality of research for individuals and for institutions was short and elegantly phrased: four-star quality would be “world-leading in terms of originality, significance and rigour” while three-star would be quality that “is internationally excellent in terms of originality, significance and rigour but which nonetheless falls short of the highest standards of excellence” (Research Assessment Exercise, 2008). That is quite succinct, given that the concepts are elusive. However, the concepts are so elusive – operationally – that it would be analytically careless to agree that the RAE was, centrally and crucially, about quality. Evidently, it was about measures of quality which were publicly visible on the basis of which money might be legitimately distributed to the universities. It was also about a political shift: a change from the University Grants Committee, dominated by academics and insulated from direct political interference, to a steering system which was more managerial and more obviously linked to political agendas about what universities should be doing. The new systems of HEFC(E) and RAE and QAA permitted the surveillance, classification, ordering, and regulation of a major national investment: a system of universities that had been massively expanded by political action in the 1992 Further and Higher Education Act – which was also the date of the creation of the Higher Education Funding Council.

Of course the redefinition of knowledge and its social and political and economic relations has happened many times in the history of universities – the universities themselves, in their medieval forms, marked such a moment and have been reshaped in specific places in other such moments (Ringer, 1969; Rothblatt, 1997; Röhrs, 1995.)

The Academic Diploma in Education was an academically difficult, theoretically-oriented, post-graduate qualification for career teachers which guarded admission to the newly-invented MA degrees in education in the University of London, Faculty of Education, and the Institute of Education, in the mid-1960s. The historical forces included the consolidation into the middle classes, through formal qualifications, of parts of the teaching profession which was (then) relatively independent of the British State.

Stephen Carney is an Australian and his papers are a pleasure to read. I have not placed him on this list because he works in Denmark and so does not benefit from Australian forms of quality control.
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Robert Cowen
Emeritus Professor of Education
Institute of Education
University of London; and
Senior Research Fellow
Department of Education
Oxford University
2. COMPARATIVE EDUCATION IN LATE MODERNITY

Tensions between Accelerating the Disenchantment of the World and Opening Pedagogical Spaces of Possibility

Dear Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an interesting coincidence that the venue of the conference, the University of Uppsala, and the University of Tübingen, where I come from, have an equally long history: they were both founded in the same year, in 1477, at the very dawn of what historians refer to as modernity. In the many centuries that have elapsed since then, socio-cultural relations have, in an uneven process of acceleration and deceleration, become both more intensive and more extensive. Today, cooperation and exchange on all academic levels have greatly intensified, often under the umbrella of European programmes, such as Erasmus. When telling students at Tübingen that I was coming to Uppsala, I learned that many of them had already been here and had spent a most growth-conducive – in the Deweyan sense – and memorable time.

Europeanisation and globalisation have repercussions on all formerly nationally bounded disciplines, including education, and some aspects of the current transformations of education is what I will be concerned with in my keynote. Viewed in the perspective of the longue durée, today’s transformations in education appear only as an episode. If challenged to assess their meaning, one is well advised to seek a “distant mirror”, in the words of the American historian Barbara Tuchman, and the organisers of the conference have decided with good reason that we should consider Enlightenment as the point of reference. It was then that the universitas as a special form of communitas between scholars and students was reshaped as the place to not only seek erudition but to create new knowledge. Especially since the second half of the 20th century, the crucial role of knowledge in modern societies has received greater attention by economists and policy-makers. In combination with discussions about access and equity this has translated into a historically unprecedented universal trend of educational expansion. As Michael Peters (2009) recently brought to the attention of the international community of educational comparativists, the open education and open science movements are an excellent example of the morphodynamics of this trend towards ever greater access to, and the democratisation of, knowledge. Is this not a clear indication that we are fulfilling the promises of Enlightenment to ever

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greater extents? Or, take the example of cosmopolitanism, for which Thomas Popkewitz’s (2007) analysis has enriched our field. Is it not true that globalisation and Europeanisation provide greatly facilitated exchange and mobility – this is a topic on which Fazal Rizvi (2009) has contributed significantly, drawing, amongst others, on Ulrich Beck’s concept of the “polygamy of spaces” (Beck, 2000). Then again, do not even the open education and the open science movements clearly privilege certain forms of knowledge and competencies over others, thus limiting the unfettered pursuit of knowledge? Thinking of terms such as the knowledge-based economy or the knowledge society, are not the authors in The Knowledge-based Economy and Higher Education in Europe (Jessop, Fairclough & Wodak, 2008) justified in their criticisms that we need to look closely at what kind of knowledge is privileged and who has access to it? And as far as moving around freely and without impediments goes: those of you who attended this year’s WCCES Congress in Istanbul know that in spite of the large number of attendants, many of our colleagues could not come due to visa restrictions, giving the conference theme of bordering and rebordering a very tangible meaning. Also in the world of Appadurai’s flows and scapes (1996), countries and borders are alive and well, for a large part of the global population.

Let me therefore jump into medias res and say that I fully agree with the thematic description of this year’s CESE Conference; that we need to concern ourselves with the tensions and contradictions of Enlightenment, such as the still unresolved relationship between individual and group rights and hence with the relation between universalism and particularism or the problematics of the concept of the person (Esposito 2010).

The particular tension or contradiction I will be concerned with departs from a specific dichotomy. On the one hand, as comparativists we are called upon to be part of the reembedding, not to say the transformation of education, by providing knowledge of how to best shape and implement ongoing reforms. Undeniably, it is in this area that new professional opportunities arise for comparativists as nomadic experts, creating new possibilities on all levels of educational policy, to refer to Martin Lawn’s and Bob Lingard’s (2002) work, not the least of which is the transnational one. On the other hand, as educationists we are also bound by important traditions in our discipline to critically reflect on the implications for late modern societal and subject formations. However, this is a task less sought after under present circumstances. Therefore, my topic, “Comparative education in late modernity: Tensions between accelerating the disenchantment of the world and opening of pedagogical spaces of possibility”, takes up the question articulated in this conference’s thematic focus: what is the relation between our tasks as comparativists in engaging with educational policy on all levels and our critical tasks of analysing and interpreting societal developments? In other words, what is the relationship between being concerned with the insertion of the next generation into the given social order – a task required of education since the beginning of modern mass education – and being concerned with providing opportunities, opening-up pedagogical spaces for the next generation; a critical
enablement, a distancing in order to self-reflectively relate to society? The latter aspect was formulated from the emerging discipline itself and was less, even if not exclusively, attributable to an expectation from its societal environment.

The next section will be concerned with selected observations on the discipline of education. The focus will be on the two major strands just introduced that are both related to the project of modernity. A strong affirmation of the basic tenets and key universalist concepts: the individual, the subject, the child, the learner, autonomy, self-direction, etc. on the one hand and, equally fundamental, a permanent questioning and revising of these tenets and concepts. I will further argue that in order to understand these two perspectives more fully, it is not sufficient to consider them spatially, affirming “thereness” on the one hand, and distancing and withdrawing on the other, but to consider them with regards to time-relations, acceleration and deceleration. Affirming “thereness” reinforces acceleration by adjusting the psychic dispositions of the next generation external, i.e. societal requirements, while distancing and withdrawing reinforces deceleration. A current theory of the sociology of time emphasising this distinction will also be introduced in this section.

Against this background, the guiding tertium comparationis I would therefore like to introduce is the acceleration/deceleration distinction. With this distinction I will be using a particular framing of societal development from modernity to late modernity, claiming that the transformations associated with it encompass not only a spatial reembedding of national education systems establishing or reconstituting relations between local, regional, national and transnational levels but that they are simultaneously linked to transformations of societal relations to time. Hence, it is argued that they have to be considered in a “spatio-tempo” context. The former shift is well discussed in theories of globalisation and internationalisation, in considerations of international educational governance as well as in discussions of scales, scapes, spaces and scopes, while the latter, although frequently referred to or implicitly included when relating current educational changes to processes of “acceleration” (e.g. the knowledge society, the creative economy, lifelong learning) has received less theoretical attention.  

In a next step, these systematic deliberations will be examined in a historical perspective with three period distinctions: Enlightenment here defined as early modernity; high modernity, reaching its peak in the 20th century; and late modernity, which has emerged in the latter decades of the last century and constitutes our present period. The examples of local manifestations of these relations are chosen according to a broadly ideal typical notion in a Weberian sense: Europe, in this case, German educational thought, will be taken as representative of Enlightenment, that is early modernity; the United States, Dahrendorf’s “Applied Enlightenment”, to epitomise high modernity; and a “placeless” international or transnational space, which is in a world polity perspective equally inherently western in nature, as representative of late modernity.
Lutz Koch, one of the authors of a recent publication on the state and the future of theoretical education, has pointed out that despite the changes in the meaning of education as a scientific/scholarly discipline over time, one fundamental distinction has persisted: education being understood as a practical, ethical discipline versus a non-ethical understanding of education that is based on researching pedagogical practice with theoretical intentions (2009, p. 79). Introducing a different dualism, education might also be described as having an empirical and a speculative end – speculative used here in the original sense, as pure, non-experience-based perception. As Koch further argued, it is this approach to theory that modern education is about to lose which also implies that it no longer concerns itself with the problematic of grounding and legitimating norms in a theoretically sophisticated sense, i.e. it no longer problematises the empirical. The same tendencies may be observed in other disciplines that are similarly constituted as education, such as sociology or anthropology, even psychology.

To illustrate that the issue behind these terminological conventions is not peculiar to the development of the discipline in Germany, where Idealism casts a long shadow, I would like to remind us of the late Rolland Paulston’s mapping project (1993, 1996, 1999) which showed that there is always one great distinction, i.e. that between an emphasis on Enlightenment’s faith in progress and perfectibility and a sceptical one, equally rooted in Enlightenment, questioning the basis of our certainties and confidences, lately most prominently associated with the postmodern debate, that is constitutive of our field. Taking-up Paulston’s work, as has already been done in several countries, updating it and applying it to different national or transnational settings of comparative education, becomes a valuable tool in assessing the context-specific appropriations and variations of this fundamental dichotomy that characterises education as an agonistic discipline. The relation between these polar orientations is rarely balanced. Usually paradigms belonging to the one rather than the other become dominant for a while, leading to different peaks in currency over time.

Presently, there is an emphasis on empirical research expressed in the favoured designs of quasi-experiments and large-scale assessments, in combination with the rise of the evidence-based paradigm that informs practice and policy and shapes education according to a (technical) science model that is to provide the means for pre-established applied ends. It allows for interesting alliances between detached observer positions, the non-normative understanding of science and melioristic interests. It thus may be said that the current confidence for certainty consists of a strong faith in empirical science approximating quasi-causal relationships which accords well with scientisation as part of an overall transnational societal trend. In fact, when compared to the predominance of the science model, the “other”, this critical understanding, which is always instantly recognisable as normative, appears to be hopelessly speculative in the current pejorative sense, unscientific and therefore outdated. Not to be misunderstood, I am not blind to the flaws of the past. There were segments in our academic output that were not characterised by
high levels of theoretical and methodical sophistication. This justified critique however, is situated on a different level than the point Lutz Koch and others are making, i.e. what are the implications for our discipline and thus, by necessity, for its comparative part, if education is reconstructed with an almost exclusive emphasis on a particular understanding of the empirical – a tendency that can be observed in many countries.

This tendency is reaffirmed because the non-evidence-based science of education is not only viewed as imprecise and lacking in scientific rigour, it also lost its previous function of being linked to a positive imaginary of possibilities. This is not only because the last utopian energies seem to have largely been spent in the alternative educational movements of the ‘70s, which is when norms such as autonomy, self-determination, etc. had great orienting force, but it is also because they are absorbed in today’s model of education as a technical discipline. In a sense, the utopian and the technical are collapsed into one. The self-directed learner making autonomous decisions on when, where and what he or she wants to learn, is but one of several appropriations of the concept of Bildung, formation or education. The very ubiquity of education and its variants in public, political and economic discourse turns them into fuzzy terms, into plastic words that can take on almost any meaning. Deprived of their denotative dimension, they are lost in connotation.

The tendency towards the scientisation of education in the sense of turning it exclusively into a technical science is, as I will argue in the sections to follow, related to a change of societal time relations. More recently, one of the most encompassing and challenging sociological theories of time has been suggested by Hartmut Rosa in Beschleunigung (2005). Rosa distinguished between four basic relations of modernisation: 1) social relations: differentiation; 2) cultural relations: rationalisation; 3) subjective relations: individualisation; 4) nature relations: instrumentalisation, domestication.

Modernisation or rationalisation, according to Rosa, may not only be distinguished according to the four dimensions mentioned, but also with regards to three dimensions of acceleration: technological acceleration, social change and the acceleration of the pace of life. Technological acceleration may be illustrated with the example of transportation: from horse, to steam engine, to automobile to aircraft. Social change refers to the increase in the deterioration-rate of expectations and experience-orienting actions as well as the shrinkage of timeframes determining function, value and action relations or spheres. The most prominent illustration of this would be the transition from inter- to intra-generational change. The acceleration of the pace of life refers to the condensation and contraction of episodes of action. More tasks have to be fulfilled in ever shorter periods of time. As is obvious, these three dimensions of acceleration are considered separately for systematic reasons, but are of course closely intertwined. Thus, the acceleration of the pace of life is intricately related to technological innovation, especially to modern information and communication technologies.

Undeniably, the intensity and frequency of interaction, a heightened awareness of the finite globe, a main characteristic of the age of globality (Shaw, 2000), and
the ongoing technological revolution all confirm Rosa’s observation on the current intense phase of acceleration. As Rosa has also shown, societal acceleration is not an even process, but occurs in bursts and bouts. All three eras considered here, Enlightenment as early modernity, high modernity and current, late modernity are characterised by distinctive phases of acceleration. With Enlightenment started the “Entsicherung”, the dissociation from certain and given (pre-established) orders; the loss of the transcendent-transcendental “anchor” and a very intensely experienced phase of acceleration. One need only to remember that it was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe who coined the term *velociferic* – a combination of velocity and Lucifer – to indicate the experience of life as it was lived in fast motion.

**ENLIGHTENMENT AND EDUCATION**

There are many variants of this highly influential period in the history of ideas. In the context of this conference, the Swedish and Scottish versions have already been mentioned, and to these may be added the example of the German *Aufklärung*. It is comprised of utilitarian strands as well as speculative and sceptical ones.

The emergence of modern education thus coincided with a “burst of acceleration”, when the future was no longer conceived of as a repetition of the past but as open and “shapable”. The ensuing processes of rationalisation affected educational relations as a social practice, deeply. A group of German Enlightenment Pedagogues, the so-called “philanthropes”, took a utilitarian stance and emphasised industry, discipline and general usefulness. Their pedagogical approaches fit well with Foucault’s concept of the disciplinary society. Successful “insertion” of individuals into the given social order that came to be epitomised by the factory is the main characteristic of this and other early visions of a technologically-oriented pedagogical theory. Somewhat simplistically but on the whole perhaps not incorrectly put, the philanthropes considered it their main task to adapt the dispositions of the educands to societal expectations and requirements.

Even if it is hardly accidental that the 18th century emphasised the plasticity of the human psyche, stressing its adaptability to ever-changing environments, technical intervention was limited on two fronts: by modern science’s state of development and by the fact that education, at that time, was still related to philosophy and theology.

Another strand of Enlightenment thinking was more concerned with belabouring the consequences of the tear, the rift, the break, the difference in the fabric of human and social relations caused by a final severance of the transcendent-transcendental safeguard in the “beyond”, in the divine order. It is from philosophers such as Immanuel Kant that the modern quest for a pedagogical space of possibility originates (Schäfer, 2009), a space of which he proclaimed that it could not be founded in the empirical world. Kant turned René Descartes’ “I think, therefore I am” upside-down into “I am, therefore I think”. As a human being, I am endowed with the capacity to reason, as expressed in the slogan: *sapere aude* [dare to use your mind, dare to know]. Kant did not hesitate to confront the transcendental loss, the disenchantment of the world as Max Weber...
would later term it, without finding an ultimately satisfying answer. In his writings on education, the problem becomes particularly obvious. On the one hand he states that man is nothing but what education makes of him and that to become educated one needs other human beings who have already been educated themselves, but the final stage of education — moralisation — is not accessible through technical intervention as are the previous ones. At the same time, the final stage, though permanently uncertain, can only be attained by having passed through the earlier ones, hence the dialectic of Freiheit und Zwang [freedom and force]. The stages in question are labelled as disciplining, cultivation and civilisation: learning to subdue one’s animal nature, learning cultural techniques such as reading and writing, and becoming acquainted with and adopting the mores and values of society. The final stage, however — moralisation — cannot logically be deduced from the others. Whereas the first stages might be termed socialisation or enculturation, which is the insertion of the individual into a given social order, the last and decisive stage indicates a relation between the individual to himself and the world which is only possible if the human being is free. Wilhelm von Humboldt would take this up and designated it Bildung; the most proportional unfolding of an individual’s inner forces. The provocation of the Kantian Copernican turn, as Alfred Schäfer pointed-out, consists of putting the individual at the center-stage of the social world: from the subject emanates all social order. But if this is the case, the subject and the social order founded by him are forever and irretrievably severed. The recognised and recognisable world, exist only in our perception, not for itself. The objects of traditional metaphysics are not accessible to the perception and cognitions of man. The transcendental thinking “I”, is radically undetermined and free and morality is only possible when this is assumed. However, this turns freedom into a necessary but unverifiable idea (Schäfer, 2009, p. 142).

This central thought may be further illustrated when contrasting the current inflated use of Bildung/education with the original use (Ibid., pp. 185ff), where education and formation stood for the tension between individuation and Vergesellschaftung — Vergesellschaftung in the sense of the old meaning of enculturation or sociation. Humboldt’s effort to determine the boundaries of the effectiveness of the state through Ideen zu einem Versuch die Grenzen der Wirksamkeit des Staates zu bestimmen [Spheres and Duties of Government] (1995)1792 is a good instance to show that the state-mediated relation between individual and society was not regarded as unproblematic. Bildung in this sense is directed to reflexively deal with societal imperatives.

However, tension does not mean antagonism as the final aim of the secular and teleological construction was the higher development of both — the individual and the collective to which he (the female version was not then in use) belonged. This was not a German-specific view, as David Lloyd and Paul Thomas (1998) have shown, using Great Britain in the 19th century as an example. The confluence of theories of the state and theories of culture is directly related to the modern construction of the national society. This also illustrates that Humboldt was part of an international trend at the time: the realignment of state, society and individual. This, by necessity, involved education which in turn evolved into a key institution of the nation state. As
stated, the ambivalences or tensions were clearly seen and therefore, classical pedagogical theory from Rousseau via Humboldt or Schleiermacher claimed a realm independent of immediate social or economical usefulness; a space that allows the individual as subject to relate himself, to “the world”, to others and to society.

If it is true that modern educational thought originates with the Enlightenment and if Enlightenment is related to societal acceleration initiating modernity than more attention needs to be paid to education and societal time relations. On the one hand, acceleration called for more effectivity and efficiency in adapting the child’s dispositions to the requirements of society. This is in line with the emergence of modern institutions as part of Weber’s rationalization process, central for stimulating further processes of acceleration. On the other hand, education is the discipline that periodically questions mechanical adaptations and insists on self-determination. In this regard, education is about establishing the conditions for reflexivity and relationality, the search for practices geared to further a reflexive stance of the subject to the world. In the next significant burst of acceleration which triggered high modernity, the division in educational thinking, as will be illustrated with the case of the United States in the early 20th century, became evident.

(HIGH) MODERNITY AND EDUCATION

The early 20th century can be characterised as a phase of even more acute acceleration than Goethe’s Velociferic age, and the geographical space that came to epitomise high modernity is the United States of America. In the US, European Enlightenment took a different turn, as Ralf Dahrendorf’s dictum of the US as applied Enlightenment reminds us.

An excellent example of the effects of acceleration on education, one not accidentally referred to by Hartmut Rosa himself, my main reference author when it comes to the sociology of time, is Henry Adams’ famous treatise, The Education of Henry Adams, published in 1918, but written mostly in the turbulent crisis-ridden 1890s. Adams, famous historian, son of one of the most distinguished and politically influential families of New England, was highly sensitive to the utter discontinuity of modern times and the obvious inadequacy of past educational solutions. The following quotation illustrates his view and provides another angle, a pragmatic notion of education as providing tools and not a well-designed influencing of dispositions:

As educator, Jean Jacques was, in one respect, easily first; he erected a monument of warning against the Ego. Since his time, and largely thanks to him, the Ego has steadily tended to efface itself, and, for purposes of model, to become a manikin on which the toilet of education is to be draped in order to show the fit or misfit of the clothes. The object of study is the garment, not the figure. The tailor adapts the manikin as well as the clothes to his patron’s wants. The tailor’s object, in this volume, is to fit young men, in universities or elsewhere, to be men of the world, equipped for any emergency; and the garment offered to them is meant to show the faults of the patchwork fitted on their fathers.
At the utmost, the active-minded young man should ask of his teacher only mastery of his tools. The young man himself, the subject of education, is a certain form of energy; the object to be gained is economy of his force; the training is partly the clearing away of obstacles, partly the direct application of effort. Once acquired, the tools and models may be thrown away. The manikin, therefore, has the same value as any other geometrical figure of three or more dimensions, which is used for the study of relation. For that purpose it cannot be spared; it is the only measure of motion, of proportion, of human condition; it must have the air of reality; must be taken for real; must be treated as though it had life. Who knows? Possibly it had! (Henry Adams, 1973, my emphasis)

We can now appreciate Henry Adams’ work as an important intellectual document testifying to the experience of acceleration, the inconsistencies between growing-up in the atmosphere and the educational concepts of the 18th century, being himself a child of the 19th, who finds himself confronted with the challenges and transformations of the 20th, such as those of industrialisation, immigration and urbanisation. These three familiar terms indicate far-reaching changes in all of the dimensions indicated by Rosa. There was technological innovation, such as in the establishment of the assembly line or the manufacturing of automobiles. There were changes in social relations in connection with previously reliable patterns of expectation that could no longer orient action – a point well made by Henry Adams when he emphasised the inadequacy of education to successfully prepare the next generation. And lastly, there was the acceleration of life’s pace. It was an era extremely preoccupied with nerves and nervous diseases, in fact, considering the literature of the time one is under the impression that nervous diseases or disorders became epidemic. Adams’ intellectual journey from unity – the Virgin and the Cathedral of Chartres, to multiplicity – the final chapter entitled Nunc Age! – is contained in his societal diagnosis that the world is multiple and chaotic, but western thought has insisted on viewing it as ordered and unified.

ACCELERATION, (HIGH) MODERNITY AND EDUCATION

At the fin de siècle until well into the 20th century, there were two towering figures dominating American educational thinking: Edward L. Thorndike and John Dewey. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, educational psychology became established as a powerful new academic discipline in many countries and universities. In the US, Edward L. Thorndike was its most famous representative whose long and productive academic life at Columbia University’s Teachers College clearly shaped educational thinking. Thorndike’s mechanistic model did not problematise ethical issues but focused on designing educational interventions certain to elicit desired outcomes:

...the art of giving and withholding stimuli with the result of producing or preventing certain responses. In this definition the term stimulus is used widely for any event which influences a person – for a word spoken to him, a
look, a sentence which he reads, the air he breathes, etc., etc. The term response is used for any reaction made by him – a new thought, a feeling of interest, a bodily act, any mental or bodily condition resulting from the stimulus. The aim of the teacher is to produce desirable and prevent undesirable changes in human beings by producing and preventing certain responses (Thorndike, 2001, p. 7).

Thorndike clearly envisioned a well-adapted individual through educational technological intervention and in the long-run, as Condliffe Lageman (1999) put it: Thorndike “won”, and Dewey “lost”. This verdict is clearly borne-out by today’s emphasis on educational psychology that is more advanced and sophisticated but clearly reminiscent of Thorndike’s approach.

DECELERATION, (HIGH) MODERNITY, AND EDUCATION

Progressive Education, with which Dewey is strongly identified, is the American version of an international movement that would probably not have occurred if it was not by the vast social changes of high modernity. Dewey clearly was not anti-modernist. He spent his long and productive life mainly in cities – the famous Laboratory School was in Chicago, and he then went to New York City, the quintessential high-modern American metropolis; a purely accelerated social space.

However, Dewey’s small-town background and the longing for organic community deeply influenced his pedagogical visions. Dewey’s “school as embryonic community” is strongly reminiscent of town meetings as the prototypical act of democratic citizenship. There are thus strong decelerating elements in his educational thinking.

Dewey is Thorndike’s great opponent although he also shares some common ground with him, not the least of which is anti-idealism. Intensely familiar with continental European philosophy through the St. Louis Hegelians, Dewey was acutely aware of the epistemological problems of this approach and so his answer became, as we all know, American Pragmatism to which he made a particular contribution.

Equally rejecting idealism and “positivistic” sciences such as the version of psychology developed by Thorndike, pragmatism found its own answer: the aim of education is growth. Put even simpler: education is growth. By definition this precluded mechanistic conceptions of individual insertion into social givens, even more to the point, it precluded any limited, one-directional forms of development.

That a man may grow in efficiency as a burglar, as a gangster, or as a corrupt politician, cannot be doubted. But from the standpoint of growth as education and education as growth the question is whether growth in this direction promotes or retards growth in general. Does this form of growth create conditions for further growth, or does it set up conditions that shut off the person who has grown in this particular direction from the occasions, stimuli, and opportunities for continuing growth in new directions? What is the effect of growth in a special direction upon the attitudes and habits which alone open up avenues for development in other lines? (Dewey, 1938, pp. 28–29)
Comparative Education in Late Modernity

Comparing the Positions

It is rather striking that Dewey draws on organic and Thorndike on mechanical metaphors. Adams’ are heavily leaning on physics. It is however, a modern version of physics he is fascinated by and relies on in order to apply it to social phenomena. He was especially intrigued by the second law of Thermodynamics, the Law on Entropy.

Dewey was convinced that in order to further social betterment and individual wellbeing, the educational process had to be conducive to growth, and this growth had to be based on experience in its broadest sense. Growth by definition is decelerating whereas Thorndike’s vision was more conducive to directly furthering the adaptive individual processes necessary to deal with the accelerated social conditions.

It would take further and in-depths studies and probably can never be answered conclusively, but I am inclined to think that Adams, would have taken educational thought in a different direction had he been inclined to develop a theory of education as he tried to develop a theory of history. Adams thinks much for in terms of relations, of momentum, force, inertia of directing and dispersing energy and from there would have taken the problem into a different direction. The opening of spaces, of providing opportunities that is often emphasized in educational thinking from Rousseau onwards was appreciated by him (see the chapter on Harvard College), but in terms of preparing the next generation for any emergency would have been dismissed as insufficient.

Hyper Acceleration, Late Modernity, and Education

When applying Rosa’s distinctions to our current situation, there is no doubt that the present state of society is characterised by yet another burst of acceleration; thinking about technological innovation, the information and communication revolution immediately come to mind. This change is so far-reaching that terms like digital immigrants and digital natives have been coined to indicate how these innovations affect individual life and social relations. However, although social relations are deeply affected by technological innovations, they cannot be reduced to them. The transformations are much more encompassing and many examples may be given to demonstrate that formerly reliable patterns of expectation are dissolving. The transformation of work relations is an excellent instance. High modernity was characterised by a certain mode of production, also known as Fordism, which was a specific work regime that was based on a “normal biography”. Michel Foucault has brilliantly analysed this “disciplinary” society, where the individual predictably moved from one interned space of enclosure to the next one: from family to school, from school to the factory, and so on.

The modern welfare state reinforced decelerating components of this regime by introducing working regulations that divided the workforce’s life into productive and recreational periods, such as after-work hours, holidays, vacations, and retirement. The whole structure was backed by the efforts of trade unions to ever-increase job security, which in turn facilitated long-term life plans, the founding of
families, the purchase of real estate to make permanent homes, etc. Today, these reliable patterns of expectation can no longer be taken as typical or standard. Gilles Deleuze (1990) has described the spaces of enclosure typical of the disciplinary society as moulds and as distinct castings, whereas the current type of society – the control society – is characterised by unbounded modulations: the endless flexibility of lifelong learning replaces the once-in-a-lifetime acquisition of educational certificates. With regards to the acceleration of life’s pace, equally far-reaching changes can be detected: the number, variety and frequency of actions increases with more tasks in ever-shorter periods of time. Via e-mail and smartphones, we are permanently accessible for professional and private communication. The boundary between the two, once strictly separated realms, has become permeable again, but in a different sense than in pre-modern times: whereas formerly, there was no distinction between work (public) and private life, today private life tends to get collapsed into work life, success and in-time delivery being two late modern yardsticks to measure the worth of the individual. The pace of acceleration may be assessed by looking at the tremendous increase of news events; the ticker is the appropriate form to keep-up with the rate and pace.

It is clear that these transformations have significant implications for education, there is a definite expectation to adjust and adapt the psychic structures and dispositions of the next generation to the “hyper” acceleration of late modernity. The first noteworthy observation when studying the manifestation of these expectations is a close relationship between multi-level educational policy and evidence-based educational research.

One of the orienting key-concepts is human capital development. This in turn translates into educational policies such as those in early childhood education that place a strong emphasis on the expertise of professional early childhood workers who must observe, document and develop a child’s capacities as well as cooperate closely with parents and professionals in other areas such as in medicine and social work, in order not to lose precious resource. It also translates into a new relation between early childhood education and school. Transitions from kindergarten to school are more flexible and less rigid. The school changes too. There are significant organisational alterations at a time when traditional bureaucratic regulation is no longer viewed as the epitome of modernity. As comparative research in a European context shows, two types of regulation may be identified: regulation by the evaluative state, characteristic of the conservative European welfare states, and regulation by quasi-markets, characteristic of the liberal welfare regimes (Maroy, 2004). Key terms of international school reform include: outcome-based performance, educational standards and tests, educational contracts, school autonomy, school choice, etc. These regulatory shifts are assumed to influence the dispositions of learners in a desirable direction.

The institutions of higher education are attributed a central role by European educational policy in turning Europe into the economic global powerhouse, which defines a common education space as the backbone of the future knowledge-based economy. Modularisation, shortening of study cycles and a greater emphasis on application through the definition of competencies are the hallmarks of this
ambitious vision. Adult education is then called upon to assist in maintaining an individual’s employability throughout life or preparing him for useful voluntary activities. All of these pedagogical interventions have to be purposefully coordinated, synchronising an ever-greater array of actors: parents, voluntary workers, educational, medical, psychological professionals, representatives of business and trade as well as religious leaders, to name only a few.

Standardisation, synchronisation and coordination of educational processes are thus geared towards successful insertion of individuals into the knowledge-based economy.

The term knowledge and knowledge-based economy is worth being looked at more closely, since it appears such an all-encompassing term.

When activities such as the World Bank’s K4D (Knowledge for Development) with its concomitant KAM (Knowledge Assessment Methodology) are considered, it is rather clear that the “knowledge” referred to privileges its technical and scientific forms (Robertson, 2008). However, one also finds creativity, one of the key terms of our conference, mentioned in this context. Recently, this has received much attention in the educational debate (cf. Marginson, 2009; Araya & Peters, 2010). The reason for this is simply that the creative industries, according to certain theories, are one particular facet of the knowledge economy. The concept itself has many forerunners, such as Peter Drucker and Fritz Machlup (knowledge workers, 1960s), Daniel Bell (post-industrial economy, 1970s) or Robert Reich (symbolic analysts). The author who synthesises Peter Drucker’s, Fritz Machlup’s, Daniel Bell’s and Robert Reich’s approaches and popularised the concept of the creative industries is Richard Florida and his book, *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2004).

> Creativity: the ability to create meaningful new forms. Creativity is multidimensional and comes in many mutually reinforcing forms. It is pervasive and ongoing. We constantly revise and enhance every product, process and activity imaginable, and fit them together in new ways. Technological and economic creativity are nurtured by and interact with artistic and cultural creativity (Florida, 2004, p. 5).

There is a clear link between the activities of the creative sector and place. Florida made a very strong point that the creative industries do not settle just anywhere but are attracted to certain areas which is why Florida considers place, in particular the diverse and pluralistic city, as the central contemporary organising unit. In a very sad sense, the disaster of this year’s love parade in Duisburg might be viewed also in this context, i.e. in the context of multi-level regional and urban governance relations aiming at the transformation of deprived cities into thriving centres of the creative industries.

Commentators on the creative industry have observed that the vagueness of the concept represents an attempt to find a term for a rather multitudinous conglomerate comprised of evolving urban structures, visions of urban planners, real estate speculation, last resorts of municipal policies and academic marketing (Olma, 2009, p. 103). Economically speaking, a large segment of the creative
industry, such as arts and fashion, unless very high-end, is rather insignificant consisting of low-capital, high-risk, small enterprises. The economically relevant part of the creative industries, the part immediately linked to the knowledge economy, concerns research and the patenting of intellectual property. One of the blunt critics of the knowledge society with the name of Brian Holmes, not to be confused with “our” Brian Holmes, the comparativist, has made his point by using South Carolina’s Research Triangle Park, which includes the universities of Chapel Hill, Durham and Raleigh, as an example (2007). The complex has become famous for creating the precedent of the private patenting of public intellectual property, which in turn is related to technology transfer as a means to augmenting universities’ funding and facilitating public-private collaborations. As Michael Peters has meticulously traced in his article on the open education and open science movements, even this broadly democratic open access movement has strong economic underpinnings: in an accelerated world, the cumbersome and time-consuming institutional processes have to be avoided in order not to waste time and immediately bring scientists together for competitive advantages in project bidding.

To do all this has required a change in the institutional nexus that guides the activity of scientists, but also a deep-running change in what Michel Foucault theorised as “governmentality”, i.e. the underlying logic or common sense that structures individual modes of self-evaluation, public expression, relation to others and relation to the future. A number of authors, e.g. Nigel Thrift (2005), deal with the policy-induced realignment of subjective and institutional structures.

Nearly all western states nowadays subscribe to a rhetoric and metric of modernisation based on fashioning a citizen who can become an actively seeking factor of production… And that rhetoric, in turn, has hinged on a few key management tropes – globalisation, knowledge, learning, network, flexibility, information technology, urgency – which are meant to come together in a new kind of self-willed subject whose industry will boost the powers of the state to compete (Thrift, 2005, p. 89).

Speed and network-like structures exemplify two concepts signifying appropriation strategies of accelerated societal conditions. Hardly surprising, the self-directed learner assimilating information on-demand and transforming it into custom-made knowledge corresponds well with this model.

In neo-institutionalist terminology, one could speak of the rise of new myths or metanarratives that are taken as objective descriptions of our social world, not least because of the various policy levels and agencies, including the expert systems, that are mutually reinforcing. A special emphasis should be laid on the cooperation and exchange relations between the major international organisations, the EU, the OECD, UNESCO and the WTO, as well as with political actors on other levels, and the considerable influence of the nation states. Epistemic communities and institutional structures create new forms of educational governance in the political science sense of the term, based on specific rationales, which are almost without alternatives.
DECELERATION, LATE MODERNITY, AND EDUCATION

Given the acuteness of current societal acceleration which deeply impacts social-spatial relations resulting in intensified cooperations and competitions, the individual and collective future seems to hinge upon the ability to keep pace and not fall behind. In this setting, education is reconfigured to weave the previously separate strands together: outcome and process, educational intentions and a focus on the learner. Against this all-encompassing “life long” and “life wide” well-orchestrated and synchronised vision of education, it is difficult to tie such relations to traditional pedagogical predicates such as the responsibility to advocate the right of the child toward the institution on the part of the teacher – which formerly constituted the pedagogical reality – as a special realm outside of the empirical world. This is impossible to ever fully realise, yet is important to bring into the discussion. The new metanarrative of education would of course argue that this is no longer necessary because the tension between student and institution is a matter of the past; we are now designing learning situations in such a way that previous conflicts no longer occur. This is yet to be proven. What we already do know however, is that high-stakes testing and universally-designed education acts such as the American “No Child Left Behind Act of 2001”, have, so far, not been able to evidence themselves as being the tools that provide educational inclusion for all children – as the mentioned act’s title would suggest. High-stakes testing, to which the US law is tied, leads, unsurprisingly, to increased rates of inclusion of weak learners. At least partly, these predictable but unforeseen effects are related to the fact that most of the evidence-based designers of policy do not have organisational theory as their forte. This points to a certain narrowness of the approach which, given the complexity of the object, is not irrelevant. However, on a more fundamental level, a permanent critique of our educational practices is the precondition for making relevant advances. Very simply put: if there is high-stakes testing, there should also be a coalition for essential schools. The relations between the various “agonistic” forces in our field contribute to keeping it dynamic and intellectually vibrant. There is also another reason why a single focus on adapting may not be as effective as desired. Let me make the point by introducing the term “shifting baselines” – a term coined by the social psychologist, Harald Welzer (2008). Welzer’s point is that human perception changes as his social and natural environment changes, depriving him of important points of reference. As self-evident as this seems, the consequences are grave. If climate change, for example, requires behaviour modification, how is this to occur if sensual experiences do not have any references with which to measure the extent of the phenomenon? Shifting baselines is a concept to explain the contradictions between acceleration and sustainability, which in education translates into maintain the chain of generations. It also could be interpreted to mean that a focus too narrowly set on immediate problem solving, on strictly defined competence areas, defines the “economy of the human force”, to use Henry Adam’s words rather narrowly and forces multiplicity into a false unity.
CONCLUSION

So, to again quote the organisers: “Thus in the contemporary rush to reform, there is a massive amount of work for us to do”. Yes, unquestionably. As some colleagues and I propose to investigate in a comparative project: we are “invited” to reconstruct education as a technical science. In a very tangible sense, having especially our young colleagues in view, this trend offers attractive perspectives for a thriving comparative education. Indeed, current societal conditions not only undergo a new phase of acceleration but also lose the bufferings provided by the nation state. Globalisation and internationalisation fluidify social relations. Against this background of modernising education, the discipline of education may reshape itself as a technical science, where the same standards of quality of research and publication are applied as in the natural sciences.

What is lost, however, and here, according to Alfred Schäfer, lies the specificity of those sciences concerned with the human world, is the reminder of the break and rupture in the foundations of social relations. A certain confluence between this view of education as an academic discipline and discussions in political science are evident in the positions by Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, who have the same concern with the political, referring to it as an unresolvable problematic, a place of “want” or “Mangel” [“lack”], of a fundamental constitutional problematics of the pedagogical and the political, as well as the unfoundedness of social, institutional processes. Without maintaining the agonistic relations constitutive of our discipline, redesigned, technised, accelerated education might soon turn over into idle running.

NOTES

1 Of course, the concept of the person is not an Enlightenment creation. Rather, it has a long history in at least four disciplines: philosophy, theology, law and education. However, it may be argued that Enlightenment thinking tended to collapse person and human being with ramifications that can be followed through to today’s human rights practice.

2 Cf. Simon Marginson (2009, p. 127) taking issue on this point with David Harvey (1990): “Despite the metaphor of time as the fourth dimension of space, space-time constitutes a heterogeneous couple.” The reason for this is, according to Marginson, is the differently quality of space and time: “But what is the materiality in time, in duration itself, that matches the ‘thereness’ that we find in the physical universe, the thereness that is altered by transport and communications? We can experience time differently, we can manage time differently, but duration itself is not as plastic in the material sense” (Ibid., p. 126).

3 Admittedly, this sounds very Eurocentric, very much like “Europe in the world” and not at all like “the world in Europe”. It needs to be remembered however, that it is one particular dualism sharpened by Enlightenment that is discussed here. The final section will provide summary and outlook.

4 The different affiliations are also reflected methodologically in the preferences for quantification and explanation or in the preference for hermeneutics and reconstruction of meaning.

5 Chapter 40 of Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre.
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S. Karin Amos

*Professor of Comparative Education*

*University of Tübingen*