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BOOK REVIEW

Europeanizing Education: governing a new policy space

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The book explores and analyses the main policy processes through which the Education and Lifelong Learning project has been advanced across European borders in the last 60 years. As noted on the back cover of the book, "*Europeanizing Education* describes the origins of European education policy, as it metamorphosed from cultural policy to networking support and into a space of comparison and data. The authors look at the early development and growth of research networks and agencies, and international and national collaborations. The gradual increase in the velocity and scope of education policy, practice and instruments across Europe is at the heart of the book".

The book deals with an extensive, multi-dimensional and fluid topic. The authors manage to handle it adequately and in a very economical way, utilizing two methodological axes to present the literature resources and to gradually articulate their line of argumentation. The first axis concerns time and space with reference to which

policies on education are formulated, disseminated and enacted across the borders of European countries. The second axis is about the systematic identification and use of examples in order to present the way networks function, as well as the shifts and the interrelation of policy content at the European, global and local level, changing the governmental model of Europe towards *governance*.

Besides its clear organization, an additional advantage of the book is the fact that the authors utilize and integrate well in their analyses both data resources and ideas developed within the context of three major research projects, based at the University of Edinburgh (Center for Educational Sociology) and at the University of Oxford (Department of Education) over the last seven years (2006-2013). These projects are: "Governing by Numbers: data and education governance in Scotland and England" (2006-2009); "Transnational policy learning: a comparative study of OECD and EU education policy in constructing the skills and competencies agenda" (2010-2012); and "Governing by Inspection: school inspection and education governance in Scotland, England and Sweden" (2010-2013).

The content of the book enriches the literature on globalization and education and policy (Dale & Robertson, 2009, Rizvi & Lingard, 2010) and the more specific literature on policy networks analysis for understanding global education dynamics (Ball, 2012). The authors develop their problematic on the emergence of global governance in relation to education, not with reference to themes and dimensions debated and documented in the growing field of inquiry and research at the global level, such as for example the discussion about the "shift from government to governance" (Rizvi & Lingard, 2012) or about "education as big business" (Ball, 2012), but by focusing on the analytical category of the "European Space of Education" and looking

at its development over a period of few decades, as a result of national, transnational and global actions, networks and programmes.

Although Lawn and Grek do not position their work in the genealogical tradition, their analysis of European education has characteristics (e.g. a historical perspective, an emphasis on the articulation of heterogeneous elements and on the transformation of education policy discourse) which suggest strong influences of this tradition (Howarth, 2000) on their specific approach. Moreover by identifying and analyzing European education as a powerful new space of governance, which is being constructed and works through the flow of policy ideas, knowledge and practices from place to place, sector to sector, interconnected institutions, associations and companies across and within national borders, they contribute to an integration of the multiple and somewhat disperse theoretical ideas about governance and networking, and its centrality in analyzing educational policy and new forms of regulation.

The book is developed in ten closely interrelated chapters. In the first chapter of the book, Lawn and Grek launch the main idea about the creation of the European Space of Education as a new and dynamic policy project which came into existence progressively, and was governed softly and by persuasion, developed by experts, agents and networks, and was de-politicized by the use of standards, comparative data, indicators and benchmarks.

Chapters Two and Three refer to the stages of European Education in the period up to 2000. Starting from the 50s, the authors first present the role of research projects, institutions and skills in the formation of mid-twentieth-century Europe. Following this, they discuss the function of international education policy actors such as UNESCO, the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), and the

International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). They end chapter Two by presenting the idea of European Education as a Common Project, first developed in the Janne Report. Chapter Three describes the move from **"Chaotic Uniformity"** to the rise of the European dimension, cultural affinity and networking in education from 1970 to 2000.

Chapter Four refers to the governing of education through the use of persuasive and unobtrusive power in the governmental policy context that is created by the relation that European Union has established with the new political actors, such as professional and research associations and networks, especially after 2000. More specifically, Lawn and Grek argue persuasively about the significant policy role played by associations, networks and experts, focusing on the formation and the work of one association, namely the European Education Research Association (EERA). It is worth noting the "reflexive" character of the decision to discuss EERA in analyzing the process of construction of the European Education Space, reminding the readers that Martin Lawn is an ex-Secretary General of the European Educational Research Association (EERA), and is currently editor of the association's *European Educational Research Journal*. In chapters Five, Six and Seven, the analysis focuses on the post-comparative phase of EU policy and the development of a strong field of governance that is a framework for governing Europe at a distance. More specifically, in chapter Five, the authors describe how, in the context created by the application of the Open Method of Coordination, experts, ideas brokers, data, standards and various criteria of performativity, e.g. learning outcomes and qualifications, are all used for "assembling a learning space" as a "central part of knowledge economy goals" (p. 78-79). Chapter Six discusses the role of data and measuring in Europe in the post-Lisbon era (2000). An overview of the

Eurydice Reports of 2000, 2002 and 2005 supports the claims made by the authors in this chapter. Chapter Seven looks more broadly at the role of European agencies and actors **-** Eurostat and Eurydice - in the governmental education space in Europe.

Chapters Eight and Nine explore "Europeanizing Education" at the global and national level of political intervention. Chapter Eight focuses on OECD and especially the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) as an agent of Europeanization in Education**.** The different national responses towards the data on students' performance, which PISA has produced for the participating countries all over the world after 2000, are explored in the cases of Finland, Germany and the United Kingdom (England and Scotland). In chapter Nine the authors discuss the idea of travelling policy across Europe from local to European policy level. More specifically, they present the processes, the actors, the organizations and the scenes of policy making through which one such policy, School Self-evaluation (SSE), initially based in Scotland, has been disseminated across Europe. It is the "Effective School Self-Evaluation" (ESSE) project of the Standing International Conference of Inspectors (SICI), funded by the European Commission for the years 2001-2003, that the authors identify as the key network that has enabled the distribution of school self-evaluation far beyond the place of its original inception (p. 147).

The final chapter reviews the whole analysis, culminating in two concluding remarks. The first is about the process of the construction of the European Education Space as a project. They note: "[T]his book explored European education as a project, not a condition or a situation; the exchange and construction of cultural narratives, across a range of areas, produces an imagined space, with a future-focused discourse, incorporating national symbols and calculated forms". The second summarizes their

main claim that "the gradual shift from an indiscernible series of activities in the field of culture and education to a regulated space of learning via benchmarks and indicators is also a narrative about the shift in governance in Europe" (p. 153-154).

The book outlines an important approach to the analysis, meaning making and understanding of the education policy field today, and it will be of interest to those teaching, studying and researching the subject in university departments of education, policy and social sciences. Also, it is a useful resource for scholars and researchers of the new arena of regulation and governance, the European Space of Education. Finally, it could be a useful piece of reading for professional practitioners working in the broad field of education, e.g. school administration, social services, educational organizations, etc.

References

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