Between covenant and contract : the negotiation of academic pedagogic identities

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The de-centred market [position] oriented identities towards satisfying external competitive demands, whereas the segmental, serial ordering of the subjects of the curriculum oriented the identities towards the intrinsic value of the discourse. This tension between the intrinsic and the extrinsic is not, of course, new. What is new is the official institutionalizing of the [de-centred market position] and the legitimizing of the identity it projects. We have a new pathological position at work in education: the pedagogic schizoid position (Bernstein, 1999, p.252).

Abstract

Pedagogic identity, as Bernstein has observed, emerges as reflection of differing discursive bids 'to construct in teachers and students a particular moral disposition, motivation and aspiration, embedded in particular performances and practices' (Bernstein, 1999, p.246). In particular, attempts at curriculum reform aim to incline pedagogic dispositions one way or another. Importantly though – and policy proposals tend to ignore this – identity is as much a social as an individual achievement, and Bernstein reminds us that pedagogic identity 'is the result of embedding a career in a collective social base'. But what is not clear is how policy-driven shifts in identity – and the curricula that are supposed to produce these identities – are to be supported by appropriate social bases, or in other words the forms of social organization that legitimate and sustain particular values and patterns of practice (Moore and Young, 2001). This paper explores one such policy-driven attempt at curriculum reform in South African higher education, and offers a case study of one response to the policy reform, observed through the framework of Bernstein's notion of pedagogic identity, exploring also the forms of social organization which sustain pedagogic practices. The paper is divided into three sections: the first will briefly sketch the policy context; the second will offer a brief synopsis of Bernstein's view of pedagogic identity, and how I propose to use it, and the third section presents the case study.

The policy context

Since the transition to democracy in 1994, higher education in South Africa – like other sectors – has been subject to a series of policy papers and bills which seek to reconstruct the field in various ways. These policy moves reflect two broad imperatives: firstly a response to global developments and the changing role of higher education internationally, and secondly a local concern for economic development, social reconstruction and equity. Higher education is seen as a means of helping to integrate South Africa into the global economy on the one hand, and as a vehicle for correcting the social and economic imbalances inherited from apartheid on the other. A central ambition of the policies has thus been to enhance levels of state control over the higher education system so as to steer the system more effectively towards these goals. A key measure by which the state plans to exert this enhanced control is the academic 'programme'. The Draft White Paper on Higher Education notes that 'the most significant conceptual change is that the single co-ordinated system will be premised on a programme-based definition of higher education' (Department of Education [DoE] 1997, paragraph 2.4). Programmes would thus become the unit by which the system would be planned, governed and funded, enabling a greater responsiveness of the system 'to present and future social and economic needs, including labour market trends and opportunities, the new relations between education and work, and in particular, the curricular and methodological changes that flow from the information revolution' (DoE 1997, paragraph 2.6). Programmes are thus not only a structural device to enable better steerage of the system; they are intended to be a vehicle for a qualitatively different form of curriculum.

Evident in the policy texts are signals that curricula should shift away from discipline-based degrees towards more vocationally purposive 'programmes' - 'It would also break the grip of the traditional pattern of qualification based on sequential, year-long courses in single disciplines.' (DoE, 1997, para 2.6) - a shift of particular significance for the natural sciences and humanities, and a trend roundly critiqued in, for example, Muller (2000). A further justification for the shift towards programmes is the argument that curricula need to be *responsive* to the needs of society. For example, the report of the National Commission on Higher Education (NCHE) makes a connection made between a particular notion of educational design and the goal of greater responsiveness to economic and social needs. Programmes, we are told,

> are almost always invariably trans-, inter- or multidisciplinary…. The demands of the future
> of South Africa as a developing country require that programmes, while necessarily diverse,

should be educationally transformative. Thus they should be planned, coherent and integrated; … they should be learner-centred, experiential and outcomes-oriented; they should develop attitudes of critical enquiry and powers of analysis; and they should prepare students for continued learning in a world of technological and cultural change (NCHE in SAUVCA, 1999, p.7).

The subsequent regulations governing academic programmes issued by SAQA blend the discourses of outcomes-based approaches and accountability. The regulations require a qualification to (amongst other things) have a 'defined purpose', consist of 'planned combinations', produce in learners an 'applied competence' which is made visible in 'integrated assessment … to ensure that the purpose of the qualification is achieved'. The body representing university top executives (the South African Universities' Vice Chancellors' Association – SAUVCA) sees the advantages of programmatization lying in its potential for increasing levels of accountability and (by implication) centralisation of control.

SAUVCA has published a Facilitatory Handbook (SAUVCA, 1999) intended to guide the implementation of the policy in South Africa's universities. The handbook is explicit about the implications of the policy: what is required is nothing less than

> a new model of Higher Education practice. For example, academics will now have to make explicit their learning outcomes and assessment criteria and offer these for public scrutiny. When designing curricula, they will be required to work in programme teams rather than as single individuals…. The demand for summative integrated assessment, across specific course outcomes and across modules within a programme will be particularly demanding in relation to design and implementation, given traditional territorial and individualistic approaches to teaching…. (SAUVCA, 1999, pp.27-8).

The policy of programmatization[1] was thus anticipating significant shifts in the nature of academic practices, in the professional identities of academics, and in the forms of authority that are invoked to regulate curriculum decisions. In particular, it anticipates a weakening of the insulations between disciplines, and that academics will participate in collectives which cross disciplinary boundaries, and which are predicated on serving external accountabilities. This accountability has at least two dimensions: firstly a responsiveness to

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[1]   Whilst the account I have given here of the policy draws from national level policy discourses, and while the study referred to in this paper looks at how institutions have responded to the policy environment, it is clear that there is no one-way linear pattern of 'policy-response' at work here (Muller, 2001). South Africa's policies are themselves responses to wider global discourses, and (as I have shown in a prior paper) at least one of the institutions under study had embarked on a process of programmatization *before* the national policy was published (Moore, 2002).

broader social and economic goals, and secondly an accountability for achieving the cross-cutting learning goals stipulated for academic programmes as a whole (rather than simply discipline-specific ones). Both of these dimensions ask for a weakening of prior insulations between departments or disciplines as academics meet to agree on graduate identities deemed suitable for the contemporary workplace, translate these into overarching outcomes that curricula should achieve, and then (at least) modify disciplinary curricula or (preferably) collaborate in interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary curricula to achieve these outcomes.

What is not discussed in any way are the organizational implications of sustaining such curricula over the longer term. Clearly some organizational means will be needed to hold together a changing group of academics across disciplinary boundaries, a means robust enough to provide a platform to contain, and adjudicate between, competing interests and views in order to arrive at a validation of the knowledge and skills prioritized for any given programme. In other words the policy is silent on the new organizational form that will need to constitute the epistemic community for a multi- or interdisciplinary programme.

We have come to learn, however, that the good intentions of policy are seldom if ever translated straightforwardly into practice (Ball, 1993). Confirming the lack of linearity in policy processes, Ensor's study of curriculum restructuring across South Africa's universities shows that despite the policy pressure towards interdisciplinary curricula, there is little evidence of interdisciplinarity:

> The credit exchange discourse has pressured faculties of science and humanities to provide a professional or vocational face to their academic provision. … Overall, though, it would seem that curricula have been re-packaged and redesigned … but remain recognisable in terms of their disciplinary origins. (Ensor, 2002, pp.15–17).

And confirming the centrality of 'people and practices', Ensor's earlier (1998) study of one attempt at interdisciplinarity suggested that the high levels of conflict noted in her study were the consequence of difficulties in reconciling opposing principles for the construction of curriculum, and that these were 'interwoven with equally potent issues of disciplinarity and identity' (Ensor, 1998, p.103). The opposing principles of curriculum construction are closely bound up with differing identity positions, and the vindication of one principle above another has consequences for the respective identities. Although new forms of curriculum were being demanded, no new mechanisms were in place

to manage the competing claims, with the consequence that 'the debate polarized very rapidly and resolution became impossible' (Ensor, 1998, p.103). The study reported below is thus an effort to explore in closer detail one of the relatively rare cases where academics seemed to participate willingly in what was billed as an interdisciplinary programme. The interest here is to see whether a changing form of academic community (predicated on changing values) is emerging to support a changing form of curriculum.

Pedagogic Identity

In this section, I draw on the sociology of education of Basil Bernstein to sketch a definition of identity, and to suggest some of the identity types currently at work in the field of academia. I also draw on the work of other authors who have explored issues of identity and change in higher education curriculum.

As we noted at the outset, Bernstein has suggested that initiatives of curriculum reform are concerned to change the 'bias and focus of official knowledge', and that these competing initiatives attempt to construct different pedagogoic identities. Bernstein emphasizes, however, that the construction of identity is not a purely solitary and inward psychological construction, but that it is formed through social processes. Identity, he says, 'is the dynamic interface between individual careers and the social or collective base. … [I]dentity arises out of a particular social order, through relations which the identity enters into with other identities of reciprocal recognition, support, mutual legitimization and finally through a negotiated collective purpose' (1996, p.73). This is consistent with Mary Henkel's (2000) 'communitarian' view which sees identity as shaped by the communities it is embedded within, and which provide the normative space for individual choices. From this view, the various institutional communities (and their respective values and practices) in which academics locate themselves thus play a major role in shaping their professional identities. Our interest is thus in any attempts that have been made to change the social form of these communities (as is suggested in the policy), and how this is (or is not) reflected in the identity projections of individual academics.

Bernstein distinguishes between two identities, which can be generated within reasonably autonomous institutions: the therapeutic and market positions. With the *market* identity, the institution shapes its pedagogy and management

to produce products which have an exchange value in a market. Management tends to be explicitly hierarchical, and acts to monitor the effectiveness of the components of the institution in satisfying and creating local markets, and to reward and punish accordingly.

> We have here a culture and context to facilitate the survival of the fittest as judged by market demands. The focus is on the short term rather than the long term, on the extrinsic rather than the intrinsic, upon the exploration of vocational applications rather than upon exploration of knowledge. The transmission here views knowledge as money. And like money it should flow easily to where demand calls…. [This] position constructs an outwardly responsive identity rather than one driven by inner dedication. Contract replaces covenant…. The [market] position projects contingent, differentiated competitive identities (Bernstein, 1999, pp.250-251).

By contrast, the *therapeutic* position emphasizes 'an integrated modality of knowing and a participating co-operative modality of social relation'. Compared to the competitive identities of the market position, this position projects (ideally) stable, integrated identities with adaptable, co-operative practices: 'the management style is soft, hierarchies are veiled, power is disguised by communication networks and interpersonal relations' (1999, p.251). Bernstein notes that the pedagogy of this position (because of its collaborative and student-centred approaches) is relatively costly, and that this identity position is sponsored by a social group with relatively little power.

How can we apply Bernstein's categories to the contemporary arena of South African higher education? It seems that the policies aim to shift the orientation of higher education from an emphasis on inward-looking disciplines, to a position where disciplines and curricula are oriented towards meeting the needs of the economy and social change. However it has to be noted at this point that the policy texts are equivocal in that they seem, in some places, to support a shift towards interdisciplinarity and vocationally-oriented curricula whilst, in other places, they appear to continue to affirm the importance of disciplinarity.

Ensor, for example, suggests that the curriculum policy texts have featured the opposing influences of a inward-looking disciplinary discourse and an outward-looking credit-accumulation-and-transfer discourse (Ensor, 2002). She also notes two further discourses, in her view somewhat weaker in influence, which are respectively a professional discourse (which faces outwards towards the physical, natural and social world) and a therapeutic discourse (which is also of an inward orientation, but which focuses on the fulfillment of the inner competence of the individual). In her schema, Ensor

links the disciplinary and professional discourses with a performance model of pedagogy, and the therapeutic and exchange discourses with a competence model of pedagogy (see Bernstein, 1996 and Muller, 2000 for a discussion of these models of pedagogy). It is here that I would like to propose an alternative schema to Ensor's, one that retains the introjected/projected distinction, but which substitutes an emphasis on the mode of pedagogy with an emphasis on the nature of the social relations between academics, essentially the shift from traditional high levels of individual autonomy and performances to the policy-driven pressure for more collective forms of practice, which I noted in my account of the policy texts earlier.

To illustrate this, I'll provisionally represent these four theoretically-derived positions diagrammatically. For the axes of the diagram below, I use the two key pressures for change embedded in the policy: the shift from an insular *introjected* orientation towards a more outwardly integrated and responsive *projected* orientation, and the shift from high levels of personal autonomy within disciplinary groupings (*insular* relations) to patterns of teamwork across traditional boundaries (*connective* relations).

Diagram 1: Identity positions in contemporary academic discourse

	Introjected	**Projected**
Insular	Disciplinary (old collegium)	Professional
Connective	Therapeutic (new collegialism)	Market (entrepreneurial)

The policy thus attempts to exert pressure for (especially) academics in the formative disciplines (the 'disciplinary/old collegium' section) to move towards the bottom two quadrants. Although Bernstein argues that the therapeutic position is a relatively weak one, it is one that is nevertheless articulated in the advocacy literature on higher education (see for example Harvey and Knight's (1996) account of 'new collegialism' as the social form

to replace what they call the 'cloisterism' of the past). Diagram 2 below summarizes the features of the respective identity positions:

Diagram 2: Characteristics of Identity Positions

Identity	Disciplinary	Therapeutic	Market	Professional
Discursive orientation	Introjected	Introjected	Projected	Projected
Curriculum organization	Collection	Collection/ Integration	Collection/ Integration	(New) collection
Social relations	Insular	Connective (internal)	Connective (external)	Insular

This diagram distinguishes these respective discursive positions as ideal-types, and it is important to make two points at this stage. Firstly, these positions are *in practice* very varyingly realized, with the disciplinary and professional positions being very strongly institutionalized, whilst the market and therapeutic positions are very weakly represented in the two institutions under study. Secondly, I want to suggest that the market and therapeutic positions are necessary but *transitional* positions in the movement of some introjected disciplinary singulars towards projected professional or vocational regions (see Diagram 3 below). In order for singulars to collaborate across disciplinary boundaries in an interdisciplinary project, which eventually becomes codified and institutionalized as a newly-emerging region, it is necessary for discipline-based academics to abandon insularity in pursuit of the 'vocational applications' of the market position, and/or the 'integrated modality of knowing and a participating co-operative modality of social relation' of the therapeutic position. Once the new region has coalesced and found stable organizational forms, then the social relations of academics within that form begin to take on the features of a professional or regionalizing position, with increasing forms of specialization within an established field with an identity in its own right. But such a transition has as its primary engine the processes of knowledge production, rather than transmission. Interdisciplinary curriculum which does not ride on the coat-tails of a regionalizing field of knowledge production and/or a field of practice would seem to have a flimsy

base for the achievement of cross-border consensus, and may be consequently quite unstable in the absence of authoritative criteria for recontextualisation (see Muller, 2001).

Diagram 3: Potential transitions of identity

Therapeutic

Disciplinary (singulars)→ → Professional (regions)

Market
(transitional positions)

As we noted earlier, there is a critical relationship between the production and reproduction of knowledge, identity, and the social forms which sustain both knowledge and identity. Bernstein (and others, e.g. Henkel, 2000) have made clear the social basis of identity formation. Moore and Young also remind us that knowledge is essentially social in character, and derives from particular sets of codes and values pursued systematically within specialist communities and networks. These codes and practices historically found organizational form in university subject departments and specialist professional and academic organizations concerned with knowledge production. Moore and Young argue that claims for shifting forms of knowledge in the curriculum should not be considered apart from 'the role of specialist communities, networks and codes of practice' that are needed to sustain these (2001, p.16). In other words, attempts to change curriculum towards more integrated forms of knowledge has implications for the forms of social organization that underpin curriculum delivery, and thus for the social relations which sustain particular identities.

At this point it is important to identify two key characteristics of forms of social organization that contribute to their cohesion and sustainability. The first characteristic is the *degree of institutionalization* of the community, or the extent to which the organization of the community is (or is not) formalized in a bureaucratic structure which distributes resources or which has an institutional life beyond the vicissitudes of its constituent members. To illustrate this, the diagram below maps out some of the organizational forms characteristic of the academic context, using as the horizontal axis the earlier distinction between insular and connective forms of association, and having as

the vertical axis the distinction between institutionalised or bureaucratic organizational structures and more informal structures:

Diagram 4: Organizational forms in universities

Organizational Forms	Insular	Connective
Bureaucratic/Formal	Departments	Institutes
Informal	Epistemic networks	Project networks

In the diagram above, epistemic networks are the (often) international networks of academics formed through commitments to particular specialisations within disciplines; such networks seldom coincide with the formal structures of subject departments which typically bring together a range of specialists with differing epistemic priorities within a disciplinary field. Project networks, however, bring together different specialisms in the interests of an overarching project; the formal institutionalization of such a grouping typically takes the form of an institute.

The second key characteristicis that of *ideological consensus*, or the degree to which members of a community share similar frames of reference about issues central to the focus of that community. In the university sector, these issues may be to do with disciplinary knowledge, with pedagogy, with the purposes and methods of interdisciplinary projects, etc. Thus each of these organizational forms (noted above) may be more or less ideologically coherent in terms of the degree to which crucial frames of reference are shared by its members.

In the case of subject departments, a weak consensus may be compensated for by the strength of the disciplinary identities, the institutionalised organizational form and the role it plays in distributing resources. The generally weak institutionalization of epistemic communities is counter-balanced by a strong primary disciplinary identity and the ideological coherence manifested in the common literature and methodology of the episteme. But a project network that is informally organized and which fails to achieve or sustain the ideological consensus needed for the connective project

may thus provide a weak reciprocal social base for the values and practices needed to sustain the identities of its participants.

The case study which follows considers one rare example of an attempt to construct an informal interdisciplinary organizational form. The study explores the identity projections articulated by the academics during the course of curriculum restructuring, considers the organizational and ideological coherence of the grouping, and assesses the extent to which a sustainable social form is emerging.

Case Study

This case study is drawn from a larger comparative study of the implementation of curriculum restructuring policy in the science and humanities faculties of two South African universities with a particular interest in the responses of academic staff. This study aims to explore the programmes implementation process, seeking to understand some of the motivations and conditions that have driven the responses to the policy. Compared to the other universities in the country, the two chosen for this study are relatively well-established institutions with strongly entrenched traditions of discipline-based departments, and with good research track-records. These institutions were chosen for the study in the knowledge that the assumptions of the policy about weakening of disciplinary identities would be particularly challenging for universities with strong departmental cultures. In 2000, the year of principal data gathering, the two institutions (UniA and UniB) were respectively in their first year and second year of programme implementation, although effectively both were implementing the changes at second-year undergraduate level. Data for the broader study included in-depth interviews with academic staff at all levels associated with the programmatisation process, as well as institutional documentation of various kinds, where this was available.

The broader study reviewed the programmatization of curricula in the two faculties and found - like Ensor (2002) above - that, institutional rhetoric notwithstanding, responses tended to preserve discipline-based collection modes of curriculum, slightly re-packaged to suggest compliance with the policy. The study then focused particularly on the rare contexts where claims were made for significant shifts either in the structure of curriculum or in the social relations between staff. In this case, the programme in question was

enthusiastically endorsed as an interdisciplinary departure from the norm of other programmes in the UniA science faculty, involving a unique manifestation of teamwork across departmental and faculty boundaries. The data for this case study comes principally from interviews with four members of staff (including the programme convenor), and from some programme documentation.

The case study concerns a new programme developed in the science faculty of UniA, called a B.Sc. in Physical and Mathematical Analysis (PMA), a three-year degree. The programme is offered by academics from four departments (Mathematics, Applied Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science) across two faculties (Science and Engineering). The claim is made that the PMA programme is 'interdisciplinary'. The evidence suggests, however, that the programme is mostly multidisciplinary, consisting of various discipline-based modules offered by participating departments (modules which are also offered to other students in other programmes), with the possible exception of a project-based course (Projects in Computational Physics) which is run by the programme convenor (a physicist) and which focuses on 'interdisciplinary' approaches to problem-solving. The interest in the case study nevertheless continues to focus on the social grouping, and the extent to which it represent a new orientation amongst academics.

This analysis will proceed firstly to establish the various identity projections which are articulated, before moving on to a consideration of the social form(s) that appear to be operating in this context. The data under consideration include (briefly) the claims made for the case study programme in the public discourses of the institution, and (at greater length) the more private perspectives offered in interviews with academic staff. The analysis concludes with a consideration of the possible variants a 'therapeutic' identity might take, as well as a discussion of the organizational forms needed to sustain these.

Identity Projections

As we've noted in diagram 2 above, the key criteria distinguishing market from therapeutic identities are firstly whether the principles for curriculum construction are derived internally from within the disciplines (introjection) or externally from a field of practice or a policy field (projection), and secondly whether the social relations are primarily connective externally (with the market) or internally (with other colleagues across disciplinary boundaries). In

terms of the first of these criteria (the recontextualisation principles), it emerges from interviews that reference to market-related signifiers in promotional material is more rhetorical than substantive. This is borne out by testimony from all four interviewees that consultations with industry about the graduate outputs of the programme had not in fact been a significant factor in the design of the programme.

> Now the committee thinks that people like that will be useful. I think the flaw in the whole argument might be that the committee didn't widely test industry to see whether there was indeed such a need. They *assumed* that there was such a need (AS12, p.2).

Indeed one interviewee (who himself projects a strong instrumental identity – see below) launches a critique of the PMA curriculum development process, putting the view that there was no clear (market-based or other) recontextualising principle with which to adjudicate the competing disciplinary claims for curricular space, resulting in an overloaded curriculum:

> You see the PMA has quite a different philosophy, a different approach. What happened there was that they said 'Well it may be a good idea to develop a programme. We don't really know what we want to do with it, but let us start talking.' What they did … is got them together and then they sat down and they started to talk. And then one person would say 'Well, I think *this* is really important!' And another person would say '*This* is really important!' Important for what? … It still doesn't have any focus whatsoever. If I want to convince a student to take that, I don't know what to tell them, except that this is really going to be a hard course, because you are going to do a lot more than is standard for B.Sc. students. …But I can't tell them 'This is what you'll be able to do with it' (AS16, p.8).

It is clear that the process of curriculum construction is not driven by a strong and coherent external or projective principle from outside the academy. Instead the choice of disciplines drawn into the collaboration are based on an awareness of how contemporary knowledge production in these related fields depended on other disciplinary contributions. The actual content of the discipline-based constituent courses is determined by the internal priorities of the respective departments, and the courses often predate the programmes policy, serve more than one programme, and (with one exception) are not purpose-designed for the PMA programme. Any external or instrumental purpose is thus only weakly conceived or actualised.

In the absence of the market as a central motive for the emergence of the programme, what in fact were the impulses driving the PMA programme? All respondents agree that the PMA initiative was led by one individual (the programme convenor), a relatively junior member of staff at the time (at senior lecturer level), and it "came not from within the power structures, but

from outside" (AS9, p.1). The initiative is not strictly a response to the programmes policy – it was mooted before the programmes policy, but gained impetus from the policy, which in the view of the convenor opens a space for relatively marginal interests to be asserted. He sees himself as following the theoretical leading-edge of the discipline, a cognitive project which requires connective relations across disciplinary boundaries.

> That is probably the one thing where the [programmes policy] gave us a break. Because I read the … [policy] paper … and thought 'Well, gee, this is our chance to put into practice what has never been possible, even overseas, and that is to go inter-disciplinary with the backing of the authorities!' … I've been involved in complexity and chaos for a while, so I have a tendency to look at things more inter-disciplinarily (AS9, p.3).

Although the convenor makes much of the 'interdisciplinary' nature of the programme, there is nevertheless clear support for the value of basic disciplinary training as the core building blocks of students' competence. It is clearly understood that disciplinarity precedes interdisciplinarity. In the course of a long interview, the convenor's *cognitive* interests (in the production of knowledge) are repeatedly foregrounded, while there is little or no mention of the market, or industry, as a conditioning factor.

Other respondents similarly are at pains to emphasize the cognitive motivation behind their involvement in the PMA programme:

> One thing that was a very interesting outcome of this PMA has nothing directly to do with students, but with projects that we have all been involved in. We have projects in seismic monitoring – for the mines specifically. … For me, personally, that has been the most exciting part, in that I get to work with people from Maths, a little bit from Physics and we all try and tackle the same problem from different angles and talk about it. … So that part of it is very exciting for me because we all bring our strengths, our perceptions to this problem and for me that is the most exciting part (AS15, p.2).

Having established the cognitive motives, the question is whether the intellectual interest in interdisciplinarity provided a platform for revised approaches to pedagogy. But throughout the interviews (which followed a semi-structured, open-ended format to encourage interviewees to elaborate their own priorities), it is clear that pedagogy is not a primary motivating factor drawing the colleagues into the collective. Indeed the structure of the programme (made up almost entirely of pre-existing courses serving a range of programmes) has ensured that no purpose-designed modules (with one exception) were possible, and thus little space was available for alternative modes of pedagogy, and no interviewee has asserted a pedagogic reform project as the motivation for their involvement in the PMA programme.

Further, it is clear that in the rest of PMA courses it is pedagogic business-as-usual, in the normal performance mode characteristic of most of higher education.

In summary, then, there is clear evidence of a strong *cognitive* project drawing these colleagues into collaborative relationship, a project which emphasises the possibilities of interdisciplinary work for the purposes of research. There is little or no evidence that the programme is driven by market-related identities, nor is there any evidence that the collaboration is motivated primarily by a project of pedagogic reform.

Social Organization

The next step of the analysis considers the form of social organisation associated with the PMA programme. The PMA website makes much of the relationship between the various academics comprising the PMA team:

> The team is the heart and soul of the PMA programme. It has grown organically over the last two years to encompass a diverse, stimulating, sometimes chaotic crowd. The team meets monthly with the express aim of exchanging ideas and learning from each others' expertise. … Membership is defined operationally by active participation in PMA affairs and of course agreement with its evolved premises and goals (PMA website, p.8).

The grouping met regularly over a period of 18 months to develop the PMA curriculum. During the first interview in April 2000, the convenor spoke passionately about the cohesion that had been achieved:

> The team was assembled with me as a nucleus, with very little active opposition. … Some people drifted away and didn't come back. Others stayed and others were re-appointed, and so on. Some went on sabbatical. So it shook itself down to the point where the people who came knew they wanted to come and we actually got to know each other as a group and as people. So it wasn't just the programme, it was the people. The programme [administration] … was more and more replaced in these meetings by a colloquium situation, where you want to make sure that what we call interdisciplinarity is not something that just consists of a bunch of course codes, but is actually something where people who have the knowledge are talking to the other disciplines, and that has worked extremely well, to the point that now I could probably abandon the PMA [curriculum] and still have what we really need. (AS9, p.6).

This is acknowledged by other members:

> I think the direct benefit of all this was that it brought colleagues from different departments, from different faculties, together to talk about what they were doing and what they could do together. … And this was very useful for us, because one of the nice side

benefits of the whole process has been the construction of a collegial atmosphere (AS12, p.2).

Although the establishment of the curriculum, the informal monthly colloquia and the ongoing contacts between individuals across departmental boundaries were a significant sign of group cohesion, the crucial dimension of collaborative knowledge production seems curiously individualized. All interviewees spoke very positively about their involvement in the seismic monitoring project conducted in collaboration with an industry-based initiative. But rather than the PMA grouping working as a cohesive team on this project, it seems that the external private-sector organization instead established separate contracts with individual UniA academics, and it was thus possible for such work to be conducted independent of the auspices of the PMA grouping. Communication within the grouping about the seismic monitoring project was thus voluntarist rather than an intrinsic feature of collective organizational learning. It seems that this voluntarist communication around knowledge production weakened what perhaps could have been the key site for the growth of consensus and a consolidation of a project identity, and thus for a collective (rather than an individualist) fulfilment of the intellectual impulses which clearly motivate these academics.

Whilst the activity of knowledge production failed to provide a basis for growing social coherence amongst the group, the curriculum also failed to provide such a basis. All the constituent courses of the programme, with one exception, are pre-existing courses provided by the contributing departments. All these courses serve other programmes (with larger enrolments than PMA), and thus none are custom-designed for PMA purposes. The one course which is custom-designed for PMA is designed and delivered by the convenor himself, again providing no platform for cross-border collaboration. And, as we have seen above, at least one member of the team (AS16) had serious doubts about the logic of the PMA curriculum, and in the course of the interview he quickly makes it plain that he is much more committed instead to a rival programme in another faculty, which has been constructed following a strong market-instrumentalist logic. There is thus no curricular or pedagogic project which commands the ongoing commitment of these academics, and the work of sustaining the identity of the programme is left to the convenor.

Whilst senior figures in the administration endorsed the PMA project with enthusiasm in interviews, the new grouping remained unformalised through any allocation of resources or administrative support. The programme also failed to attract significant student numbers. Interviewees account for the latter

in various ways: usually a lack of institutional investment to enable appropriate marketing, or an overloaded and demanding curriculum. By early 2002, the PMA initiative is showing signs of collapse. In follow-up interviews conducted in January, it emerges the monthly colloquium series collapsed in 2001 when the responsibility for driving the colloquium was delegated by the convenor to another colleague who failed to convene it at all. Further, the convenor resigns as PMA co-ordinator, chiefly, he says, in order to provoke clarity about whether or not the initiative has support from other members of the team, and from management.

Conclusion

This case study has set out to explore a possible example of a changed division of academic labour to see whether significantly modified social relations between academics (underpinned by changing values) are emerging in the context of contemporary policy pressures. I have drawn on Bernstein's notions of therapeutic and market identity to distinguish these patterns from traditional academic patterns of practice, and the motivations which condition them. It is clear, however, that in both institutions under study in the larger project from which this case study is drawn the primary forms of curriculum structure (disciplinary singulars) and social organization (discipline-based departments) remain the overwhelmingly dominant patterns. Against this strongly drawn landscape, cross-boundary initiatives like that sketched above are faint (and sometimes fading) outlines. However, the distinction between various identity positions remains a useful analytic for interpreting the discursive projections of academics at a time when academic roles are under considerable stress from various directions.

I conclude with two observations. Firstly, I want to suggest that the therapeutic identity proposed by Bernstein has two possible sub-forms: a *cognitive* sub-form and a *pedagogic* sub-form, variants that are predicated on the nature of the primary project that provides the occasion for collaborative association. Ensor (2002), for example, has suggested that a therapeutic identity is characterized by competence modes of pedagogy, and this is a perfectly possible eventuality, although still relatively rare in higher education. Competence mode therapeutic projects may indeed be possible, but this mode of pedagogy is not *required* for the realization of the identity. Other documented examples of therapeutic associations based on a pedagogic project include Ensor (1998) and Moore (2000), each of which aimed to

weaken both organizational and epistemological boundaries in the production of generic competencies. By contrast, I have shown that the case study above (and those illustrated in Moore, 2002 and forthcoming) provide instances of therapeutic identities predicated on cognitive projects, driven by intellectual interests, which have found expression in embryonic (and often unstable) social forms.

Secondly, I want to suggest that this particular instance of therapeutic-style association seems headed towards failure for a number of key reasons. In the first instance, the key role of collaboration in knowledge production has failed to fulfil its potential as a socially-binding project (by providing, for example, opportunities for new epistemic common ground), and thus also as a potential arena from which to generate more effective principles for recontextualization. Secondly, the delivery of the curriculum itself provides little ongoing pretext for advancing a common cognitive or pedagogic project. Thirdly, the absence of the institutionalization of the project in some formal form has required that the social cohesion for the project be provided in the form of charismatic leadership from the convenor. This is not sustainable in the medium- to long-term, especially against an organizational landscape which remains traditionally structured. Individuals involving themselves in the new PMA structure must face Janus-like towards both old and new structures, but inevitably when competing demands arise, it is the old structures which command priority because of their role in resource distribution, and perhaps because of the enduring base they provide for academic identity. The question is whether or not more formal institutional investment in the new initiative would have produced a more sustainable organizational base for the nascent intellectual and curricular interests.

To conclude, we return to the issue identified at the outset: the policy of programmatization argued for an alternative curricular and organizational form, but it is clear that insufficient attention has been given to how such organizational forms are to be sustained. In the professional faculties, vocational programmes (Engineering, Medicine, Law, etc.) are usually supported by formal organizational structures in the shape of faculties, departments and professional bodies, and these act to distribute resources, sustain identities, and to ensure the epistemic integrity of their associated curricula. In the case of the humanities and the natural sciences in the institutions under study, however, the process of programmatization enjoyed no similar organizational support and we see the consequences of this, even for instances where the cross-boundary initiative emerged organically from the motivations of academics themselves, supported by developments in the

broader field of knowledge production. This has implications for how the programmes-based approach to system steerage will find effect in these faculties in the longer term, and for how the quality assurance of such programmes is to be achieved.

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