

**Philanthropic governance: charitable companies, the commercialisation of education and *that thing* called 'democracy'.**

Antonio Olmedo, University of Roehampton, United Kingdom.

**[FINAL VERSION]**

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Even before the recent economic meltdown of the 'nth' phase of capitalism, the winds that propelled the expansion of neoliberal modes of governance had already begun to change direction. As Ong suggests, "in recent years, shake-ups in global events and in the social sciences have required a shift away from models of stabilized world arrangements to the analysis of heterogeneous situations contingently shaped by global forces" (Ong, 2012, p. 25). As an example, the World Bank's new impetuous promoting public-private partnership (PPP) schemes in all domains of public policy was accompanied by calls for novel reformulations and readjustments of traditional capitalist logics and mechanisms, and new political frameworks where such changes could take place (Bishop & Green, 2010). Gates' *Creative capitalism* is a good example of the former. According to the billionaire businessman, who has recently metamorphosed into a 'global' philanthropist:

The genius of capitalism lies in its ability to make self-interest serve the wider interest (...) but to harness this power so it benefits everyone, we need to refine the system"; and, to do so, we need to develop an "approach where governments, businesses, and nonprofits work together to stretch the reach of market forces so that more people can make a profit, or gain recognition, doing work that eases the world's inequities" (Gates in Kinsley, 2010, pp. 9-10).

Creative capitalism calls for new political sensitivities and forms of governance that orbit around the traditional capitalist binary axis: profit (recognition) / market (competition). David Cameron, the UK's current Prime Minister, picked up the gauntlet and, in his first major speech since winning the 2010 election, he sketched a straightforward response to Gate's challenge. At the heart of the new coalition government strategy, the *Big Society* champions a new form of governmentality in which the government is not at the centre and gives away his role as the most substantive player in the provision of public services. In his own words:

(...) we have got to open up public services, make them less monolithic, say to people: if you want to start up new schools, you can; if you want to set up a co-op or a mutual within the health service, if you're part of the health service, you can (...) I don't believe that you just sort of roll back the state and the Big Society springs up miraculously. There are amazing people in our country, who are establishing great community organisations and social enterprises, but we, the government, should also be catalysing and agitating and trying to help build the Big Society.<sup>1</sup>

Both Gates' *creative capitalism* and Cameron's *Big Society* aim to extend neoliberal sensitivities into places and spaces where they had not had access before. Indeed, the argument is now being made that the disciplines of competition and profit are what is needed to reform and re-energise the provision of public sector services. On the one hand, governing within this new paradigm entails a redefinition of the relationship between the domains of the economy and the social. It also involves the design of new ways of addressing social problems in which the boundaries between government and state, public and private, processes and results, common wealth and individual profit, charity and benefit, are made increasingly indistinguishable. However, as Ong (2012, p. 26) reminds us, "it is especially a mistake to fuse political sovereignty with capitalist might, as these are separate technologies of power that interact in complex ways". It is this space of interaction, where the economy invites the state to adapt and the state responds by 'recycling' capitalist solutions to do so, that concerns us here. In short, both schemes sketch a scenario where, as Jessop (1998, p. 43) portrayed it, "the invisible hand will be combined with a visible handshake". On the other hand, they require building up a set of conceptions, new policy technologies and apparatuses intended to operate in complex networked contexts. As the advocates of the new model of governance suggest, in order to achieve gains in efficiency and innovation, those 'policy solutions' that traditionally fell under the domains and responsibilities of the government should now be shared by a new set of social, political and economic actors. Far from past roles and duties as a warrantor of equality and welfare for all its citizens, the government becomes a 'croupier assistant', a facilitator, a broker, or, as Ball (2007) aptly puts it, a 'market-maker'. In other words, there is a reconfiguration of the field of policy and a shift from a focus on '*correcting for*' to '*connecting to the market*' (Brooks, Leach, Lucas, & Millstone, 2009). As a consequence, during the last decade of the 20th century, a new group of political actors, including 'new' venture philanthropists, social entrepreneurs and neoliberal policy advocates, amongst others, have repopulated the policy arena.

The mistake at this stage would be to focus merely on the structural dimension

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-on-big-society>

of neoliberalism, what Ong (2007) calls 'N'eoliberalism (with a capital N). This refers to Neo-Marxist formulations of Neoliberalism that conceive it as a "dominant structural condition [characterised by private property rights, individual liberty, free markets, and free trade] that projects totalizing social change across a nation" (2007, p. 4). However, as Ong suggests, 'n'eoliberalism (with small n) could be also seen as "a technology of governing 'free subjects' that co-exists with other political rationalities" (2007, p. 4). This second perspective, closer to Foucauldian approaches, understands neoliberalism as a set of 'traveling' and flexible practices that adapt to the contexts in which it operates. In Springer's (2014, p. 3) words, "neoliberalizing practices are thus understood as necessarily and always overdetermined, contingent, polymorphic, open to intervention, reconstituted, continually negotiated, impure, subject to counter-tendencies, and in a perpetual process of becoming". Making a free paraphrase of Foucault's mantra, it could be argued that there is not such a thing as 'neoliberalism' but 'neoliberal practices'. This is what Springer means when he stresses the need to treat neoliberalism as a verb, which implies focussing on its "processual, unfolding, and action oriented sense" (Springer, 2014, p. 3). Here, the focus becomes to identify the subject (in terms of interchanging 'subjector'/subjected relationships) of such processes and actions.

This chapter sketches some of the new ways through which these changes are being enacted. More specifically, it will analyse the new methods of policy linked to what is known as *philanthrocapitalism* (Edwards, 2008). This new philanthropic approach has gained an increasingly important political dimension, becoming a central explanatory variable to understand the recent changes and directions of national and international political agendas in different parts of the world (see Ball & Olmedo, 2012). These transformations represent new forms of governmentality and power regimes and are deeply rooted within the political economy and political philosophy of neoliberalism. According to Jessop (2002), they also facilitate the transition to a new political framework characterised by new forms of coordination, or 'heterarchies'. The analytical approach to what is referred to here as 'the global' responds to the set of discrete, identifiable and traceable practices (connections, transactions, meetings, travels, influences and impositions, etc.), through which international economic and political relationships are enacted. In Dickens and his colleagues' words:

Instead of conceiving of the global economy as a disembodied and disembedded set of supra-human forces, the network understanding of how commodities and services are produced, distributed and consumed highlights the *grounded* mechanisms through which the web of international economic relationships is actually created and reproduced. (Dicken, Kelly, Olds, & Wai-Chung Yeung, 2001, p. 106)

More specifically, the following sections reflect on a set of 'new' edu-enterprises, their connections, ideological influences and agendas on the ground. Within the field of policy analysis, "policy network analysis seeks to identify the important actors – governmental and nongovernmental organizations, interest groups, and persons involved in policymaking institutions, to describe and explain the structure of their interactions during policymaking processes, and to explain and predict collective policy decision and outcomes" (Knoke, 2011, p. 210). To do so, the paper furthers previous analysis (see Olmedo, 2013) on the organisational configuration and international operations of the English *charitable company*: ARK (Absolute Return for Kids). More concretely, the sections below focus on the new policy solutions promoted by and through the members that configure ARK's policy network. It will be suggested that the role and nature of profit is not only blurred but is also blurring other dimensions in the realm of policy and politics. The aim of the chapter is to raise a number of questions and concerns on the potential impact that these new policy actors could be exerting over democratic processes and political practices.

### ***New philanthropy: philanthrocapitalism and philanthro-policymaking***

By coining the term 'philanthropic governance' in previous papers (see Ball & Olmedo, 2012; Olmedo, 2013), we aimed to highlight the important changes that can be acknowledged in the nature and the subject of processes of policy enactment in the field of education. Although philanthropy is not a new phenomenon (see Arnove, 1980), its functions and position within the social space have changed substantially. Within the aforementioned reorganization of the architecture of regulation and policy production, philanthropic involvement in the public arena has shifted from an initial role as "cooling-out agencies" (Arnove, 1980, p. 1) into a more 'hands-on' approach, where 'new' philanthropists have become key political actors involved in the design, negotiation, promotion and delivery of policy processes, including the reorganisation and enactment of public services, civic action and community development.

There are two main characteristics of what has been denominated as 'philanthropy 3.0' (see The Bellagio Initiative, 2011). On the one hand, new philanthropists bring into play new 'methods' of policy. As suggested in the initial quotation above, 'new' philanthropists like Gates, Omidyar, Broad, Bertelsmann, Agnelli etc. are willing to 'give back' that which they generated in the form of profit from their businesses. However, they want to use their donations in a business-like way, that is in the form of 'strategic investments' that should lead to 'good', measurable results. The rationale behind it is led by the new social enterprise slogan: 'do good while doing well'. In this sense, social

enterprise is being developed as a new “economic rationalization of giving”(Saltman, 2010). These new sensibilities of charity, understood now as social ‘investment’, have led to increasing use of commercial and enterprise models of practice within new forms of philanthropic organisation and investment (e.g. venture philanthropy, due diligence, accountable donations, micro-finance, etc. - see Stewart, van Rooyen, Majoro, and de Wet (2011)). This is what is known as ‘philanthrocapitalism’ (Bishop & Green, 2010).

ARK (Absolute Return for Kids) is a good example of these nascent philanthropic enterprises. Registered both as a charity and as a company limited by guarantee in England, ARK takes the shape of what are known as ‘charitable companies’. As such, ARK is entitled to own property and generate profit. However, the economic surplus generated from the provision of the services that they provide should be ‘reinvested’ within the organisation. That does not exclude the alternative possibility of using their economic assets to trade and purchase services and goods with other public and private providers. Once again, within these novel philanthropic enterprises, the already thin line between profit and social altruism becomes even more diffused. Their ethos and methods are attuned with the corporate roots and organigrams of their parental organisations. As the business leaders who founded ARK over a decade ago stated in their introduction to the charitable company’s 2012 Annual Report:

We created ARK in 2002, convinced that our combined efforts could have a greater effect on children’s lives than if we each supported individual charities. We wanted to apply the same robust measurement and accountability to philanthropy as we do to business, in order to deliver programmes that transform the lives of the most disadvantaged children.<sup>2</sup>

‘New’ philanthropy is taking a more protagonist role in political terms, which is already contributing to the re-dispersal of political and moral authority. Business actors, in their new role as charitable philanthropists, feel the ‘need’ to take action outside the sphere of the economy, assuming key roles in the organisation of the societies where their companies operate. This new dimension of philanthropy responds to dynamics of what Shamir (2008, p. 4) understands as the “moralization of economic action”, whose aim is to roll-out a “a kind of rehabilitation for forms of capital that were subject to ‘ill repute’ in the public imagination” (Ball & Junemann, 2012, p. 32). As an example, in 2011, the president and CEO of Starbucks Coffee Company, Howard Schultz (2011) stated that:

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<sup>2</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/media/59711/ARK%20Annual%20Report%202012%20PDF%20final.pdf>

As corporate citizens of the world, it is our responsibility — our duty — to serve the communities where we do business by helping to improve, for example, the quality of citizens' education, employment, health care, safety, and overall daily life, plus future prospects.

Portraying themselves as morally compromised agents, the new philanthrocapitalists thin out the relationships between, on the one hand, the processes through which they amass their fortunes and, on the other, the roots of the social problems that they seem willing to address. That is, there seems to be no critical reflection on the 'contribution' of capitalism, and, within it, the business practices of their own companies, in the worsening of old and the creation of new forms of inequality and social injustice across the globe. Instead, promoters of this new role of philanthropy have begun to advocate for an even clearer "new division of labour (...) between governments, businesses, charitable NGOs, and philanthropists" in order to solve "the stagnant problems of the world"(Bishop & Green, 2010, p. 12).

On the other hand, some of these organisations are becoming global behemoths. Their organisational configurations spread over complex networked structures, where once well-established boundaries between public and private goods; charity and profit-making activities; citizenship and self-interest; and local and foreign players, are blurred. These networks, as Ong (2012, p. 25) suggests, "invoke 'the global' not as a metaphorical or achieved instantiation of a singular logic, but as a historically contingent concept that points to configurations shaped by the interaction of global and situated components". One again, ARK exemplifies the new 'global' character of philanthropic governance:

Originally set up by leaders of the alternative investment industry, we deliver high social returns on our philanthropy, leveraging intellectual, financial and political investment. We are headquartered in the UK and our work focuses on health, education and child protection around the globe.<sup>3</sup>

The following diagram shows the dense assemblage of connections of different nature (economic transactions, in-kind donations, intellectual contributions, partnerships 'on the ground', etc.) that constitutes ARK's network<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/about-us>

<sup>4</sup> A warning reminder is needed at this point: given the impossibility of discriminating the nature of each of those connections in order to be able to assign them to one, and only one, of the previous categories, a decision was made to keep the same connecting lines amongst nodes. This constitutes one of the main difficulties of network analysis studies, given, on the one hand, the technical limitations imposed by two-dimensional representations, and, on the other hand, the constantly changing, multi-faceted and polygamist behaviour of the actors in play. In previous and related publications (see, for instance, Ball, 2012; Ball & Junemann, 2012; Olmedo, 2013; Olmedo, Bailey, & Ball, 2013), we have attempted to map the shape and contents of network

[Insert Diagram 1 around here]

The remaining sections focus on some of the programmes and actors that conform ARK's network.

***'Connecting people': the role of network capital in 'doing neoliberalism'***

As ARK's policy network diagram shows, 'new' philanthropy is facilitating access to new players into the field of social and education policy, repopulating and reworking existing policy networks, and giving legitimacy to the role of business in the solution of social problems. As Ball and Junemann's research concludes: "strategically, philanthropy has provided a 'Trojan horse' for modernising moves that opened the 'policy door' to new actors and new ideas and sensibilities" (Ball & Junemann, 2012, p. 32). As an example, within Pearson Education's endless portfolio of edu-products and activities<sup>5</sup>, both of a for-profit and philanthropic nature, the company is involved with ARK in the development of their Teaching Leaders programme. The latter consists on three sub-programmes aimed at middle-leaders, or teachers who show 'high potential' to be so, and trains them in three different fronts: managing pupil data; holding teachers to account; and motivating their teams. Once again, Teaching Leaders rests on ARK's compromise with the principles of accountability and measurement. The programme is funded by the National College for Teaching & Leadership (an executive agency of the UK's Department for Education), the Future Leaders Trust and Teach First (though the network of supporters and partners is broader - see *Network 1*). Through their participation in ARK's Teaching Leaders, Pearson is not only donating altruistically but also gaining back access to important 'hot knowledge' and situated and local experiences, that would inform the company's operations in other fronts. As stated on the programme's website:

Pearson has kindly sponsored our Graduation Ceremony for the past 3 years and established the Pearson Excellence Awards for Teaching Leaders. All graduating Alumni and Fellows at the end of their first year are eligible to apply for this award. The judging panel looks at a wide range of criteria reflecting both the quality of the thinking behind and execution of the individual's Impact Initiative as well as their impact on the staff and pupils within their school.

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nodes and ties by bringing together tools from Social Network Analysis (SNA) with more traditional ethnographic methods. Our approach adapts and develops further the method of "network ethnography" (Howard, 2002) and responds to Bevir and Rhodes' (2006) call for "ethnographic analyses of governance in action".

<sup>5</sup> Pearson Education is part of Pearson PLC, is one of the biggest edu-business in the growing global market of education policy (for a more detailed account see Ball, 2012).

We also look at innovative ways for Fellows on our programmes to share experiences of leadership and a view from within schools with the Pearson team to aid them with their policy work.<sup>6</sup>

Here, it can be seen how it is not only profit, or, more accurately, profit in its monetary form, that these charitable companies and those who support them are seeking. Money and ideas work to join-up advocacy activities to policy proposals and to programmes of reform. Businesses, through their philanthropic foundations, are also investing in the work of think tanks and advocacy networks and policy entrepreneurs with the hope of future political ‘returns’. Ball (2012, p. 139) has given clear evidence of a “growing global market in policy ideas” and stresses that policy itself has become a commodity and a profit opportunity that can now be bought and sold (Ball, 2007). As a consequence, policy work is increasingly being out-sourced to profit-making organizations, which bring their skills, discourses and sensibilities to the policy table. International companies (like, for instance, Pearson, Cambridge Education, PWC, Matrix Knowledge Group or A4e) are now offering a broad portfolio of ‘policy products’ that range from school improvement programmes; CPD and training courses; ‘evidence-based’ policy knowledge and performance-based evaluation toolkits; design and brokering of outsourcing contracts, reports; and, more recently, even writing education policy themselves for local and national governments<sup>7</sup>.

ARK’s network works as a “connective tissue” (Ball & Junemann, 2012, p. 12), conforming the “circulatory systems that connect and interpenetrate the local and the national” (Peck, 2003, p. 229). It generates and accumulates what could be considered as *political* ‘network capital’ (see Larsen, Axhausen, & Urry, 2006), with the potential of being ‘traded’ into other forms of capital when required (Bourdieu, 1986). As an example, back to our diagram, ARK also works in partnership with the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). The CMI is a registered charity in England, Wales and Scotland whose “charitable mission is to promote the art and science of management”<sup>8</sup>. Through a network of accredited centres, it offers a wide portfolio of standard and tailored training courses to professionals operating in the field of management and leadership. It also conducts research and works as a political consultant and government lobbyist. As stated on their website:

## **A POWERFUL ALLY**

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<sup>6</sup><http://www.teachingleaders.org.uk/who-we-are/supporters-and-partners/education-partners/>

<sup>7</sup> Cambridge Education, for instance, has been recently contracted out to draft legislation for a new Education Act in the Maldives. The company has been hired to assess and write a new curriculum for Secondary Education in Uganda [<http://www.camb-ed.com/Experience/Casestudies/CurriculumAssessmentandExaminationReform.asp>].

<sup>8</sup><http://www.managers.org.uk/about-us/governance>



CMI enjoys an authoritative mandate from the management community. So you can be sure that we can make your voice heard in government, education and business. When we speak, people listen.<sup>9</sup>

### **INFLUENCING PUBLIC POLICY**

We set the standards for management and leadership throughout the UK and our policy agenda ensures that managers' voices are heard by government.<sup>10</sup>

ARK is involved with the CMI in the construction of “generative nodes”, that is spaces aimed at facilitating new connections and linking opportunities between public and private actors. These are “‘new sites of policy mobilisation’ and ‘globalising microspaces’ that operate between and beyond traditionally defined areas of policy formulation, such as localities, regions and nations” (Ball & Olmedo, 2012, p. 86):

Teaching Leaders and the CMI have partnered to create a round table between business and education leaders.<sup>11</sup>

Bringing actors together in meetings and conferences, training present and future leaders, carrying out research and promoting ideas, lobbying government at different levels, amongst other activities, configure the everyday practices of ‘doing neoliberalism’, and, as can be seen through previous examples, ARK plays a key role in this.

### ***Operating between the trenches: ARK’s Public-Private Partnership model***

A second dimension in the role of new philanthropy focuses on their direct involvement in the design and delivery of policy programmes. As mentioned above, in general terms, the move from government to governance, or more accurately to neoliberal governance, involves moving away from previous top-down forms of imperative coordination and points towards new modes of what Rhodes (1996) captured as ‘governing without government’. This form of governance encompasses processes of continuous dialogue and the creation of alliances between political and other actors from different fields. That is the move towards a ‘polycentric state’ (Rhodes, 1996). In policy practice, all this translates into changes in the way in which public services are designed and delivered. More and more, education, health and other social services, are enacted through a mix of “strategic alliances, joint working arrangements, networks, partnerships and many other forms of collaboration across sectoral

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<sup>9</sup><http://www.managers.org.uk/about-us>

<sup>10</sup><http://www.managers.org.uk/insights/policy-papers>

<sup>11</sup><http://www.teachingleaders.org.uk/who-we-are/supporters-and-partners/education-partners/>

and organizational boundaries” (Williams, 2002, p. 103) based upon “relations involving mutuality and interdependence” (Peterson, 2003, p. 1). This new form of ‘network governance’ involves new governing mechanism, what Rose and Miller (1992) identified as processes of ‘governing at a distance’, which rely “on a dense fabric of lasting ties and networks that provide key resources of expertise, reputation and legitimization” (Grabher, 2004, p. 104). As a result, governments are increasingly “catalyzing all sectors – public, private and voluntary – into action to solve their community’s problems” (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). Public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a good example of this. They are presented as a “new programmatic idea” (Verger, 2012, p. 110) and imply “a form of relational contracting between the public and the private sector for the organization and delivery of services that involve risk sharing and mutual learning between the parties involved” (Verger, 2012, p. 114).

Back to our case, ARK Schools runs one of the largest Academy chains in the England (see Gunter, 2011). The academies programme is similar to the US charter schools counterpart. Through it, schools become independent from local authorities’ control and receive funding directly from the Department for Education on a per pupil basis (like any other maintained school). The programme, launched by the Labour party, has been revitalised by the current Conservative government as part of Cameron’s “all-out war on mediocrity”<sup>12</sup> in schools. Currently, ARK is operating 31 primary and secondary schools. The last two Prime Ministers and their Secretaries of State for Education, from the Labour and Conservative parties, have publicly praised the charitable company for its contribution to the programme and the positive results in driving up standards in challenging areas (Junemann & Ball, 2013).

The application of market-based principles does not only relate to the already mentioned structural and organisational dimensions of ARK, but it is also instilled in the charitable company’s methodological ‘innovations’. Their model is based on six pillars: high expectations; exemplary behaviour; excellent teaching; depth before breadth; more time for learning; and, knowing every child<sup>13</sup>. Running through the capillaries and connecting each one of those there is a strong focus on measurement and performance indicators:

To ensure no child is left behind, we have developed data management tools which allow teachers to monitor pupils’ progress and quickly identify when children, or indeed teaching staff, need extra support.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup><http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/11383017/Massive-expansion-of-academy-programme-to-be-announced-by-Prime-Minister.html>

<sup>13</sup> See <http://www.arkschools.org/our-six-pillars>

<sup>14</sup><http://arkschools.org/our-six-pillars>

Accountability is coupled with a broader set of corporate strategic methods that ARK is developing with the support of partner organisations in order to bring ‘innovation’ into their teaching. An example of it is Mathematics Mastery, a “teaching framework and approach that will enable every student to reach their true mathematics potential”<sup>15</sup>. The programme consists on a full curriculum for teaching mathematics that spread across primary and secondary education based on the Singaporean model:

The programme is based on the world leading curriculum and pedagogy of Singapore, which has consistently been amongst the highest performers in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) since 1995.<sup>16</sup>

Mathematics Mastery is being supported by the Department for Education, the Mayor of London and the Education Endowment Foundation. The latter is expected to invest more than £200m over a period of 15 years on innovative schemes to improve attainment particularly amongst the poorest students in England<sup>17</sup>. With the economic support of its funders, ARK launched the programme in 2009 and is expanding it with the aim of reaching sustainability:

We will continue to act as a seedbed for innovation beyond ARK Schools. For example, we will grow Mathematics Mastery to sustainability. A £600,000 grant from the Education Endowment Foundation will enable us to expand the programme to over 100 schools in 2013. We will also launch a new corporate mentoring partnership with Bloomberg and its support will help us to pilot new initiatives across our network.<sup>18</sup>

However, an recent independent external evaluation conducted by researchers from the Institute of Education, University of London, and funded by the Education Endowment Foundation suggests that the programme does not seem to be offering the level of outcomes expected from ARK’s ‘innovative’, and expensive, curriculum. As the IOE’s report<sup>19</sup> summarises:

#### Key conclusions

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.mathematicsmastery.org/our-vision/>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.mathematicsmastery.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Mathematics-Mastery-Info-Sheet.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.mathematicsmastery.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Mathematics-Mastery-Info-Sheet.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.arkonline.org/education/ark-schools>

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[https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Mathematics\\_Mastery\\_Secondary\\_\(Final\).pdf](https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/Mathematics_Mastery_Secondary_(Final).pdf)

1. On average, Year 7 pupils in schools adopting Mathematics Mastery made a small amount more progress than pupils in schools that did not. However, the effect detected was not statistically significant, meaning that it is not possible to rule out chance as an explanation.
2. There is no strong evidence that the approach had a greater impact on lower-attaining pupils than on higher-attaining pupils.
3. Combining the findings from this study and a second randomised controlled trial of Mathematics Mastery involving Year 1 pupils may strengthen the overall evidence for the approach.
4. Given the low per-pupil cost, Mathematics Mastery may represent a cost-effective change for schools to consider. However, teachers would need to resolve tensions related to differentiation to provide support for all groups of children.
5. It would be worthwhile to track the medium- and long-term impact of the approach, to assess whether there is a cumulative effect to the approach and whether it has an impact on performance in high-stakes tests.

Back to ARK's Academies programme, the charitable company is embracing existing models based on the sustainability of chains of private schools through the attainment of economies of scales (see Tooley, 2007, 2009). They are expecting to expand into a full network of 50 schools by 2017 and envisage the possibility to become fully independent of extra funding (apart from that coming from the UK government) in the near future:

#### **GROWING OUR NETWORK OF SCHOOLS**

Our target is to establish a network of around 50 schools by 2017. These schools will provide 23,500 places for the 2015/16 academic year, rising to over 35,000 pupils at full capacity. As our network grows, we will realise further economies of scale and aim to become self-sustaining on funding from the Department for Education by 2017/18.<sup>20</sup>

The previous quotation clearly shows their intention to keep growing in a 'sustainable' basis, or at least as sustainable as traditional local authority schools were. If their aim is to reach that benchmark, that implies that at least at the moment they are more expensive to run than their counterparts in the public sector. The charitable company's accounts (at least for their academies programme) can be easily traced, however, the sources and use of the extra philanthropic contribution and economic donations is difficult to follow. Also, it could be questionable whether the costs and bureaucratic burden of running a chain of 50 schools would not result in the same issues and alleged 'inefficiencies' experience by the local authorities, which seems to be the root of all the current problems.

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<sup>20</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/education/ark-schools>

Running schools is just the first step. In 2012, ARK formed a partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University, an Anglican public university affiliated to the Church of England, to develop their own teacher-training scheme:

Research shows that a teacher's performance doesn't vary much after their first three years in the job. So, the training they have in those early years is crucial. In 2012 we created our own teacher training programme in collaboration with Canterbury Christ Church University, and have now become an accredited teacher training institution in our own right. By 2020 we want half of our teachers to have come through our programme – and by 2015 we want all of them to be using our training resources as part of their ongoing professional development.<sup>21</sup>

Brewing their own teachers is a controversial move that has important implications in different fronts. It creates a potential conflict of interest or, at least, dynamics of unfair competition against other ITE providers who do not own schools, and therefore are not in a position to be able to offer jobs directly to their graduates. Furthermore, it raises questions on whether those graduates would be ready to work in all different environments, and not only in those schools that follow the ARK model. Finally, it could be questioned whether public money should be used to fund such enterprises.

### ***Going the 'extra mile': from local charity to international player***

Steaming from their experiences in England, ARK has in recent years expanded its operations into Asia and Africa. In India, the charitable company has run two projects since 2009: ENABLE and ASPIRE. The former is a phonics-based programme for teaching English designed with the help of Dr. Pauline Dixon (University of Newcastle) and developed through partnerships with two state governments and the Bharti Foundation (one of India's largest education foundations). It is now being used in 335 schools across nine Indian states. The latter consists of a voucher scheme developed in Delhi:

We are piloting an education voucher scheme in the poorest areas of Delhi to encourage families to claim their entitlement to free private school places. ARK uses picture guides to inform parents about the quality of schools available; to ensure children from all backgrounds have an equal chance, we allocate places with a lottery system. Our corruption proof vouchers cover tuition fees, uniforms, textbooks and lunch for the full five years of primary school.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/media/71816/ARK%20Annual%20Report%202013.pdf>

<sup>22</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/education/india/aspire-and-enable/aspire-and-enable-page>

The first cohort included 635 pupils across 69 schools and ARK is already “looking ahead”:

Generating robust evidence on the difference the voucher system can make to children's learning is a priority for 2013. Ark is collaborating with Newcastle University to compare the results of pupils with and without vouchers. Our aim is to offer state governments a one-stop solution for implementing the Right to Education Act; two Indian state governments have already shown interest.<sup>23</sup>

ASPIRE ran between 2009 and 2014 and ENABLE will cease in 2016. Over the last five years the charitable company has acquired enough expertise and knowledge to move one step forward. As a result, ARK has developed two new schemes. The first one consists of a School Quality Assurance (SQA) programme initially piloted in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. SQA was developed with the input of former inspectors from Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills – the UK's inspectorate service) and in collaboration with partners DfID (UK's Department for International Development), CfBT (Centre for British Teachers) Education Trust and M-CRIL (Micro-Credit Ratings International Limited). SQA offers a quality assurance framework and a set of tools to automate the inspection process, to make it easier for stakeholders to analyse school data. Though the programme started as a small-scale pilot scheme, it has become now “officially adopted policy” and it is expanding over into other Indian states:

Following the project's success, it has now gone from being a small-scale pilot to an officially adopted policy. Our framework will be scaled up across all Madhya Pradesh schools in the next five years, after being praised as 'a special and excellent step for the enhancement of education' by the state's Chief Minister.

As a result, thousands of schools will be held to higher standards, and will therefore be more likely to deliver good results for their pupils. We're now working with the authorities in Delhi to do the same work for them. This is a huge step for us, and for all the pupils who will now enjoy a better quality of education.

In just three months, Ark and the Madhya Pradesh School Education Department inspected 2,000 schools. Our framework will be used in over 120,000 schools by 2019.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/education/india/aspire-and-enable/aspire-and-enable-page>

<sup>24</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/education/india>

ARK's second programme in India is the result of a Public-Private Partnership with the Indian government. Through it, the charitable company will be launching its own chain of primary schools in 2015:

Combining the education experience and expertise we have gained through working in India and the UK, Ark now plans to set up a network of high quality primary schools in partnership with the government, which will provide an excellent education for disadvantaged children. Ark's plans are ambitious; we ultimately aim to grow a network of high-performing schools which could impact the entire education system as demonstration models, proving what can be done using the right educational approaches. Our education approach is based on our six pillars of education, which have underpinned the success of our network of schools in the UK.<sup>25</sup>

In a similar fashion, ARK has recently expanded its operations into Uganda. In partnership with PEAS (Promoting Equality in African Schools), ARK is running a network of state-funded secondary schools in rural Uganda<sup>26</sup>. Once again, the aim is to champion the PPP model through which their other school programmes in the UK and India operate:

Our goal is to work with Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports to support improvements across the education system, using proven, effective elements of our model in other secondary schools. We also aim to pilot another type of public-private partnership model, where we contract-manage new government-built schools.

By 2014, combining PEAS' local expertise with Ark's focus on measurement and quality, we hope to show that public-private partnerships can deliver academic achievement greater than the national average, at a lower cost to the government.<sup>27</sup>

What we can see here are the fingerprints of new forms of what Ozga and Jones (2006) understand as 'travelling' and 'embedded' policies. As McCann (2011, p. 107) suggests, the idea of conceiving policy in terms of "mobilities" facilitate the operationalization of approaches that intend to explain what he defines as the "local globalness" of urban policy transfer". More than straightforward and lineal exercises of policy borrowing (see Steiner-Khamsi & Waldow, 2012), the analysis of ARK's network and the programmes analysed in this section helps us identify the surface traces of policy flows or instances of circulating policies.

### ***Implications over that thing that some used to call 'democracy'***

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<sup>25</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/education/india>

<sup>26</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/education/uganda>

<sup>27</sup><http://www.arkonline.org/education/uganda>

As suggested at the beginning of this chapter, the new forms of political and economic coordination are redefining the apparent incompatibility between anarchic (market-based) and hierarchic (state-centred) forms of co-ordination. The resulting model is conformed by more flexible structures (heterarchies), where relationships, responsibilities and processes of decision-making are shared at different instances by old and new actors (Jessop, 1998). Such new models of global governance implies the development of new “methods for co-ordinating actions across different social forces with different identities, interests, and meaning systems, over different spatio-temporal horizons, and over different domains of action” (Jessop, 1998, p. 37). The dominant mode of governance is characterised by networks that are formed by a hybrid mix of actors (individuals, companies, foundations, NGOs, governments, etc.) embedded in a system of national, sub-national, supra-national, intergovernmental and transnational relations. As Besussi (2006, p. 6) suggests, policy networks represent “a real change in the structure of the polity”. Such networks open spaces “of attraction and meaning, in which soft power is at work, creating a space in which actors are drawn to work within it and to produce it” (Lawn, 2006, p. 272).

However, far from the mirage proclaimed by some scholars (see Sørensen & Torfing, 2007) of a more democratic space where actors operate through horizontal and balanced power-relations, “alongside the introduction of new actors and organisations, the shift to polycentrism also involves the displacement of some others, like trade unions and professional associations” (Junemann & Ball, 2013, p. 425). It could be suggested that network governance creates a ‘democratic deficit’ as the processes of policy and governance become more dispersed and less transparent, and political spaces are ‘governed softly and by persuasion’ (Lawn & Grek, 2012). From this second perspective, policy networks are intentionally blurring the line between business, enterprise, development, and the public good, and pose fundamental questions about the methods and future role of government and other traditional political agents. As a result of this, states around the world could be ceding the ability to design and steer their education systems.

The cases and examples presented throughout the chapter illustrate Horne’s (2002) claims of the existence of a ‘parapolitical sphere’ within which new philanthropists would be operating and developing their own policy agendas. The direct involvement of these new players in the political sphere implies changes in the steering of democratic societies, and, most importantly, in terms of social accountability and control. As Frumkin (2006, pp. 26-27) suggests, “unlike government, which has elections to set policy directions, and unlike corporations, which have shareholders to whom they must be responsive,



philanthropy is able to operate across the boundaries of public and private and to do so with little or no accountability to its many stakeholders". This reconfiguration rests upon a double moral shift in the conception of the relationship between charity, policy and profit. On the one hand, corporate and family foundations and philanthropic individuals are beginning to "assume socio-moral duties that were heretofore assigned to civil society organizations, governmental entities and state agencies" (Shamir, 2008, p. 4). On the other, these new philanthropists do not completely renounce the possibility of profit, indeed in their own words it is possible to 'do good and have their profit, too'.

The programmes, initiatives, enterprises and schemes presented throughout the previous pages are examples of policy flows and policy advocacy within and beyond the state reach. Their connections and alliances, agendas and methods, cross-border movements and local implementations, constitute new sites of policy within what Peck and Tickle (2003, p. 22) call "emergent geographies of neoliberalisation". What we are dealing with here are new ways of 'neoliberalism in action', that is a set of practices and processes, structures and relationships, which constitute what could be understood as 'doing neoliberalism' (Ball & Olmedo, 2012). At the same time, the work of the philanthropists and foundations sketched here also represent a different spatial dimension that challenges the principles and theoretical scaffolding in which contemporary education policy research is framed. Therefore, there is the need for a "second generation of governance research" (Sørensen & Torfing, 2007, p. 14) which will bring "clarity and rigour" to what is currently "a somewhat eclectic and confusing theoretical landscape" (idem, p. 7).

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