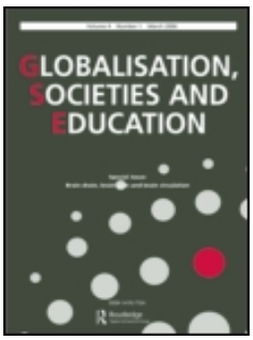

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Eduscapes: interpreting transnational flows of higher education

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'Knowledge society' and 'knowledge economy' are current buzzwords in the visions of the future made by nations, regions and federations on a global scale. A concrete outcome of this is the globalisation and intensification of higher education and research. The visions based on a knowledge component should be treated as expressions of an ideology. In this article we use the notion of 'eduscapes' and 'imaginaries' as analytics for an understanding of such visions as these are expressed by individuals and institutional actors involved in educational landscapes. The argument is made that this notion is less ideological and more apt for an analysis of globalisation of higher education.

Keywords: globalisation; higher education; eduscapes; knowledge society; imaginaries; Pakistan

1. Introduction

In this article, we approach an interpretation of the transnational flows of higher education through a critical understanding of the notions of 'knowledge society' and 'knowledge economy'. The argument is that the widespread political vision of knowledge futures needs to be unpacked and critically perspectivised beyond its narrow ethnocentric, ideological and technocratic conditions and meanings; to be replaced by alternative interpretations of transnational flows of higher education.

In this we are tapping into debates around the 'demystification' of knowledge production and higher education on a global scale (cf. Collinge 2005; Robertson 2006) as well as sharing a commitment to counter-hegemonic forces in the present-day neo-liberal globalisation of higher education. We consequently adhere to different critical voices that problematise the political economy of knowledge production in the world of higher education (Reid and Traweek 2000; Robertson 2006; Luke 2006), and in more detail we are interested in 'the flows and linkages in the production, distribution and consumption of education' Robertson (2006, 5). As also will be shown we are concerned with

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the flow of imaginaries, institutional as well as individual, that in various ways feed these linkages with social and symbolic facticity in order for them to become such powerful vehicles for the rhetoric of 'knowledge society/economy' and the ideological force of globalisation. This concerns the dominating commodity paradigm as well as the peripheral concerns of the intellectual outskirts of a globalised 'knowledge society' that both, but in different ways, are linked to transnational flows and channelled routes in the world of higher education. We will exemplify this double perspective of the rhetoric of dominating institutions and peripheral voices with two empirical cases.

To move beyond the ethnocentric and normative claims inherent in the contemporary assemblages of what constitute an emergent globalised 'knowledge society', we propose a set of analytical tools and concepts that could contribute in clarifying different forms of geo-political stratification in higher education. Through this we are approaching fundamental questions in the political economy of knowledge production such as who gets to be taught, what, where, and who is being selected to provide education in the global food chain of higher education (see Robertson 2006, 10). The main purpose of this article is to introduce these tools and concepts and show how they can be set in motion. The critical potential of our approach will be framed as an explicit intervention in a contemporary debate concerning the 'knowledge society' where a key claim is that the value of intellectual assets and biographical cultural capital will rapidly increase. We wish to approach this topic beyond a naive understanding of 'knowledge society' taken as a techno-political fix in a relatively neutral sense, and to show its cultural embeddings as well as its ideological underpinnings. The critique of 'knowledge society' will thus be based in cultural analytical approaches and in what we propose to call 'interdisciplinary knowledge studies'; including epistemology, sociology of knowledge, history of ideas, discourse analysis and, in particular, the anthropology of knowledge production.

For these purposes, we make use of the notion of *eduscapes* (shorthand for educational landscapes) as the major analytical concept. We define eduscapes (cf. below) as the transnational flow of ideas and people in regard to research and higher education and where nodes of knowledge centres, peripheries and positional dynamics shift over time but are connected through modern communication technologies and different epistemic, ethnic and learning communities (see also Kynäslahti 2001; Luke 2005, 2006; Ambrosius Madsen 2005, 2008; Beck 2008; Carney 2009, 2010, 2012; Ambrosius Madsen and Carney 2011; Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas 2011). Through the notion eduscapes we open up for analysis understanding educational landscapes in terms of their positional dynamics within asymmetrical power grids.

We are giving this concept momentum in regard to two types of material. (1) The rhetoric of global trading in knowledge society exemplified by a prospected (but never realised) branch campus establishment in Pakistan. This section will serve to illustrate the ideological currencies of 'knowledge society'

at the top and low end of the global food chain based on the material representing institutional and national actors in the East and the West. In particular we will use this example as a case for interpreting transnational flows and scapes of higher education. (2) Global spatial practices and social imaginaries of a number of interviewed students and lecturers in Sweden and Malaysia, coming from a vast range of countries. We are here drawing on an eclectic variety of materials, such as policy documents, contracts, interviews and ethnographic observation. These various texts have been read through the conceptual lens of eduscapes (cf. below).

The article has four substantive parts. First of all, we discuss the theoretical framework of our approach to a critical anthropology of 'knowledge society' and *eduscapes*, and in the two following sections we are presenting empirical evidence that is framed within our critical perspective on 'knowledge society'. The two cases are selected for two reasons. First of all they reflect the kind of material we are working with: communication between authorities and institutions in higher education located in different parts of the world (Sweden and Pakistan), and interviews with students and teachers in Sweden and Malaysia. The cases speak to each other as evidences of educational landscapes in institutional and individual contexts with both differences and similarities. Finally, the different strands of the argument will be drawn together in order to approach an interpretation through perspectivising the rhetoric and mechanics of 'knowledge society'.

2. Knowledge society/economy on a global scale and concurrent eduscapes

Most nations and regions around the world are currently committed to acquiring privileged positions in emerging regimes on a global scale characterised by a knowledge component, either a 'knowledge society' or a 'knowledge economy'. These notions are sometimes used interchangeably, although there are obvious differences between them. The notion of 'knowledge economy' is usually framed within a context of a human capital understanding of education and work. When the notion of 'knowledge society' is used, however, economic accounts of social conditions are framed within a wider view of culture, society and politics. In this article we will follow the usage of the actors, although we will also argue that both versions are ideological and of limited value for analytical purposes. Instead we will approach these ideological visions as social imaginaries for which the term *eduscapes* will be used analytically. The commitments made by nations and regions worldwide are based on the belief that the future global world will be hierarchically stratified in a positional dynamics with political economies and forms of production dominated by either manual ('industrial') or intellectual ('knowledge' or 'creative') work. According to this widespread belief, the most successful strategy for survival and growth is to be positioned at the higher end of the global knowledge food chain, in that part which is built on work/services dominated by a strong

'knowledge' (Drucker 1964; Böhme and Stehr 1986) or 'creative' component (Florida 2002). Developed regions of the world such as the USA and the European Union (EU) strongly endorse the development of a highly competitive knowledge-based economy (KBE). In the case of the EU this is expressed, for instance, in the Lisbon Strategy (2000), in the EU's current 'Vision 2020' (2012) and subsequent updated documents, which has been 'aimed at making the EU the most competitive economy in the world and achieving full employment by 2020'. Higher education is regarded as a key target for these growth strategies. The goals of the future are extremely ambitious: full employment and the prospects of being a leading economy on a global scale. This is not unique to the EU, but is generally characteristic of the assertive mode with which developed regions of the world pitch their future role as global leaders. This illustrates how a leading position in a future conditioned by a component of knowledge presumably will be reached as the result of successful participation in a competitive process characterised by knowledge growth and production. Despite the assertiveness with which such statements are put forward, it serves as an expression of collective social imaginaries (see below) on a grand scale.

The rhetorical character of KBE discourse (cf. Jessop 2004, 2008; Fairclough 2006) is typical for contemporary statements on aggregated national and international levels. Meanwhile, from the perspectives of individuals as well as institutions, the objectives of a 'knowledge society' or 'knowledge economy' serve the function of important guiding principles (imaginaries) for interpreting contemporary changes in production, work practices, education and the analysis of future demands. Emphasising the rhetorical character of 'knowledge society' and 'knowledge economy' must not lead to an overly reductionist understanding of the complex character of the social imaginaries of actors and agencies.

The regions of the world that today are characterised as post-industrial posit themselves as the most self-assertive candidates for future supremacy in a KBE, while the industrialising regions of the world, according to this biased view, are yet contained in subordinated roles. The idea and hypothesis of a 'knowledge society' or 'knowledge economy' are based on the belief that knowledge, competence, creativity, talent and other ways of identifying intellectual assets are relatively neutral abilities, free for anyone to acquire, accumulate and use in an idealised interchangeable market and meritocracy. In particular the notion of 'knowledge economy' welds the notions of knowledge, learning and competence in an economic direction. 'Knowledge economy' carries various assumptions about, e.g., intellectual fairness, interchangeability of competence and evenly distributed access; it can be understood as a global counterpart to the American dream; the global dream of meritocracy. Whatever these assets are called – knowledge, knowledge production, talent, learning, higher education, etc. – these are fundamentally understood in terms of their standardised exchange values, on a par with other dimensions in an economy that are subject to processes of commodification, marketisation and monetisation.

Critics, however, have argued (e.g., Rose 1999; Hislop 2004; Jessop 2004, 2008; Fairclough 2006; Välimaa and Hoffman 2008) that the idea of knowledge society and the KBE discourse, especially in its commoditised version referred to above, is far from the neutral condition it is assumed to be. On the contrary, the idea of 'knowledge society' or 'KBE' is best understood as one of the strongest constituents of contemporary hegemony (Jessop 2004), directly linked to key arguments in classic capitalist and human capital theories (Hayek 1964).

2.1. Developments in global higher education

We witness today an expansion of higher education on a global scale, including student mobility and educational migration, as well as an increasing number of institutions engaged in higher education: public, as well as private, for-profit and corporate actors. Meanwhile, nations, regions and transnational actors engage in pursuing a policy agenda of spreading the word of education throughout their populations. It is popular to think of these developments in terms of a 'globalisation' of higher education although in such developmental scripts the processes of 'globalisation' often remain unchallenged. On the contrary, the very notion of 'globalisation' becomes a taken-for-granted carrier of an ideology that embraces a belief in a number of things, such as the general benefits of a free market for transnational exchanges, a promotion of reducing state intervention in policy and business transactions, a belief in the autonomous subject responsible for his/her future. Understanding 'globalisation' in this way is very limited and furthermore serves the function of pursuing an ideological agenda. The simplified notion of 'globalisation' also limits the way we understand that which should be explained, in this case higher education. Instead, we need to problematise the understanding of 'globalisation' in such constellations as, for instance, when it serves as a presumably neutral explanation of developments in higher education. Following critical theories of globalisation (Appadurai 1996; Robertson and Dale 2008; Gomes, Robertson, and Dale 2012) we can become better equipped to understand the scalar dynamics of how higher education in various places changes through mobility and connectivity.

Contemporary changes in higher education and globalisation can be explained in many ways, for instance by the political processes of democratisation as well as a result of neo-liberal approaches to higher education in terms of deregulation including withdrawal of financial support by the state (Luke 2006, 102) and the subsequent emphasis on accountability in higher education and research. A typical economic explanation suggest that nations that experience a dynamic economy witness the emergence of middle classes that demand higher education, in response to which local infrastructures traditionally fail to deliver. Carmen Luke (2005, 169, 170) describes how this development challenges the national project of education when higher education 'becomes

progressively uncoupled from national education policy frameworks' (Luke 2005, 170) affecting notions of citizenship and the role of 'public' institutions. Luke debates the pros and cons of this development. She identifies the benefits these educational aspirations bring to newly industrialised countries as well as the drawbacks in the form of economic exploitation and 'educational imperialism' (Luke 2006, 107).

Future supremacy and economic wealth, however, is not an aspiration and dream characteristic just of the developed nations located at the top end of the global knowledge food chain. The world's largest and most populous nations outside the Western world such as India, China, Brazil, Indonesia and Pakistan, are educating large skilled workforces to participate in this development and they are already well on their way through rapid expansion of tertiary education and through student mobility in international higher education. Following a period in which students from Asian countries have migrated to the West, these countries are increasingly supporting the development of regional institutions where students are taught at home in English (Altbach 2011). This goes for China and India, as well as for the Gulf States, and Malaysia and Singapore. The latter has particularly been established as a major hub for new waves of globalised higher education (Luke 2005, 2006; Thrift and Olds 2005) while the Gulf States are rapidly developing into a new hot spot for higher education (Davidson and Mackenzie Smith 2008; Geddie 2012). The 'learning and discovery environments' of the modern university are regarded as a 'critical catalyst', bringing expectations about beneficial repercussions throughout society and its national systems of innovation. Observers of the transnational flows of higher education thus identify a shift or 'contra-flow' (Brooks and Waters 2012, 120–122) in the gravity of innovation from West to East (Luke 2005, 165), and a continuous levelling between some countries when it comes to changing and improving conditions for scientific knowledge production, as exemplified by nations in Southeast Asia, as well as Mexico and Brazil, in their role as 'science nations' (Regalado 2010). The levelling takes place alongside other hierarchical indicators of quality such as the growing importance of ranking.

A recent phenomenon in globalised higher education is the 'offshore' or the 'branch' campus (McBurnie and Ziguras 2007; Lane 2011). Obviously there is an overt Western agenda in this particular terminology due to the fact that Western universities often take a leading role in cooperating with local institutions or national authorities. A key aim is to enhance recruitment of students from the host country, through high visibility at international higher education exhibitions, on the Web, and in the international scientific arena. Some commentators argue that the major volume of the expected increase in the demand of higher education will take place in Asia and will consist particularly of offshore- or branch campuses (McBurnie and Ziguras 2007; Lane 2011). Branch campuses amounted to 24 worldwide establishments in 2002, but have increased sixfold in just a few years to 162 in 2009

(Altbach 2011). Some of the reasons for the anticipated increase of offshore/branch campuses, in contrast to the more conventional educational migration trajectories to the West, are the following: international establishments of branch campuses is part of the global strategy of high-ranked universities; the increasing demand from students and nations takes place primarily in developing regions; these regions allow for lower costs of living and tuition; it enables a consolidated national infrastructure for higher education and research; it generates spin-off effects in the economy; and it reduces the brain drain to the West (Altbach 2011; Cao 2011).

2.2. Eduscapes

We will here follow the critique of 'knowledge society' and 'knowledge economy' (cf. above) in order to understand how these notions have emerged to occupy leading positions in contemporary political and educational thinking. By employing the general perspective of 'interdisciplinary knowledge studies' (cf. above) we aim towards an analysis of the ethnocentric assumptions underpinning a number of Western actors as well as analysing the spatial strategies and routes available for higher education and knowledge migration as these are used by individual students from developing countries (South). Our way to conceptualise these strategies and flows is to think of them as 'educational landscapes' (eduscapes). As a cultural phenomenon eduscapes has its historic counterparts in the privileged classes' educational migration in the form of 'Bildungsreise' and 'Le Grand Tour', as much as in labour migration. The significance of the notion is in no way unique to our time but is tracing age-old patterns of movement in the name of diaspora, colonialism, postcolonialism, exploration, 'conquistadorism', etc. Spatial movement for educational purposes is not unique to our own time. However, a new dimension of concurrent eduscapes is the intensification, diversification, differentiation and technologisation of 'scientific' knowledge and institutionalised higher education on a global scale not previously experienced. The notion of eduscapes does not primarily serve the function, as do both 'knowledge society' and 'knowledge economy', of giving a general characterisation of a time period, a dominant form of production or a global framework for positional ranking.

Drawing on anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's (1996) conceptualisation of contemporary global flows and different forms of global scapes (i.e., finance-, media-, techno-, ideo- and ethnoscapes), this form of (edu)scape is adding another global dimension of social facticity as well as its realm of cultural imaginary. In his work, Appadurai does not explicitly mention education as part of his scapes, although an analysis of education could be located across several of these as an aspect of finance, media, ideology, etc. Believing that science, research and higher education are one of the strongest driving forces in present-day 'globalism' – 'interpret[ing] globalisation in a neo-liberal way as primarily the liberalisation and global integration of markets, linked to the

spread of particular version of "(Western)democracy"' (Fairclough 2006, 7–8) – eduscapes is intended to serve a complementary purpose in relation to the other forms of global transformative scapes outlined by Appadurai (1990; see also Kynäslahti 1998, 2001; Luke 2005, 2006; Ambrosius Madsen 2005, 2008; Beck 2008; Carney 2009, 2010, 2012; Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas 2011).

Most previous usages of 'eduscapes' make explicit references to the typology of Appadurai, although the concept has been given quite different interpretations in the literature including media education, postcolonial and globalisation studies, cultural studies and comparative education. Media education scholar Heikki Kynäslahti (1998, 2001) amalgamates a variety of concepts from Appadurai, Deleuze and Guattari, and Castells as well as from the sociology of time and space, to envision eduscapes as a horizontal integrative landscape in the field of education based on distributed access to ICT. The rich theoretical background that the concept is given in the work of Kynäslahti is linked to very specific imperatives for creating simultaneous spaces for interaction and educational purposes divorced from physical places reminiscent of decontextualised virtual spaces for interaction: 'The eduscape is a world-wide "scape" of educational flows which people can reach regardless of their location and regardless of the physical reality they live in' (Kynäslahti 1998, 159).

Like many other cultural globalisation scholars Kynäslahti focuses on the individual in a context of globalisation and so do postcolonial and globalisation studies scholars Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas (2011) in their study of 'affective eduscapes' among Indian students within Australian international higher education. They depart from Appadurai's typology of scapes by first identifying that Indian students in Australia typically exemplify 'ethnoscapes' (Appadurai 1990, 297) but they argue that educational experiences cannot be reduced only to ethnicity, but are part of all the five original scapes in Appadurai; it is not just a matter of ethnicity, but also of finance, ideology, media and technology. Following Luke (2006, 101, cf. 2005, 162) and Kynäslahti (2001, 159), 'eduscapes' are understood as educational experiences that work as vectors across, between and among all the other spaces. In the spirit of the 'affective turn' in cultural studies they also argue that eduscapes are specifications 'of the types of affective experiences produced by and within this flow' (Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas 2011, 94). The personal experiences of Indian students in Australia are the focus of their article. How these students in practice and in terms of emotions cope with the changing cultural context and new expectations is what they call the 'affective eduscapes of international higher education' (Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas 2011, 87). More concretely the 'affective eduscape' is about individual aspirations, their hopes, dreams and fears and how these affective forces can be confronted by frustration, anxiety and depression (Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas 2011, 94), when they encounter a context where foreign students are regarded as 'cash cows' (Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas 2011, 87) whose main role is to contribute to student revenue, where

up to 80% of the student body in the class consists of Indian students and the rest are Nepalese or Chinese (Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas 2011, 95).

Cultural studies scholar Carmen Luke uses the notion of 'eduscapes' as a general extension of the argumentation in Appadurai with a focus on the unevenness, disjunctures and heterogeneity of scapes and flows, without explicitly discussing how and why this notion should replace the original five scapes:

> My use of the term 'eduscapes', then, is meant to invoke inconsistencies and incongruences of that hot export commodity coveted by providers and highly desirable from the vantage point of consumers: branded international education and credentials brought to you by the 'enterprise university' – we take VISA, Mastercard or AMEX. (Luke 2005, 162; cf. 2006, 101)

In the work of Luke, which we partly follow, eduscapes functions as a comprehensive lens for a descriptive and critical analysis of scapes and flows in the realm of global education, knowledge and publishing. In comparative education, Stephen Carney and Ulla Ambrosius Madsen have both been using eduscapes as well as educational 'policyscapes'. The latter refers to a cross-national dimension of shared educational policies, witnessed through an analysis of educational policies on three different continents which show great similarities (Carney 2009, 2010, 2012). Policyscape is a way of linking diverse contexts instead of treating them nationally and separately, thus attempting both to identify a transnational dimension of policies and to overcome 'methodological nationalism' (Robertson and Dale 2008; Amelina et al. 2012). Eduscape is defined by Ambrosius Madsen (2005, 1) as, 'an analytical concept that transcends the national boundaries for education and connects the studies of schooling across sites' (Brazil, Zambia and Vietnam) which is quite similar to policyscapes with the aim of connecting multi-sited contexts. Most similar to our own usage of this notion is the one proposed by Visaka Kumari Beck (2008), who wants to go beyond the notion of internationalisation to better reflect its complex character and multiple dimensions through eduscapes.

With our use of eduscapes, we are aiming at an analytical vehicle that encompasses places and processes, institutional practices as well as spatio-temporal strategies of individuals. For our purposes, eduscapes refer to places such as hubs of knowledge and capital. It can designate institutional arrangements referring to the ideology of a group, an organisation or a nation. It can also mean processes of knowledge negotiation and subjective trajectories of individuals in time and space, including their imaginary (educational) landscapes. These eduscapes are linked to social and cultural imaginaries as that subjective horizon of expectation and experience that both institutions and individuals inhabit. The cultural imaginary of eduscapes is here regarded as a symbolic matrix within which people imagine and act as collective and individual agents. Following the British historian Graham Dawson (1994, 48),

the cultural imaginary is a 'network of discursive themes, images, motives and narratives available in a culture in a specific time'. The social imaginary is understood as the everyday hermeneutics of how collectives and individuals navigate in relation to the symbolic matrix of eduscapes. This is a landscape of meaning and collective aspiration where the imaginary dimension is equally important as the actual physical movements. We are thus moving in-between cultural scripts and social facticities that are conditioning institutional policies and strategies as well as individual anticipations, in the form of dreams, hopes and imaginations, what is called 'affective eduscapes' in Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas (2011, 94). From the horizon of the individual the educational landscape is where dreams of a prosperous future are nourished and maintained, but this is also the place where fantasy is not merely an escape from reality but a constant and unavoidable accompaniment in real life experiences.

2.3. Methodological implications

Carney and Ambrosius Madsen have in their work explicitly addressed precisely the methodological benefits of the notion of eduscapes and policyscapes. This is done both in order to detect a transnational dimension and to avoid methodological nationalism (Ambrosius Madsen 2005, 1; Carney 2009, 63, 65, 67). Carney argues for combining various sites (Denmark, Nepal and China) (cf. Ambrosius Madsen above) because these are increasingly interconnected and representing practices both at the top and in grass-roots levels. Accordingly eduscapes can be studied at different levels, from individual trajectories, to the local, regional, national, federal and global contexts. Our aim, generally, is that these levels should not be separated but studied by detecting flows and processes through these dimensions/scales so that different contextual layers can be integrated. More concretely, eduscapes can be investigated through its very constitution in educational aspects such as the following: exchange and mobility programmes between universities and nations; branch campus establishments; higher education exhibitions; national and federal research policies; the global commodification and massification of higher education; virtual universities and distance education; individual imaginaries, etc.

Following this introduction, we will focus on two examples where we use the notion of eduscape to understand the flows and scapes of higher education on different levels.

3. The rhetoric of global trading in the 'knowledge economy'

In this section we will look at the interaction between the top and low ends of the global knowledge food chain, focusing on institutional and national actors and their eduscapes. We will follow a case study of the relations between Sweden (at the top end) and Pakistan (at the low end; ranked among the lowest in the world in terms of access to higher education; Perkinson 2006, 4),

identifying the rhetorics of global trading and hegemonic knowledge economy discourse, as well as the various understandings of the meaning of knowledge, mobility and cultural exchange at the level of higher education. The study is based on an analysis of documents that were used in this institutional exchange and produced by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan.

3.1. Pakistan towards the knowledge economy

As an example of the global trading in knowledge economy, we will take a closer look at the example of Pakistan during the decade following the new Millennium and 9/11. Even long before that event, in fact already since political independence, the Government of Pakistan and its HEC (established 2002) had struggled to rethink their perceived disadvantaged role in contemporary international higher education. As a result of this, Pakistan designed five year plans (started already in 1955), serving to enable the country to 'embark on the road to develop a knowledge economy' (Medium Term Development Framework 2005–2010 [MTDF]; Higher Education Commission 2005, iii). The establishment of the HEC and the subsequent increased financial allocations were historically motivated, but also a response to influential reports by policy-making transnational institutions such as the World Bank and UNESCO (Moutsios 2010) and consultancies such as The Boston Group. In order to understand this case of global trading with knowledge institutions we need to contextualise the status of higher education in Pakistan.

Being the sixth most populous country in the world with 177.1 million people (National Institute of Population Studies [NIPS] 2011), Pakistan is mainly based on an agricultural economy focused on food production and the textile industry. The national vision in the early 2000s was 'Rapid industrialization and economic growth' contributing to a, '. . . developed, industrialized, just and prosperous Pakistan through rapid and sustainable development, in a resource constrained economy by deploying knowledge inputs' (Higher Education Commission 2005, iii; these exact words are also reiterated in the current national Vision 2030 for Pakistan). The mission statement is 'engineering Pakistan' (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 4) and the quotations from these HEC-texts echo visionary optimism:

> Pakistan is one of the fastest growing industrialized countries of the developing world. Industrialization of the country fuelled by an economic boom is a turnaround unprecedented in Pakistan. It is now becoming an international venue for opportunities and investment. (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 4)

From being mainly an agricultural economy, Pakistan now also strives to become a producer of other goods and generally 'quality products' on an international market. In order to achieve these goals, policies are formulated which will aim to attract the relocation of business and R&D work to Pakistan

from industrialised countries, just like what has happened over the previous couple of decades in India, particularly in Bangalore and Hyderabad: 'all efforts to be made to make Pakistan member of global supply chain' (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 5). It is argued that the agricultural economy needs to be transformed into an updated version of an, 'agriculture sector [with] high value-added agricultural produce, information technology, biotechnology, engineering sciences, pharmaceuticals, material sciences, basic sciences, social sciences, economics, finance and other disciplines' (Higher Education Commission 2005, v). The vision for 'engineering Pakistan' is built upon a perception and perpetuation of the present strength and potential in agriculture, albeit on a more aggregated level.

We can clearly identify how the national vision of Pakistan is formed on the template of contemporary knowledge economy discourse, oriented to an understanding of knowledge and its implications primarily dressed in economic terms. Knowledge in this sense is deployed as a general catalyst for the large-scale industrialisation of production, and contributes to associate Pakistan with a promising market for investments and business opportunities. The mission statement 'engineering Pakistan' neatly captures several important elements in this regard: the centrality of industrial production; the key role played by engineers; the making of strategic plans for changing the country. It is worth emphasising, that these are ideological statements aimed towards the future. In the analytic terms favoured in this article, they would qualify as examples of 'social imaginaries' (see also Taylor 2004) and 'eduscapes' (cf. above) in which collective expressions of socio-political and economic expectations and goals become blended with generalised accounts of economic achievements.

Based on the statistics provided by the Governmental Commission, there were in 2005 a total of 30,000 engineering students in the country with an annual graduation output of 7400, most of them on the Bachelors level (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 10). Since these figures are extremely low for a country with a population almost as large as Russia or Brazil, and with research being almost non-existent, the conclusion in the HEC-document was that the country needed to improve higher education. During the period 2002–2009 enrolment of students tripled from 2.2% to 4.7% of the 18–23 year age cohort (Halai 2011, 2). According to the same source, the infrastructure at universities for research in science and technology is obsolete. There is inadequate scientific and technological manpower with no or very little emphasis on faculty training/development. Overall it is not possible, they argue, to sustain and progress with an annual output of only 7400 engineers at B.Sc. level (Halai 2011). During the five years after 2005, the Government's plan is to invest roughly 93.5 million Rupees (roughly 2.5 million Euro; Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 3) on university infrastructure and human resource development. Infrastructure development

at universities would be undertaken to enhance the quality of teaching and research and to:

> . . . [d]evelop a sound base of technological manpower in emerging and market based technologies (engineering, genetic engineering, material sciences, micro-electronics, robotics, mechatronics, space sciences, IT, renewable energy, water resource development, etc.) and to excel at an international level. (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 4)

The infrastructure includes also the founding of technology and science parks adjacent to universities, linking education, research and development with potential for employment, in order 'to enable the transfer of technically qualified graduates rapidly into wealth creating industry' (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 4). Politics of innovation and knowledge play an important role in the building of this infrastructure and for this reason HEC through the programme Universities of Engineering, Science and Technology of Pakistan (UESTP) prospected cooperation with Western and South East Asian partners. Technical education and skill development will be planned and implemented for the next five years (until 2010) in cooperation with 'world class foreign engineering universities' (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 3). As partners in this project, which will constitute the first step towards achieving the main goal in the five-year plan, the Government has selected high-ranked technical universities in Sweden, France, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Italy, Japan, China and South Korea to establish new universities of internationally renowned standards in Pakistan. The actual progress of the UESTP-programme remains unclear at the time of writing.

Obviously, the improvement of higher education and research was (and still is in Vision 2030) a key element in the plans for the future 'engineering [of] Pakistan'. Albeit somewhat old, the statistics presented above are overwhelmingly making the point that an improvement has to take place in order for the country to reach into the higher echelons of the global KBE. For an outside observer it is obvious that changes other than those at the level of higher education also may apply in order for this vision to be realised. Expressions characteristic of contemporary and highly competitive higher education discourse and KBE discourse, emphasising global trading in knowledge, are repeatedly used, such as 'excel at international level' and 'world class' when it comes to defining the quality and level for achievement. Another discourse which is used is the design for implementing higher education into employment and technological change through the means of science parks and innovation politics. In order for this vision to materialise, the HEC argues, outside help is needed through the UESTP-programme. This is formulated in terms of cooperation and partnership with 'world class foreign engineering universities' which are invited to establish new campuses. From

the horizon of Pakistan, the global trading in knowledge society is put forward as a joint project based on partnership.

3.2. A proposal to KTH

In this section, we will follow the case of Pakistan and the rhetoric of global trading in knowledge economy through the prospected partnership with one of the foreign countries mentioned in the previous section. According to the MTDF-plan, the so-called Pak-Swedish University was scheduled to be established by the Swedish Royal Institute of Technology (Kungliga Tekniska Högskolan, KTH). This example of the global trading of higher education will be interpreted through the lens of eduscapes.

In late 2004, KTH hosted a visit by the Minister of Education from Pakistan, Dr Atta-ur-Rahman. The Minister officially asked the school to assist Pakistan in establishing a technical university from scratch, the Pakistan–Sweden University, of the same quality as KTH and with adjacent science park, business incubators and innovation activities. Based on this initial visit, a more detailed HEC-document was later prepared. This document (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 6) specifies that 500 acres of land was made available in the industrial region of Sialkot in the North-Eastern province of Punjab, 125 km north from Lahore and adjacent to the Indian border and the province Jammu and Kashmir. Three point five million square feet of facilities would be expressly built for 5500 students, including administration offices, hostels, faculty housing, etc. Some of the first students, 335 Ph.D. and 165 M.Sc., would be trained in Sweden, and should thereafter be hired to work at the campus. KTH would contribute with its good reputation and take charge operationally with project development, including recruitment of faculty and administrative staff. Out of the total faculty of 475, 32 should be recruited from Sweden. The campus was envisioned as a state-of-the-art learning environment, equipped with laboratories, teaching labs, wired as well as wireless networks, computerisation, automation and video conferencing, library, transport facilities, self-generating power units, etc. The students should be provided with scholarships and all would carry their own laptops. Economically, everything would be cared for by the Government of Pakistan.

The expected output of the project in full operation would be 1240 ‘world class graduates’ annually (1000 M.Sc. and 240 Ph.D.; Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 8). The Pakistan–Sweden University would also undertake fundamental and applied research, and run development projects aimed at ‘wealth creation’ in the long, medium and short term. The faculty should be both willing and capable of providing consultancy to enhance industrial growth around the region of Sialkot and also throughout Pakistan. The project should, according to the national vision of development (cf. above), promote the sustainable development of a technologically trained society. The project was assumed to meet its development costs within 10 years. The approximate

annual benefit to the economy was expected to be PKR 5.000 billion (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006).

The general benefits of the project included economic, cultural and social factors. Pakistan would use the establishment of Pakistan–Sweden University, as well as the other institutions developed with the other partners in the UESTP-programme, as a window of communication with the partner country and the rest of the industrialised world, with the goal of enhancing the image of Pakistan as a promising nation. It would create a nucleus of higher education for producing 'quality manpower' that could participate in developing the entire education sector, and enhancing the quality of education through better education facilities and training:

> Sustaining the nation's prosperity in the 21st century will require making effective use of the talents and abilities of all citizens and the project will provide the engineers & technical training for the nation's technically and analytically talented community. (Pak-Swedish University Sialkot 2006, 17)

A national labour force of high quality would be educated on site in Pakistan by the partners from Europe and South East Asia. The link with the partners should be maintained for at least 10 years. These UESTP-universities would be distributed all over the nation, making general emphasis on innovation, entrepreneurship and engineering skills. It was expected that a rapid transfer of skills in education and training could take place also through the founding of science and technology parks; education linked with employment.

As indicated, the offer from Pakistan was concrete and detailed at the level of minutiae according to the expected standards that characterise an established state-of-the-art technological university. It is interesting to note that all of this would be paid for by the Government of Pakistan. The transaction can be regarded as a straightforward form of global investment and global trading in knowledge, infrastructures and key resources for social and technological development. The glimpses we get here of the rational calculation was that a return on investment could be met within a period of 10 years, and is understood in straightforward economic terms. Another interesting aspect is that the connection with KTH (and the other universities involved) was understood as a window of contact, communication and exchange with the partner country and also, with the rest of the industrialised world. The connection would thus enable Pakistan to disseminate and enhance a national image of a Pakistan in a process of being 'engineered'.

The way in which KTH managed the offer from Pakistan reflects, first of all, that it is treated on a par with any other large industrial project; higher education is in this sense no different from investment in energy or infrastructure. It is a matter of 'exporting' a product (higher education) and, in the long run, 'exporting' the knowledge economy. The subsequent discussion of the possibilities and barriers related to this project that took place at KTH is

interesting to follow. The several risks involved were thoroughly analysed and assessed by hiring international risk consultancies. Faculty members were interviewed regarding their willingness and/or hesitation to participate in the project. These discussions in the University Board, the Faculty Board and by various experts on higher education, risk and security can be regarded as constituting an assessment of the operative and realistic side of the globalisation policy but cannot, however, be dealt with in this article.

This case shows the clash when visionary and optimistic expectations from developing nations meet the distanced and sober responsibilities of actors in the industrialised world. Interestingly, despite this dramatic clash, they seem to share an instrumental understanding of knowledge, expressed through the hegemonic KBE discourse (Jessop 2004, 2008). It also shows the difference in their positioning in relation to this: as an aspiring actor at the very low end of the global knowledge economy food chain, and as an actor that is already being there and wants to behave responsibly and securely. In our conceptual terms, we can say that they both share the imaginary of an eduscape being defined according to the criteria and discourse of knowledge economy, understood primarily as a development of infrastructure and manpower for the benefit of industrial development and transformation. Their respective eduscapes are different, however, in their relative positioning and the measures taken in the process of making the project materialise. Finally, it shows how KTH as the selected actor underwriting the Millennium goals freely can choose the standards on which to intervene or not in a concrete project, emphasising not just their specific positioning but also how this role is related to gatekeeping powers.

4. Educational biographies and cultural imaginaries

In this section of the article we are shifting focus from the top end of the global food chain of knowledge society to peripheral voices and individual biographies with the aim of crystallising subjective dimensions, individual agency and the workings of cultural imaginaries in peripheral corners of global eduscapes. The data, which has been collected between 2003 and 2011, consists of interviews, participant observation and correspondence with altogether 70 students and lecturers in Sweden and Malaysia coming from 26 different countries. Four examples of experiences of transnationalism, migration within the realms of higher education and research will be presented. These examples are by no means exhaustive but rather illustrative cases illuminating what eduscapes also can bring forward from a grass-roots perspective.

In the capacity of Study director of an international master's programme in Science and Technology Studies (STS) at Linköping University in Sweden, one of the authors received this (paper) letter from Ghana in November 2003:

Dear Sir/maddam

I was so delighted when I saw your address in a magazine. I decided to write you because after one year I will by going to university and I had to know much about university, and from infancy Sweden is a country I admired a lot, I just wanted to be a citizen of Sweden. I'm a boy of 17 years of age and a student in the secondary school studying Agric Science as my course. The most subjects I like most are physics, chemistry, horticulture, animal science, mathematics and many more. I'm a guy who want to study abroad but due to some financial problem I can't study abroad. I'm also good in academic work, moving here and there researching, making science research. I'm very respectful, humanise and friendly, and I believe you can help me financially so that I can study abroad and do something better for Sweden. My main profession is to come out and be a medical doctor in future or be extension for vertinary officer. 'I Love Sweden'

I hope to hear from you soon. May God bless you and your followers. Thank you. Yours faithfully – Aby Ibrahim R

Although rather unusual today in its paper format, the letter in itself represents some of the social imaginaries that we have identified in many of the interviews and the correspondence with young students from peripheral positions in global eduscapes. Lack of resources, an identifiable desire to move into what is an imagined centre of knowledge society, excessive respectfulness for academic authority often accompanied by a spiritual devotion are some of the most recurrent features in our observations. These features constitute one form of topography in contemporary global eduscapes channelling desires into an economy of development and higher education. In this cartography of human mobility in the world of higher education, it is important to stress its multilayered contingency pending historical specificity and cultural situatedness but still identifying common threads in a global knowledge chain.

In line with much of the work of contemporary theorising of the global circulation of money, people, technology, ideas, etc. (cf. Appadurai 1996; Tsing 2000; Freeman 2001; Lindquist 2009) we are interested in the meaning-making and collective aspiration of such educational landscapes where the imaginary dimension is of just as great importance as the actual physical mobility. As a propelling imaginary force in everyday lives and hopes for future betterment such collectively held aspirations are mostly channelled through stories from relatives and friends, but also through an increasingly aggressive marketing of higher education in the global race of exporting knowledge commodities from developed countries, as we have discussed earlier.

In our interpretation of Aby Ibrahim's letter, we are moving in between fantasy scripts as well as social facticity governing dreams, hopes and individual imaginations from his west-African horizon. In his letter, and many more in this genre, we confront inhabitants of imaginative collective landscapes where dreams are nourished and fed but also individuals where fantasy is not merely an escape from reality but a facticity of life speaking from peripheral positions in this educational landscape, reminding us that globalisation is an uneven and contested process. In a generative theoretical lingua we

interpret this kind of data in terms of a fluid imaginative connection between the imaginary and imagination, a working imaginative geography of cultural as well as psychic life. The educational landscape functions as a symbolic matrix within which Aby Ibrahim imagines and acts as an individual agent. In our example, Aby Ibrahim is talking across national borders where we as symbolic as well as real gatekeepers act as collective agents in this eduscape. Gatekeeping is evidently a central activity of the symbolic matrix and much time, money and energy are devoted to figuring out how to overcome the maze of representational as well as real barriers in global eduscapes, at least from a peripheral position. Although a constant stream of students from developing countries migrates to universities and knowledge hubs in different parts of the world on a large scale, the overly optimistic ideas of a free global flow of mobility are not the experience of our interviewees. Moving from Aby Ibrahim's letter to other understandings of peripheral positions from other peripheral locations in knowledge society we can also note a recurrent and constant pre-occupation with over-coming gatekeeping functions, family and local hindrances.

A great deal of imaginary work, money and headache constantly revolves around how to evade gatekeeping and gatekeepers in whatever form it takes. This ranges from collecting loans from relatives and bargaining anticipated returns, travelling long and costly distances to visa-issuing embassies in the capital or the capital of the neighbouring country, worrying about the sometimes unreasonably long turnaround time for issuing student visas to Sweden, being able to present valid documents and to be certain what counts as valid, etc. Gatekeeping is here understood as positional power inhabited and exercised by individual and collective agents in an uneven process of supply and demand. The amount of imaginary energy that many of the students use to find strategies around the positional power, real or imagined, is impressive and something constantly talked about and acted upon in the often large and extended transnational networks of clansmen, fellow countrymen- and women, that almost every one of the interviewed students witness to. A migratory exiled experience where higher education is the driving force behind the mobility pattern is not only something that concerns individuals but for many of the interviewees it is also part of their family and kin stories. It governs their lives and it has in very many cases governed the entire family history. Three examples will follow that illustrate the transnational character of educational biographies originating from peripheral positions.

Fidelis from Cameroon (age 24 at the time) has studied the above-mentioned STS-programme and stayed in Sweden for 13 months before moving on to England for a Ph.D. and working part time to support himself. His mother who has been alone with three children commutes on a yearly basis between Cameroon, the USA and the UK. She works as a biology teacher in Cameroon and as a nurse in the USA and UK. His two brothers currently study in the USA, supported by their mother and the salary she makes as a nurse. Being the last of three he came to Sweden because as he says:

> I think the absence of tuition fees is a big factor that encourages students to come and study in Sweden. I, for one would not have thought of studying in Sweden if I had to pay fees. Having lost my dad, my mother is the sole breadwinner and she has two others to take care of.[1]

Christina, originally from Uganda, has four siblings. She also took the STS-programme at Linköping University and has since then become a Ph.D. student in Sweden. Her father was a professor of public administration. Belonging to the wrong ethnic group (the Baganda tribe) when Milton Obote regained power in the country in 1980 and Idi Amin was ousted, they were targeted, hundreds of thousands of Bagandas were exiled and the family left the country for Botswana. The family later moved to Swaziland and eventually South Africa but the parents have now returned to Uganda when her father retired. At the age of 20 Christina had lived in four different countries and transnationalism is part of her family heritage. Her father moved on to better positions and the family accompanied him. Christina did her undergraduate degree at the University of Swaziland and after a couple of years of working she opted to go back to university. At the time she had: '. . . about 4 friends who've been abroad, one of my best friends did her MBA in Brighton, England, another one in Washington DC, another one in Manchester, one went to Copenhagen, another ended up going to Johannesburg'. She applied to a number of UK universities and was accepted but was unable to get any funding: '. . . the amount of money they were charging foreign students, I mean there is no way, I wouldn't even know where to start to get that kind of money'. Luckily, she eventually got a scholarship and ended up in Sweden and the programme at Linköping University. Her two brothers live in Swaziland and her two sisters live in Johannesburg, South Africa. Christina would not have been able to study in Sweden without the scholarship she was awarded in 2003.

Another identifiable category of educational migrants are those students who have left their home countries because of political reasons. Matin from Iran in an interview from 2010 said:

> Due to political and some cultural problems there are many students who are thinking about going abroad and studying out there. Some even use studying as a way to leave the country and maybe they are trying to find some kind of life here, yeah there are many actually. Today when I am talking to my friends, most of them are either thinking seriously about it or they are thinking about maybe that they have to do it. It's an issue for most of my friends.

In a similar way, other interviewed students talk about themselves as educational refugees and refer to the political situation in their home countries as highly frustrating for a young generation with a global horizon, not in terms of educational ambitions. A recurrent theme in their stories is also the relative loss of status that many of their families have experienced in one or two generations in relation to political and economic instability in their home

countries. This is most evident for students from Pakistan, West Africa and Iran.

Common threads in their educational biographies are their middle-class background with a strong orientation towards higher education but also being located at contemporary peripheries of global eduscapes. In these biographies we do find a transnational pattern of mobility prevalent in the individual biography as well as in the family history. This pattern is characteristic for many of the interviewed students and lecturers. The centripetal forces of mobility in knowledge society, both celebrated and actual ones are as in these cases multilayered and involve a multitude of speaking positions with particular geographies and temporalities. Still, what we also see is that entry of global eduscapes into the logic of everyday life is given a constant larger influx by the twin forces of present-day globalism: migration on a massive scale and mass mediation. The role of information and communication technologies is here of course of tremendous importance. It is also through such means that we suggest that a new dimension of concurrent eduscapes is the intensification, diversification and differentiation of 'scientific' knowledge and higher education on a global scale not experienced before. It propels the imaginary force of different forms of eduscapes and serves as a theoretical handle to understand both geo-political power patterns in the world of higher education as well as individual life trajectories in these educational landscapes.

Focussing on 'grass-roots' aspects of transnational and intercultural experiences of students, also highlights the cultural embeddedness of speaking positions. We see that students and scholars in the periphery live a multiplicity of intersectionalities, creating certain ways of knowing, being in-between core and periphery in global eduscapes. We believe it is important to recognise the situatedness of knowledge consumption as well as initiating reflexive knowledge-making processes about location, particularity, and specificities in regard to the multitude of speaking positions in global eduscapes. This is not least so in academic communities of celebrated scientific nomadism that too easily tends to disregard the epistemic void, fragility and absence of canons in peripheral positions depending on lack of resources, geographical and political marginalisation. Peripherality is by no means fixed but rather characterised by multilayeredness and gradual differences. Locating the multilayeredness of different speaking positions is thus part of the challenge.

5. Eduscapes and the critique of 'knowledge society/economy'

In this paper we have argued that the notions used by nations and federations to describe current and future forms of production in terms of 'knowledge society' and 'knowledge economy' are ideological and normative. As a parallel to the problems associated with the naive understanding of the notion of globalisation, there is a strong need to unpack and put into perspective these normative constructs which tend to play important roles in current political and

educational discourse. The main purpose of this article has been to approach such a perspectivisation.

As a contrast to this ideological and normative conceptual apparatus, we have chosen, in analogy with the concepts developed by Appadurai (1996), to use the notion of eduscapes. We have drawn on various earlier uses of the concept (Kynäslahti 2001; Luke 2005, 2006; Ambrosius Madsen 2005, 2008; Beck 2008; Carney 2009, 2010, 2012; Ambrosius Madsen and Carney 2011; Caluya, Probyn, and Vyas 2011) with the purpose of further elaborating eduscapes as a comprehensive conceptual tool to clarify and problematise different forms of positional dynamics and geo-political stratification with regard to studies of globalisation and higher education. In particular, our elaboration of the concept stresses an integrated analysis of structural and institutional dimensions working in parallel with individual and affective experiences. We argue that by tracing collective and individual imaginaries, cultural embeddings as well as ideological underpinnings can be made visible in the current transformations of higher education at various places around the globe.

Through an analysis of two cases illustrating two different kinds of transnational flows, the case of Pakistan's proposed investment in higher education and a second case involving interviews with students, we have argued for eduscapes as an analytic concept by highlighting both institutional and individual aspects. We have consequently set the concept in motion in relation to these diverse sets of data. The case of Pakistan showed how the authorities and institutions were prepared to use a comprehensive conceptual kit of a knowledge society in order to argue for increased investment in higher education. We understood this as an example of creating common ground in a process described as global trading in knowledge society. We used the notion of eduscapes to unpack its normative aspects. The cases of the different educational biographies and imaginaries have further shown how this notion also can be used as a metaphor for unpacking different individual trajectories in the world of higher education and research. As eduscapes refers to individual as well as collective experiences of migration, mobility and the flow of ideas it is also possible to see how these layers of experiences accompany and intersect with each other. As such it also points to the situated unevenness of different speaking positions in a stratified chain of global knowledge production and consumption.

In sum, the main advantages of eduscapes as an analytical concept are the following. First, as a descriptive notion it is still not void of ideology, but this ideology is less naive in relation to an interpretation of current politics of higher education. Secondly, eduscapes can open up for peripheral voices and listening beyond its globalist connotations, thus making room for various modes and voices in the global food chain of knowledge production. Third, the notion of eduscapes can help to visualise (mapping differences) how particular

kinds of knowledge configurations and power participate to produce particular kinds of subjectivities.

Note

1. Until the year 2011 no Swedish universities charged tuition fees for non-Swedish citizens. From 2011 the local universities will decide on tuition fees.

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