

Challenging Orthodoxies: The Critical Governance Studies Conference

Warwick University 13-14 December 2010

The role of alterity in democratic governance discourse: a preliminary response to Bevir's puzzle¹

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Abstract

In Democratic Governance (2010)³, Bevir has posed the puzzle of what follows high modernism as the dominant determinant of public policy discourse and technologies of governance. This paper will attempt to identify a potential response to Bevir's puzzle through the use of postcolonial genre and alterity which is now being deployed in democratic discourse by world institutions⁴ and being interpreted through localization and decentralization narratives in England by the Coalition Government. Since the mid 1990s, a new genre of governance discourse has been emerging which is not based on the professional dominance of new public management but rather deploys other narratologies of engagement, localism, culture and self management or responsabilisation. It is reliant on the strength of cultural norms as a mechanism for democratic forms and governance arrangements and, where deployed, is seeking to replace hierarchies as a dominant mode. It also can be argued that it offers more extended and associational forms of network and Institutionalist theories

The re-patterning of this dialogue and the potential emergence of a new genre appears to owe its provenance to a globalization narrative, where western hierarchic analogies do not have common resonance in the majority of societies. For the west, the process which may be driving this turn can be most closely linked to post-colonialist models, where the periphery is now creating the structures for the centre in a process of alterity which may have profound implications for governance models for the future. This may be a line to follow in responding to Bevir's puzzle and this paper sets out to examine the claims for such a response.

Introduction

This paper has been developed as a preliminary response to Bevir's puzzle, as set out in *Democratic Governance*, (2010). In this, Bevir is challenging recent attempts to remake the state through policy

¹ The development of this paper is in response to both the critical public administration specialist panels at the PSA Conference 2010, Janet Newman's presentation to the Policy and Politics Conference, Bristol September and Mark Bevir's presentation to the Interpreting Deliberative Governance Conference at DMU, September 2010. It represents thinking in progress and comments responses are welcomed

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³ Bevir, M., (2010), *Democratic Governance*, (Oxford: Princeton University Press)

⁴ See for example *The White Paper on Multilevel Governance A consultation response*, EU Committee of the Regions, 2010 (Brussels: CEC)

expertise and is rather considering of 'how to renew democracy' (ibid 4). As identified by Bevir, democratic governance theory has been used as an agent of high modernism and he argues that this has been a means to de-politicize and bureaucratise democratic decision making, deploying it as a tool of the state in a way which promotes micro-contestation whilst controlling strategic direction. This paper accepts that argument but suggests firstly that this bureaucratisation was an intended consequence of the elite response to the masses, with modernization being used to generate complexity, distance and bureaucratic modes to disguise a more fundamental crisis of a loss of control in a post-empire state and the creation of a mass market society. Carey's arguments on this are set out in *The Intellectuals and the Masses* (1992) whilst Light (2007) demonstrates this fear through the specific responses and destabilisation of perceived class breakdown, in this case of a leading high modernist practitioner, Virginia Woolf. As Harris (2010) demonstrates, the fracture created by high modernism was profound and calculated and left others to pursue different approaches which were regarded as being outside the mainstream.

However, as this paper outlines, it is possible to go beyond this and consider the role of high modernism as a genre and then consider this within the context of the role and use of genre in meta theory as being a means to consider a response to Bevir's puzzle. Genres have powerful roles in establishing patterns of understanding, as they are formulaic, appear to have secure outcomes and although narratology can be exotic, the genre has its own rules for resolution. Genre is not a slippery concept in this respect. Single genres can be preeminent in specific fields and they have a natural life in terms of application and replacement which can be slow or accelerated and transition through recontextualisation (Currie, 1998). What may be the case in democratic governance theory is that high modernism has been a long-lasting and functionally useful genre but changing contexts may be leading the search for a new genre which can be communicated through differentiated narratives.

This paper explores the potential drivers for the replacement of the high modernism and a candidate replacement genre based on the ways in which this is being infused within governance structures worldwide. The candidate genre identified here that of post-colonialism and its powerful ability to 'write back' from the old periphery to the old centre (Ashcroft et al 2002, Chrisman 1990). The old periphery is de-centred model that brings with it, through the process of alterity, a new working approach for democratic governance. Rather than state de-centering being defined as a tool to 'hollow out' the state (Bevir and Rhodes, 2003), the de-centered state is being viewed as a way to strengthen the state through its economic power and means to control relationships with

other states. This paper is located in the view that the application of genre is always intentional and that these re-scaled de-centered models are being supported as a means to promote social order and meet continuing state-defined economic imperatives.

Bevir's puzzle

In *Democratic Government* (2010), Bevir sets out a genealogy of the concept of governance and the ways in which it has been realised through operational means using a variety of forms. His aim is to identify a new democratic practice which is not circumscribed by provenance but, through adaptation, moves into a position which is more appropriate to modern times and as such is polemical in its mission. Having identified the current high modernist approach to governance and its technologies, Bevir is seeking a successor approach which does not create distance between the governed and democratic modes of operation. Bevir argues that high modernism took over from historical and hegemonic modes of governance and that its associated bureaucracies served to distance its practice from the people as an unintended consequence. However continuing Bevir's genealogical trope, it is possible to argue that the high modernist turn had a different ancestry and was a deliberate attempt to maintain distance through governance and that the associated technologies were the means of achieving this rather than a consequence (Carey, 1992, Light 2007, Harris, 2010). In this genealogy, the DNA is configured to maintain power and thus will regenerate over time.

Bevir sets out his case in *Democratic Governance* in three parts starting with a theoretical narrative, followed by a more detailed account of the methods and technologies applied in the service of theory and then lastly the search for a replacement account. In the first part, Bevir reviews the narratives that underpin the approach to the modern state. These include economic and social models as the predominant and alternative carriers of meaning, including both neoliberalism and the third way. He also notes the shift towards accountability models and aligns these to a bureaucratic narrative, which he argues represents a new wave of high modernism. Following this he surveys the current theoretical lexicon, drawing the conclusion that ultimately the genetic makeup of high modernism is rooted in the same DNA as all other governance theories and remains antithetical to preceding historicist modes. Lastly, in this first section, Bevir argues that the crisis of high modernism led to the development of governance as a mechanism for decentring the state through collaborative relationships which privilege some interests who are invited to engage in these processes (Clarke and Newman, 2009) and through new conceptions of the 'public' has seen a further turn to maintain bureaucratic rather than democratic control.

The second part of *Democratic Governance* revolves around discussions of the expressions of credibility and legitimacy of governments. This is undertaken through a theoretical review and then an assessment of modes and technologies that have been applied to address this concern. It reviews the role of governance at all scales from the supra-national in the EU to the local, including devolution, and identifies the legal reforms that have underpinned these searches for new democratic legitimacy and accountability. The third part of the book deals with specific policy reform initiatives that have been used to attempt to create more democratic accountability and the break up of professional cultures which retain a producer dominance (HMG, 2007). These include specific initiatives on joined up government and police reforms.

All of this analysis culminates in the puzzle that Bevir sets at the end of the *Democratic Governance*. In this he argues that high modernism has come to the end of its useful life as demonstrated through the many recent but ultimately unsuccessful attempts to retain bureaucratic power through technologies such as performance management. But if democratic legitimacy is to be re-established by making the centre more accountable, what is to replace it? Bevir identifies the influence of globalization as one of the issues that has engaged and potentially undermined high modernism. Pressure has been placed on the bureaucratic system as the electorate resist increasing influences of globalization and want the current system to control it as recent 'beggar my neighbour' trade arguments have demonstrated.

Bevir sees the prevailing models of governance continuing to regenerate in ways that ensures survival whilst questioning whether this model remains credible and what might replace it. He demonstrates that the state has recognised its own weaknesses (255), as incoming governments quickly learn that they have few levers available to effect the changes in policy direction set out in their electoral mandate (Blair, 2010; Hennessey, 2010; Rawnsley, 2010; Powell, 2010) and soon fall back on notions of better co-ordination which still maintain central control, although not all central interventions have the outcomes intended. Bevir's aim is to challenge high modernism and the puzzle that he has set is what should or could replace it. In framing his own initial response, Bevir returns to the economic and social narratives that he used earlier in the book. These are then translated into forms of local rationalities, contextualized and culturally defined which, Bevir argues, can be viewed as 'local reasoning'. Whilst governance models are expressed through policy models based on top-down behaviourism, Bevir argues that 'local reasoning' can embrace tradition and contextualization and generate approaches of local culture and agency which lead to

democratic self rule, i.e. government rather than governance.

Through these arguments, Bevir opens up both an implicit and an explicit set of challenges to prevailing orthodoxies in governance theory. Implicitly, there is a challenge to the theoretical models which Bevir argues operate within a unified frame and provenance whilst being viewed through the lens of difference. At the same time, Bevir argues that the explicit technologies and artifacts of governance are no longer appropriate servants of a democratic practice. Both of these arguments can be examined within their own terms and that is not attempted here. Rather, the use of alternative frames to view and examine the puzzle of what replaces high modernism is being considered. In part, this debate can be initially located in the models of change that Bevir identifies as being successive, interdependent or co-existing. There are numerous theories of social and economic change including positivism and falsifiability, paradigm shift, path dependency, alterity, catastrophe theory or Habermasian approaches amongst others.

If an alternative or replacement approach is to be identified and adopted then it will need to meet local and globalised tests of accountability and utility. Without meeting both of these, any new model is unlikely to have resonance. In Bevir's terms, this quest may be for a new theory - a predictive model which through its practices provides mechanisms for delivering enhanced 'local reasoning'. However, there may be another way of responding to this puzzle, through the use of genre which provides a formulaic discipline which can be predicted rather than predictive and support narratologies of practice as middle range theories. If this is the case, is a possible response to Bevir's puzzle found by switching genre rather than by identifying new theory. Such an approach does not necessarily crowd out high modernism but can co-exist and possibly eventually replace it as a genre of governance. As genres are less likely to be hybrid, post-colonialism is likely to need new technologies to promote its adherence - shifts from compliance to behaviourism. This is considered further below.

Genre and Governance

The use of genre can provide an alternative to the 'theory' and narrative models that have been deployed. As Todorov indicates (1974:4), genre can be defined in greater and lesser degrees of generality but can also have a theoretical provenance and application. Narratives or in this case, policies that are manifest through texts, exist individually but also within groups or genres. They are written within these codes and with reader reception in mind (Iser, 1989). The use of genre also patterns expectation but also immediately locates texts. Genres are mechanisms for organizing

discourse and structure meaning (Frow, 2005). Genres are created by conventions that change over time and constructs a world that is specific and will be understood by a discourse community, in which a schematic world is sketched out within the expectation that the community already has some understanding with which to fill out the compressed form (ibid, 7). Genres also have specific thematic content from which derive conventions and vocabularies, and a structure of implication. Although genres can overlap and intertextualise, they are less likely to be hybrid. Genres have formats, narrative arcs and expectations of resolution. They can be translated into governance models as they provide some expectation that specific approaches will have defined outcomes and that they are likely to be successful within the initial terms set. Unlike theories, genres are not subject to falsifiability or contestation but are predictable formats which engender confidence and credibility offering policy makers and practitioners a secure basis for action. Genres can be temporally specific but it is their role in creating an outcome from an understood path that expresses their utility. Within genre, narratology is predictable, and can contain the narratives used by governments to generate organizational and societal outcomes not least as the state has its own objectives which are set through manifestos, external economies and international concerns (Fujita et al, 2002, Mulgan, 2009). Even where local reasoning is exercised, the state has to establish frameworks for its implementation and this has to conform to wider state objectives as part of its programme for mediated action. Overall genres classify, and create horizons of expectations in their users but they are not models of prediction to be verified or falsified. They can provide a middle-range theory.

Whilst Bevir identifies his key driver of democratic governance as being democracy, i.e. how decisions are made, other see governance as the way in which these decisions are turned into action and the overriding values that accompany this process. Mulgan (2006) identifies this purpose of governance as service or as being a servant of the people (Rawnsley, 2010). Narratives have long been identified as providing a means of carrying state objectives and meaning into action through creating 'golden threads' and harmonized discourse which create behavioural patterns (Mumby, 1987). As Bevir (1999) has indentified, political science relies on a 'narrative form of explanation' (Bevir and Rhodes, 2003:20) although unlike fiction, these narratives are concerned with 'objective knowledge of the world' (ibid). The use of performance indicators sets parameters for these narratives when they are not strong enough to achieve the objectives set locally or at other scales (Mulgan, 2007 and 2009). However, is the use of narratology enough to carry the intentions of the state? Narratives operate within current orthodoxies and whilst useful as a means of explaining behaviours and values in operation (Clegg, 2010), they do not necessarily serve to provide

explanations of wider governance tropes and alternatives.

Does the use of genre help to answer Bevir's puzzle? It might be argued that there is little difference between theories as set out by Bevir and the use of genre taxonomies, but the application of genre can be less bound in conventional and emotive positions and, in this case, may help to challenge orthodoxies. So the form of policy genres may be seen as linear and cathartic - some form of change will lead to a desired outcome. The narrative convention would therefore include the situation, the objectives, the agents of change and the outcome. On the other hand, genres of governance set out higher level, ethical texts which describe relations of power. Governance genres can illustrate the application of their principles in practice and are drivers of the other genres.

The use of narrative within organizations and government is not new. As Mumby (1987) demonstrated, narrative plays a role in defining and locating deep structural conformity through the creation of organizational realities which are implicitly understood rather than being transparently externalized. Narratives create a normative thread to which actions and behaviours can be related and which assumes outcomes will emerge through the orthodoxy of the narrative arc. Mumby argues that narratives create legitimating frameworks. Orr (2005) has also identified the role of narratives in policy discourse and their importance for conveying affective meaning. Narratives become fashionable and crowd out other stories which are not seen to be likely to be so successful but within these approaches they can also be successive and change over time. They can also become 'rationalized myths', which Clegg (2010) argues is a 'mobilization by political and media elites' (6). One Thatcherite example of this might be the introduction of private sector competition in the public sector from the mid 1980s, seen to be further de-centering the state in a flow of neo-liberal high modernism but rather the state using the narrative to carry requirements of treaty compliance with WTO/GATT Uruguay Round agreements in 1986. Here the narrative was created to sit within the genre. When New Labour came to power in 1997, the narrative was changed to Best Value in local public sector services but remained within the high modernist genre.

Although it might be argued that texts in social science whether adumbrating theory or policy are not literary texts or works of fiction, as Bevir states, many policy texts have more in common with fables and seek to generate new myths. They may be based on evidence but they are set within specific frames where outcomes are already predetermined. There are 'goodies' and 'baddies', heroes and villains in these stories, prizes to be won and obstacles to be overcome. In the way of

fables, sagas, fairy stories and myths, failure to follow the formula will lead to the wrong ending and there will be a lack of subsequent closure. And like fiction, policy narratives cannot be subject to a truth test - following the recipe may not produce the same results every time, again a point made by Bevir in his search for an interpretive governance approach.

Control through cohesion - Globalization and the post-colonial genre

If high modernism has run its course, as Bevir suggests, then what are the drivers for succession and is there any evidence that a displacing genre is emerging? One key contender for the role of supplanting genre is that of post-colonialism where the former periphery can demonstrate the power and techniques of working through cultural practices to the former centre. In a world where the western lens no longer works (Garton Ash, 2010; Morris, 2010; Ormerod, 2010; Brown, 2010), other narratives are needed to provide more universal reception and adoption. Control of markets in the high modernist sense has failed and we look to anthropologists such as Tett (2009) to unlock the stories of institutional failure that have resulted in the challenge to hierarchical models. Financial vehicles now operate outside high modernist political and economic orthodoxies and longer term survival requires their remaking. Rather than depend on the reform of the existing, there is pressure to identify a genre that can develop narratives that are universal in their flow but identifiable in their construct and which create framing mechanisms that draw the other within them, in an attempt to incorporate western defined 'contrarian' states. Whilst the west continues to work within hierarchal models, other parts of the world have been developing economic innovation within varying cultural norms. Attempts to locate global initiatives within a western construct such as holding the Commonwealth Games in India, the Olympic Games in China and Brazil and the Football World Cup in South Africa and Russia recognize the emerging status of BRICS nations as economic and political powerhouses but may not produce the result the west was seeking. Rather than demonstrating the standards gap between west and elsewhere, they serve to challenge prevailing western orthodoxies of international strategizing and delivery.

There are a number of drivers of these changes. Elite theories and models are running their course because they depend on top-down western cultures of organisation. In a globalised world these models are not as powerful and cannot be imposed by the west, they are expensive to operate and may be bureaucratically sub-optimal in complexity and cost. Globalisation has led to a search for new models that can have wider resonance and also can be used for cross-national and cross-cultural benchmarking. Expanding the global market includes market regulation, taxation (OECD, 2010) and a series of understood global commons. As Wikileaks has demonstrated, Governments can

no longer ensure that countries operate within agreed codes and the western models that have prevailed over the last two hundred years are breaking down and no longer enforceable through colonialism, economic power or warfare. Western core executives are recognising their ability to control is reducing and are reaching for new genres which can create new inclusive predictabilities.

The transition to the use of a post-colonial model over that of high modernism has not been easy. Mulgan's discussion on forms of power (2006) is an example of someone who is close to power perceiving that the western model is under threat and being somewhat bewildered by the alternatives which he views through a western lens of continuity rather than through wider models in a globalised context. An alternative view is taken by Blond (2010) who centres this change on the reform of individual 'honourable' conduct (ibid 175) and revisiting the democratic contract. This personalized view has morphed into a concern for happiness and well being (Layard, 2006; Cameron, 2010). The transfer to the local is one means of creating these individual and personal relationships between state, citizen and place. In foregrounding the individual the state can restructure and expect that individuality will lead to innovation and ultimately greater economic competitiveness as individuals overcome bureaucratic boundaries. Putnam's (2001) notion of social capital, popular for a period in New Labour as a means of generating community solidarity to deliver individual conformity has now been replaced by the individual's economic behaviourism of 'nudge' (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008) and the wider economic benefits of happiness in 'The Spirit Level' (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2010). Each of these popularizations is part of the narratology of genre.

The west is concerned with the levels of institutionalization in its labour force and the lack of innovation and workforce participation this can foster. It is attempting to find formats that create the conditions for innovation within a bureaucratic structure. Here the rest of the world outside the west is seen to have a competitive advantage as strong cultural and tribal associations can ensure social solidarity, even if some aspects are unwelcomed by the west, and enshrines energy for change and improvement which the west is perceived to have lost (Morris, 2010). The welfare state is no longer seen as a mark of social solidarity and civilization (Judt, 2009) but rather a potential hindrance to a nation's future (as Obama's health care policy and proposals to build new railways demonstrate). Attempts at incorporated change within the west such as the political reforms in Eastern Europe and South Africa have expanded the potential for intra-western trade and been supplemented by endogenous growth models but these together have not produced enough certainty and security for the west to maintain the preeminent position that it has held for the last

two hundred years. Maintaining power and authority has led to a recasting of predominant models that are globally inclusive and create new modes of comparison and, the west hopes in time, system control. The global economic crisis of 2008 was a blow to this policy development, reducing the west's dominance over the financial system and increasing its eastern economic (inter)dependency. Even if the west cannot remain dominant it can have first mover advantage in an attempt to continue to frame the system

Using the post-colonial genre for governance narratives

In order to establish new orthodoxies the west has looked to the principles of the post-colonial genre as a means of establishing new approaches. In considering any new genre as a candidate for creating global governance narratives certain requirements will need to be met including:

- universality of appeal and applicability
- ability to deal with complexity
- applicability in a variety of social contexts
- economically underpinned and applicable in diversity of markets

It is not the purpose of this paper to detail the development and role of the post-colonial genre as this has been done elsewhere (see for example Said, 1978, Chrisman, 1990, Bhaba 1994, Boehmer, 1995, Loomba, 2005) but it is useful to consider two aspects of the genre and its associated narratology that have specific traction on the governance debate and what might follow high modernism. The first is the periphery's influence on the centre. The notion that the periphery writes back to the centre (Ashcroft et al 1989) is now well established in literature but has been less discussed in policy thinking. Post-colonialism offers a view on both hegemonic and modernist positions. It could be argued that the loss of empire was one of the main drivers in the adoption of high modernist approaches within western society, transferring the loss of peripheral control to focus on the application of similar modes on a domestic stage. If imperial expansion could not be achieved then bureaucratic transfer was clearly an interesting and, to some, new option. However, even bureaucratic empires are now being lost through devolution, EU treaties securing sub-state governance and post-mature bureaucratic operating costs.

At the same time, post-colonialism also expresses a development of distance and a recognition of the other which is equal and not subject. In time this has led to the periphery's position in creating a new condition which moves on from the post-colonial. This is conveyed in the notion of alterity (Levinas, 1999). Alterity is generally taken to mean exchanging one's own perspective for that of another. Alterity represents this as a fusion of familiarity and surprise (Attridge, 2004:84) and as

such it is through its creative and potentially innovative attributes that politicians are seeking to meet challenges within domestic economies. Although Attridge views alterity as a literature of resistance, using innovative fusions to create more exotic varieties of forms there is also the potential for this alterity to be appropriated towards more consensual and instrumental ends. The creation of a new 'other' is now demonstrably influencing a range of thinking and policy developments in a variety of ways. One example of this in practice is the extent to which Australian, New Zealand and Canadian governance models and policy experts were used by the core executive in the development of policy and on delivery in the second Blair government (Blair, 2010; Mulgan, 2009). This resulted in direct policy transfer appearing including the proposals for the new Scottish tax system drawn from experience in Canada (McLean and McMillan, 2003) and local infrastructure investment and delivery methods drawn on Australian, New Zealand and South African models (Morphet, 2010) and subsequently being delivered by the Coalition Government through the Scotland Bill (2010) and the UK Infrastructure Plan (HMT, 2010). (Interestingly and counter-intuitively, the Conservative/Coalition government comparables have been drawn from Europe - Swedish primary education, pension and finance approaches, Dutch planning system, French system of functional economic area governance, Belgian population register and social security system and Finnish secondary education.)

This process may have been one that was initially instigated to support the return of a Labour government in Australia much as New Labour was supported by Clinton's administration (Richards, 2010). However in one of these turns, it was the Australian experience and approach that started to influence New Labour central policy thinking. This may have been because Australian experience provided new policy models for delivery, a key concern of the Blair second term but it also chimes with the post-colonial genre that was emerging as part of international thinking. A similar experience has occurred in post-devolution UK. Although there was always as much suspicion of the role of 'down south' in Edinburgh as in Belfast, the post-devolution picture represents both the transference of policy between Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and England but also a counterintuitive convergence of policy as delivered through legislation in the four states of the UK (Morphet, 2011).

The second is more specific aspect of post colonialism and within the subgenre of subaltern studies (Spivak, 1988). This looks at the world from the point of view of the individual and has also been described as the 'bottom up world' (Taleb). The rise of the east and growth of the internet has created challenges to western orthodoxies and the role of the individual is seen to be central to

change, innovation and overcoming the failures of bureaucratised service delivery. The role of personalisation of services and use of responsabilisation (6 et al, 2010), based in both exogenous growth theory and behavioural economics mechanics such as 'nudge' (Thaler and Sunstein, 2008; Ormerod, 2010)) are a mechanism for claiming and optimizing perceived post-colonial advantages for the west. In its attention to lives as lived and their relationship with outcomes, there has been a closer interest in the ways in which individuals have influence through their own lives such as in health outcomes or in the influence on the world stage on security issues through the use of soft power (Blair, 2007; Hoffman, 2010).

At the personal level, the rise in anthropological inquiry and its application to bend outcomes from specific societies has seen its application in behavioural economics through popular concepts such as nudge. Appealing to self interest to change behaviours in ways that reduce society's costs and improves individual contributions to society's benefit is central to this approach. They can be seen through the tropes of self-management, personalisation and mutualism, which may all have generally beneficial outcomes although they are intended to deliver specific outputs such as identified in Mulgan's views on the use of 'good' and 'bad' power (2006). The role and use of nudge approaches in English domestic social and economic policy is emerging (Wintour, 2010) as a mechanism for promoting reductions in costs and dependency through welfare models. However as Leggett (2010) has indicated, nudge creates no dialogue with power or docile institutions and as yet little response for those who decide to opt-out i.e. refuse to budge rather than be nudged

Implications for Bevir's Democratic governance: applications in England

In Bevir's *Democratic Governance*, there is a review of the way in which high modernism has been applied in England through conceptual policy mechanics such as regulation and evidence based policy making and applied approaches illustrated through police reform. This is partly contextualized within wider frameworks such as the effects of globalisation and the EU but an overarching narrative such as that presented here is not offered. In this last section of the paper, the development of the post-colonial genre in policy discourse and delivery is considered in more detail in the UK context which is now federal state without a federal apparatus (Trench, 2007; Hazell, 2006) sitting within the EU. Even this resulting variable geometry may be a positive approach to attempting to appropriate local difference for central state advantage.

The governance framing of the EU, with its WTO trade and competition role is significant in both conveying global approaches to the EU and then ensuring adoption and compliance through member

states. In some areas of domestic legislation, where EU Treaty competencies create legislative constructs, then the UK has to implement and legislate to meet requirements and fill in gaps which compliance requirements have identified (House of Commons Library, 2010). The translation of OECD, UNCTAD, IMF, WTO and World Bank post-colonial policy redirection can be found in the Lisbon Treaty, negotiated in the period up to 1999, agreed in 2009 and to be implemented in 2013. The new framing components of territorial cohesion and protocols on subsidiarity and access to public services represent framework mechanisms for 'bottom up' approaches which also fit with potential longer term EU political objectives. The development of this approach has coloured both the thinking of successive New Labour Governments and the current Coalition Government through general concepts such as community engagement (DETR, 2008, CLG, 2009), Big Society, (Conservative Party, 2010), 'localism' (Conservative Party, 2009) 'new localism' (Corrie and Stoker, 2003, Balls 2003), decentralization (Clark, 2010) and fairness (HMT, 2010). The UK has signed up to deliver these Lisbon Treaty elements and their submerged role in policy formation has yet to be fully discussed.

The EU is now moving to consider the next major treaty or agreement between member states, Europe 2020. This may be precipitated by Euro zone crises but on governance the emergence of key policy on multi-level governance from the Committee of the Regions, part of the EU which is directly responsible for sub-state responsibilities is significant. As part of the preparation for Europe 2020, the CoR has prepared a White Paper on multi-level governance (2009; 2010) which gives a bottom up account of cross governance scale contracts rooted in place. Using the interpretation of the role of territorial cohesion set out by Barca (2009), the local is now suggested to be driving the centre and anchoring the centre to local commitments and delivery. This approach turns the former high modernist approaches of centre state contracts in England, e.g. Local Area Agreements and Local Public Service Agreements on their head. The state is still controlling the framing of these intra-England contracts (which may be related to local happiness indicators, Cameron, 2010) but there is a notional and potential equalising of roles through Parliamentary subsidiarity tests.

In considering this in more detail, the narratives of New Labour were initially full of approaches to support and develop community engagement (DETR, 1998) as a means of improving democratic credibility and associated accountability. New Labour's fear of losing a second term election overshadowed all other considerations (Powell, 2010; Richards, 2009), and the potentially visible but not transparent back room politics in Labour's local authorities was seen to be an Achilles' heel that popular engagement and increased approaches to accountability, as set out in the 2000 Local

Government Act were intended to address (Morphet, 2008). These approaches were also useful in meeting Lisbon Treaty protocol requirements for more localist and engaged approaches which were then being negotiated. The overall considerations here were political and social.

This localist approach hardened in Blair's second term when economic and political considerations took over. The post colonial approaches manifest in two key ways. The first was through the 'new localism' agenda which was launched in 2004 as a ten year review programme for local government and fitted an anti high modernist frame which promised greater use of bureaucracies and performance technologies in the short term in return for greater freedoms and flexibilities in the longer term. Miliband's double devolution (2006) and Lyons' future for local government (2007) were framed to reduce the role of the centre, which also was part of the post-devolution hangover of English reform. Whitehall saw itself as still being responsible for the UK when devolution had clearly demonstrated the scale of potentially devolved matters through their definition of reserved matters in Scotland (Pemberton and Morphet, 2010). At the time when small government was being established in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, England's central government apparatus continued to expand.

At the same time there was a hardening of post-colonialist approaches through the application of devolved decision making (DDM) (HMT 2004a and b) and its links to local productivity (HMT, 2003). Faced with communities which had been resistant to high modernist targetry (Bevan and Hood, 2006) by local agencies to influence their behaviour in ways that government wished to see such as reducing worklessness, fewer teenage pregnancies associated with housing and benefits strategies and managing anti social behaviour, DDM started to make communities and sub national governance spaces responsible for changing behaviours and lifestyles through local cultural influences. Communities were expected to be self policing in ways that would be dependant on local values and community pressure.

The Conservative Party's approach to these issues before the 2010 General Election were set out in policy papers which promoted three specific principles which are drawn from the post-colonial lexicon. These are localism, the Big Society and fairness. These narratives have also been popular bipartisan themes for the coalition as they espouse Liberal Democrat manifesto commitments. Localism and decentralization are led by the eponymous Minister, Greg Clark and were set out in the Conservative manifesto policy paper 'Control shift' (Conservative Party 2009). The localist agenda, to be contained in the Localism Bill (pending) include likely transfers of power down through the

system as a product of the application of subsidiarity tests. At the local level, responsibility for removed regional roles including strategic housing plans and EU funded programmes including some transport, housing and regeneration projects, bringing them within direct democratic control is expected. Below the local level, an enhanced accountable neighbourhood and parish tier is emerging, based on French models and likely to use parish council legislative powers to create democratic decision making and control over funds. However, a major feature of this Bill may be the application of subsidiarity test to current state run services such as social benefits assessment and payments, where the Department of Work and Pensions is proposing centralization and others in government want a decentralised system to allow flexibility and to improve efficiency. Further, the delay in the Bill is said to be due intra government departmental contestation which has been manifest through announcements for local directly elected police commissioners from the Home Office, centralization of schools funding by the Department of Education currently withdrawn but still on the agenda) and ring fencing of public health budgets in the department of health's localising Public Health white paper. Schools and public health will remain as the only ring fenced budget areas post 2012 when all other local government funding will be in a single pot. High modernism still reigns in Whitehall.

The second principle of the programme is the role of the Big Society which it is stated will form 'society - the families, networks, neighbourhoods and communities ...to be bigger and stronger than before' (Conservative Party, 2010). Only when people and communities are given more power and take more responsibility can we achieve fairness and opportunity for all'. The Conservatives have defined these new powers for the Big Society is a number of ways including giving communities more powers for planning in the hope that this will make neighbourhoods more likely to accept planning growth (Clark, 2010 November 30 speech) and have management of local facilities. It includes training and development in community leadership, transfer of power from central to local government through a general power of competence and the mutualisation of services, whether provided by the public or voluntary sectors. The Big Society might respond to Bevir's proposals for 'local reasoning' arrangements although it is questionable whether these proposals are for a coherent programme or whether the Big Society bundle is a convenient means of delivering a variety of outcomes. For example the proposal to encourage the role of mutuals could be steered by the goal of economic innovation, a key agenda item for the EU and OECD to promote economic growth. Transfer of power to local government and publication of government data meet existing EU commitments made through the Lisbon Treaty 2009 and INSPIRE, the Directive on sharing public information (2007) respectively. Proposals to promote more charitable giving for the arts could be a

mechanism to introduce neo-liberal funding policies.

The third principle is that of 'fairness' which was raised before the 2010 General Election and for Conservatives, fairness is defined as being associated with responsibility and freedom (Osborne, 2008). Fairness was also included in the Liberal Democrat's General Election manifesto, and included fair taxes, more chances for children, a fairer and greener economy, and cleaning up politics (Liberal Democrats, 2010). Fairness assessment of proposals recreates a mechanism for equalisation of funding and assessing policy outcomes between people and places. It also incorporates intergenerational equity. The fairness principle has been applied in practice through a 'transparent' review of the distributional impact of the 2010 Comprehensive Review (HMT, 2010), and can be seen as a revisionist approach to the 2010 Equalities Act - a policy product of the previous Government

So we can see the emergent forms of a post-colonial policy genre appearing in the England (and other parts of the UK although not illustrated here) although overthrow and succession are clearly set to make this a struggle. The next transition to full Lisbon Treaty implementation in 2013 with its requirements to report on the implementation of territorial cohesion - locality based policy and delivery, subsidiarity and local access to services will be interesting to view. The English experience illustrates that high modernism will not give up without a struggle but the external economic forces and the western crisis may stimulate this transition in unexpected ways - these could be considered to be known unknowns.

Conclusion - how useful is the post-colonial genre in replacing high modernism? How does it contribute to solving Bevir's puzzle?

If the genre of post-colonialism is replacing high modernism is it useful and does it respond to Bevir's concerns in *Democratic Governance* to see a different approach through local reasoning? If this argument does find resonance as a response it may not be in the terms that Bevir set his puzzle. Any system of governance and the patterns that it makes needs to be understood before it can be used and evaluated against democratic principles. Without this, then the executive maintains power albeit in a different form from what went before but with the same intent. As we have noted earlier, organizations and bureaucracies have strong survival instincts and strategies. Organisational narratives provide some certainty and credibility to their own actions even where these develop into more bureaucratic modes. Also in every genre there are different narrative arcs

to operate and deliver the outcomes that the centre is looking for. As some narratives may appear to be more successful than others in enshrining delivery, they will be reinforced and take precedence but if none of the narratives produce the outcomes of economic and financial stability, reduced costs and greater innovation then the reach and engagement with novelty will continue. Holding the system to account is another issue.

In turning to Bevir's consideration of local reasoning as a means of democratic engagement, it is hard to disassociate this with the rude mechanics that follow on. Whether people choose to engage or not, they expect some product from their time and their taxes. Much of what is delivered is unseen and taken for granted - in this respect government is infrastructure (Mulgan, 2006). As Bevir advocates the dismantling of academic involvement with multiple technologies it is hard to see how the machine can be silenced although it is more likely to be repositioned. The use of the post-colonial genre provides one means of examining a plethora of governance initiatives which may then be used to evaluate how local reasoning can be advanced as Bevir proposes.

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