Organizational Professionalism: changes, challenges and opportunities

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For a long time, the sociologies of organizations and of professional groups have developed separately and had their own research questions and agendas. This has changed in the last 15 years as, increasingly, practitioners in Anglo-American societies (as well as in European) now work in complex hierarchical organizations (e.g. medicine and health) or, in law, in professional service firms (PSFs) and sometimes in international locations. Most professional work now takes place in organizations both publicly managed services or large private sector firms.

This change has been theorised in a number of different ways. One way has been to demonstrate a convergence between the previously different Anglo-American and European contexts for professional work. In 1990 Collins was able (p.98) to distinguish ‘Anglo-Saxon’ and ‘Continental’ modes of professionalism. In Continental modes the state was the main actor while in the Anglo-American model self-employed practitioners had freedom to control work conditions. Processes of convergence now render the Collins distinction somewhat obsolete, except in historical accounts (Svensson and Evetts, ed, 2003; Evetts, ed, 2008a). Burrage and Torstendahl (1990) identified four key ‘actors’ in the development of professions – practitioners, users, states and universities – but it is now increasingly important, in both Anglo-American and European societies, to add a fifth which is the role of the employing organization.
An alternative way of theorizing this change is to focus on professionalism both as an occupational value (Parsons 1939; Freidson 2001) and/or as a discourse (Fournier 1999; Evetts 2003). I have conceptualized this as a ‘new’ professionalism (though there are continuities) or as ‘organizational’ professionalism (Evetts 2004; Falconbridge and Muzio 2007) in contrast to ‘occupational’ professionalism (see section 1). Organizational professionalism seems to involve a challenge to the occupational control of the work which was Freidson’s defining characteristic of Anglo-American forms of (occupational) professionalism. It seems that professionalism is no longer a distinctive ‘third’ logic since the exercise of professionalism is now organizationally defined and includes the logics of the organization and the market, managerialism and commercialism.

So how is it best to theorize these organizational contexts for professionalism. One possibility is to see professions as severely challenged and threatened by organizations, professions as passive victims who are relatively powerless against demands for regulation, increased bureaucracy, transparency and accountability. In effect this might involve a return to notions of proletarianization or de-professionalization (Reed 2007). This rather pessimistic interpretation has been prominent in my own recent writing (2008b, 2009a) when I have characterized recent changes as a threat to the third logic of professionalism and as challenges to professionalism as an occupational value; and that expert judgement and professional discretion is something worth protecting and preserving. This paper examines some of these challenges.
The paper explains some of the organizational dimensions of professional work. The first section explains professionalism as an occupational value, how professionalism is changing and being changed and the consequences for practitioners and their clients. A model is constructed which contrasts organizational professionalism with occupational professionalism and enables an assessment to be made (in section 2) of what has changed and which aspects continue. Then, in section 3, some of the challenges to professionalism as a ‘third logic’ and an occupational value are assessed. In section 4 some of the opportunities for professions and professional workers in organizations are explored.

1. **Professionalism as an occupational value: changes and continuities**

The analysis of professionalism as an occupation value in sociology has a very long history. In early analyses of professions, in both Britain and the USA, the key concept was the occupational value of ‘professionalism’ and its importance for the stability and civility of social systems (e.g. Tawney 1921; Carr-Saunders and Wilson 1933; Marshall 1950). Early American sociological theorists of professions developed similar interpretations. The best known, though perhaps most frequently mis-quoted, attempt to clarify the special characteristics of professionalism, its central values and contribution to social order and stability, was that of Parsons (1939). Parsons recognized and was one of the first theorists to show how the capitalist economy, the rational-legal social order (of Weber) and the modern professions were all interrelated and mutually balancing in the maintenance and stability of a fragile normative social order. He demonstrated how the authority of the professions and of bureaucratic hierarchical organizations both rested on the same principles (for example of functional specificity, restriction of the power domain, application of
universalistic, impersonal standards). The professions, however, by means of their collegial organization and shared identity demonstrated an alternative approach (compared with the managerial hierarchy of bureaucratic organizations) towards the shared normative end.

Professions, then, involve different ways and means of organizing work and workers, different work relations, compared with organizations. Professional values emphasize a shared identity based on competencies (produced by education, training and apprenticeship socialization) and sometimes guaranteed by licensing. Professional relations are characterized as collegial, cooperative and mutually supportive and relations of trust characterize practitioner/client and practitioner/employer interactions.

The work of Parsons has subsequently been subject to heavy criticism mainly because of its links with functionalism (Dingwall and Lewis 1983). The differences between professionalism and rational–legal, bureaucratic, hierarchical ways of organizing work have been returned to, however, in Freidson’s (2001) recent analysis. Freidson examines the logics of three different ways of organizing work in contemporary societies (the market, organization and profession) and illustrates the respective advantages and disadvantages of each for clients and practitioners. In this analysis he demonstrates the continuing importance of maintaining professionalism (with some modifications) as the main organizing principle for service sector work.

This interpretation represents what might be termed the optimistic view of professionalism as an occupational value, and of what professionalism and the process
of professionalization of work entails. It is based on the principle that the work is of special value either to the public or to the interests of the state or an elite (Freidson 2001: 214). According to Freidson, ‘the ideal typical position of professionalism is founded on the official belief that the knowledge and skill of a particular specialization requires a foundation in abstract concepts and formal learning’ (2001: 34/5). Education, training and experience are fundamental requirements but once achieved (and sometimes licensed) then the exercise of discretion based on competences is central and deserving of special status. The practitioners have special knowledge and skill and (particularly if its practice is protected by licensing) there is a need to trust professionals’ assessments, recommendations and intentions. As a consequence externally imposed rules governing work are minimized and the exercise of discretion and good judgement, often in highly complex situations and circumstances, and based on recognized competences, are maximized.

There is a second more pessimistic interpretation of professionalism, however, which grew out of the more critical literature on professions which was prominent in Anglo-American analyses in the 1970s and 1980s. This second interpretation is critical of the occupational values analysis and during this period professionalism came to be dismissed as a successful ideology (Johnson 1972) and professionalization as a process of market closure and monopoly control of work (Larson 1977) and occupational dominance (Larkin 1983). Professionalization was intended to promote professional practitioners own occupational self interests in terms of their salary, status and power as well as the monopoly protection of an occupational jurisdiction (Abbott 1988). This was seen to be a process largely initiated and controlled by the
practitioners themselves and mainly in their own interests although it could also be argued to be in the public interest (Saks 1995).

A third and later development involved the analysis of professionalism as a discourse of occupational change and control – this time in work organizations where the discourse is increasingly applied and utilized by managers. This third interpretation combines the previous two. The third interpretation returns to professionalism as an occupational value but in this interpretation professionalism is ideological and used as a means of practitioner/employee control. The discourse of professionalism is taken over, reconstructed and used as an instrument of managerial control in organizations where professionals are employed and in order to rationalize, re-organize, contain and control the work and the practitioners. Fournier (1999) considers the appeal to ‘professionalism’ as a disciplinary mechanism in new occupational contexts. She suggests how the use of the discourse of professionalism, in a large privatized service company of managerial labour, works to inculcate ‘appropriate’ work identities, conducts and practices. She considers this as ‘a disciplinary logic which inscribes “autonomous” professional practice within a network of accountability and governs professional conduct at a distance’ (1999: 280). It is also interesting and highly relevant to link this notion of organizational professionalism with aspects of public management – particularly in education and the NHS in the UK.

The analysis of professionalism as an occupational value has, then, involved different interpretations – sometimes positive, sometimes negative and in the latest interpretation combined – of what the professionalization of an occupational group entails. The features of occupational professionalism (the traditional Anglo-American
form) which made it distinctive and different to organizational means of controlling work and workers were somewhat idealistic (probably ideological) and based on a model and image of historical relations probably in the medical and legal professions in predominantly Anglo-American societies in the 19th century. The image was of the doctor, lawyer and clergyman, who were independent gentlemen, and could be trusted as a result of their competence and experience to provide altruistic advice within a community of mutually dependent middle and upper class clients. The legacy of this image, whether in fact or fiction, has provided a powerful incentive for many aspiring occupational groups throughout the 20th century and helps to explain the appeal of professionalism as a managerial tool.

The image or the ideology of professionalism as an occupational value that is so appealing involves a number of different aspects. Some might never have been operational; some might have been operational for short periods in a limited number of occupational groups. Aspects include:

- control of the work systems, processes, procedures, priorities to be determined primarily by the practitioner/s;
- professional institutions/associations as the main providers of codes of ethics, constructors of the discourse of professionalism, providers of licensing and admission procedures, controllers of competences and their acquisition and maintenance, overseeing discipline, due investigation of complaints and appropriate sanctions in cases of professional incompetence;
- collegial authority, legitimacy, mutual support and cooperation;
- common and lengthy (perhaps expensive) periods of shared education, training, apprenticeship;
• development of strong occupational identities and work cultures;
• strong sense of purpose and of the importance, function, contribution and significance of the work;
• discretionary judgment, assessment evaluation and decision-making, often in highly complex cases, and of confidential advice-giving, treatment, and means of taking forward;
• trust and confidence characterize the relations between practitioner/client, practitioner/employer and fellow practitioners.

These aspects are not intended to be regarded as the defining characteristics of a profession. Rather these are aspects of the image and the ideology of professionalism which can account for the attraction and appeal of professionalism as an occupational value and increasingly as a managerial tool in work organizations. In previous publications I have referred to these aspects as ideal-types of occupational professionalism and contrasted these with organizational aspects of professionalism (Evetts 2006).

In contemporary societies we seem to be witnessing the development of two different (and in many ways contrasting) forms of professionalism in knowledge-based, service-sector work: organizational and occupational professionalism (see Table 1). As an ideal-type organizational professionalism is a discourse of control used increasingly by managers in work organizations. It incorporates rational-legal forms of authority and hierarchical structures of responsibility and decision-making. It involves the increased standardization of work procedures and practices and managerialist controls. It relies on externalized forms of regulation and accountability.
measures such as target-setting and performance review. In contrast, and again as an ideal-type, occupational professionalism is a discourse constructed within professional occupational groups and incorporates collegial authority. It involves relations of practitioner trust from both employers and clients. It is based on autonomy and discretionary judgment and assessment by practitioners in complex cases. It depends on common and lengthy systems of education, vocational training and socialization, and the development of strong occupational identities and work cultures. Controls are operationalized by practitioners themselves who are guided by codes of professional ethics which are monitored by professional institutes and associations. In earlier work the links and connections between these two different forms of professionalism and the classical interpretations of Weber and Durkheim have been explored (Evetts 2004, 2005). These links will not be explained here but can be illustrated by reference to Weber’s analysis of the increased prominence of the efficiency of the rational-legal and Durkheim’s interpretation of organic solidarity and occupations as moral communities and sources of identity.
### TABLE 1
Two different forms of professionalism in knowledge-based work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational professionalism</th>
<th>Occupational professionalism</th>
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<tr>
<td>• discourse of control used increasingly by managers in work organizations</td>
<td>• discourse constructed within professional groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• rational-legal forms of authority</td>
<td>• collegial authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• standardized procedures</td>
<td>• discretion and occupational control of the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• hierarchical structures of authority and decision-making</td>
<td>• practitioner trust by both clients and employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• managerialism</td>
<td>• controls operationalized by practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• accountability and externalized forms of regulation, target-setting and performance review</td>
<td>• professional ethics monitored by institutions and associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• linked to Weberian models of organization</td>
<td>• located in Durkheim’s model of occupations as moral communities</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
2. **A new professionalism? Changes and continuities**

Professionalism is changing and being changed and these changes have been seen as a tool of government intended to promote commercialized professionalism (Hanlon 1998) and organizational professionalism (Evetts 2006; 2009b). Organizational principles, strategies and methods are deeply affecting most professional occupations and expert groups, transforming their identities, structures and practices. Whether or not there is a ‘new’ form of professionalism is debatable since there are elements of continuity as well as of change. It is important, therefore, to clarify what exactly has changed and what continues in order to be able to assess the relevance (or otherwise) of analyses of professionalism as an occupational value.

In identifying what has changed, certainly there are elements of hierarchy, bureaucracy, output and performance measures and even the standardization of work practices affecting professionalism and which are more characteristic of organizational forms of control of work and workers. When service sector professionals have proved enduringly difficult to manage and resistant to change, then an important part of the strategy became to recreate professionals as managers and to manage by normative techniques. The discourse of enterprise becomes linked with discourses of professionalism, quality, customer service and care. Professionals are also tempted by the ideological components of empowerment, innovation, autonomy and discretion. In fact, the measurement of and attempts to demonstrate professionalism actually increase the demand for explicit accounting of professional competences. The work organization’s management demands for quality control and audit, target setting and performance review become reinterpreted as the promotion of professionalism. This quest for professionalism and accountability is highly competitive (Hoggett 1996) and individualistic (Broadbent et al., 1999) but it is also a
bureaucratic means of regaining control of a market-directed enterprise staffed by professionals.

In addition there are other new and different elements and characteristics of professionalism (particularly the professionalism developed in New Public Management, NPM, in the UK and elsewhere) which would make it a distinctive and new variant different to both organizational and occupational forms of professionalism. The emphasis on governance and community controls, the negotiations between complex numbers of agencies and interests, and the recreation of professionals themselves as managers, make this new professionalism a variant on organizational and occupational forms of control. The control of professionals in public services is to be achieved by means of normative values and self-regulated motivation. The discourse of enterprise is fitted alongside the language of quality and customer care and the ideologies of empowerment, innovation, autonomy and discretion. In addition, this is also a discourse of individualization and competition where individual performance is linked to the success or failure of the organization. These all constitute powerful mechanisms of worker/employee control in which the occupational values of professionalism are used to promote the efficient management of the organization.

In numerous ways centralizing, regulatory governments, intent on demonstrating value from public service budgets seem to be redefining professionalism and accountability as measurable. But before we acknowledge the decline (and possible demise) of occupational forms of professionalism, it is necessary also to acknowledge some of the ways in which occupational professionalism still continues to operate. The occupational control of work is still important in some previously powerful occupational groups such as law (though less so for medicine). It is also of increased
importance in some newly powerful professional groups such as international accountancy. In addition, there are examples of attempts by some occupational groups to reclaim professionalism. In these cases both national institutions and European professional federations are involved in aspects of the regulation of the occupational groups including the development of performance criteria, target setting and continuing professional development (CPD). In assisting governments to define and construct these regulatory systems, these national professional institutions and European federations are continuing to operationalize the occupational control of the work and constituting a form of moral community based on occupational membership. In addition there are also examples of the sharing, modification and adaptation of particular regulatory regimes between different professional institutions and federations (Evetts 1994).

Other continuities characteristic of occupational professionalism remain and seem resistant to change sometimes despite clear policies and incentives for change. Gender, and gender differences in professional careers and occupational specialisms, continue, although some interesting variants are emerging and situations are complex. Women are entering established professions in larger numbers and proportions, and men are entering female professions, and many are successfully progressing their careers. Other professionalizing occupations (often where women are numerically dominant) have utilized professionalism in order to secure new tasks, responsibilities and recognition. Women are increasingly becoming managers, but management itself is being changed and standardized such that it might be the case that men are leaving this (less interesting and powerful) field and moving upwards where they can and sideways (e.g. into consultancy or private practice) when they cannot.
Table 2 summarizes aspects of change and continuity in the interpretation of professionalism as an occupational value in service professions. This is a simplification of what is, in fact, a highly complex, variable and changing situation. Professional occupations are different both within and between nation-states and contexts are constantly changing as new nation-state and European policies emerge, develop and are adapted and modified in practice and in local work places. Used with care and due caution, these aspects might enable an assessment of the prominence of organizational and occupational professionalism to be made in different occupations and work places.

**TABLE 2**

**Changes and Continuities in Professionalism as Occupational Value**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Changes</th>
<th>Continuities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Legitimacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External forms of regulation</td>
<td>Prestige, status, power, dominance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit and measurement</td>
<td>Competence, knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targets and performance indicators</td>
<td>Identity and work culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work standardization</td>
<td>Discretion to deal with complex cases, respect, trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial control</td>
<td>Collegial relations and jurisdictional competitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition, individualism, stratification</td>
<td>Gender differences in careers and strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational control of the work priorities</td>
<td>Procedures and solutions discussed and agreed within specialist teams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possible range of solutions/procedures defined by the organization</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

These changes and continuities include both structural and relationship aspects and characteristics although, importantly, the changes are more structural while the
continuities tend to focus on relations. The contexts for different occupations and professions are also complex, diverse and variable both within and between different nation-states in Europe and North America. In addition these changes and continuities have been identified and illustrated at macro and mezo levels of analysis but there might also be significant micro variations in different work places and local organizational contexts (Liljegren 2007).

It might be the case that professional strategies are increasingly resistant, defensive or conservative which seek to protect jurisdictions and privileges (Muzio forthcoming; Abel 2003; Muzio and Ackroyd 2005; Reed 2007). It is also important, however, to include the new strategies and tactics which are developing as professions adapt to emerging challenges and opportunities. These opportunities for practitioners, professions and professional institutes and associations are also considered.

3. Professions in Organizations: risks

For the most part the risks associated with professionals practicing in organizations involve the challenges to professionalism as an occupational value, as a special means of organizing work and controlling workers and with real advantages for both practitioner-workers and their clients. Freidson (2001) emphasized the importance of maintaining ‘professionalism’ as a distinctive and different mode of work and practitioner control particularly in public sector service work.

The consequences of and challenges to professionalism as an occupational value, and some of the unintended consequences, are being documented by researchers interested in different occupational groups in Europe and North America (e.g. Schepers 2006; Wrede 2008; Champy 2008; Dent et al. 2008; Boussard 2006; Bolton 2005; Bourgeault and Benoit 2009) and research links with sociologists of organizations are
developing (Faulconbridge and Muzio 2007). There are also some early indications of what might be a retreat from or a substantial redefinition of certain aspects of managerialism and NPM by policy-makers in respect of some service work (e.g. Dahl 2008). There is, as yet, no established causal link between the organizational changes and challenges to occupational professionalism and a deteriorization of professional values so, as yet, any linkage remains speculative. Also there are several complicating factors which make a causal link difficult to establish. Complicating context factors (some general, some nation-specific) include the demystification of aspects of professional knowledge and expertise; cases of practitioner malpractice and ‘unprofessional’ behaviour; media exaggeration and oversimplification, and political interference; large fee and salary increases in particular professional sectors and divisions between commercial (corporate clients) and social service (state-funded) practitioners; trade union activities or threats including withdrawal of services or actions short of a strike which can indicate self rather than the public interest.

It is also the case that powerful professionals have often been resistant to managerial intervention and organizational controls. Many organizations in the public services (e.g. hospitals and universities) are complex professional bureaucracies (Mintzberg 1983) characterized by the involvement of a number of different professional groups. These groups have a history of relative autonomy over their working practices and often have high status which gives them both power and authority. In addition, the ‘outputs’ of these organizations (and the professionals in them) are not easily standardized and measurable. When the ability to define and standardize the nature of the work process is limited and the definition of the outputs of the work (and what constitutes success) is problematic then such service work would seem to be unsuitable for both market and organizational controls. Yet controls such as
performance review and target-setting continue to be developed supposedly in the interests of value, transparency and accountability.

A decline in occupational professionalism and the possible expansion of organizational forms of professionalism is then one of a number of complicating factors. It can be stated, however, that organizational techniques for controlling employees have affected the work of practitioners in professional organizations. The imposition of targets in teaching and medical work – and indeed for the police (see Boussard 2006) - have had ‘unintended’ consequences on the prioritization and ordering of work activities, and a focus on target achievement to the detriment or neglect of other less-measurable tasks and responsibilities. Increased regulation and form filling takes time which might arguably be devoted to clients and the professional task. Performance indicators, linked to future salary increases, are defined by the organization rather than the individual practitioner or professional association. The standardization of work procedures, perhaps using software programmes, is an important check on the underachieving practitioner but can be a disincentive to the creative, innovative, and inspirational professional.

It is important to remember also that the way professionals regard their service work and their working relationships are also being changed and this is an important consequence of redefining the occupational value aspects of professionalism. An emphasis on internal as well as external markets, on enterprise and economic contracting, are changing professionalism. In tendering, accounting and audit management, professionalism requires practitioners to codify their competence for contracts and evaluations (du Gay and Salaman 1992; Lane 2000; Freidson 2001). ‘Professional work is defined as service products to be marketed, price-tagged and individually evaluated and remunerated; it is, in that sense, commodified’ (Svensson
and Evetts 2003: 11). Professional service work organizations are converting into enterprises in terms of identity, hierarchy and rationality. Possible solutions to client problems and difficulties are defined by the organization (rather than the ethical codes of the professional institution) and limited by financial constraints.

The commodification of professional service work entails changes in professional work relations. When practitioners become organizational employees then the traditional relationship of employer/professional trust is changed to one necessitating supervision, assessment and audit. In turn, this affects the relations between fellow practitioners in the organization. When individual performance (e.g. of pupils and teachers, GPs and consultants) is linked to the success or failure of the organization, then this amplifies the impact of any failure. The danger in this is that professional cohesion and mutual cooperation are undermined and competition can threaten both team working and collegial support.

Relationships between professionals and clients are also being converted into customer relations through the establishment of quasi-markets, customer satisfaction surveys and evaluations, quality measures and payment by results. The production, publication and diffusion of quality and target measurements are critical indicators for changing welfare services into a market (Considine 2001). The service itself is focused, modelled on equivalents provided by other producers, shaped by the interests of the consumers and standardized. The marketing of a service organization’s service product connects professionals more to their work organization than to their professional institutions and associations. Clients are converted into customers and professional work competencies become primarily related to, defined and assessed by, the work organization.
4. Professions in Organizations: opportunities

The challenges to professionalism as an occupational value seem numerous but are there any opportunities associated with these changes which might improve both the conduct and the practice of professional service work and be of benefit for professions as service institutions, practitioners and clients? Might there be some advantages in the combination of professional and organizational logics for controlling work and workers? Certainly there are opportunities for practitioners which might prove to be beneficial from the combination of the logics of professionalism and the organization. One of these is the incorporation of Human Resource Management (HRM) from the organization into professional employment practices, processes, procedures and conduct of the work. Job contracts, job descriptions, formal interview and selection procedures, employment rights and benefits, appeals procedures, sickness benefit and cover, maternity, caring and other absences, are all examples which have benefited the majority of professionals working in organizations and have for the most part replaced less formalized social networking and informal recommendation procedures.

Standardization and formalization of selection, retention and career development procedures have also increased the transparency of what were often hidden, even ‘mysterious’ arrangements in respect of promotion, career progress and departmental relationships and links within the organization. Less formalized procedures benefitted only a select few privileged practitioners and were perceived as unfair and inequitable by the majority. Increased transparency can then result in more emphasis on career choices, dependent on personal circumstances, rather than the sponsorship of the privileged few. Career inequalities clearly continue (including in respect of gender and ethnicity), as well as some reliance on networking, informal advice and recommendations, but, in general, the incorporation of HRM procedures and
regulations from the organization into professional employment practices have been an opportunity and of benefit for practitioners and their work.

Other opportunities would seem to be explained by the increased recognition that organizational management and managerialism is not only complex but is also multi-layered and multi-dimensional. Management is being used to control, and sometimes limit, the work of practitioners in organizations but, in addition, management is being used by practitioners and by professional associations themselves as a strategy both in the career development of particular practitioners and in order to improve the status and respect of a professional occupation and its standing.

As a micro-level strategy, there is some evidence, particularly from health professionals such as nursing and midwifery (Carvahlo 2008; Bourgeault et al. 2004) but also now from medical doctors (Kuhlmann 2008) and teachers (Gewirtz et al. 2009), of individual practitioners acquiring qualifications in management (e.g. the MBA) with the clear intention of developing careers. In the case of health professionals such as nurses and midwives this can also be interpreted as a strategy in the competition with medical dominance but increasingly hospital management at middle and senior levels is perceived as a career opening for those with appropriate management credentials, experience and motivation.

As a mezo level strategy, it is also interesting to note the work of Langer (2008) in respect of social work in Germany. Masters level programmes for social workers in Germany are incorporating management training as a way of increasing the status, standing, reputation and respect for social work as a professional occupation in the field of social services work. Following the Bologna process and standardization of higher education levels in Europe, in Germany there is a large development of masters
programmes which qualify (in this case) social workers to apply for leadership positions in non-profit organizations and social services departments. These developments can be interpreted, therefore, as both a micro and mezo level strategy in respect of social work.

In addition, as Muzio and Kirkpatrick (forthcoming) have argued, organizations can constitute sites for (and objects of) professional control and domination. Ackroyd (1996: 600) describes this as a form of ‘dual closure’ where access to labour markets (through registration and credentialism) is combined with informal control of access to particular work tasks and divisions of labour within the employing organization. Brint (1994: 73) explained how, in the corporate sector, ‘high value-added applications within organizations can be more successful in enhancing status than closure in the labour market’. Similarly, Faulconbridge and Muzio (2008) have shown how managers and administrators benefit from their ability to control, devise and construct the bureaucratic machinery as well as to resolve central problems of their organizations.

Other processes also explained by Muzio and Kirkpatrick (forthcoming) refer to jurisdictional disputes and negotiations – originally described by Abbott (1988) but this time played out within organizations rather than in the wider arena of labour markets and education systems. Within organizations, occupations seek to process and control tasks and task divisions to suit their own occupational interests. The medical profession – particularly doctors employed by the state – continue to use their cultural authority and legitimacy to maintain dominance (Larkin1983; Freidson 2001; Coburn 2006). Armstrong (1985) describes competition between professionals in management (accountancy, engineering and personnel) in colonizing key positions, roles and decision-making with large organizations. In these ways organizations
constitute arenas for inter-professional competitions as well as professional conquests.

Or, as Muzio and Kirkpatrick explain, organizations can ‘provide a means through which traditional objectives of collective mobility, status advancement, financial reward and service quality can be better served’.

In conclusion it is important to remember that the reconstruction of professionalism in organizations and its links with management present opportunities and benefits for professions, professional work and workers as well as important challenges. Perhaps achieving a balance between change and continuity, challenges and opportunities, for professionalism in organizations is one of the most important tasks for states and for researchers in the sociology of professional groups over the next few years.
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