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Andreas Fejes, European citizens under construction – the Bologna process analysed from a governmentality perspective, 2008, Educational Philosophy and Theory, (40), 4, 515-530. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2007.00362.x.

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### European citizens under construction – the Bologna process analysed from a governmentality perspective

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Published in Educational Philosophy and Theory, 40(4), 515-530, 2008.

### **Abstract**

This article focuses on problematizing the harmonisation of higher education in Europe today. The overall aim is to analyse the construction of the European citizen and the rationality of governing related to such a construction. The specific focus will be on the rules and standards of reason in higher education reforms which inscribe continuums of values that exclude as they include. Who is and who is not constructed as a European citizen? Documents on the Bologna process produced in Europe and in Sweden are analysed drawing on the Foucauldian notion of governmentality, showing a neoliberal rationality of governing. The European citizen needs to become flexible, autonomous and self-regulating as a way of facing the threats of the constantly changing future. The technique of diversity is a condition of possibility for constructing such a citizen and for harmonising higher education in Europe. Further, the current power relations in the discourse define what is and what is not European, thus constructing 'the other', the one who is excluded.

Keywords: Governmentality, Europe and higher education, Bologna process, Policy analysis

#### Introduction

One of the major changes in higher education today is the Bologna process, a declaration signed by 45 nations, both members of the European Union and several other countries (Bergen Communiqué, 2005). It aims at harmonising the higher educational systems in Europe. In texts on this issue, there are ideas of comparability, mobility<sup>1</sup>, transparency, flexibility, shared European values and diversity put forward as means of creating a European educational space. However, deciding about this policy area is outside the competence of the EU. Consequently, each nation has to choose whether or not to sign it.

According to some researchers (Nóvoa, 2002; Ahola & Mesikämmen, 2003), the narratives about harmonisation are in some respects taken for granted and many universities in Europe have accepted this process and see it as inevitable. As the narratives about this issue seem to construct the Bologna process as a process in which sameness is to be created out of difference where inclusion is seen as the output, it would be interesting to study the ordering of such a process and what the effects of such ordering are. Thus, questions of a European citizen and subjectivity become central and the overall aim of this article will be to analyse the construction of the European citizen and the rationality of governing related to such a construction. The specific focus will be on the rules and standards of reason in higher education reforms, which inscribe continuums of values that exclude as they include (Popkewitz, 2006).

I perform a discourse analysis where I analyse official documents concerned with the Bologna process and higher education in Europe and Sweden. These documents construct views of various aspects of the future, the European citizen, the ones not 'European', etc. In what way do ideas circulating in the discourse of higher education (the Bologna process) construct the European citizen as a way of solving the problem posed? Who should the European citizen become and how should this be realised through the practice of higher education? More specifically, I ask the following questions in the analysis, based on Foucault (1983) and Dean (1999):

- What is the problematic of governing and why govern (the teleos of government)?
- What should be governed?
- How should governing be practised?

The case of Sweden is used as a way of analyzing how the Europeanization of citizens is constructed discursively in a 'local' cultural practice.

### Research on the Bologna process

If we turn our attention to research on the Bologna process, we can see how there is still much to be done, especially in terms of more critical approaches. Many of the texts on the issue are policy inspired and some are normative, addressing different areas of the Bologna process. The level of analysis varies from superficial to deep. Themes discussed in these articles are, for example, social issues in the Bologna process (Kladis, 2003; Nyborg, 2005), descriptive accounts of how the progress of implementation is proceeding in the participating countries (Reichert & Tauch, 2004), what the positive and

negative effects of the process might be (Amaral & Magalhâes, 2004), trend reports, analyses of factors that have paved the way for nations to accommodate to the convergence of higher education systems (Huisman & van der Wende, 2004) and personal reflections on the progress of the Bologna process (Froment, 2003; Wächter, 2004). However, there are a number of more critical accounts of the Bologna process. Ahola and Mesikämmen (2003) discuss the implementation of this process in Finland. They critically trace the emergence of the process and ask how Finland could adapt to it. Ann Corbett (2003) makes a critical analysis of EU documents and interviews as a means of explaining how policymaking before 1971 has had a major impact on subsequent policymaking, such as the Bologna declaration. In his problematization of higher education today, Teichler (2004) argues that the national structures of higher education will be standardised through the Bologna process as a way of meeting the challenges of globalisation. The question he poses is whether this will change the intranational trend of structuring higher education where there is a growing qualitative diversity among universities.

From the above one can conclude that the discursive approach taken in this article seems to be limited in relation to the Bologna process. However, others have used a Foucauldian analysis to study higher education in Europe e.g. quality assurance systems in higher education (Luke, 1997) and neoliberal governance of higher education institutions (Marginson, 1997). Further, a critical task is carried out by Nóvoa who, together with Lawn (2002), has edited a book, *Fabricating Europe*, which brings together several critical and deconstructive approaches to European educational Policy. Nóvoa (2002) himself draws on Foucault when he analyses educational policy documents produced by the European Union during the first two years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He relates the analysis to the Bologna process and argues for more critical analyses of European educational policy.

Lately, Foucault-inspired analyses of higher education and lifelong learning policy in Europe seem to have increased. In a collection of work, lifelong learning and governing of the subject is analysed drawing on Foucault (Fejes & Nicoll, Forthcoming). In a special issue of the journal *Educational philosophy and theory*, the learning society is analyzed by different authors drawing on Foucault and his concept of governmentality (Simons & Masschelein, 2006). For example, Tuschling and Engmemann (2006) analyze the discourse of lifelong learning in European higher education policy. They argue that lifelong learning is part of a governmentality, which tries to transform each individual into a self-organizing learner. Liesner (2006) argues in a similar way when she states that the harmonisation of higher education in Europe demonstrates a new

mode of government called neo-liberal governmentality. She illustrates how the university is an environment that fosters the teachers and students to conceive of themselves as entrepreneurial customers and providers. Simons (2006) use the Foucauldian concepts of biopolitics and governmentality to analyze the European space of higher education. The focus is on the relation between the emerging relationship between entrepreneurship and biopolitics. The biopolitics of the entrepreneurial self is governed by the economic tribunal. Thus, investment has become central for the entrepreneurial self. We need to invest in our own human capital and enhance our competencies. But it is not enough to keep them up to date. We also need to compare ourselves with others in a competitive process of lifelong learning. If we fail in such competition, we will become excluded. Such competition can be seen within the European space of higher education where each entrepreneurial institution needs to prove that it can provide human capital with added value.

Based on the above, there seem to be an increasing interest in performing Foucauldian analyses of European higher education policy. However, such analyses focusing on the Bologna process are still limited. In this article, my main interest is in analysing how different configurations of ideas constructed in texts on the Bologna process and higher education in Europe operate and how they construct the European citizen. I am inspired by Foucault's notion of governmentality, which is used to analyse how mentalities and ideas about how governing should be practised is constructed in different texts and how these ideas operate in a way that constructs specific subjects (Foucault, 2003a).

### Governmentality

In this article, I will analyse policy documents concerning the Bologna process based on the idea of governmentality. I will argue that the texts about the Bologna process construct a practice of exclusion and otherness. 'The European' is defined and thus excludes those nations and citizens, within and outside Europe, who do not have the 'European essence'. Inclusion and exclusion are discursively constructed as binary concepts, although exclusion as the effect of inclusion is not acknowledged in policy documents. Thus, I believe analysis of such discursive constructs is needed as to make visible how power operates and what the effects of such operations are. Further, I argue that the Bologna process is part of a neoliberal rationality of governing where each subject (which can be an individual, a higher education institution or a nation) is fostered to self-govern. The analysis is part of a broader project where the governing of the adult learner in Swedish higher education

and adult education is analysed (Fejes, 2005, 2006a, b; Andersson & Fejes, 2005).

The Foucauldian concept of governmentality (Foucault, 2003a) helps us to understand the advanced forms of modern exercise of power and its different expressions (Hultqvist & Petersson, 1995). Foucault (2003a) argues that a process of governmentalization of the state has been in progress over the last few hundred years; a change from the repressive centralized power of the prince to punish to a more decentralized way of governing through institutions and the subjects themselves. As statistics and science emerged, the population was made into an entity that could be measured and governed; statistics were the condition of possibility for the population to emerge. Through the emergence of the modern social state, the exercise of power has become more finely meshed, expanded and scattered. The result is increased governability through regulations, standardisations of people's conduct, etc. (Hultqvist & Peterson, 1995).

We could say that a governmentality consists of mentalities/thoughts concerning how governing should be practised. Governmentality focuses on the articulation of different kinds of rationalities of government, not on what is the correct way of governing. Such rationality is always based on, or has a relation to, an idea of what to govern. Things and objects do not have a static meaning; instead, they are always open to reinterpretation made in the form of the scientific choices of concepts and theories. It is the aim of governmentality to make the circumstances and mentalities of power politics visible that makes it possible for us to create these specific interpretations (Hultqvist & Petersson, 1995). Thus, the main focus of a rationality of governing is on how to govern, the conduct of conduct - how to lead the governing. The concept of conduct points to several meanings; to conduct is to lead or guide, and it also means to conduct oneself (ethical aspect) in a self-directed way in certain situations, at the same time as it points to our articulated set of behaviours, which are often regarded as being possible to judge in relation to certain norms. All these meanings merge in the concept of governmentality, governing attempts to shape our behaviour according to a particular set of norms and ideas. This is not achieved by means of laws. Instead, the rationalities of governing are inscribed in different tactics that are intended to shape the conduct of the population by working through our desires, aspirations and beliefs (Dean, 1999). Foucault expresses it as follows:

... the finality of government resides in the things it manages and in the pursuit of the perfection and intensification of the processes it directs; and

the instrument of government, instead of being laws, now come to be a range of multiple tactics (Foucault, 2003a, p. 237).

Thus, an analysis of government focuses on what to govern, how to govern, what the conditions are for governing and what the rationalities of governing are. One can view the texts about the Bologna process as part of the construction of a particular governmentality. In this article, I focus on the Bologna process and the rationality of governing constructed in it. This rationality contain different tactics for governing, which will be elaborated upon.

I have analysed material from the European Union and Sweden in order to compare the relation between texts from two different subject positions, the European and the Swedish. Further, by analysing the Swedish documents it is possible to see how the Europeanization of the citizens is discursively constructed in a 'local' cultural practice. I have chosen to analyze official documents as they are assigned a specific position in the discourse. All positions in a discourse are part of the construction of the discourse itself, but some positions are created as more important than others. Such a construct is specific to time and space. In Sweden, official documents are assigned an important role in the decision-making process (Olsson, 1997) and, as will be illustrated, ideas from the European documents are inscribed in the Swedish ones in specific ways. Five European documents are analysed; the Bologna Declaration (1999), Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality (2001), the Berlin Communiqué (2003), Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European higher education area (2005) and the Bergen Communiqué (2005). The second and fourth of these documents are not about the Bologna process per se. However, I have chosen to analyse them as they are two central documents in the policymaking of education on a European level and they are closely related to the Bologna process. Two official documents from the Swedish Ministry of Education are analysed. One is a document produced as a foundation for gathering opinions on the Bologna process in Sweden (Ministry of Education, 2004) and the other is a proposal made by the government to the Swedish parliament on this issue (Ministry of Education, 2005).

The analysis is divided into three parts. In the first part, the focus is on the problematic of government. What is it the Bologna process is supposed to solve? In the second part, I analyse what kind of subject is constructed in the European and Swedish texts. And lastly, the focus is on how the technique of diversity constructs a specific kind of subject.

# The Bologna process – standardisation as a way of handling risk and constructing a European citizen

Texts concerning higher education in Europe stress the need to create a Europe of knowledge. So far, Europe has made extraordinary progress, but an even greater effort needs to be made. According to the texts, such a growing awareness can be seen especially in the political and academic world. What has to be done in particular is building "upon and strengthening its intellectual, cultural, social and scientific and technological dimensions" (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 1). It is emphasised that:

A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 1).

The idea of a Europe of knowledge is something taken for granted and it is seen as an essential part of the construction of a European citizen. Such a subject should be able to handle the challenges of the new millennium and should feel a sense of belonging to a common cultural space. Further, this space should be created as a means for Europe to be able to compete with the surrounding world. Europe needs to become the most competitive and well-developed knowledge society (European Commission, 2001). Here, we can discern an idea of threats from the surrounding world. There are other parts of the world, and in this case the entire world, that have to be competed with. Therefore, Europe has to become a "Europe of Knowledge" (Berlin Communiqué, 2003, p. 2). Similar ideas are repeated in the Swedish texts. Competencies are seen as essential and are closely related to the universities. If Sweden does not have good universities, there will be a risk of marginalisation in relation to the rest of the world, which is illustrated in the following quotation.

In a society constantly measured in relation to other societies, the individual competence becomes the most significant factor for the future development of the society. Therefore, well-run and highly qualitative universities are essential for us if our society is to keep up with the competition in the future (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 26).

We could say that both the European and Swedish texts present the Bologna process as a solution to threats in the future. Through it, Europe and individual countries, in this case Sweden, will attain/maintain top positions in the world. The narratives of threat contain an idea of risk. If certain measures are not taken, there is a risk that something bad will happen. These narratives are projections of the present on the future – someone writes about a future that does not exist as natural and real. It is written as a fact and some measures will have to be taken to avoid this risk. The future is constructed as a technique for governing and the result is that what is in the unknown future is seen as a fact and a truth. This imaginary truth is then part of the basis of certain conclusions of how to act. Such ideas can also be seen in texts about municipal adult education in Sweden, where the need to properly educate the citizens is stressed as a means of competing with the surrounding world (Fejes, 2005, 2006a, b).

At first glance, one might regard such an idea of risk as an external risk, something that comes from the outside. But, as Giddens (2000) argues, today, risk is manufactured based on the knowledge we create concerning ourselves and our world. Thus, the production of 'bad' visions of the future is not something that comes from the outside. Instead, it is a manufactured risk made into a fact which fosters individuals into becoming active subjects who have to address these risks based on knowledge produced about them. As Giddens (2000) argues, risk has not become more dangerous than before; instead, it has taken on new shapes and today we create our own risks. Such a way of reasoning about risk is part of the construction of a specific neoliberal rationality of governing. It acts as an argument for why certain measures should be taken and it constructs specific subjects.

Further, the European texts argue that comparability and compatibility between different educational systems are part of the solution to the problem concerning the future:

Ministers welcome the various initiatives undertaken since the Prague Higher Education Summit to move towards more comparability and compatibility, to make higher education systems more transparent and to enhance the quality of European higher education at institutional and national levels (Berlin Communiqué, 1999, p. 3).

Transparency is central and the projected consequence is good quality. We can see this as a central part of the current rationalities of governing where the things to be governed need to be made visible. Through a transparent higher educational system, knowledge can be produced about the individual universities. Higher education is made into a calculable and governable

space. Further, the focus should be on structural aspects such as degree cycles and grading systems as well as on content aspects such as criteria of what a student should know after obtaining a certain degree (Bologna Declaration, 1999, ENQA, 2005). There is, in other words, an idea to standardise higher education in Europe. Such a system would create good quality and a prosperous Europe. Standardisation can be seen as a way of governing and regulating behaviour in specific ways (Brunsson & Jacobsson, 2000). For example, it can be seen as risk management that addresses the manufactured risks (Giddens 2000) concerning the future. In other words, there is an ambition to create sameness out of difference. At the same time as sameness is created, there is a practice of exclusion. The one who is not, does not want to or cannot become, the same will be created as 'the other' (Popkewitz, 2003), the excluded one who needs correction. He/she should be placed in programs of ethical re-programming (Rose, 1996), as a way of being transformed into the desirable citizen. The ambition to include as it is expressed in policy, has a double effect which is inseparable but not acknowledged in social policy and educational practices; efforts to bring about an inclusionary society also have exclusion as an effect.

Thus, the problem, according to the texts, is how to handle threats and risks in the future. The way to meet these risks and threats is to create a European area of higher education, a prosperous Europe and a specific kind of subject. In the following parts, I will analyse what kind of subject is constructed in the texts about the Bologna process and what kinds of techniques are constructed to fabricate this subject.

### The flexible, employable European citizen

As mentioned earlier, the European citizen is constructed as one who has to be able to face a new and uncertain future and who feels a sense of belonging to a common cultural space. Such a subject is constructed through the creation of a Europe of knowledge. Further, the texts construct the desirable subject as one who is employable and mobile. This mobile and employable subject is created at the same time as a European area of higher education is created. There should be a "creation of the European area of higher education as a key way to promote citizens mobility and employability and the Continent's overall development" (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 1-2). It is essential to satisfy the employment market and this is done by constructing subjects that develop transferable skills, e.g. in doctoral programs. "We urge universities to ensure that their doctoral programmes promote interdisciplinary training and the development of transferable skills, thus meeting the needs of the wider employment market (Bergen Communiqué,

2005, p. 4)." The employable citizen is also constructed in the Swedish texts. In a constantly changing society, people need to be prepared to change jobs and to become mobile. Education is seen as a way of constructing such a subject, which the following quotation illustrates:

The speed of change in society is increased by globalisation. New work opportunities and companies evolve and other disappears. No one can depend on keeping a job with the same content for a long time. Therefore, educational policy becomes important. Education becomes one of the most important assets for people to be strong and secure in a time of rapid change (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 27).

In this text, the future is seen as something that is unknown and not possible to plan. The only thing certain is change, compared to the discourses dominating educational policy during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Sweden. Then, the future was seen as known and possible to plan (Fejes, 2006a). At the same time, society is seen as constantly changing and uncertain. "Given the current uncertain economic climate, investing in people becomes all the more important" (European Commission, 2001, p. 6). Therefore, the subjects constructed need to be able to handle these changes by becoming flexible citizens. The emphasis is placed on the subjects themselves. All of them have to adapt to these changes and the established patterns of behaviour need to be changed. This implies that the subjects are their own actors in their own local welfare (Hultqvist et al, 2003).

It is stated that knowledge and competencies are essential in order to become employable. At the same time, the subjects are encouraged to take advantages of the opportunities created as a way of becoming competent. It is argued that citizens:

have vast new opportunities in terms of communication, travel and employment. Taking advantage of these opportunities, and actively participating in society, is reliant on the ongoing acquisition of knowledge and competences (European Commission, 2001, p. 6).

If the citizen does not take advantage of these opportunities, there is a risk that he/she will not become employable and thus become 'the other', the one who is in need of a remedy. These 'others' are especially the ones without a basic level of education: "but almost 150 million people in the EU without this basic level of education face a higher risk of marginalisation" (European Commission, 2001, p. 6). To avoid marginalisation, investments have to be made in people (e.g. through education) as a means of making them active

participants in society. But the citizen her/himself must actively choose participation. Further, we could say that this discourse is almost a totalising one where there is only one thing about the future the citizen can be certain of and that is a future of change. A citizen cannot remain outside the changing future, but he/she can meet it by making choices and thus becoming flexible.

This way of reasoning constructs active subjects who are encouraged to participate in the Bologna process. However, not only citizens as subjects but also higher education institutions are constructed as active subjects. This is seen as essential for making the endeavour a success. Universities are seen as partners in a joint venture that will create a good future. "Ministers welcome the commitment of Higher Education Institutions and students to the Bologna Process and recognise that it is ultimately the active participation of all partners in the Process that will ensure its long-term success" (Berlin Communiqué, 2003, p. 5). Universities as subjects are central to the success in reforming higher education in Europe in order to create EHEA, the European Higher Education Area.

We underline the central role of higher education institutions, their staff and students as partners in the Bologna Process. Their role in the implementation of the Process becomes all the more important now that the necessary legislative reforms are largely in place, and we encourage them to continue and intensify their efforts to establish the EHEA (Bergen Communiqué, 2005, p. 1).

As a partner, different subjectivities are constructed as being active and responsible for the implementation of the Bologna process. We could say, drawing on Rose (1999), that there is a process of responsibilisation in which the subjects themselves are made the vehicles of action. If they do not act in a responsible way and contribute to the process, there will be a risk of failure. There is no 'direct' governing where the subjects are told exactly how to act. Instead, a prosperous future is presented as desirable and combined with different options for how it is possible to act. It is then up to the subjects to make their own choices.

Such ways of speaking construct 'the EU' as 'the enabling state' that should make it possible for the subjects to make their own choices, and it is in the choices and actions of the subjects themselves that the state (EU) inscribes itself (Rose, 1999). 'The state' is not referred to as an entity or an actor that does things. Instead, I view the state as a changing epistemological pattern of assumptions about how to govern and what to govern. Over time and space, it changes, taking on new shapes and meanings (Hultqvist, 2004).

It could be said that 'the state' is a mode of governing. 'The enabling state' is an epistemological pattern constructed today, which is made up of ideas about how to govern and what to govern. By enabling the subjects to become autonomous, self-regulated actors responsible for their own future, the future can be controlled, but not planned. Here, we see the construction of an autonomous, self-choosing subject, which can be related to a neoliberal governmentality. Governing is not conducted through lawmaking; instead, the freedom of each citizen is a necessary starting point for regulating and governing behaviour. By fostering the will to make choices, governing becomes something which everyone carries out by him/herself – the conduct of conduct - we govern ourselves and others. However, this does not mean that the state governs less than before. Instead, governing has assumed new shapes, and today the 'state' governs at a distance.

However, we should not view such expressions of power as repressive. Power is not something that a person inherits and which can be used against others. Nor is it a thing, commodity or position. Instead, power is productive and it works through our desires in all relations and it produces the limits of what is possible and not possible to say and do, e.g. what subjectivity is desirable, although these limits are constantly changing and put into question (Foucault, 1980). Everyone should desire to be a flexible and mobile subject, but other positions (subjectivities) in the discourse are possible. As Foucault, (1980, 2003b) argues, there is always a space for resistance in discourses. Without resistance there can be no power relations. Other positions than the flexible subject are possible, but such positions might be categorised as being part of 'the others' who are in need of a remedy. However, in the analysis performed in this article, the focus is on the desirable subject constructed through the policy documents.

In this section, I have illustrated how there is a construction of an autonomous, flexible and mobile European citizen in the European and Swedish documents. Such a desirable citizen, together with a standardised higher education system in Europe, is seen as a solution to threats in the future. In the next section, I will discuss how the technique of diversity operates so as to construct such a standardised system and such a citizen.

## Diversity as a way of creating a common European educational space

In this part, I will illustrate how the idea of diversity operates in different ways in the European and the Swedish texts so as to construct a European citizen. However, the effects are the same in both.

In the European texts there is a construction of a subject that has "an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space" (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p.1). Such an idea constructs a 'cultural subject' with specific European values. It is intertwined with an idea that there are cultural differences within Europe that should be respected. In the Bologna declaration it is stated that:

We hereby undertake to attain these objectives - within the framework of our institutional competences and taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy – to consolidate the European area of higher education (Bologna Declaration, 1999, p. 4).

Together, these ideas represent a view that there is an essence of the European citizen that needs to be acknowledged; a Euro-centrism. There is something 'specifically European', which is related to shared values and a common cultural space at the same time as cultural differences are acknowledged – the same but different. There is an ambition to make the difference more alike and at the same time to respect this difference. In such narratives, diversity operates as a way of realising a standardised higher education system and a desirable European citizen. Respect for diversity is a condition of the possibility to start speaking about standardisation.

Such ways of speaking also create 'the other', the one who does not have this European essence (i.e. people from other parts of the world), or the one who is not aware of it. The specific power relations in the discourse define what is normal and abnormal, what is to be included and what is excluded (Foucault 2003b). In this case, this division is based upon ideas about cultural affiliation. Based on my analysis, I argue that texts on the Bologna process express ideas about inclusion, at the same time as they also create exclusion. Countries outside Europe and their citizens are excluded, as they do not have the 'European values'. If they are to be included, these values need to become part of those nations and those citizens. What we see is how the efforts to achieve inclusion have exclusion as one of their effects, which is not recognized in social policy and educational practices. Such effects have implications for the practices of reflection and action. The rules of conduct that produce principles of exclusion in efforts to achieve an inclusionary society are embodied in the very strategies of reform. This implies that researchers, policymakers and academics take part in the production of subjectivities (Popkewitz, 2006).

In the Swedish documents, we can see how the technique of diversity operates in a slightly different way where there is a 'Swedish European'

created. Instead of creating a 'European space' (common social and cultural space), a 'national space' is created through ideas of systems. These can be seen as national stories (Balibar, 2004) acting as imaginary techniques in the creation of a national identity. For example, it is argued, with reference to Swedish tradition, that the specificity of the system in Sweden needs to be protected. An example of this can be found in the discussion about the European credit transfer system and the idea of having a common grading scale in all the countries participating in the Bologna process. In the Swedish texts, it is argued that the Swedish grading system (which is goal-oriented) is better than the one suggested in the Bologna process (which is a normreferenced grading system) (Ministry of Education, 2004, 2005). This is discussed by the Swedish Minister of Education in a news article. He argues that: "another pedagogy is needed for such a fine grading scale, and it diverges from the Swedish tradition to work in such a way (SvD, 10/4 2005)". Further, the article states that the minister "wants to increase the competitiveness and the mobility of the Swedish students by 'other means'. Nevertheless, he does not think the 7-grade scale will solve the problems as only two countries, Italy and Norway, have introduced it" (SvD, 10/4 2005). What we see is the construction of a Swedish citizen made up of 'traditional' Swedish ideas. The texts construct something 'specifically Swedish' related to ideas about systems. Nevertheless, the Swedish texts present an ambition to be part of Europe and the Bologna process. Accordingly, what we see is a Swedish European under construction. The Swedish subject is supposed to become a European based on Swedish traditions.

We can also see how an idea of differences (cultural diversity) is present in the Swedish texts, as it is in the European texts. "When more and more people obviously do not share a common cultural and ethnic background it is necessary to develop a higher education that is relevant irrespective of the students background" (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 27-28). Higher education needs to be developed in a way that can handle such a population of students. Further, the students need to gain knowledge of, and show respect for, these cultural differences where exchange studies are seen as leading to "personal development, increased general knowledge, improved language knowledge, knowledge and understanding of people in other countries and the circumstances they live in, attitudes and values" (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 61). Such a student is part of the solution of how to solve the problems of the future and of how to make higher education more alike. Diversity operates so as to harmonise the Swedish system of higher education in relation to Europe, and to construct a desirable European citizen.

What my analysis illustrates is that diversity is constructed as a technique, which fosters nations to desire to participate in standardising their

higher education system at the same time as it fosters students to desire to become a specific European citizen – one who is mobile, flexible and shows respect for diversity. Diversity is a condition of possibility to start speaking about harmonisation and standardisation of higher education in Europe. Further, the analysis illustrates how the narratives of the European citizen produced in European and Swedish documents are similar, even if they appear to be different. For example, the construction of a European space and a Swedish space seems to differ. Nevertheless, the same techniques operate in the discourse as a way of creating a standardised higher education system and flexible and mobile citizens.

### Concluding remarks

In this article, my aim has been to show how the European citizen is constructed through texts on the Bologna process and what rationality of governing is related to such a construction. I have illustrated how texts on the Bologna process construct a neoliberal rationality of governing. Such rationality seeks to de-emhazise the state and its different practices of governing. Governing should not be conducted by a legislative institution or by a 'state/EU' dictating what to do. Instead, governing should be conducted through the choices and actions of each subject. It is in these choices that the 'state/EU' is inscribed.

Such a statement has been supported in my analysis where I show how different texts present the Bologna process as a solution to several threats in the future. By making higher educational systems in Europe more standardised it is argued in the texts that Europe will maintain a leading position in the world. Further, an uncertain and constantly changing future is created, which can be handled by constructing the Bologna process. These different threats in the future can be handled by fostering subjectivities (citizens) who are flexible, mobile and adaptable. Universities and nations, as subjects, should desire to become active partners in such an enterprise. They need to take responsibility for making a good future for Europe a reality. Thus, government is conducted through the freedom of each citizen and subjectivity. By making choices, citizens, universities and nations participate in governing themselves and others.

I have also illustrated how the technique of diversity operates as a way of fostering desirable subjectivities. Such a technique operates in the discourses constructed by both the European and Swedish documents, but in slightly different ways. By analysing European and Swedish documents, I have been able to show these differences and how they are part of the same rationality of governing. I argue that diversity is a condition of possibility to speak about

harmonisation and standardisation of higher education. In the discourse of higher education today, it would not be possible to speak about harmonisation without any reference to respect for diversity. Such a narrative is excluded from the discourse.

Further, I have shown how power operates and produces specific subjectivities. At the same time as subjectivities are produced, there are exclusionary effects. Inclusion and exclusion are discursively constructed as binary concepts, but the exclusionary side is something not acknowledged in policy documents. The analysis shows how the rules and standards of reason in higher education reforms inscribe continuums of values that exclude at the same time as they include. At the same time as there is a construction of the European citizen, there is also a construction of 'the other', the one without the European values who is in need of ethical reprogramming to become what is desirable.

In this article, I have made an attempt to contribute to an ongoing debate on how higher education in Europe is governed, based on a governmentality perspective. The discussions and analysis I have presented might point to a new trajectory in research on the Bologna process. Using the concept of governmentality allows us to analyse the specific relations of power that operate in the discourse of higher education, what pictures of reality they create and what the expressions of power set in motion are. Such an approach is limited in this field of research. I have shown how complex the current discussion is concerning how higher education in Europe should be governed. There are changes taking place that have different effects in terms of power. We need to analyse these effects more thoroughly as a way of opening up a critical space for reflections about our present. What discourses are the dominating ones today, how do they operate, what is made possible to say and do, and what is being excluded. Thus, it is possible to show how the very trivia of everyday ways of constructing a better world leave untouched and intact the rules and standards for ordering conduct. As illustrated in this article, the ambition to include also excludes, something not acknowledged in social policy. Consequently, a critical task such as the one carried out in this article is necessary as it gives us another starting point (it makes visible the rules and standards of reasong and ordering of conduct) for discussion than do other kinds of perspectives, e.g. several of those adopted by researchers mentioned in my research overview. Instead of prescription and foundational critique, I give 'exemplary' criticism, which is normative in the sense that I do not prescribe what the results of my questioning are (Dean 1999). What such a project is about is best illustrated by Foucault.

My point is not that everything is bad, but that everything is dangerous, which is not exactly the same as bad. If everything is dangerous, then we always have something to do. So my position leads not to apathy but to a hyper- and pessimistic activism (Foucault, 1983, p. 231-232).

### Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Staffan Larsson, Associate professor Ulf Olsson, Professor Thomas S. Popkewitz and Henrik Nordvall for comments on different drafts of this article. I also appreciate the constructive feedback provided by the two anonymous reviewers.

### Note

1. Mobility is one of the basic freedoms in the European Union. A citizen in one EU country is free to move to other EU countries, to vote, to have the legal right to work, to study, etc. In this article, the focus is on mobility in relation to higher education.

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