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New wine in old skins: Changing patterns in the governing of the adult learner in Sweden

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Abstract

This paper explores the ways the adult learner is governed in recent years and whether the techniques for doing this have changed over the last 50 years. The focus is first on which adult subject (adult learner) is constructed in the material analysed. What kinds of subjects are governed? This is followed by an analysis of what kinds of techniques are used to govern the adult learner. Official reports from the present time and the mid 20th Century on Swedish municipal adult education are analysed using the foucauldian notions of genealogy and governmentality. The results show that a different, more individualistic, subject is construed in the contemporary texts compared with the texts from the mid 20th Century. The subjects should be autonomous and be mobilized by being included in lifelong learning. In the mid 20th Century, the adult learners were the talented ones who were supposed to develop their inner potential and by doing so reach self-fulfilment. However, several of the techniques used for governing these subjects are the same. Guidance and risk calculations are used during both periods. But as will be argued, they differ in how they are used. Today, the techniques employed are in line with a more individualistic view where the subjects conducting their own conduct; they plan their own education supported by study counsellors as well as making their own risk calculations. In the mid 20th Century, the subject was governed by society in a more direct way; it was the study counsellors who decided whether an adult would study and they (and a board of exemptions) made the risk calculations. The techniques are the same but different: new wine in old skins.

Introduction

The focus of this article is on how the adult subject in Swedish adult education is construed in official reports and how this subject is governed. (Subject is used in a foucauldian sense, where human beings are transformed into subjects by different modes of objectification. For example how dividing practices turns subjects into sane/mad, sick/healthy etc, or how human beings turns themselves into subjects, such as the autonomous, self-reflecting adult learner. (Foucault 2003a) Adult subject and adult learner is used synonymous.) The article takes as its point of departure the present time and then traces the configurations of thought back to the mid 20th Century. The foucauldian notions of governmentality and genealogy are used as analytical tools. As will be argued, the ways in which the adult learner as a subject is construed in the practice of adult education in Sweden today has changed compared with the mid 20th Century. The techniques used to govern the adult learner today are not new. Rather, they can be located in the texts from the mid 20th Century. However, they differ in how they are used. In other words, the techniques used today are the same as in the mid 20th Century, but different.

In contemporary policy texts concerning adult education, we can see that concepts of individuality, employability, competitiveness, lifelong learning, etc., are central. (DS 2003:23,

SOU 2001:78) Such concepts are part of the creation of the discourse of adult education and of the construction of the adult learner. These concepts seem to be new in this practice. Accordingly, we can assume that they create a different subject and different techniques for governing this subject than was previously the case. Is this so? To answer this question, and to study this change in Swedish adult education, we can turn to an area of research concerned with changing patterns in governance that draws on some of Foucault's later works (Foucault 1991) and the notion of governmentality. In the last decade, many scholars from different parts of the world have drawn on this notion, which not the least can be seen in the number of books produced in this area. Examples of phenomena studied are school policies, the ideas of Dewey and Vygotsky, risk and responsibility, the state, etc. (For example, see Baker and Heyning 2004, Popkewitz et al 2001, Dean and Hindess 1998, Barry et al 1996, Hultqvist and Petersson 1995)

Today, Nikolas Rose (1999a, 1999b, 1996), one of the most cited writers, mostly theorizes on how the ways the subject is governed have changed over time. Turning to the practice of adult education, John Field (2000) has discussed how the adult learner is governed in relation to the concept of lifelong learning, but without drawing on the notion of governmentality. This is instead done by Richard Edwards (2004, 2003, 2002) who discusses lifelong learning and the significance this concept has had as regards the changes in governing the adult learners. These studies mainly focus on theorizing, and the empirical material is limited. However, Mitchell Dean (1998) has carried out an empirical analysis on how the adult subject in Australia is governed, where the focus is on the young unemployed. In Sweden, Kenneth Hultqvist (2004) has studied how the governing of the school subject in Sweden has shifted over time, linking it to the notion of the state and to knowledge. Another empirical study on the adult subject in Sweden has been carried out by Kenneth Petersson (2003) where the offender as a subject is focused on.

To summarize; in the search for literature on this subject, it seems that no empirical study concerning the practice of adult education and the adult subject construed in this practice has been carried out, using the notion of governmentality and comparing material from different historical times. Accordingly, in this article, I have performed an empirical analysis. The focus has been on the construction of the adult subject in official reports on formal adult municipal education in Sweden today and in the mid $20^{\rm th}$ Century. This has enabled us to contrast the results of today with those from times past, and thus uncover shifts over time. We have then explored what techniques were used to create this subject and how they were similar and different in terms of the periods studied.

Swedish adult education

In Sweden, adult education consists of several different parts. There is higher education, municipal adult education, folk high schools, study circles, labour market training, etc. If we include all the parts of adult education, there were the equivalent of 700,000 full-time study places at the end of the 20th Century. (SOU 2000:28). This can be compared with the entire population in Sweden, which is about 9 million. 178,000 of these 700,000 study places were assigned to municipal adult education, which is the part of adult education studied in this article. This is an institution funded by each individual municipality where adults can study the same curriculum as in upper secondary school (Lpf 94). Often, this is done to acquire the qualifications to be able to apply for higher education.

Municipal adult education was introduced in 1968 with the goal of giving adults, who earlier not had the chance, a formal education. The focus soon shifted to adults with the lowest level of education. This was an educational reform designed to implement an allocation policy instead of a service policy, which meant it was primarily a way of distributing resources instead of a service to those persons wanting to attend adult education.

(Höghielm 1985, Rubenson 1982) Prior to 1968, adults were able to acquire the qualifications necessary for higher education by studying at evening schools for adults. These schools for adults were introduced in 1953 but only on a limited scale. (Fejes 2003) Over the last ten years, municipal adult education has been focused on by policy creation. This was especially the case in 1996 when the adult education initiative (AEI) was implemented. Research had shown that a large proportion of adults had not reached the level of upper secondary school. The aim was to make it possible for these people to raise their level of education. The initiative was limited to five years, 1997-2002, and during this time the state funded 100,000 study places. (SOU 1996:27). This resulted in the expansion of adult education in Sweden. When the initiative ended, state funds to the municipals were reduced, as was the number of study places for adults. Today, new ways to develop adult education are being discussed, especially recognition of prior learning (for further reading, see Andersson, Fejes and Ahn 2004).

The material analysed in this article consists of five different official reports on adult education. Three of them were written in recent years (SOU 1998:51, 1999:141 and Långtidsutredningen, appendix 10). The first two concern the adult education initiative and the third one is a report discussing the future in more overall terms. Two of the reports were written in the middle of the last century (SOU 1948:27 and 1952:29) and outline the foundations of the evening schools for adults created in 1953. The first report concerns in part adult education and the second focuses solely on adult education. In my analysis, the texts are viewed as subjects actively participating in the creation of the discourse of adult education. They "speak" from a subject position on a state level.

Concepts from the foucauldian toolbox

Two concepts from the foucauldian toolbox, genealogy and governmentality, have guided me in my research. Genealogy is derived from the Latin word *genea*, meaning birth. (Beronius 1991). It can be viewed as a family tree where you try to trace branches back in time. The idea is to show that the past is present in present time. This perspective contrasts with the search for origin and the underlying view that there is an essence to things. Instead, it searches for disparity (Foucault 1977). In other words, it could be called a history of the present. It views history in a special way. According to Popkewitz et al:

History....is an understanding of the present and of collective memory as the weaving together of multiple historical configurations that establishes connections that make for the common sense. (Popkewitz et al. 2001, p. 4)

It is the historical configurations that focused on and the researcher tries to trace them back in time. This means that history is not viewed as linear. It is the things taken for granted in our present time that are challenged (Rose 1999). In my case, it is the view/configurations present in the discourse of adult education in Sweden. In this discourse, there are ways of speaking, which construct configurations of thought and the adult subject. If we try to trace these configurations back in time, we find some of them present at certain times, but not at others.

If we turn to the second concept, governmentality, Foucault (1991) argues that this concept refers to political thought from two perspectives:

- 1. Politics is about governing
- 2. Governing is based on common sense notions about the one being governed.

In other words, it could be said that governmentality is mentalities/thoughts concerning how governing should be practised. This means that in the discourse present today, there are mentalities concerning how the adult subject should be governed. There are also techniques

used for governing. If we try to locate these mentalities and techniques, and then try to trace them back in time, we will find that some of them are present earlier on, others not.

The analysis is conducted by performing a discourse analysis drawing on these two concepts from the foucauldian toolbox. Accordingly, the focus is on locating central concepts in the discourse of today and analysing how they construct the adult subject and how they act as a way of governing this subject. Using genealogy I try to trace the configurations of thought and concepts located in the texts of today back to the texts from the mid 20th Century. By doing so, I can determine the shift in their use. The empirical part of the article is divided into three different main sections. In the first, the subject constructed in the reports from different times is discussed. This is followed by a discussion of the concept of equality and how this is related to the construction of the subject. The third and last empirical chapter is about different techniques used in governing the adult subject. Finally, the results are discussed.

Who is the adult learner?

In this section, I will argue that the taken-for-granted construction of the adult learner of today is that of a self-governing and autonomous subject compared with the construction of the talented subject prevailing in the mid 20th Century.

The self-governing, autonomous subject at the present time

If we turn our attention to one of the official reports concerning the adult education initiative, we can see that lifelong learning is one of the most central concepts used. (SOU 1998:51) By investing in adult education, all individuals should be able to be a part of lifelong learning.

With the adult education imitative, the committee intended to strengthen the educational opportunities for adults with the shortest of formal education. There are groups that are at risk of being marginalized and excluded from the labour market because they do not have the prerequisite needed to participate in the lifelong learning. It is for them that adult education has to be strengthened and an adult education initiative created. (SOU 1998:51 p. 27)

The report argues that not everybody is a part of lifelong learning and therefore study opportunities for those risk groups have to be created. These groups are the long-term unemployed, people with low-status jobs, the welfare dependent, immigrants, etc. There is a configuration of risk embedded in this reasoning. If these people do not get to be a part of lifelong learning, they will be marginalized. We will return to the concept of risk later on in the article and problemize it as a technique of governing. Here, we can conclude that lifelong learning is put forward as something that everyone should be a part of, but are not.

The responsibility to be a part of lifelong learning is not a one-way process. It is divided between the state, the municipalities and the individuals. (SOU 1998:51). In other words, there is no one-way governing where the state should stake out the correct path for the citizen to follow. Instead, the citizen is a co-creator of his/hers own destiny. He/she is a co-player who meets the state's representatives (study counsellors) and, together, they plan the individual's study path in the name of freedom. In other words, you should take part in lifelong learning and if you fail to do so, it is your own responsibility. Lifelong learning reinforces this discourse. (Crowther 2004).

It seems as if lifelong learning is presented as a right and something that should be a natural goal for every individual. The state should create the prerequisites and the individual should take the responsibility for choosing the education of his/her choice. At the same time, the concept leads us to the thought of the colonisation of life. Life is a long educational journey (both formal, non-formal and informal learning). You are never free of it, but that is not a problem because you as a subject will (should) be choosing learning of your own free

will; it is something good. In other words, if we look at the concept of lifelong learning, it gives the impression that all people learn their entire lives. In itself, such a thought is not new. The notion that people learn their entire life can at least be traced back to Plato. (Rubenson 2004) What is interesting to note is that in the texts today, not everyone is automatically included in lifelong learning. Rather, it is something that is held up as desirable. What kind of subject, then, is created in the texts? What should the risk groups become?

The mobilization of the individual and society, are central themes in the practice of adult education. The subject should become an acting autonomous subject.

Public education should, according to the committee, mobilize in a completely new way the individuals – their commitment and responsibility – and involve the different parties in the labour market. (SOU 1998:51 p. 31)

The report seems to construct an autonomous subject who should take responsibility and be committed. They choose their path through adult education/life with the support of study counsellors (SOU 1998:51). At the same time as this liberal view (Rose 1996) of the subject is accentuated, it does not seem to exist. It is something that has to be constructed; public education must find new ways of mobilizing the subject and, at the same time as this happens, society is mobilized. The adult learner finds him/herself in this ambivalent situation; on the one hand he/she is presumed to be autonomous and self regulated and on the other, this autonomous and self-regulated subject does not yet exist. This ambivalence is a common component of a liberal society and there are, according to Hindess (1996), two different notions of the connection between a community of autonomous persons and its political governance. The first notion views autonomy as a natural part of the human essence and takes this as the basis of government in some contexts. The second notion sees autonomy as a realized artefact created through different practices of government. Therefore, the autonomous persons are the bases of political governance in some contexts and in others they are artefacts of governance. This dilemma can be related to what Uljens (2002) names the pedagogical paradox. Education is viewed as a provocation of self-reflection where the individual are to transcend her own capacity by her own activity. But to be able to reach beyond this, the individual must already be conceived as autonomous and self-reflecting.

The process of educations seems to presuppose autonomy and self-reflection; in other words, It presupposes the very existence of the thing that it is trying to bring about. (Uljens 2002, p. 362)

One interpretation of this focus on the individual's responsibility and commitment is that it represents a part of the governmentality of today. The governing of the subject is no longer conducted by regulating it directly through "society", instead the individual should regulate and govern him/herself. This is achieved by means of different technologies, including technologies of the self, to use Foucault's words (Foucault 2003b). We will return to these technologies/techniques later on in this article. The individual is, in other words, construed as an active, acting subject, which should to be mobilized. One could perhaps say: be liberated from a time when the subject was neither involved nor took responsibility. The ambivalence points to, as Dean (1998) discusses, one version where the subject is obliged to be active and one where the subject have to learn to be active. He distinguishes risk groups similar to those discussed in the texts I have analysed. It is the members of these groups who shall become the active citizen because they are unable at the moment to handle the risks themselves.

So far, we have seen that there is a construction of an autonomous, self-governing and active subject. This is the desirable subject that should be created in the practice of adult education. One way of creating this subject is to apply the concept of lifelong learning, which can be viewed as a linguistic construction used to govern the subjects. Everyone should desire

to be a part of this and society should create the necessary conditions. If we now turn our focus back to the mid 20th Century, are these configurations of thought present? Is it the same subject that is construed and can we find the same linguistic ways of governing these subjects?

The essential elite – the adult subject in the mid 20th Century

Instead of speaking of an autonomous and self-regulating subject, there are other attributes assigned to the adult subject in the texts from the mid 20th Century. Those people who should be the ones to study in adult education are the talented ones. They are a part of an elite. Before being accepted for adult education, you are tested by means of intelligent tests and interviews. This enables the experts to judge whether you are one of the talented ones (SOU 1952:29). The configuration of thought with respect to talent seems to accentuate a view that you need to be talented if you are to manage to pass the exams given in adult education. However, there seem to be persons who manage, even if they do not have the talent. This is seen as a problem in the report because these persons will not be able to satisfy demands placed on people educated at the academic level. (Adult education in the 1950s focused mainly on making it possible for adults without the necessary qualifications to apply for higher education.)

Experience shows, however, that a person with a strong ambition often succeeds in completing their studies, even if his theoretical talent is way below the average among the students. This is not good for society. There is reason to assume that the weakest talents among the students, when they have passed their exams and are placed in different positions, will find it difficult to satisfy the demands made on university graduates. (SOU 1952:29 p. 47)

When this happens, it is mostly society that suffers, not the individual. In other words, there seems to have been a notion present in the discourse during this period that emphasised talent as central to success in studies and in a future academic labour market. It seems as if there is a notion of an inner essence of what an individual can potentially become. This notion is reinforced in discussions in the report where it is claimed that there are, in per cent, more talented people in the higher social groups than in the lower ones (SOU 1952:29). In other words, talent has a relation to what social class you are born into.

It is argued that you will be happy if you choose according to your inner potential when you make your choice of profession.

The individual who finds a place in life where he best can use his talent and other resources, will achieve a sense of satisfaction. This is also in the interest of society since the individual can then be expected to make a greater effort in his work. (SOU 1952:29 p. 14)

Society too will gain by the subject choosing according to his potential because he will then make a greater contribution on the labour market. This view implies a notion of an inner essence that can be measured and evaluated. If the subject chooses the right path in life he/she will be happy. Accordingly, I have chosen to label this as a configuration of thought called self-fulfilment. Here, I include the notion of the inner essence and the view that you will be happy making choices according to this essence. The role of society is to make it possible for individuals to develop their essence. Consequently, the measurement of talent is viewed as a way of creating equality. By holding interviews and measuring the subject by means of intelligence tests, the subject is objectified and categorised as gifted/not gifted talented/not talented. If we try to trace the configuration of thought concerning the inner essence and self-fulfilment, we find ourselves in the humanistic tradition where the development of the individual and society should be in harmony. (Frängsmyr 2004)

A changing subject – present time back to the mid 20th Century

If we try to contrast these pictures constructed in this article so far, we can see that there seems to be strong economic motives present in both the present time and the mid 20th Century. The risk groups in the present time must be educated and kept away from unemployment. In the mid 20th Century, this was the case when the focus was on "placing the right man in the right place". This is most beneficial for society. But these similar economic motives create different adult subjects. Today, the adult learner should be mobilized to be a part of lifelong learning. He/she is construed as autonomous and self-regulated, making his/her own choices and lifelong learning is a linguistic construction used to govern this subject. In the mid 20th Century, the adult learner was a talented individual belonging to an elite. They had an inner essence/potential that could be developed if the state supported the subject. The aim was to try to attain self-fulfilment. The individuals who should be allowed to study were the talented ones, not the risk groups such as those existing today. Similar results can be seen if we focus on the concept of equality and how this is construed in the reports.

Equality – an individualistic or collectivistic view?

The texts from both the present time, and the mid 20th Century put forward arguments with the aim of achieving equality. But they are different. Today, it is an individualistic view that is put forward as illustrated by this passage:

Sweden has as one of its goals to be a leading knowledge society, but the ambition is also that its citizens should be able to participate in education irrespective of their background. The aim of reducing socially uneven recruitment is to create "equality in chances". It should be the individual's own ability and achievement, rather then social background, gender, ethnicity, etc. that determines the individual's life destiny. (Långtidsutredningen, appendix 10, p. 9)

You as an individual, no matter where you come from, should have the same opportunity. This could be discussed in terms of the result of what kind of subject is created. Everyone should be self-regulating, active and autonomous. To achieve this, everyone should have the opportunity to be a part of lifelong learning. You make your own choices with the support of the experts. Society has to change to make this happen. This view of equality was not expressed in the mid 20th Century. At that time, there was a more collective view where the focus was on the inner potential of the adult learner.

According to our democratic values, the human being-individual is the objective, never the means as in a dictatorship. We are of the opinion that the individual, within the framework of society, should be free to choose the work that corresponds with his interests and capacities. The individual's freedom of choice of profession is dependent on education. (SOU 1952:29 p. 13)

In a free and democratic society, higher education should be open for everyone according to his/her interests and capacities. (SOU 1952:29 p. 192)

These passages illustrate that the individual should be free to choose education and work. But the choice should be made within the framework of society and according to the individual's capacities. Consequently, the evaluation of talent is viewed as an instrument for equality. With it, the individual can be helped to find out what his/her potential is. According to Kjell Härnqvist (1989), there are different kinds of equality, one of which is to focus on giving all collectives (e.g. social classes, gender, geographical groups) the opportunity to acquire an education; equality between collectives. This is the case in the material analysed from the mid 20^{th} Century and it means that if you are talented, no matter what social group you come from, you are welcome to educate yourself. But if there are structural obstacles (economic issues, etc.) they are for the most part your own responsibility. Today, you are free to decide if

you want to study, and structural obstacles are removed by the state. In other words, the testing of talent was a way to get people from lower social groups to study, if they had the talent.

So far, we have seen different subjects constructed drawing on the concepts of lifelong learning and self-fulfilment. This is supported when studying the concept of equality and how it differs between times. The questions we now turn to are: what kinds of techniques are used today to create the self-regulating and autonomous subject? Can these techniques be traced back to the mid 20th Century?

Same but different - techniques for governing the adult subject

In this section, it will be argued that different techniques are used for governing the adult subject. We have already pointed to the linguistic construction of lifelong learning and to self-fulfilment. Now, we turn to more "practiced" techniques.

Guidance and advising as techniques for governing the adult subject

As mentioned earlier on, the subject construed today should be autonomous, self-regulating and free to choose. In an educational system where this freedom to choose is present, the subject can be offered numerous ways of studying. There are study counsellors present to help in making these choices. In the reports it is emphasized that everyone should have an individual study plan, which is jointly drawn up by the subject and the study counsellor. (SOU 1998:51)

If the adult education initiative and lifelong learning are to be realized, adult education will have to satisfy the individual needs and be adjusted according to the individual's capabilities. Not least from a motivational point of view, it is important that the individual participates in the planning of his/hers own education and is supported in taking responsibility for his/her own study planning. A dialogue concerning their educational profile, possible opportunities for development and alterative educational organizers are an important service that the municipalities should give the citizens during the different stages of life. An individual study plan should also be a requirement for participating in the adult education initiative. (SOU 1998:51 p. 31-32)

The concept of dialogue is central and the view is that the relation between the subject and study counsellor is equal and mutual. The counsellor does not inform a passive subject. It is essential to get the individual to participate in his/hers own learning process. Here, the study counsellor is assigned the role of expert. Analogous to how Nikolas Rose (1999) argues, this means that the study counsellor is present to handle the subjects' anxiety and to help them reach the goals they have set up. In this case, the goals are to acquire an education and the job of their choice. But it is the individual him/herself who is responsible for his/her own destiny and the choices made and the study counsellors are only supportive in these choices. The relation created is a complex machine for governing (Rose 1996) where the bodies viewed as non-political (in this case, the study counsellor) are dependent of the political bodies. They should comply with the norms and goals set up by the political bodies. Consequently, they become an important part of the state's ambition to govern.

In other words, the subjects are free to choose their own path, with the support of counsellors and other experts. In its ambition to make everyone a part of lifelong learning, the state uses study counsellors as its representatives at the local level. These are assigned certain tasks and a certain pedagogy to be used when carrying out these tasks. Politics are thus represented in the local arena without it being obvious. Consequently, the dialogue pedagogy could be viewed as rationality of governance used by the state to govern from a distance. The subject to be created should be autonomous, self-governing and free to choose. If this becomes reality, the subject will govern himself or herself. This means that the state is always

present in the process of governing. The individual study plan is another technique for creating this subject. It makes the subject active and self-regulating.

The technique of governing through guidance is not new. On the mid 20th Century, there were study counsellors present. The justification for this was based on the knowledge that adults may feel insecure when they are confronted with the thought of studying in adult life. They may have difficulties in estimating their own qualifications. Consequently, there has to be some kind of study counselling. (SOU 1952:29)

In the proclamation of 30th September, 1947, concerning the public employment office (no. 983), it is stated that vocational guidance should be available at the public employment office, with the task of giving the general public advice and information on choice of profession and educational issues and in other ways [offering] suitable measures for promoting the individual's vocational training and adaptation to a profession. (SOU 1952:29 p. 136)

The use of concepts is interesting in this case. Two concepts are used in the mid 20th Century: advising and guidance. The adult should be able to get advice on study opportunities. This can be related to the discussion on the measurement of talent. As discussed earlier on, these texts from the mid 20th Century contained a notion that the subject had an inner potential that could be measured by taking intelligence tests and by being interviewed. The adult could thus get advice about the suitability of him/her studying by doing these tests. If a person is categorized as talented and gifted he/she can get guidance about what kind of courses he/she should take to be qualified to apply for higher education. This distinction between advice and guidance is important because the former implies a division between the talented and the untalented. Another difference between the concepts is that advising implies that a subject is not active (Sandström 2001). He/she gets information about different aspects of studying. Guidance, on the other hand, is associated with an active participating subject. This term is used both in the mid 20th Century and the present time, although it is used differently. There are no indications in the texts from the mid 20th Century that there is any focus on getting the subject to participate in the planning of his/her studies. Guidance thus seems to be something representing more of a one-way communication in the mid 20th Century.

Guidance is not a new technique, but it has taken on a more individualistic shape. It could be said that during the present time, guidance is a two-sided activity where there is a dialogue between the subject and the counsellor. This is a technique used to create the autonomous and self-regulating subject who will conduct his or her own conduct. In the mid 20th Century, a one-sided activity could be seen with the counsellor advising the subject, telling him/her what kind of talent he/she had and how this talent could be developed (either in the educational system or in the labour market). This is a more "direct" form of governing where the subjects have little influence on their study choice as adults and on planning their studies.

Risk calculation as a technique for governing the adult subject

As I will argue in this section, another technique used to govern the adult subject is by calculating risks. This is present during the present time and was present in the mid 20^{th} Century, but differs depending on who makes the calculations.

In a report from the present time, there is a discussion on the calculation of risk in relation to what education program you should choose.

Here, the employment office has an important task to handle. It involves providing the unemployed and other people applying for jobs with information about the prospects on the labour market in relation to different educational levels and different education. What the risks are when ending up in and retaining an unqualified job. This is not only an assignment for the employment office but also for the study and vocational counsellors and the different agencies

and authorities that supply them with information about developments in society and on labour market development. (SOU 1998:51 p. 79-80)

The individual has to take into account what kind of risks different choices involve. The employment office and counsellors should be supportive and contribute with their expertise in the area. Such information will probably influence the choices made by the individual. But there is still the freedom of choice and the individual can either take the risks into account or not, it is up to him/her. The subject is governed through the calculation of future risks. Hultqvist et al. put it like this:

Danger has always been a part of the concept of the future, but danger today is different from the past. In the 1800s and the early 1900s, educational thought was concerned with the fears and dangers connected with particular individuals or classes. It was part of a mode of reasoning called risk. Risk does not refer to a pre-existing reality that is filled or not filled with danger, it is a mode of thought that regulates those risks that are inherent to this mode of thought. This way, risks are fabricated, regulated and normalized. (Hultqvist et al. 2003 p. 5)

Danger and risk are not new, but today, discourses on risk and uncertainty seem to be everywhere, according to Edwards et al (2002). In his actions, the counsellor takes an element of risk into consideration. Through studies of the labour market and what it will look like in the future, a picture is presented to the individual. It is then up to the individual to evaluate the picture and then make a choice. According to Rose (1996), there has been a shift as regards the management of risk during the last half century. A move from solidarity risk management (through social insurance) to private risk management. As an individual, you seek out the study counsellor (expert) and you then make your own risk calculation. The subject is now governed by itself in contrast with the era of the welfare state when the subject was governed by society. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier on, the texts produced in the present time argue that there is a risk of some groups being marginalized if they do not participate in lifelong learning. This is also a part of the governing through risk. If you are a member of a risk group, choosing an education is a choice that will hopefully neutralise this risk. But the choice is yours to make.

Using risk calculation as a technique for governing is not new. In the mid 20th Century, calculations were made of what kind of revenue the subject would generate for society in the future.

When an exemption assessment is made, the applicant should be judged not only from the point of view of his ability to complete his studies. The question of whether the applicant can be assumed to have the capacity to make a useful contribution in the career he has chosen cannot be neglected. (SOU 1952:29 p. 127)

This means that the board of exemptions not only measured talent but also performed a risk calculation of how much revenue the subject could generate for society during his/her career. If it is calculated that the subject will not generate much revenue in the future, there is no need to have the person educated. This is in line with earlier reasoning about the inner essence of the individual, which can be realised with the support of society. The calculation focuses on fitting the individual into the "right place" according to inner potential and future revenue. But there is a difference here, which is also related to the contemporary texts. In the mid 20^{th} Century, it was the board of exemptions, not the individual, that calculated the risk. If you were categorised as a person who would bring in little revenue in a future academic job, you would not be able to study as an adult.

Conclusions – New wine in old skins

This article has taken as its point of departure the foucauldian notions of governmentality and genealogy. By analysing official reports on adult education in Sweden, representing both the present time and the mid 20th Century, we have been able to study what kinds of subjects have been construed. We also analysed what shifts in the use of technologies for governing the adult subject have taken place. A search of the literature produced no other empirical studies focusing on adult education and the adult subject using the notion of governmentality and genealogy. Consequently, this article can be seen as a contribution to this area of research.

Today, there are strong economic motives present in the discourse studied. Lifelong learning is seen as something everybody should desire and be a part of. If this is realised, society will undergo an economic growth that will make it possible to compete with the rest of the Western World. Education is viewed as a way of reducing the unemployment rate and thus the cost of social benefits. As we have seen, these strong economic motives are not completely new. In the mid 20th Century, it was considered desirable for the adult subject to develop his/her inner essence/potential. For some, this meant they were not supposed to apply for higher education because it would not be beneficial for society. But there were others, the talented and gifted ones, who would bring in revenues if they were allowed to acquire the qualification enabling them to apply for higher education. By making calculations of how profitable the applicant would be in a future academic job, society could make the most out of every individual.

Different techniques are used to create the desirable subject and the desirable future. We have seen that the techniques used during the present time are similar but different to those used in the mid 20th Century. The most obvious difference is the changing pattern from a more collectivistic view to a more individualistic one. In the mid 20th Century, it was not the individuals themselves who made risk calculations, who were the focus of work to achieve equality or played an active role in planning their studies. Governing was carried out in a more direct way than is the case today. In the middle of the last century, the adult learner was supposed to attain self-fulfilment choosing according to his/her inner potential/essence and it was the exemption board and the study counsellor who measured this talent and decided whether the person had the capacity to study. It was a case of one-way communication. As can be seen today, the adult subject is supposed to be an autonomous, self-regulating and selfgoverning individual. The techniques used in the mid 20th Century are still present but they have become more individualistic. Study plans are drawn up with the adult learner as an active participant. Adult learners make their own choices supported by the study counsellors. Later on, they are informed about the risks involved in different choices after which they themselves can make the risk calculation and the choice according to their own values. Equality is also seen in a more individualistic way where every individual should have an opportunity to be a part of lifelong learning. This autonomous subject differs from the talented subject in the mid 20th Century.

We can see the emergence of new ways of governing the adult subject. As Nikolas Rose argues (1996), we live in a time of advanced liberalism which brings a new formula of rule. This formula is dependent on experts, but not in the same way as before. It does not attempt to govern through "society" as before; instead, it tries to govern through the regulated choices of the individual citizen. This shift can be verified in relation to the material analysed. There has been a shift from a one-way relation, where it was "society" that governed the adult subject, to a two-way relation where the dialogue pedagogy is central and where the adults are supposed to govern themselves. The adult learner of today is construed to become an autonomous and enterprising self. As argued by Richard Edwards (2003, 2002), lifelong learning acts as a technique for governing the adult subject. He argues that lifelong learning is a part of:

the way in which conduct is conducted and subjectivity mobilized and re-fashioned. Lifelong learning can be argued to play an influential role in catering for active, enterprising selves and subjecting them to educational and training practices that attempt to instil flexibility and enterprise as desirable and desired ways of being. (Edwards 2002 p. 359)

If we broaden our perspective, we can see that these ways of governing the adult learner do not seem to be limited to the Swedish context. The discourse/s are not local in character. In the last 50 years, there has been a growing focus on adult education, as a policy area, both in Sweden and in the Western World. Lifelong learning is one of the main concepts on the agenda. In a communication from the European Commission in November, 2001 (European commission 2001), it is stated that the EU wants to create a European area of lifelong learning. The aim is to empower citizens to move freely between learning settings, jobs, regions and countries and to make the member states more prosperous as well as tolerant and democratic. In a more overall aim, the EU stated at the Lisbon council in March, 2000, and at the Stockholm European council in March, 2001 (EU 2001), that the union should become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society in the world. Accordingly, education and training should be offered to all individual citizens at all stages of their lives in order to make them employable and mobile. This points to strong economic motives present in the discussions/discourse at the EU level. The subject to be created should be autonomous and flexible, as in the case of Sweden presented in this article.

To conclude this article, it could be said that the desirable future, where Sweden will have the economic growth and ability to compete with the Western World, is the same today as it was in the mid 20th Century. But what has changed is the way governing is conducted, from a more collectivistic approach where the subject was governed through society to a more individualistic approach where the subjects are supposed to govern their own conduct. The state is still always present, but today it governs from a distance. What we see is new wine in old skins.

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