

Speculative Pedagogy: Education, Entrepreneurialism and the Politics of Inclusion in Contemporary Sweden*

Magnus Dahlstedt

University of Lund, Sweden

Mekonnen Tesfahuney

University of Lund, Sweden

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Every Thought emits a Roll of the Dice.

Mallarmé *A Throw of the Dice*

We are living in a speculative age. It is not simply politics, economics, and culture, but also life itself, which is subject to the calculus of risk and risk-taking. In this social and political climate that encourages creativity, innovation and adventure or hazard, it is the entrepreneurial self that has come to symbolize the ideal (citizen) subject at once flexible and docile yet risk-taking. The logic of speculative competition and accumulation has become an integral part of governing society over the past decades – in times of crisis as well as growth. Daily shows and television series, such as ‘celebrity poker’, ‘poker stars’ and ‘poker tours’, as well as a wide plethora of *reality-TV*-shows, foster a culture of gambling and speculation. The media are just one aspect of the wider speculative culture that has emerged since the 1970s.

The state has been a key agent abetting such a culture, not only by availing public sector moneys for speculative ends, but even more significantly by mobilizing one of the most, if not the most, significant disciplinary space in modernity, i.e., education, to foster and impart a speculative ethos and culture. In the speculative era the nation-state is transformed into an organ that stakes identity, history, economy, culture and citizens in the global casino. We see it in speculation in pension funds, state guarantees and/or subsidies to risky projects, in short, a gambling state. These developments reflect the hegemonic role of financial capitalism since the mid 1970s.

In this paper we focus on the consequences of economies and cultures of speculation in the field of education. Education is one of the arenas where the logics of speculation are being played out. It is argued that the major shifts in educational policy over the past decades in Sweden derive from what Ian Baucom aptly called ‘speculative epistemologies’.¹ The field of education is contemporaneous with the wider recasting of society, economy, politics and culture that is premised on the neo-liberal calculus of accumulation and value maximization. In this context, education could be understood in terms of *speculative pedagogy*. Speculative pedagogy stands for education that strives to both capitalize knowledge, schooling or learning and realize immediate returns from knowledge, schooling and learning. Speculative pedagogy is used here as an umbrella concept to denote profit driven education and the various educational philosophies, theories and practices in education that are based on notion of

¹ Baucom, Ian. *Specters of the Atlantic: Finance Capital, Slavery, and the Philosophy of History*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.

valorization, capitalization and immediate returns to education, such that the primary role of education is reduced to augmenting marketable value (personal, economic, aesthetic, national, etc.). Following the classical logic of *Game theory*, speculative pedagogy is about learning how to calculate risks, under highly uncertain conditions. Trusting other players is a liability. Each player bets for him/herself, and expects everybody else to do the same. The basic idea being that one can only be a winner at the expense of others.² Neo-liberal educational policies provide the necessary political and institutional environment where speculative pedagogies are enacted and can flourish.

Entrepreneurship, employability and lifelong learning form key aspects of speculative pedagogy. As disciplinary technologies in education, the task of speculative pedagogies is to (re)mould individuals into calculating, risk-taking and maximizing subjects – gamblers – or docile and risk-taking subjects that live and act in accordance to the rules of the game. In what follows, we rely on recent developments in Swedish educational policy, to discuss the rise of speculative regimes in education. A major task of speculative pedagogy is to foster people that are attuned to the demands of accumulation by speculation on a global scale. Changes in educational policy over the last two decades in Sweden have transformed education into an arena where *politics* and *pedagogies* of speculation come into play whose primary objective is to promote ways of being and thinking, foster values and ideals based on the speculative logics of financial capitalism.

However, these pedagogic interventions have been contested and have been facing a number of challenges. One of these challenges in this regard, discussed particularly lively in recent years, revolves around issues of ethno-cultural or national identity, core societal values and how these nourish or stifle the speculative ethos. The problematic of ‘multi-cultural society’ – and not the least the various ‘threats’ that certain groups of immigrants or sections of ‘multi-cultural society’ supposedly pose to the so-called democratic *core values* of Swedish society have been the focus of debate. In this debate, ‘immigrant youth’ – notably those living in ethnically segregated and poor areas – have been targeted as the problematic and threatening Others, against which specific and concerted actions need to be taken in order to transform Them into well-adapted, flexible and entrepreneurial citizens – i.e. speculative subjects. The

² Cf. Tesfahuney, Mekonnen, and Magnus Dahlstedt. ‘Fångad i spelet? Spekulationer om den bästa av världar.’ *Den bästa av världar? Beträktelser om en postpolitisk samtid*. Ed. Tesfahuney, Mekonnen, and Dahlstedt, Magnus. Stockholm: Tankekraft, 2008. 302-314.

abstract flexible, risk-taking and enterprising subject is not as gender, race and class neutral as the neo-liberal ideologues would have us believe. Rather, issues of national identity, class, ethnicity and gender are re-worked to justify the need for speculative pedagogy, enterprising ethos and cultures of innovation as to solve structural problems. One of the ways of ‘policing the crisis’,³ is by portraying the migrant Other as fundamentally different and devoid of ‘our democratic core-values’. In other words, speculative pedagogy recasts issues of ethnicity, gender and class in terms of lack of speculative skills and ethos. Structural problems of poverty, unemployment and segregation are thus presented as expressions of the absence of a speculative culture and ethos in the Other.

Regimes of Speculative Governmentality

The theoretical point of departure for this article is the theorization of governmentality and the governing of society developed originally by Michel Foucault and, more recently, by scholars such as Nikolas Rose, Mitchell Dean and Aihwa Ong.⁴ The concept of governmentality focuses on the ‘different mentalities of government’,⁵ i.e. the ways in which thoughts and ideas are linked to a wide range of procedures and techniques in the governing of society. Governmentality, then, is about analyzing the numerous ways in which our conduct is being *governed* (by governments, but also by ourselves and by others) as well as *made governable*.

Governing is comprised of a broad repertoire of technologies operating across the *entire* social field. In analyzing the ongoing governing of society, Foucault in his later work distinguished between ‘technologies of power’ and ‘technologies of the self’. According to Foucault, *technologies of power* ‘determine the conduct of individuals and submit them to certain ends or domination’, while *technologies of the self* ‘permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct, and ways of being, so as to transform themselves in order to

³ Hall, Stuart, et al. *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order*. London: Macmillan, 1978.

⁴ Foucault, Michel. ‘On governmentality.’ *The Foucault Effect*. Ed. Burchell, Graham, Gordon, Colin and Miller, Peter. Brighton: Harvester, 1991. 87-104; Rose, Nikolas. *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999; Dean, Mitchell. *Governing Societies*, Maidenhead: Open University Press, 2007; Ong, Aihwa. *Neoliberalism as Exception: Mutations in Citizenship and Sovereignty*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.

⁵ Dean, Mitchell. *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*. London: Sage, 1999, p. 16.

attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality'.⁶

Following the later work of Foucault, Nikolas Rose has argued that today we are living in an 'advanced liberal society', where technologies of the self have become more and more important in governing society. According to Rose, the formula for governing today's society 'does not seek to govern through "society", but through the regulated choices of individual citizens, now constructed as subjects of choices and aspirations to selfactualization and self-fulfilment'.⁷ By numerous technologies operating throughout society, individuals are made responsible for their lives – *responsibilized* – i.e. fostered into being motivated, willing and able to act as 'active citizens'.

The theorization of governmentality could be most useful in understanding the speculative contemporaries. The speculative ethos, culture and economy outlined at the beginning of this article, are rooted in particular conceptions of the world and ways of being in the world (*ontology*).⁸ The ideal-typical figure in this ontology is a docile or compliant and yet risk-taking, risk-managing and calculating individual.⁹ The 'conduct of conduct'¹⁰ to foster docile and yet risk-taking subjects is modeled on the entrepreneur, what Ahiwa Ong has called *entrepreneurial governmentality*.¹¹ According to Ong, the various forms of neo-liberal governmental rationalities introduced since the 1970s comprise of a wide repertoire of measures and technologies, knowledge and expert systems, which all in all, bind not only individuals and groups, but human worth as well as life itself to the abstract rationality of the market and the calculus of profit maximization. Moreover, these technologies are not necessarily bound to specific territorial units and include a range of actors – state, non-state, transnational, regional and local networks, as well as individuals, i.e., risk-taking and speculative subjects as argued in this article.

⁶ Foucault, Michel. 'Technologies of the Self.' *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*. Ed. Martin, Luther H., Gutman, Huck and Hutton, Patrick H. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988. 16-38, p. 18.

⁷ Rose, Nikolas. 'Governing "Advanced" Liberal Democracies.' *Foucault and Political Reason*. Ed. Barry, Andrew, Osborne, Thomas and Rose, Nikolas. London: UCL Press, 1996. 37-64, p. 41.

⁸ Baucom, 2005, p. 106.

⁹ Lemke, Thomas. 'Immunologi.' *Fronesis* 19-20 (2005): 68-83.

¹⁰ Foucault, 1991.

¹¹ Ong, 2006.

Entrepreneurship, competence and risk-taking are sanctioned and promoted as moral ideals – or even duties or obligations – for both individuals and society at large.¹² Inability to live up to the demands and ideals of entrepreneurialism are depoliticized and recast as moral and personal shortcomings. Governance consists of multiple interventions that organize, direct and manage groups/individuals and follows a speculative rationality where the rules of the game are never fully given or known in advance, but are subject to improvisation and change in accordance with the prevalent rules of the game. In effect, speculative regimes of governmentality imply lifelong management of ‘the self’ and the wider social context, whereby the individual is constantly engaged in (re)working his/her self, life styles, body, health and even soul, in order to ‘be able to optimize their choices, skills and competitive capacities under turbulent market conditions...’¹³ In short, to foster the entrepreneurial subject and enterprising self, such that ‘the enterprising self makes an enterprise of its life and attempts to maximize its human capital, stakes (charts) out its future and tries to mold itself to become what it desires’.¹⁴

In this article, we use entrepreneurialism as a short hand for the ontologies, knowledge systems, ideas, and ideals that nurture speculative ethos or cultures and economies.¹⁵ On the one hand, entrepreneurialism constitutes of starkly transcendental, an almost religious ardor or zeal, that casts the entrepreneur as a kind of savior or messiah, ‘a bearer of the light and quintessence of the good’, ‘a torchlight in the darkness of a monotonous and grinding bureaucracy’.¹⁶ On the other hand, entrepreneurialism is firmly tied to the inherent, immanent or performative logic of capitalism – reduces everything to the calculus of production, consumption and accumulation. Capitalist growth and expansion requires creativity and innovation as well as constant infusion of ideas, labor and resources that enable capital to incorporate ever larger and newer domains. Society and life reduced to nothing more than a series of economic transactions and flows as well ‘creative destruction’ bound to such flows. Thus, entrepreneurialism is at once transcendental and immanent.

¹² Burchell, Graham. ‘Liberal Government and Techniques of the Self.’ *Foucault and Political Reason*. Ed. Barry, Andrew, Osborne, Thomas and Rose, Nikolas. London: UCL Press, 1996. 19-36; Du Gay, Paul. *Consumption and Identity at Work*, London: Sage, 1996.

¹³ Ong, 2006, p. 6.

¹⁴ Rose, Nikolas. *Inventing Ourselves*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998, p. 154.

¹⁵ Harvey, David. *Spaces of Capital: Towards A Critical Geography*. New York: Routledge, 2001.

¹⁶ Styrrhe, Alexander. ‘Ideology and the Subjectification of the Entrepreneurial Self.’ *International Journal of Management Concepts and Philosophy* 1:2 (2005): 168-173, p. 170.

The logic of the market is a key part of the processes that divest citizenship from the spaces of the nation-state,¹⁷ i.e., its former territorial or sedentary metaphysics,¹⁸ such that rights and duties are remolded and firmly bound to a global, de-territorialized calculus of growth and the stern rationality of the capitalist market. According to Ong, ‘market driven institutions have in different ways restructured the elements of citizenship and pose a challenge to unified models of citizenship and the national or territorial basis for citizenship claims on the other hand’.¹⁹ Citizens are reduced to *homo economicus* and envisioned through a narrow economic lens – as taxpayers, customers or clients, and consumers. Instead, argues Ong, it is *flexible* or *graduated* citizenship models that are replacing the former unified and territorial conceptions – with first, second and third class citizens. Citizenship rights, duties and claims as well forms of inclusion/exclusion are allocated and structured *differentially*.²⁰ Inclusion and exclusion are based on differential valuations of individuals, groups and communities such that some are reckoned *more* worthy and deserving than others.²¹ Principles of inclusion and exclusion, valuation and allocation of entitlements and duties, rely increasingly on ideals and notions of worth as set out by the abstract rationality of the market and the calculus of value maximization. The entrepreneur is seen as the ideal typical (citizen) subject. Creativity, risk-taking and innovative drive are portrayed as key attributes or qualities of the enterprising self and ideal typical (citizen) subject.

‘Innovative Sweden’

The end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s saw a radical ideological shift in Sweden – one concurrent with and similar to the restructuring of societies, economies and politics that took place in other parts of the world.²² Perhaps the most important effect of the ideological shift has been that ideals and notions of the common, national good no longer *comprise* the self-evident base for politics proper. Rather, the political sphere came to be increasingly

¹⁷ Ong, 2006.

¹⁸ Malkki, Liisa H. *Purity and Exile*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997.

¹⁹ Ong, 2006, p. 14.

²⁰ Ong, Aihwa. *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999; Urry, John. *Sociology Beyond Societies: Mobilities for the Twenty-First Century*. London: Routledge, 2000; Choules, Kathryn. ‘Globally Privileged Citizenship.’ *Race, Ethnicity & Education* 9:3 (2006): 275-293.

²¹ Ong, 2006. In this regard, Bourdieu’s crucial findings of the workings of social and cultural capital in the reproduction of class relations within the educational system, as well as elsewhere, have long since been refined in order to suit the demands of the neo-liberal world order, cf. Bourdieu, Pierre, and Jean-Claude Passeron. *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. Beverly Hills: Sage; Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. London: Routledge & Keegan Paul.

²² Dahlstedt, Magnus. *Aktiveringens politik: Demokrati och medborgarskap för ett nytt millennium*, Malmö: Liber, 2009.

conceived as having to do with the technical administration or management of structural problems, social and economic conflicts or contradictions.²³

That political parties regardless of the ideologies they espouse have tended to gravitate towards the center and strive after the resolution of conflict through consensus – the differences in their political stance are not substantive but revolve around formalities in dealing with questions of how best to administer and/or find efficient ways of managing fundamental problems, exemplifies the extent of the break from conventional ways of conducting politics. Flexibility, responsibility, sound state budgets (sound state finances) and entrepreneurship appear to be the mottos for all political parties. The political is draped in the abstract and technical idiom of economics – efficiency, growth competitiveness, and freedom of choice.²⁴ Starkly ideological metaphors and values laden expressions are commonly used as if these were the most natural and neutral descriptions of the world. Thus, state outlays are labeled *drains*, *taxes burdens*, and *welfare dependence*.²⁵ Rights are subordinated to duties, coercive consent becomes the norm, structural problems and social issues are individualized and recast as a persons *own* responsibility and thereby relegated to an a-political sphere of personal and moral failure.

We can relate these developments to the ongoing ‘universal modeling of human action in terms of value maximization’,²⁶ which takes place not only in production and consumption, but in almost all sectors of society – from the state apparatus to culture, to the quotidian, indeed life itself. The paradox however is that the deeper the inroads of value maximization into different sectors of society, the less these are perceived as profoundly *political* acts.

The Social Democratic party launched its strategy of ‘Innovative Sweden’ in the year 2004, in order to meet the challenges Sweden faced in the new millennium. The problems (hinders) and suggested solutions presented in the final report of the Committee are in many ways epitomize the post-political spirit and epoch prevailing in Sweden at the turn of the millennium. Leif Pagrotsky, the Minister of Industry, and Thomas Östros, Minister of

²³ Zizek, Slavoj. *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology*. New York: Verso, 1999; Lindqvist, Mats. *Is i magen: Om ekonomins kolonisering av vardagen*. Stockholm: Natur och Kultur, 2001.

²⁴ Boréus, Kristina. *Högervåg: Nyliberalismen och kampen om språket i offentlig debatt 1969-1989*. Stockholm: Tiden, 1994; Hugemark, Agneta. *Den fängslande marknaden: Ekonomiska experter om välfärdsstaten*. Lund: Arkiv, 1994.

²⁵ Boréus, 1994.

²⁶ Zizek 1999, p. 241.

Education and Science, who lead the working group, described the objective in these words: ‘Our vision is that Sweden shall be Europe’s most competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based economy, and thereby one of the world’s most attractive nations to invest in for both small and large-scale knowledge based enterprises’.²⁷ The strategy is explicitly designed along the lines of the objectives set-up by the European Union, i.e. the so-called Lisbon Declaration and its aim to turn Europe into ‘the world’s most competitive and dynamic knowledge economy’ within a period of ten years.²⁸ The report by Pagrotsky and Östros paints a picture of Sweden as a country that will face a difficult and uncertain yet hopeful future in a globalized world.

Few countries have the requisite good conditions to draw benefit from the processes of internationalization and growing knowledge economy currently underway as Sweden. Our tradition of openness and wide knowledge base provides us with a head start compared to many other countries. Our starting point in relation to the future is auspicious. We cannot, however, be smug and trust that the situation will work out well on its own accord even in the future. Others are striving to close the gap and even surpass us.²⁹

The two ministers portray Sweden as a country that is under challenge from strong global forces, ‘internationalization’ and ‘expanding knowledge economy’. Although Sweden has excellent capacities to face the said challenges, in the increasingly sharp edged competitive situation prevailing in the global knowledge economy, one needs to be vigilant and prepared to avoid being surpassed by other competitors. The major challenge faced by Sweden and other countries in this regard has to do with strengthening Sweden’s competitive edge. Surmounting these challenges hinges on the innovative capacity of the country and in the final analysis this rest on ‘innovative persons’.

Industrial and business projects originate, develop and flourish due to innovative and self-confident individuals who trust their own capacity as well as that of others’ to grow or develop. It is becoming increasingly imperative in the global knowledge society, therefore, to safeguard the inventive spirit and talents of people in order to facilitate the competitive capacities of states and companies.³⁰

²⁷ Ds 2004: 36. *Innovativa Sverige: En strategi för tillväxt genom förnyelse*. The Government Offices, The Ministry of Economy/The Ministry of Education, 2004, p. 1.

²⁸ Commission of the European Communities. *Making a European Area of Life-long Learning a Reality*, Brussels: Commission of the European Communities, 2001, p. 1.

²⁹ Ds 2004: 36, p. 1.

³⁰ Ds 2004: 36, p. 38.

The major themes broached in the strategy for ‘innovative Sweden’ preoccupy the Council on Globalization – another expert committee set-up by the ‘Alliance for Sweden’, the right-wing government that came to power in the 2006 election (the Alliance hereafter). The chairman of the Council on Globalization is the former leader of the Liberal Party and Minister of Higher Education and Science Lars Leijonborg. In its final report, the council outlines the challenges facing Sweden, and bemoaned that ‘Sweden has very few entrepreneurs and small-scale industrialists that venture to invest in order to grow. One needs entrepreneurs to build business enterprises’.³¹

In both strategies, education is seen as the key component that would enable Sweden to assert itself in the global economy vis-à-vis other countries. In addition to a well-educated population which is seen as vital in upholding Sweden’s competitive edge, Swedish ‘research and education ought to hold world class standard if the country is to assert itself in the global knowledge economy’.³² Education thus becomes the arena in the making of an enterprising nation peopled by enterprising subjects. Educational policies and priorities, curricula and pedagogy are, thus, increasingly subordinated to the logic and demands of the market and economic growth. Increasingly, education is geared to the inculcation of innovative skills, enhancing the competitive skills, advantages, and potentials of Sweden with view to maintaining its competitive edge in the global knowledge economy. Like other sectors of society, education is increasingly perceived primarily as a marketable commodity. The merits of education are no longer valued in terms of their capacity to foster cultured and well-informed subjects as well as imparting knowledge as an end in itself end, i.e. traditional Humboldtian ideals. Rather the role and significance of education, as well as its worth are more and more measured in terms of its capacity to contribute to economic growth, generating marketable values and products, as well as its capacity to enhance the image of Sweden as a strong knowledge economy and nation. The Council points out that education ought to be one of the key elements in the branding of Sweden, i.e., packaging and selling of Sweden as a strong knowledge economy and nation. Thus,

Sweden must be The Knowledge Nation that markets itself as the land of the
Nobel Prize and a country strongly commitment to research of world class

³¹ Ds 2009: 21. *Bortom krisen: Om ett framgångsrikt Sverige i den globala ekonomin*. Final report by the Commission on Globalization, 2009, p. 16.

³² Ds 2004: 36, p. 16.

level: The Knowledge Nation, that also has the capacity of transmute scientific results to production, ‘The Land of Innovation’.³³

The Council’s marketing strategy implies that Sweden ought to be designed and branded, packaged and sold as an imagined community, a country of innovation and knowledge made up of subjects driven by the entrepreneurial spirit. Sweden itself reduced to a commodity, with the right kinds of images that evoke positive or viable associations as a country of quality products and worth investing in, and offered for sale as such in the global market place. Underscoring that the ‘images of Sweden that the world has are an significant instrument of competition’, the Council maintains that a lot of work remains to be done in this regard. ‘The problem is that the large majority of the people of the world do not even have the faintest idea or picture of Sweden’.³⁴ What is required according to the Council is a series of long-term and sustained drives to create and establish an auspicious image of Sweden around the world. It is the same line of argument that permeates the previous Social Democratic government’s report *Innovative Sweden* as well. Which image of Sweden is it then that both reports deem necessary to create or appropriate to have? The final report ‘Innovative Sweden’ is of the opinion that in the global competitive situation that prevails today it is strategically vital to evoke the image of ‘innovative Sweden’. Thus:

To develop and boost [the image of] Innovative Sweden is a priority task as part of the collective endeavors to campaign for Sweden, by promoting export, investment, tourism and culture. The promotion of Sweden should focus on making Sweden visible, and the values that the country stands for and the opportunities it offers.³⁵

The two strategies are typically post-political. Both are mainly concerned with how best to deal with or manage the challenges that Sweden supposedly faces in the era of globalization. Relevant issues of the political, cultural and social implications of the measures outlined by the respective strategies would have, are not raised. Nor are questions of who benefits (winners) and who does not (losers) addressed. Alternatives are not entertained. Rather it is as if the fate of Sweden is firmly tied on how best it partakes in the global regimen of value maximization – speculation, growth, competition and innovation. Educational policies and priorities in education are subordinated to market demands of economic growth, innovation

³³ Ds 2009: 21, p. 18.

³⁴ Ds 2009: 21, p. 93.

³⁵ Ds 2004: 36, p. 24.

and fostering risk-taking and entrepreneurial subjects,³⁶ i.e., education is as one of the key spaces where speculative rationality and governmentality are enacted and cultivated. The earlier role of education – to foster an imagined community and instill sentiments of shared myths, history, culture and national identity, is reworked in order to suit and augment new (*risk-taking and risk-managing*) subjectivities and ways of being in and relating to the world. Educational policies and pedagogies to serve a regime of speculative governmentality compliant with prevailing global speculative ethos and subjectivity that are more suited to the speculative ethos of lifelong education, continuous training and skill, responsabilization of self, entrepreneurialism and nurturing an innovative spirit, etc. Speculative governmentality enables (de)territorialized forms of differential valuation of individuals, groups and mechanisms of selective inclusion/exclusion.

A Life of Incessant Schooling and Training

As regards citizens, the main concern of the ‘innovative Sweden’ strategy revolves around the issues of cultivating and encouraging ‘entrepreneurial individuals’.

It is crucial for Sweden’s long-term development that both women and men feel that setting-up and running enterprises and business ventures is upbeat and natural, and that we change the mind-set to [business] failure. Trying anew and learn from mistakes ought, more than ever, to be seen as a sign of strong will and diligence, as well as desire to take risks. An important part of the challenge to establish better conditions for enterprises, business undertakings, and innovations is to aid in creating positive attitudes to setting-up and running businesses.³⁷

Notably, it is in the context of the rhetoric of (the numerous and big) challenges facing Sweden in the new millennium that ideas of ‘lifelong learning’ materialized and became topical. Since then, the concept of ‘lifelong learning’ became widely known in the field of education policy, in Sweden as well as in other countries.³⁸ The Council on Globalization utilizes precisely this concept to argue that what a ‘knowledge society’ requires is not simply new knowledge or learning, but, above all, lifelong education and a new type of *learning subject*.

³⁶ Peters, Michael. “Education, Enterprise Culture and the Entrepreneurial Self: A Foucauldian Perspective.” *Journal of Educational Enquiry* 2:2 (2001): 58-71.

³⁷ Ds 2004: 36, p. 38.

³⁸ Fejes, Andreas, and Katherine Nicoll, eds. *Foucault and Lifelong Learning: Governing the Subject*. London: Routledge, 2008.

In a knowledge society, the educational needs of individuals are not simply confined to childhood and adolescence. On the contrary, as modern [sic!] human beings we need continuous and lifelong learning. A nation's capacity to renovate to a large extent depends on the opportunities available to adults to acquire supplementary knowledge.³⁹

The same philosophy underlies The Swedish Board of Education. Thus, learning is not only a lifelong process, but also life-extensive as well. Educational policy, thus, ought to stimulate learning in all its forms and in all social fields. Society is best understood as a 'learning society'.⁴⁰ On prima facie grounds and in as much as individuals learn or experience new things, grapple with new challenges and try to solve various problems in their everyday lives, the issue of lifelong learning *per se* is not a contentious issue. Learning is an incessant process and takes place everywhere. However, what the Council is advocating is not lifelong learning in general, but rather a specific type of learning, viz., the kind that has marketable value or potential. By way of the notion of lifelong learning, the focus and role of the school as an educational institution is shifted to learning itself. In a sense, the lifelong learning perspective on education and educational policy implies that the whole of society, or if one so wishes life itself, becomes but an extension of formal education or schooling, a forum for valorization through continuous instruction.⁴¹

The upshot of lifelong learning is that schools are no longer organs that impart basic (primary) education, general knowledge and skills. Instead, teaching or learning ought to devote more time and effort on imparting skills and training students to learn, that is, provide students with methods that enable students seek and obtain, select and evaluate information independently and according to their individual capacity. The tempo of life and advances in present day society entail that the rules of the game are in constant change, which stipulates that individuals keep abreast the times and learn how to be in the game, lifelong learning becomes a necessity and duty, or so the argument goes. Hence, lifelong learning is a crucial link in the endeavor to create a more 'innovative Sweden'.

The educational system must live up to the needs of continuously upgrading knowledge and skills appropriate to a work-life undergoing rapid change. In

³⁹ Ds 2009: 21, p. 40.

⁴⁰ The Swedish Board of Education. *Det livslånga och livsvida lärandet*. Stockholm: The Swedish Board of Education, 2001.

⁴¹ Hultqvist, Kenneth, and Kenneth Petersson. 'Iscensättningen av samhället som skola: Konstruktionen av nya nordiska människotyper i det sena 1900-talet.' *Pedagogik*. Ed. Bjerg, Jens. Malmö: Liber, 2000. 496-527.

addition to formal education, lifelong learning has great bearing on society's innovative potential. Technological progress and rapid changes in the organization of work make it less likely that education in early life would suffice throughout working-life.⁴²

The primary task of educational policy is to organize learning so that it is customized to and matches the needs *as well as* capacities of individuals, and thereby ensure 'employability'. In that sense, the citizen is envisaged as 'human capital', a subject that capitalizes and lives off the interest of its own capital and as a raw material subject to continuous refinement and processing. The concept of lifelong learning urges individuals to secure their 'enterprise' and 'employability' on their own, incessantly, through various forms of constant education and (re)training.

The *entrepreneur* as the model for the ideal citizen-subject – an active, responsible subject and enterprising individual – is what current educational policy aims to foster.⁴³ This subject is constantly engaged with upgrading his/her qualifications and acquiring skills in order to make considered and independent choices. In the words of Rose, the 'new citizen is required to engage in ceaseless work of training and retraining, skilling and re-skilling, enhancement of credentials and preparations for a life of incessant job-seeking: life is to become a continuous economic capitalization of self'.⁴⁴ Lifelong learning is *de facto* proscribed, as the only avenue open for one and all – *to learn or not to learn* – thus, to all intents and purposes is an injunction or compulsion rather than a choice. The formulation by The Swedish Board of Education explicitly underscores this: 'compulsory education ought perhaps to be replaced by mandatory learning'.⁴⁵ In sum, speculative pedagogies and lifelong cultivation of entrepreneurial skills are not the 'free choices' that these are oft made out to be in neo-liberal philosophies and strategies of education. Rather these are nothing less than injunctions to take risks, speculate, innovate, be entrepreneurial, and as such symptomatic of the contemporary (global) existential condition.

Fostering Entrepreneurial Subjects

⁴² Ds 2004: 36, p. 18.

⁴³ Simons, Maarten. 'Learning as Investment: Notes on Governmentality and Biopolitics.' *The Learning Society from the Perspective of Governmentality*. Ed. Masschelein, Jan, et al. Malden: Blackwell, 2007. 109-126.

⁴⁴ Rose, 1999, p. 161.

⁴⁵ The Swedish Board of Education, 2001, p. 25.

Of late, the notion of ‘entrepreneurial learning’ has gained ground in Swedish and international discourses of education and policy debates. In this regard, the key roles of junior and upper secondary school levels as arena for entrepreneurship and in fostering entrepreneurial subjects have been the focus of debate. Increasingly, in both the junior and upper secondary school levels neo-liberal ideas have gained the upper hand as manifested, among other things, in the burgeoning management doctrines of efficiency, innovation and entrepreneurialism as well as notions of ‘the self-governing school’, that aim to mold classroom instruction and children’s behavior.⁴⁶ Since the early 1990s, the idea of entrepreneurship has received increasing attention in educational policy documents and teaching in Sweden, as well as in other countries.⁴⁷

To achieve long-term results interest for, as well inquisitiveness and yearning for discovery ought to be kindled already in early school ages. So as to raise the entrepreneurial knowledge of youth and contribute to positive attitudes, entrepreneurship must take a self-evident place in teaching and collaboration between schooling and business ought to expand. Upper secondary education should prepare [students] both for jobs and own business activity. Efforts ought to be made to in order to facilitate the creativity and entrepreneurial skills of the young. The measures shall in due course lead to an increase in new enterprises as well as growth in existing companies.⁴⁸

Similar, although more explicit, claims have been made by the right-wing government as well. Thus, the Alliance ‘considers that entrepreneurship should be the leading theme or major idea in the educational system as a whole. [...] Education at the compulsory level should stimulate entrepreneurship. The foundation for developing an entrepreneurial stance can be laid down early on by, for instance, stimulating the curiosity, creativity, self-confidence and ability to make decisions of girls and boys, and in other ways uplift the skills that are decisive for entrepreneurship’.⁴⁹ The same guideline is valid at the comprehensive secondary school level as well. Interestingly enough, such speculative pedagogy are in actual fact paradigmatic instances of the very ethos of venture, risk-taking and speculation that it is intended to bolster in the first place. Put differently, educational policy becomes a speculative exercise where

⁴⁶ Peters, 2001.

⁴⁷ See for instance, Svedberg, Gudrun. *Entreprenörskapets avtryck i klassrummets praxis: Om villkor och lärande i gymnasieskolans entreprenörskapsprojekt*. Department for Swedish and Social Science, Umeå University, 2007; Dahlstedt, Magnus, and Fredrik Hertzberg. *Skola i samverkan: Utbildningspolitik, segregation och drömmen om den öppna skolan*. Malmö: Gleerups, 2011, in press.

⁴⁸ Ds 2004: 36, p. 40.

⁴⁹ The Government Offices. *Strategi för entreprenörskap inom utbildningsområdet*. Stockholm: The Government Offices, 2009, p. 12.

instant returns and gain dictate the rules of the game. Learning becomes an incessant game of speculation.

The rhetoric of entrepreneurialism and educational discourses on fostering entrepreneurial subjects establish distinctions between normal/desirable versus deviant/undesirable subjects.⁵⁰ Thus, the entrepreneur is at heart a highly inventive, trustworthy and responsible subjects. The entrepreneur is on the look out for opportunities, spots prospects where others see obstacles, problems and limitations. Hence, risk-taking and audacity are perceived as assets than liabilities and requisite traits for success and growth. Deliberation and scruples get in the way of the speculative and venture ethos, leading to stagnation. As a seeking subject, the entrepreneur is thus an a-territorial subject, akin to a nomad forever pursuing green pastures driven by the venture spirit. A universal, ideal genderless and classless subject unmarked by ethnic or national belongingness – a cosmopolitan subjectivity that can best be described as ‘wherever the entrepreneur lays his/her hat is his/her home’. Naturally, although realizing the ideal or dream of becoming successful entrepreneurs is a privilege enjoyed by few, still we all bear the seeds of the entrepreneur spirit in us. In sum, entrepreneurial subjectivity and rationality are universal, alas only few manage to attain it.

‘Marginal Sweden’

The description of the challenges that Sweden faces in an increasingly ‘globalized knowledge economy’ and the solutions being proposed to meet the challenges resonate in their rudiments in the debates on ‘multi-ethnic Sweden’ that flourished around the turn of the millennium. The notion of entrepreneurship as a means of reinforcing Sweden’s competitive potential in the global market has left its mark on integration policy debates especially after the change in government in 2006. In the final report by the Council on Globalization, ‘new Swedes’ are described as ‘a valuable supplement to the Swedish economy’. According to the Council, it is important to count on that many of those who migrated to Sweden are entrepreneurs. ‘In many immigrant groups the proportion of entrepreneurs is higher than that of native Swedes’. This holds not only for the present. In actual fact, immigrant entrepreneurship has over a long period of time contributed to the development of the Swedish economy. The Council states that there are several reasons for the well-developed enterprise culture among immigrants.

⁵⁰ Peters, 2001; Kelley, Peter. ‘The Entrepreneurial Self and “Youth At-Risk”: Exploring the Horizons of Identity in the Twenty-First Century.’ *Journal of Youth Studies* 9:1 (2006): 17-32.

Immigrants may have acquired special skills that are not to found in Sweden yet. Immigrants may have international contacts nets which, among others things, are valuable in international business. People that abscond from their home country tend on average to be more resourceful and risk-taking than those who stay put throughout their life in their country of birth.⁵¹

We note in passing that it is the willingness to take risks and cut loose that is at focus and not the dire state of affairs that force people to leave in the first place. The political is trivialized and reworked as a trait of the entrepreneurial drive. The basic thrust or tone of the Council's depiction of immigration is highly positive. At the same time, the Council's account bears strong hints of pervasive threats, specifically the dangers associated with widespread and growing 'marginality' all over the country, especially in so-called 'zones of marginality' (*utanförskapsområden*) with high concentration of immigrants. These areas appear as the antitheses of the dynamic and innovative settings and milieus that constitute the ideal at present.⁵² The Council on Globalization is sharply critical of integration policies driven by the previous Social Democratic government. As per the Council, prior integration policy – like the Swedish model in its entirety – and its spirit of benevolence and goodwill has contributed to transforming immigrants from active, enterprising and self-reliant subjects to passive and dependent objects of welfare. Similarly, one discerns the same kind of logic in the distinctions between normal/desirable versus passive/undesirable subjects that underlies the rhetoric of entrepreneurship and enterprising individuals. Moreover, the Council asserts that it is precisely the integration policies since the 1970s have 'created sizeable clusters of marginality'.⁵³

Marginality is conceived not simply in plain economic terms (unemployment and poverty), but in ornate socio-cultural and emotional terms – powerlessness, despondency and misgivings towards others *and* oneself – as well. According to this construal, marginality implies not only 'a tangible loss for the Swedish economy in the form of lower productivity and mounting welfare dependence' but also 'risks in the form of rising social tensions'. The message the Council on Globalization is keen on conveying is obvious: Swedish integration policy has to change track, from a top-down rule that dampens to a bottom-up system that

⁵¹ Ds 2009: 21, p. 89.

⁵² Dahlstedt, 2009.

⁵³ Ds 2009: 21, p. 89.

discharges pursuit, creativity and skills of immigrants. ‘Sweden needs an integration policy that liberates the development potential that the new Swedes represent’.⁵⁴

The argument resonates in the Moderate Party, the largest political party in the right-wing coalition (*Alliansen*), as well. Enthused by Tony Blair and his triumphant *makeover* of Labour to *New Labour* afore the 2006 Swedish ballot, Fredrik Reinfeldt, leader of the Moderate Party, revamped the party from the Moderate Party to the *new Moderates* or ‘the New Worker’s Party’ (in contrast to the party of social welfare – the Social Democrats), with the motto ‘restore the worth of toil (work)’. In the manner of the Council on Globalization, ‘the new workers party’ portrays immigrants positively as a valuable ingredient of Swedish society. While the party finds it heartening that ‘many would like to immigrate to Sweden, since it shows that Sweden is an attractive country to live and work’. The standpoint of the new Moderates is that those who come to Sweden have the same opportunities and enjoy the same rights and freedoms as well. Everyone, irrespective of background, ought to be treated equally. All people have the same freedoms, rights and duties. In turn, they are expected to live up to the demand of being responsible for themselves and others.⁵⁵ However, for many immigrants Swedish benevolence has ‘become a curse that that stifles self-initiative’.⁵⁶ According to the new Moderates, the failure of Swedish integration policy makes it evident that all people *are not equal*. Once again, a clear distinction is made between active/desirable and passive/welfare dependent/problematic subjects or citizens.

The argument constructs ‘Swedes’ and ‘immigrants’ in terms of dichotomous categories (decency and curse, resourcefulness/inventiveness and stifled) and is reminiscent of the scheme employed by the Council on Globalization: the caring welfare State in itself is a problem. It is time to ‘liberate’ immigrants from welfare dependency, spur on their initiative and unfetter their potential. For the coalition parties (*Alliansen*) and the new Moderates, marginality is not a fringe phenomenon in Swedish society, located in the outskirts of large cities. Rather, marginality allegedly casts its dark shadows on Swedish society in its *entirety*. The depiction of marginality as a threat, is reminiscent of another menace that has set the tome for the global geopolitical climate and discourse of security, the enemy and risk in the

⁵⁴ *ibid.*

⁵⁵ De nya moderaterna. *En integrationspolitik för arbete och delaktighet*, partistyrelsens proposition till partistämman 2009, 2009, p. 3.

⁵⁶ De nya moderaterna, 2009, p. 11.

21st century, namely ‘terrorism’.⁵⁷ In both cases, the threats to democracy not only lie *out there* but also *here* – nestled in our midst as well. Although the alleged threats cannot be placed with exactitude, as many time before, these are said to hail just from the outskirts of large cities. In the public images and debates on risks and threats, the outskirts are depicted as nurseries for ‘cultures of violence’, ‘terrorism’ and other types of un-democratic currents of thought seem to present a vital threat to the basic set of values and the very fabric of Swedish society and democracy.⁵⁸ Due to marginality, there is a looming risk that this urban mentality will spread to other urban areas or zones as well. In order to protect and preserve the existing order, a series of powerful, sustained, and extraordinary interventions need to be made. On several counts, the portrayals of residents in the ‘marginal zones’ give the lie to the rhetoric of the ideal-typical entrepreneur. The typical ‘marginal zone’ resident is portrayed as anything but the value maximizing, responsible and risk-taking individual entrepreneur, but rather a passive, tradition and religion bound creature. One can draw parallels to another and earlier discourse, namely that of the *culture of poverty* from the 1960s and 1970s.

Although the most urgent problem in ‘neighbourhoods of marginality’ is the high level of unemployment, once it has taken shape, the specific lifestyle, or morality, that is generated by these socio-economic conditions has a kind of independent dynamic of its own. In this description, the ‘culture of marginality’ is thus divorced from the wider political, social and material context. In sum, it is ‘immigrants’ themselves that are responsible for their own marginalization. The upshot being that in relation to ‘zones of marginality’ and the younger generation residents in segregated areas in particular, what is being called for is a battery of measures and interventions that are – in Foucauldian terminology – simultaneously based on ‘technologies of power’ and ‘technologies of the self’.⁵⁹ The measures tabled to solve the problems facing both ‘marginal zones’ and other urban areas revolve around activation, responsibilitization and fostering a culture of enterprise. Plans by the Allians government to introduce ‘entrepreneurship’ as a school subject in its own right, especially in ‘marginal zones’ have to be set in this context. The paradox in this regard, is that while immigrants *are*

⁵⁷ Tesfahuney, Mekonnen, and Magnus Dahlstedt. ‘Tärningen är kastad! Entreprenören, kasinosamhället och post-politikens moral.’ *Den bästa av världar? Beträktelser om en postpolitisk samtid*. Ed. Tesfahuney, Mekonnen, and Dahlstedt, Magnus. Stockholm: Tankekraft, 2008. 31-73.

⁵⁸ For a more extreme account in this genre, see the lackadaisical report by Ranstorp, Magnus, and Josefine dos Santos. *Hot mot demokrati och värdegrund – en lägesbild från Malmö*. Centrum för Assymetriska Hot och TerrorismStudier, Försvarshögskolan, Stockholm, 2009. For a more nuanced discussion that draws out the lineages of neo-liberalism and terrorism and how these impacts on issues of education, see for instance Giroux, Henry A. *Against the Terror of Neoliberalism: Politics Beyond the Age of Greed*. Boulder: Paradigm, 2008.

⁵⁹ Foucault, 1988.

construed as intrinsically entrepreneurial, at the same time they must be stimulated via special measures and incentives to be enterprising individuals. Apparently, it is the felt need to *construct* immigrants as inherently entrepreneurial rather than their *de facto* entrepreneurialism that is the motive behind policy recommendations of responsabilization and activation. Secondly, one can discern latent colonial discourse and images of indolent and passive Others that always already need training, supervision and assistance from the ‘white’ man/master to earn their keep.⁶⁰

The new Moderates underscore this by suggesting measures that promote ‘immigrants’ entrepreneurship’. Taken together, the policies are intended to make starting businesses easier and at low-costs, which the party holds will benefit all in the long run – both natives and expatriates. One must, through various measures, make it ‘natural for immigrants to start business’ – an oxymoron since what the new Moderates are saying is naturalize what presumably is natural to immigrants!

However, for the newcomer, the possibilities to start business must be an even more natural way to earn [his/her] own living. Thus, for those who have received Swedish residence permits must the introduction [to Sweden] focus at measures that boost entrepreneurship.⁶¹

The critical issue that has repeatedly been raised in the context of integration policy debate in Sweden over the past decade is how to get the suburban population to transform its supposed morality of impotence, dependence and passivity into the diligence, confidence, employability and enterprise of the surrounding society – in short to become *empowered*. Everything hangs on the desire and ambition of the suburban residents *themselves*. Marginality can only be resolved from the inside. Suburban residents may live under difficult conditions, finding themselves in a situation of profound (structural) marginality, and may suffer as a result of a lack of knowledge of the Swedish language or of Swedish society, but the ‘solution’ to the serious problems associated with such marginality is nonetheless to be found within those who are often categorised as constituting the ‘problem’. Even the marginalized can take control over their own lives and find their way into the community – if only they are given the opportunity. Based on this type of argument, a large number of activating measures or efforts (intended to motivate, provide opportunities, remove obstacles) are also directed specifically

⁶⁰ Said, Edward, W. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1994.

⁶¹ De nya moderaterna, 2009, p. 12.

at multi-ethnic suburbs. These interventions create both *subjects* who are willing and able to assume their responsibilities as citizens and *arenas* where it is possible to assume this responsibility.⁶²

The metamorphosis from *problem* to *resource*, *consuming* to *nourishing*, *passive* to *active*, *unqualified* to *employable* is reciprocal. The argument rests on images of We and Them, such that We are constructed as host and Them as guests – We are the ones inviting Them.⁶³ In exchange for being offered initiatives, advantages and opportunities, the inhabitants of the marginal areas are expected to prove their worth, do something in return.⁶⁴ The relationship is not only reciprocal – it is also hierarchical. Those who are offered the opportunity to participate and be included in the wider community are at the same time subjected to a large number of most often tacit demands that can take different forms. These demands target in particular residents classified as ‘immigrants’, who in a variety of different situations are required to ‘prove’ their willingness to work as well as their commitment and loyalty towards Swedish society. Indeed, this is a differential, moral and racialized demand regimen that makes it mandatory for immigrants only to prove their willingness to earn their keep.

The emphasis on requirements of entry resonates in several of the suggestions discussed of late in Swedish integrations policy. One highly debated suggestion – launched in various ways by the Social Democrats, the Liberal Party and the Christian Democrats – is the setting up of a special contract to coach or instruct the ‘new Swedes’ into the Swedish national community. The new Moderates have also toyed with the ‘contract’ scheme for newcomers and propose that the system needs to spell out the specific contractual obligations, both in terms of the rights of and demands on newcomers. It underlines that ‘breaking the contractual agreement must have tangible consequences’. Another aspect of the contractual scheme proposed by the new Moderates deals with ‘the rights and duties that apply in Sweden in general and this aspect should not be tied to remuneration but rather aims at clarifying the rules of the game that are applicable to all of us in Sweden. [...] It is about the basic human rights, Swedish law and the democratic values that form the foundation of our society.’⁶⁵

⁶² Rose, 1999.

⁶³ Cf. Said, 1994.

⁶⁴ Dahlstedt, Magnus, and Fredrik Hertzberg. ‘Democracy the Swedish Way? The Exclusion of “Immigrants” in Swedish Politics.’ *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30:2 (2007): 173-201.

⁶⁵ De nya moderaterna, 2009, p. 11.

The requirements for being allowed into the community are ‘neutral’ in the sense that they are not explicitly marked in terms of race or ethnicity – flexibility, responsibility, employability, democratic values, human rights, gender equality, and enterprise. In particular, the economic value generated by immigrants and their contribution to growth and strengthening the competitive potential of Sweden is deemed valuable. Once again the argument resonates with the maxim of differential valuation of individuals and groups, based on the calculus of marketable worth, value maximization and the narrow calculus of economic gain. Not all enjoy the same rights and obligations. Neither is the rhetoric of equality and rights uniformly applicable to all irrespective of background. What we observe instead is graduated forms of inclusion and exclusion.

Those possessing the right ‘values’ are allowed in; the rest are barred. ‘Those who refuse to become responsible... have also refused the offer to become members of our moral community. Hence, for them, harsh measures are entirely appropriate. Three strikes and you are out; citizenship becomes conditional upon conduct’.⁶⁶ Theoretically, any type of exclusionary measure is possible; the limits are only those set by the imagination. These measures may involve significantly lower benefit levels or the introduction of language tests as a requirement for ‘immigrants’ to become Swedish citizens. The unemployed may be forced to relocate in order to find jobs. They may be forced to apply for a certain number of jobs, or to look for work for a specified number of hours every day.⁶⁷ All those who fail to live up to the ideals of entrepreneurialism are required to continuously work on themselves and subject themselves to the demands of speculative pedagogy – learn to become well-adapted, flexible and entrepreneurial citizens – i.e. speculative subjects.

In conclusion

In conclusion: What we are witnessing today is that different policies and measures are being streamlined to suit the precepts of value maximization and the logic of market rationality. Virtually all sectors of society – from the political, cultural, social and economic to ways of being, life styles and individual choices – appears to be reduced and subordinated to the speculative logic of financial capitalism. As such, issues of education, integration, environment and community – indeed life itself – are only so many stakes in the global

⁶⁶ Rose, Nikolas. ‘Government and Control.’ *British Journal of Criminology* 40 (2000): 321-339, p. 335.

⁶⁷ In this regard, one could argue that the long series of measures that target non-European immigrants set in place in Denmark is an apt pointer of what the future may have in store for Sweden as well.

speculative gamble. The state is one of the principal actors and major organs actively advancing the speculative ethos, as well as major player in the speculative game. In sum, in the era of global financial capitalism the state transmutes into the speculative (gambling) state. The gambling state upholds or safeguards the interest of financial capital – as the spree to save financial institutes in the wake of the recent global financial crisis shows.

Discourses of entrepreneurialism, innovation and lifelong learning in education are central in establishing a regime of ‘flexible normalism’,⁶⁸ where individuals and groups are trained to be flexible, risk-taking and willing to adapt to the ever-changing rules of the game of the speculative economy and society. These rules follow the calculus of immediate reward, satisfaction, gain and its horizon of the short-run. There are no real choices, only illusions of ‘freedom of choice’, or rather only injunctions to choose. As such, discourses of entrepreneurialism, innovation and lifelong learning are central not only to understand current neo-liberal governmental rationalities, but also to grasp the re-workings of the educational sector and their implications for issues of inclusion/exclusion, class, gender and ethnicity. Innovation, flexibility, lifelong incessant schooling and training, entrepreneurial learning, growth, competition and value maximization, form the templates for governing citizens and society. The technologies of government apposite to the era and ethos of speculation are speculative in nature and are better understood as speculative governmentality, driven not least by a gambling state, that both takes and encourages risk, stakes its resources, people and enacts policies with uncertain outcomes, but long-term consequences.

One of the consequences of making individuals ever more responsible for their own lives is that those who for some reason do not manage to hold their own in the competitive game in principle only have themselves to blame. An education policy that is not part of a long-term welfare strategy to counteract hierarchies and inequalities in society ultimately runs the risk of aggravating rather than alleviating already existing divisions in society. Individuals and groups with the proper resources contacts, networks and other resources, as well as privileged access to and knowledge of the rules of the game, are now provided with more opportunities and new arenas in which they can safeguard their privileges and interests; and conversely.⁶⁹ As every game, the game of speculative pedagogy has both winners and losers. The winners

⁶⁸ Deleuze, Gilles. *Negotiations*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1995.

⁶⁹ cf. Broady, Donald. ‘Skolan under 2000-talet.’ SOU 2000:39. *Välfärd och skola: Antologi från Kommittén Välfärdsbokslut*.

are the ones who are willing and capable of capitalizing (speculating) on the self. The losers have themselves to blame and are reminded to try to improve their appearance, social competence, employability, and other personal qualities, in order to partake in the speculative game. What is being played out in and through educational policy today is a spatial polarization along ethnic, class and gender lines. When it comes to educational performance, we observe the effects of the radical shift in educational policy in, among other things, the higher scores or grades for pupils attending reputable private and public schools (often in the inner city), compared to the higher drop-out rates for and poor grades for pupils attending schools in ‘marginal areas’ throughout the country.⁷⁰ In a situation where pupils in different respects are expected to take greater responsibility for their own learning, greater responsibility for education is put on the family. The focus on the individual/family shifts the responsibilities for injustices in the educational system as well as society at large, from the structural to the familial/individual.⁷¹ What is taking place, in other words, is the re-alignment of the Swedish educational sector along the trajectories followed by many other nations in the West.

The previous implies that a key challenge facing critical education research and activism, broadly understood, is no less than the *re-politicization* of issues of education and schooling. The fundamental purpose and meaning of education needs to be re-imagined beyond the narrow confines of neo-liberal educational policies and the instrumental logic of accumulation, the abstract logic of the market and the calculus of value maximization, in the service of financial capital. At one level, the apparent a-political categories of entrepreneurialism, innovation and lifelong learning appeal to anyone and everyone, i.e., in as much as these are neither time nor place specific (abstract, ex-territorial). It is precisely this ‘universal’ appeal that at once hides the highly political nature of these categories, while at the same time renders the very same categories highly effectual in revamping (in this case) the educational sector *and* disarming resistance. The concepts of entrepreneurialism, innovation and lifelong learning are alluring. So alluring, that also critical social and pedagogical studies

⁷⁰ Cf. Bunar, Nihad. *När marknaden kom till förorten: Valfrihet, konkurrens och symboliskt kapital i mångkulturella områdens skolor*. Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2009; Lundqvist, Catarina. *Möjligheternas horisont: Etnicitet, utbildning och arbete i ungas berättelser om karriärer*. REMESO, Linköping University, 2010.

⁷¹ Beach, Denis, and Marianne Dovemark. *Education and the Commodity Problem: Ethnographic Investigations of Creativity and Performativity in Swedish Schools*. London: Tufnell Press, 2007; cf. Gillborn, David, and Deborah Youdell. *Rationing Education: Policy, Practice, Reform and Equity*. Buckingham/Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2000.

can easily be incorporated into the very logics of speculative pedagogy.⁷² In the words of Henry A. Giroux, ‘redefining the purpose and meaning of schooling as part of the broader attempt to struggle for a radical democratic social order’,⁷³ is still the key educational challenge, even in Sweden.

The discursive and other processes
whereby the racial becomes the spatial
and the spatial becomes the racial,
whereby the imagined, the concrete and the symbolic
emerge out of one another,
are complex and overdetermined,
are multiple and often deeply sedimented,
are a set of ontological and metonymical dirty tricks.
But, however complex,
simply awful
in their consequences.
Even in Sweden.⁷⁴

⁷² Kvale, Steinar. ‘Frigørande pædagogik som frigørande til forbrug.’ *Pædagogikken og kampen om individet*. Ed. Krejsler, John. København: Hans Reitzels forlag, 2004. 63-88; cf. the argument in Dahlstedt, Magnus, and Fredrik Hertzberg, 2011; Hardt, Michael, and Antonio Negri. *Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000.

⁷³ Giroux, Henry A. *Public Spaces, Private Lives: Democracy Beyond 9/11*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003, p. 102.

⁷⁴ Pred, Allan. *Even in Sweden: Racisms, Racialized Spaces, and the Popular Geographical Imagination*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, p. 184f.

Writers' Details:

Magnus Dahlstedt is an associate professor in ethnic studies at REMESO (Institute for Research on Migration, Ethnicity and Society), Linköping University. Among my primary research interests is the politics of inclusion/exclusion, citizenship, education policy and multiculturalism.

Mekonnen Tesfahuney is a Ph D in Human Geography at the University of Karlstad, Sweden. He has among other things published on issues of education, geophilosophy, migration, racism and geopolitics. His current research interest deals with post-politics, racism and educational transformation in Sweden with focus on questions of inclusion/exclusion, citizenship and resistance.

Correspondence Details

Magnus Dahlstedt <magnus.dahlstedt@liu.se>;

Mekonnen Tesfahuney <mekonnen.tesfahuney@liu.se>