CHAPTER 8

Rethinking Decentralization and the State/Civil Society Distinctions

The State as a Problematic of Governing

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In a variety of national contexts, there have been discussions about the changing relations of the State to the educational arena. Often, these discussions center on issues concerning the centralization and decentralization of the State or the devolution of power, the latter referring to shifts in the loci of power to geographically local contexts, for example, through community governance of education. The State is treated as an “object” that produces, and in some cases, mitigates against the modernization of educational systems. These discussions posit the state as a “real” entity in opposition to civil society (public vs. private, government vs. economy). At a different level are discussions about the “privatization” and “marketization” of social policy, concepts which indicate a major change in the relation of the state to civil society. These sets of distinctions accept political rhetoric as the presuppositions of analysis rather than making that rhetoric itself the focus of what is to be understood and explained.

The purpose of this chapter is to locate the problem of the state in the problematic of regulation. I use the concept of “arena” to think of two related layers. One is the State as the patterns of relations in which certain actors are authorized to organize, classify, and administer school practices. A second layer of regulation involves the governing systems that organize and classify the objects for scrutiny and action in the arena. In the nineteenth century, Foucault (1979) argues, there occurred a new relationship between state governing practices and individual behaviors and dispositions. If the state was to be responsible for the welfare of its citizens, he argues, the identity of individuals had to be linked to the administrative patterns found in the larger society. This embodied a power/knowledge relation. New institutions of health,
labor, and education tied the new social welfare goals of the state to the self-reflective and self-governing principles of individuality (Donald, 1992; Hunter, 1994; Rose & Miller, 1992; Shapiro, 1992). Governing, then, is used to focus on historically specific practices through which the individuals can think of, conduct, and evaluate themselves as productive individuals. This “socialization,” as in Bourdieu’s (1984) (and before him Durkheim’s and Weber’s) *habitus*, is not part of the anthropological universe of functional sociology but the outcome of specific social practices through which subjectivities are constructed. It also entails a change from a sovereignty notion of governing to one of governing people and things.

I explore the problem of the state as a system of regulation in three ways. First, I look at the relation of actors and discourses in the educational reforms of four apparently different countries—Russia, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States. I draw maps of similarities and differences in the constructions/reconstructions in the educational arenas. My concern is how the subjectivities of various actors are historically constituted through the patterns of relation produced. I argue that the effects in the governing patterns are not only related to the child and teacher but also to the field of actors in the educational arena. Second, I look at homologies between the construction of the teacher and the child in the educational arena and changes occurring in politics, the arts, and economics. My purpose at this level of analysis is to explore an amalgamation of noncausal intersections in patterns of governing. Third, I consider pedagogy as a specific site which relates political rationalities to the capabilities of the individual. That governing, however, does not occur on a level playing field in the sense that there is an uneven distribution of eligibility for participation and action. The systems of distinctions and differentiation in pedagogy, I argue, produce systems of inclusion/exclusion as local, and partial knowledges are inscribed as universal and global. “Constructivist” pedagogy, given prominence in the United States and international reforms, is an exemplar of the production of such differentiations.

While public discussions about school reform are populist and sometimes evangelical—reforms ostensibly promote local, individual choice, empowerment, and democracy—I argue that reforms are governing technologies that problematize the possibilities of action and self-reflection. Such governing is not linear but a story of fluctuation, uneven movements, and unpredictable transformations as political rationalities are brought into the pedagogical discourses through multiple capillaries, capillaries that traverse distinctions between state and civil society.

**Constructing the Problem-Solving Citizen Changing Patterns of Regulation**

The past two decades involve important changes in the governing of the educational arena in Sweden and the United States, two industrialized countries which on the surface are historically different. In this section, I compare the educational arenas of these two countries to explore the transformations. My discussion problematizes a discussion that begins with Hegelian to post-Kantian moral and political philosophy and continues into the present. Its underlying premise is the idea that the State is not only the regulation of the legitimate forms of political and economic action, but the modes of action that act on the dispositions, sensibilities, and awarenesses that enable individuals to be productive and autonomous actors. The subjectivity of the person, then, becomes “not only subject to the play of forces in the apparatus of the social but also act as author and subject of its own conduct” (Donald, 1992, p. 14).

In focusing on the state as patterns of regulation, I engage a notion of power that has been prominent in postmodern discussions about the politics of knowledge. This concern is to understand how power is deployed through multiple capillaries that produce and constitute the “self” as an agent of change (Barrett & Phillips, 1992; Butler, 1993; Shapiro, 1992; Young, 1990). My use of the concept of the educational arena is to interpret power relationally and historically as an amalgamation of institutional and discursive practices that function as “a collective assemblage of disparate parts on a single social surface” (Crary, 1990, p. 6).

The discussion refocuses the notion of power from that of sovereignty, which seeks to identify the “origins” or roots of power through classifying those groups that are structurally dominant and those that are repressed. While the notion of sovereignty provided certain insights, it also ignores or misrecognizes the disciplining and productive qualities of power in the construction of the autonomous and self-reflective person. I have discussed the problems of the sovereignty notion of power in the study of schooling elsewhere (Popkewitz, 1991; Popkewitz & Brennan, 1998). For now, suffice it to say that the sovereign notion of power as a historical narrative positied unified, often evolutionary processes and structures. I argue, however, that power tends to be constructed, envisioned, and deployed in a manner that is historically contingent, with multiple and fluid boundaries. In a prominent category of traditional analysis, while one can posit a generalized condition of capitalism as a background to the organization of power, this positing does not provide an adequate theoretical grounding for understanding how the capillaries of power work in contemporary societies. There is no one “model” of capitalism; neither is its history one of a single, unified development (for different discussions related to this, e.g., Boyer, 1995; Crary, 1990; Sousa Santos, 1995).

**Governing at a Distance: Reconstituting the Swedish Arena**

The construction of the modern Swedish welfare state in the 1920s and 1930s transformed a network of diverse and often antagonistic voluntary
associations, trade unions, political parties, and local municipal bureaucracies into the centralized professional and administrative apparatus of the “welfare state.” This type of governing embodied certain principles and ideals of social engineering, that is, the application of a universal rational knowledge and apparently “neutral” professional expertise that would calculate and regulate social, economic, and moral affairs. That welfare state would ensure high levels of employment, economic progress, social security, health, and housing (education as a governmental activity came much earlier in Sweden).

The major responsibility for planning and evaluation belonged to the central state ministry and bureaucracies, not to the teacher. Detailed parliamentary instructions to teachers were legislated. The Swedish Board of Education, for example, was constructed with this bureaucratic, social engineering approach to social progress. Further, the educational sciences were mobilized, particularly in the post–World War II period, in the administrative development of schooling, and in the production of a self that brought the extension of processes of rationalization to a disciplined, autonomous, self-reliant, and morally inner-directed individual.

The past two decades have seen important shifts in the governing patterns that constitute the Swedish educational arena. By the 1970s, the centralized school system produced a number of unsolved problems and developed a great deal of “inertia.” Demands emerged for more flexible local responses to education, such as those provided historically by parish and later municipal schools (see, e.g., Kallós, 1995). In fact, there was a common move to increase the scope of action of municipal school boards during the 1970s, the consequences of which are “visible” in the reforms of the 1980s and 1990s. By 1991, the Board of Education was replaced with a new agency, the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket). The latter is a smaller entity that has both regional and central concerns in the administration of schools. In one sense, the construction of the Swedish educational agency, Skolverket, is a Parliamentary effort to undo the strongly centralized and uniform school bureaucracy. At the same time, Skolverket is located within historically contingent changes in the educational arena that are neither evolutionary nor reducible to the conscious intentions of Parliament.

I explore the changes in the educational arena by recognizing that the revisioning of the “welfare state” is less the beginning of a new form of state than the construction of a new mode of inscribing political rationalities in the self-government of the individual. The changing patterns of regulation are examined through the repositioning of actors and problem solving produced in the educational arena.

The new problem solving embodies a revisioning of the Swedish State curriculum (Läroplan) that is reformulated as a goal-driven conception of the state vis-à-vis the educational arena (Carlgren, in press). General curriculum goals are set by the central government to provide local school districts with flexibility and a certain degree of autonomy in developing implementation plans. In return, the central state bureaucracy monitors outcomes and content through psychometric measurements rather than processes. If we view the current situation from one view of the state, the Swedish National Agency for Education establishes what is legitimate and reasonable for the conduct of education, but localities and teachers have the responsibility for evaluating and, in same cases, choosing from the many goals.

While the word stayed the same, the Läroplan embodies a restructuring of the problem-solving capabilities of the teacher and local administrative authorities. The new teacher who participates in the modern state is one who is flexible, responsive to changes, and acts with greater autonomy in finding solutions to social problems.

Although there is debate about the reforms, the categories that are used to construct the teacher are generally not made problematic. The governing practices of the new Läroplan embody sets of assumptions related to the importation of two Anglo-American words—curriculum and professionalism (see, e.g., Kallós & Lundahl-Kallós, 1995; Kallós & Nilsson, 1995). The word curriculum brings into focus distinctions about teaching, and helps to construct a teacher who has autonomy and capabilities in local planning, organizing, managing, and evaluating school knowledge. The call for professionalism relates to a revisioning of occupational identity. It gives value to school work that includes greater teacher responsibility and flexibility in implementing goal-governed approaches of the state.

The importation of the words curriculum and professionalism represents more than a simple process of borrowing words to express desired “states” of the future teacher. Instead these words embody “rules of reasoning” about the self-examination and capabilities of teachers, educational researchers, bureaucrats, and teacher educators. “Curriculum” and “professionalism” are concepts drawn from Anglo-American governing traditions in education where a “weak” central bureaucracy historically interacts with civil organizations, local school districts, and professional groups to produce pedagogical practice. These traditions provide a stark contrast to previous continental European practices. However, they have relevance in the current reconstitution of the Swedish educational arena (Popkewitz, 1993a).

The Swedish reception of notions of “curriculum” and “professionalism” are not “merely” brought into its educational arena as “fixed entities.” They are given interpretation within the patterns of relations in the educational arena that have a specific historical horizon. For example, the words curriculum and professionalism are nuances through continental European (Danish and German) educational traditions associated with Herbart, and an outlook
about an educated class that is different from, but intermixes with, the Anglo-American notions of expert knowledge.

These changes in the problematic of regulation are not only of the rules regarding teachers and students; they effect the subjectivities of the various actors in that arena. For example there is a self-problematization of the bureaucracy. The former governmental official who monitored the school operated with the assumption that the rules of schooling were clearly defined within a hierarchical authority. This is no longer so, and the bureaucratic official needs to operate in a more fluid, pragmatic, and locally defined problem-solving context. In this sense, the bureaucrat who “administers” the school is defined and understood in the reconstitution of the governing principles of the educational arena.

Contemporary Swedish university and teacher education also involve a visioning/revisioning of the production of knowledge and expertise. At one level, there has been a disbanding or weakening of governmental agencies that had previously coordinated and monitored the universities. In this new schema, universities occupy a changed relationship relative to other actors in the educational arena as there is greater internal control over faculty positions and budget. Contemporary political rhetoric speaks (either positively or negatively, depending on the ideological position of the speaker) about the “new” Swedish university as responsible to some mythical notion of “market” that is flexible to changing conditions, although the nature of faculty involvement is often prescribed through the rationalities of “self-government” and financial strategies of the central government that govern organizational matters.

Epistemologically, the State as centralized governmental structures has been challenged by a more pragmatic outlook that focuses on problems of teachers and didactics, with a greater use of “qualitative methods” to assess local implementations of reforms and on teachers’ problem-solving abilities. At the same time, centralized statistical information about children’s achievement, school resources, and reform implementation has been authorized as the central government finds itself with different requirements for information about school outcomes. The production of the latter type of information has become a recognizable industry within the university as new national tests are being constructed to monitor governmental programs.

Epistemological shifts in this arena involve the appearance of two new sets of authorized actors. One of these is the psychometrians who have been present in the educational arena since the early 1950s but are given a new credibility in the current restructuring.

A different grouping of actors is teacher educators who had previously had little authority in the research community. I will call them the “local” researchers. They focus on knowledge that is deemed “useable” to regional authorities, the “decentralized” teacher education programs, and local par-
accept implicitly the idea of a weak state through various categories of interpretation, such as descriptions of the U.S. system as decentralized and localized, school outcomes through psychological “learning” theories, micro-ethnographies of the classroom culture, and the principal as the key to school reform.

The notions of “weak” and “strong” states, however, have little analytic value when considering the problematic of governing. In fact, such language tends to be more misleading than helpful. One needs to look no further than current U.S. policy discourses about “virtuous” subjectivities to understand that the United States embodies a strong set of institutional relations and discourses that govern subjectivities. Current debates about the regulation of smoking and the labeling of foods to discipline the dietary habits of individuals, for example, point to strong rules that relate governmental legislation to the moral deportment of citizens. This inscription of the harmonizing of administrative patterns and individual self-government transcends ideologies. National discourses about abortion and child’s rights, women’s abuse, teenage pregnancies, and welfare reform, constructed with different ideological agendas, converge through the acceptance of the harmonization of political rationalities with the moral deportment and behaviors of individual subjects.

The differences between Sweden and the United States are seen in how governing patterns are constructed rather than in such labels as weak or strong. The linking of political rationalities with subjectivities in U.S. schools during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, for example, involved different trajectories than those described previously in Sweden. Certain discourses about the pedagogy of the child, childhood, school administration, and measurement of achievement, for example, circulated nationally to construct the object and subject of schooling. The rules of curriculum and childhood inscribed notions of progress that tied social engineering approaches to child development with the construction of self. At the same time, an academized knowledge of the “teacher” in teacher education and the development of management techniques to hire, organize, and assess teacher performance were woven together with other practices to govern the teacher and child. The amalgamation of ideas, technologies, and institutions that formed the governing systems were not weak, decentralized, or evolutionary.

The current reforms can be understood as a reconstitution of the patterns that have governed the school arena. Captured in the recently used phrase “systemic school reform,” new sets of relations among governmental agencies, professional teaching groups in the various school subjects, research communities, and regional authorities have emerged. As in Sweden, the new governing strategies move among multiple sets of actors whose patterns of governing constitute the state in education. The discourses of standards and professionalism emerge from coalitions among groups within State agencies, professional groups, foundations, and teacher unions. The national discourses about standards are joined with discussions about site-based management, shared decision making, teacher education reforms about a “reflective teacher,” and a constructivist pedagogy. A consequence, I will argue in the last section, is a revision of the problematic of the governing of the self through the applied reasoning.

The sets of actors being mobilized and the relations established in the educational arena of Sweden and the United States involve a reconstitution of the problem-solving field for the possibilities of action, but in different historical, national conditions. In neither instance can we assume that educational change involves a linear and evolutionary process in which a stable and consistent group of actors is suddenly challenged by a newly emerging group. Such an account of the reform process implies an illusion of stability that ignores the assemblage of techniques and images that intersect to create subject positions and to position and reposition actors. The bureaucratic actor who practices social engineering in Sweden is a different bureaucratic actor in the current problem-solving context. In an important sense, actors who might appear on some level to be the same are, in fact, transformed as they compete in different patterns and through different epistemological rules of engagement. Concepts such as “markets” and “privatization” that are offered in both countries to explain changes leave unscrutinized the field of relations being produced in the educational arena.

Changing Regimes and the Patterns of Regulation: Russia and South Africa

Whereas changes in Sweden and the U.S. government relate to party policies, Russia and South Africa involve changes in the rationalities and rules of politics and citizenship associated with their regimes. Yet both countries are engaged in educational reform programs that have certain similarities to those of Sweden and the United States. The historical conditions in each country involve different sets of relations in order to consider the meaning of the state in education. My focus on those relations here is twofold: to historicize the notion of state through exploring the intersection of changing actors and epistemologies in changes of political regimes; and to locate the production of problem solving to govern social practices. That letter requires attention given to expert mediate knowledge in the construction of governing patterns. The tying together of actors and discourses, again, is to offer a multilayered, relational, and historical notion of the state.
Russia and South Africa are both witnessing a change in the political regimes. In both countries discussions are emerging about constructing a “civil society” (through nongovernmental organizations—NGOs), an ideological focus within international agencies and policy discussion. Civil society, it is believed, provides intermediary social institutions between the individual and State that can democratize society and reduce or eliminate the authoritarian practices of the previous regimes (see, e.g., Fukuyama, 1995; Zakaria, 1995). Further, Russia and South Africa have policies that point to a decentralization that coincides with a centralization (nation building) that, on the surface, seems similar to that discussed earlier in regard to Sweden and the United States. The former countries, for example, have developed a rhetoric of decentralization, site-based management, and reforms that focuses on didactics through the incorporation of a psychological constructivism.

In Russia, a potentially liberal political and capitalist economic regime is replacing the system of centralization organized by the Communist Party. The previous Soviet regime, for example, had no governing actors outside of the infrastructure of the formal governmental agencies and the Party from which strong hierarchical systems of regulation were constructed and monitored. The rapid emergence of the Soviet system after the revolution resulted in a combination of Czarist and Communist policies that had prevented a viable civil society or public associations from forming. In all respects, the Party dominated the political, social, and cultural activities. (In the language of international funding agencies, there were no viable NGOs in the former Soviet Union.)

We can contrast the transformations currently taking place in Russia with those in South Africa as the apartheid system is politically dismantled. Although it was authoritarian in its technologies that suppressed dissent, South Africa’s apartheid system had a strong capitalist economic system and relatively strong social, academic, and labor movements. Even during the worst moments of apartheid, Black labor unions were strong, and certain community groups functioned even though the economic consequences of racial discrimination often destroyed the fabric of family life. Furthermore, groups in exile challenged South Africa from outside. Although the educational system was segregated, there was an educated Black elite, which came mainly from missionary schools. Academics could contribute to the social sciences through study abroad and domestically (sometimes they could read books considered as “subversive” in special sections of libraries). The academic situation of South African intellectuals, then, presents a stark contrast to Soviet social and educational scientists for whom theoretical and methodological development were severely restrained. In South Africa a consequence of the functioning of these different groups outside and inside the country was developed administrative capabilities that could be brought into the restructuring of governing patterns once apartheid ended.

It is within this political context that we can think historically about a mobilization of a social engineering that “slept” during the apartheid years—some intellectuals were exiled, or lived in fear of reprisals if they acted out of concert with governmental policy. As apartheid began to be officially dismantled, the “sleepers” in South African civil society could be awakened. They had the necessary skills (mentallities) to work as “planning groups” alongside official governmental bodies.

With the Soviet Union’s collapse, there were no sleepers except those from the old party system. The Communist Party was so encompassing in its control (and fear) mechanisms that there was no developed civil society to interrelate with the formal governmental agencies in the construction of governing patterns. Equally important was the fact that people did not have the dispositions and “civilizing rules” of capitalist modernity in which to negotiate the complexities of their new situation. It is no accident that many of the people who make decisions in Russia are the same people who were Party bureaucrats in the old system, but now act within the “new” epistemic spaces of institutional reforms that emphasize “choice” and individuality (Kerr, this volume).

Both instances of changes in regimes entailed a production of expertise to govern reason and “reasonable” people. The struggles about the new citizen and polity are most dramatically illustrated in the conflict between the Russian parliament and the Russian president. However, these struggles are just as profoundly embodied in the reshaping of the educational arena. The Russian educational problem is, among other things, the need to develop an “expertise” necessary for managing a more fluid and less bureaucratically centralized administration of schools. This expertise is not, however, merely technical competence. It also involves a reconstitution of the teacher—how one feels, thinks, sees, and acts as a competent subject in schooling.

As in Sweden and the United States, the governing of teachers and children is central to the construction of the educational arena. On the surface, the new regimes in Russia and South Africa need to produce more teachers, retrain existing teachers, and construct a new content in the curriculum. But the reform practices are more than recruitment practices or changes in curriculum format. The map of the educational arena is also being reordered through the relations established.

Let me explore this through the work of the SOROS Foundation, a New York philanthropic agency investing large sums of money in Eastern Europe to facilitate changes toward a market economy. This foundation has been working with the Russian Ministry of Education to produce new high school textbooks about the new “imagined communities” of nationhood and the citizen inscribed with Western liberal philosophies and histories of ideas.

Previously Soviet teachers worked from well-scripted lesson plans that chronologically detailed an exact sequence for each lesson. The styles of
presentation for materials were ritualized—everyone in the country was to use them in a standardized manner. The SOROS textbooks, in contrast, were intended to construct mentalities that combined different Russian approaches to pedagogy with Western liberal and progressive notions of child-centered education. While the discursive constructions are not monolithic, the “new teacher” was one who could act autonomously, using problem-solving capabilities. In other words, this teacher is the embodiment of the problem-solving teacher discussed in a previous section.

However, the task of constructing a new, imagined community is more than merely writing textbooks. It involves reconstituting the “author” as a subject and object of scrutiny. When SOROS located authors to write such textbooks, the project planners realized that the authors did not have the requisite skills. A statist mentality associated with the previous Communist textbooks, the project planners realized that the authors did not have the skills. A statist mentality associated with the previous Communist regime was embodied in the textbook authors. To produce the textbooks, the SOROS Foundation held workshops to teach the authors how to think about, and organize, curriculum content, didactics, and assessments. The teacher’s guides provided teachers with a choice of activities and had visual and psychological appeal for children—things that are taken for granted in Western countries. Less explicit but on the horizon of the curriculum construction were Russian views about spirituality and specific religious outlooks that have become part of the discourses of schooling.

The practices of the SOROS Foundation provide one point of entry into the changing relations of different actors and the struggles over the production of reason. The rewritten textbooks occupy a problematic position in relation to other school and teacher practices that center on the mastery of school content embodied in the examination systems provided by the Russian Ministry of Education in Moscow. A more geographically localized context of school management with regional authorities and finances also redefines the planning and the production of knowledge embodied in the Russian Academy of Education and Teacher Education. At present neither of these agencies has a monopoly in the production of teachers or of the epistemological systems that construct the curricula, the didactics, and the teacher. As in Sweden, there is a new local researcher/evaluator.

The map of the South African arena has a different historical construction. As the South African negotiations for a change-over in regimes came closer, the African National Congress, with private internal and external foundation assistance, set up policy-making units to rival those functioning within the formal government controlled by the Afrikaaner National Party.

One such academic group in education produced the NEP (National Educational Plan). Whereas previously, policy was dominated by Afrikaan academics and a “Fundamental Pedagogics” that legitimated apartheid, the NEP was intended to appraise and develop goals for a new multicultural system of education. Implementation of this plan resulted in the production of a series of polished booklets that outlined the purposes and directions of a multicultural curriculum, administration, and economics of a new educational system. The NEP assumed a strong role of the state in steering South Africa toward national goals. This process, as was found in Sweden, was coupled with developments in local government and a teacher autonomy, expressed as professionalism.

If one expunges a particular rhetoric related to South Africa from the NEP documents, (such as references to apartheid and equity and democracy), the texts embody universalized discourses about calculating and managing change that are also found in other countries, such as the United States and Britain. The NEP also inscribes many of the priorities of inter-state agencies, such as the World Bank, through its definition of problems and options for problem solving.

The NEP documents were produced by a new group of academic experts drawn from previously marginalized groups within the English and Indian universities as well as from colored and black South Africans trained in postgraduate education outside the country (these distinctions are themselves the effects of power in the apartheid system that are still productive in its dismantling). Less visible and rarely acknowledged are foundations and inter-state agencies. These consist of not only SOROS in Russia, but also other institutions such as the World Bank, US AID, Swedish SIDA, and OECD, as well as nongovernmental institutions such as the Ford, Rockefeller, and McArthur Foundations, which operate within Russia, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States (see, e.g., Fisher, 1993; Lagemann, 1989).

My argument to this point is that if we narrowly view the State as only confined to governmental agencies in the current historical conjuncture, we misrecognize the power relation through which the governing practices are forming. While similar reform practices about decentralization circulate among the four countries, there are historical distinctions in the constituting of relations and power in the educational arena. Various actors within civil society and government have no essential, unchanging attributes but are defined through the systems of relations established. The reforms emerge through multiple trajectories and are given authority through different sets of actors that are located both in the state and civil society. My focus on Russia and South Africa, however, was also to bring the position of academic scientific actors into sharper relief in the governing principles to construct the teacher and the child in schooling and teacher education. But even here, we cannot assume the academic actors are a single unified group. Only certain groupings of academics are authorized to speak. Understanding the patterns of regulation requires that we consider the notion of actor as problematic; to understand empirically the relations among groupings in their arena of practice and to consider the knowledge systems that give direction and interpretation to those practices. The latter bring the problem of governmentality to the fore to
understand how epistemological rules of problem solving position and are positioned by the various actors in the educational arena.

Global Systems, the Capabilities of the Individual and Educational Reforms

The restructuring of the patterns of regulation in education, as my previous comments indicate, needs to be understood historically and globally. At one dimension, these discourses are elements of an international circulation of ideas about appropriate practices and interpretations of school change. The circulation of international discourses occurs not only through formal institutions concerned with policy, but through professional associations, journals, conferences, and the mobility of academics around the globe. Globalization is not restricted to particular hegemonic groups of nations as postcolonial literatures have illustrated the hybridity of discourses (see, e.g., Appiah, 1992; Young, 1990).

We can think about globalization through homologies between the regulatory patterns of education and those of other arenas. I use the term homologies to consider relations of education to other social practices in a manner that is neither causal nor suggests a single origin of the changes. This second dimension of globalization enables me to extend the discussion of the regulatory norms of constructivism through situating the "sensibilities" of the teacher to other transformations in the patterns of politics, culture, and economy which schooling both expresses and influences.

The shift from bureaucratic centralism (rule governing) to "goal steering" is occurring not only in Sweden but also in many European countries. The changes can be related to a tendency for political projects to become more local and less class focused, such as in the Green movements and the politics of feminism in the past decade. Several years ago a member of the Swedish Parliament, for example, talked about the feminist movement as too important to be left to women; today that view of the state is no longer prevalent. Localized practices are also found in academic discourse, with an emphasis on pragmatic knowledge, local social histories, and rejections of universal histories and generalization (Lloyd, 1991).

The administrative-legal reorganization of the government is also related to changes in the relation of global and regional economies whose patterns of regulation are homologous to the educational arena. The new corporate structure is less hierarchical and pyramidal than it was in the past, and it has eliminated many middle layers of management. The language of the business pages of major newspapers is similar to that of the professionalization literature in teaching; the new business organization, for example, is "the law of the microcosm," which postulates that the most agile and flexible companies are those most likely to survive. The new business entails a work condition that involves problem solving—where highly variable customer demands, new technologies, multicentered business structures, and horizontal structures organize workers into groups concerned with specific projects that do not have the older layers of management. The smaller units are utilized to empower workers and to develop flexible, responsive environments that can respond quickly to customer (read "corporate") demands.

This corporate restructuring embodies changing patterns of governance toward work and productivity. In examining efforts to increase production, Donzelot (1991) argues that there are increasing efforts to break previous psychological ties that define individual identity according to fixed notions of work and production. The new approaches accent the relation of the individual's autonomy and the capacity to adapt and be an agent of change in a changing world as integral to one's self-fulfillment. "Instead of defining the individual by the work he [sic] is assigned to, [the new psychology] regards productive activity as the site of deployment of the person's personal skills" (p. 252).

There is a particular set of epistemological rules around which the teacher is defined in current reform practices. These rules often evolve around a label of "constructivism" which draws on psychology and social-interactional perspectives. Constructivist strategies are intended to enable teachers to have the "correct" dispositions and capabilities for effecting school reform. Knowledge and subjectivities are viewed as contingent and plural. They can be represented through the following equation:

"I understand it" + "I can do it" + "I care about it" = "capacity"

But constructivist pedagogies are not neutral strategies to teach problem solving; they politicize the body through connecting power/knowledge. There is a shift from the individual defined by having particular sets of competencies, skills, and knowledge (such as those for cognitive mastery) to the individual who embodies pragmatic capabilities and dispositions. The capabilities of the teacher are self-confidence, self-discipline, problem solving, and a willingness to learn.

If we examine the Holmes Group (1986, 1990), organized by deans of leading schools of education in the United States to produce change in teacher education, a constructivist psychology is offered as a template for improving the quality of teaching in professional development schools. Constructivism is brought to bear on the formation of teachers when it is asserted that "the generic task of education" consists of "teaching students how to make knowledge and meaning—to enact culture"—or when it is argued that it is necessary for institutional networks to develop multiple models of reform "rather than a template for a single conception" (Holmes Group, 1990, pp. 6,10).
of inclusion/exclusion can be likened to a broader discussion called “the two-thirds solution.” Commentaries about social policies in Europe have suggested that the social policies in Europe may produce divisions in societies (see, e.g., Wagner, 1994). Two-thirds of the society consists of those people whose subjectivities embody the sentiments and dispositions to create “opportunities,” where the Other/others embody different habitus that exclude them from “the main spheres of society in which social identities can be formed” (Wagner, 1994, p. 167).

The inclusions/exclusions are not in the categorical constructions that are associated with labeling theories, such as calling a child “socially disadvantaged,” “at-risk,” or from “the inner city.” Rather, the inclusions/exclusions are embedded in the systems of recognition, divisions, and distinctions that construct identities. The systems of recognitions generate the normalcies by which individuals are to see, conduct, and evaluate themselves as normal and reasonable people. The production of subjectivism is historically specific and inscribed within the subject relations of the arenas of social practices.

I argue by analogy that systems that are intended to include are never universal; they produce simultaneous exclusions. The universalizing of reason in constructivism has a duality: its governing systems are intended to open possibilities for those who have the appropriate dispositions and sensitivities to capitalize on the new curriculum, while those who do not are excluded. Thus, instead of opening up spaces for those who are different, the reform systems may instead place them in an oppositional or marginal space. This occurs as constructivism names the children who need remediation or special assistance while, at the same time, asserting a universalism to its systems for classifying how thinking occurs. As Dumm argues in a different context, the discourses of the social sciences are normalizing practices that classify marginalized groups, such as people of color, as different from the norm and who, at best, can be “like the normal person.” Particular groupings of people are enclosed and interned (Dumm, 1993). Thus, the production of governing principles and actors also involves systems of inclusion/exclusion through the subjectivities produced.

But this issue is not only one of internal differentiation. As Badie and Birnbaum (1994) suggest in a recent paper on the state, the rise of transnational relations and the crisis in the machinery for regulating inter-nation-state relations have imposed new regulatory patterns. I want to suggest here that the distinctions in the reconstruction of inter-state-nations may not be at the national-territory level but through the production of distinctions and differentiations related to subjectivities. In a recent review of the policies of international lending agencies toward the restructuring of teacher education, distinctions were produced among the teachers in first-world and second/third-world countries (Carnoy et al., 1994). Whereas first-world countries emphasized university education and scientific cultures in the education of teachers, international funding agency policies toward nonindustrialized countries gave preference to the practical, school-based training of teachers.

These differences in approaches in teacher education are ostensibly to save money in the educational sector, but the financial rules also intertwine the deployment of power with the production of distinctions. However, if we focus not on the World Bank as a sovereign actor but on “the rules of reasoning” about educational practices, the educational practices can be understood as part of a broad set of discourses and practices intended to reconstitute the way teachers think about and assess their performance. The differences among countries are not only in what is overtly learned, but in the distinctions, dispositions, and sensitivities produced in social practices. My earlier discussion of the linking of work and leisure, the homologies between the dispositions associated with “constructivist” didactics and other transformations in industrialized societies, together with national differentiations all point to the deployment of power through the construction of particular styles of thinking and acting. Thus, while we may talk about a universalized school, as do Meyer and his associates (1992), we must historicize the constructions of pedagogy to understand how distinctions and differentiations are the effects of power.

At a different layer of discussions about the state, it has been popular to label the changes as a “conservative restoration,” labels that I believe miss the long-term historical processes that underlie these changes—some occurring as early as the 1940s and 1950s—well before Thatcher in Britain or Reagan in the United States (see, e.g., discussion in Popkewitz, 1991; Whitty, this volume). If we examine current rhetoric about neoliberal slogans of “markets” and “privatization” that emerged as political slogans and that have been brought into social scientific concepts, we realize that the changes do not start with recent policies but are part of more profound social changes that have been moving in uneven ways during at least the past four decades. At one level is the breakdown of the Fordist compromise in postwar Europe and the United States, a compromise among workers, industrialists, and the state which produced a division of labor and mechanization in exchange for a favorable wage formula and the implementation of a state welfare system, as Fordism lost its efficiency with technologies and markets. The organizations of work that we are now witnessing is in part a response to the lack of efficiency of Fordist mass production.

The changes in governing have no single origin that can be reducible to “ideology,” economy, or hegemony; but they embody multiple historical trajectories. There are

a range of other challenges to the mechanism of social government that emerged during these same decades from civil libertarians, feminists, radicals, socialists, sociologists and others. These reorganized programmes of government utilize
If I pursue Rose and Miller’s argument, the problem of the state is the constitution of governing practices. This position transposes much contemporary analyses that define the State as an “object” that dispenses power rather than as a set of relations through which governing and government are produced. It is interesting to note here that contemporary discussions about “bringing back the State” in social and educational theories tend to incorporate nineteenth-century historicist and structural distinctions in the theoretical deliberations. The distinctions evoke images of the past that, I have argued, are inadequate for understanding the changing patterns of governing discussed above. (For a general discussion of nineteenth-century epistemologies and contemporary social theory, see Wallerstein, 1991; in education, Popkewitz, in press.)

Some Concluding Notes

My interest in the state has been to consider the problem of governing in education through sets of concepts that are relational, historical, and comparative. Two different but related intellectual strategies guided the chapter. One is related to the concept of an educational arena. The idea of an arena directed attention to the position of different actors as analogous to players in a game; it is also important to recognize that some players have more resources and capital, in Bourdieu’s sense, than do others. Embedded in the notion of an arena was a second move, the exploration of the relation of actors to the construction of systems of regulation. This concept drew on Foucault’s notion of “governmentality” to direct attention to the rules of the game that discipline reason and the self-governing of “reasonable” people. While the disciplining is never totally coercive, the production of knowledge positions and produces power through the regulatory principles applied as “reason” and “truth.”

The meaning of the state lies, then, in the relation of these two sets of empirical problems as they change over time and at its multiple levels. Russia, South Africa, Sweden, and the United States provided examples of changes in the relations that constitute their educational arenas. My examples focused on the actors who are authorized to “speak” about the object and subject of education and the social relations where intelligibility for speaking takes place. Attention was focused on the proximity among different groupings of actors in the production of the categories and distinctions. The state, then, was treated as an epistemological category to consider empirically the patterns of governing.

My concern, however, was not only with patterns of relations but also practices of governing as producing systems of inclusion/exclusion. Governing to include/exclude occurs through the reasoning applied rather than in any “overt” systems of exclusion. Here, attention to reason as an effect of power is, I believe, an important contribution of postmodern feminist theory and political analyses to our understanding of the micropractices of schooling.

Different dimensions in the study of policy, power, and schooling can now be addressed. We cannot assume that the actors and their positions in the educational arena are stable and fixed categories. The categories of actors are at times the effects of power themselves. Further, the “actors” in the educational arena are not monolithic and universalized groups but are instead historically formed and reformed groupings. In fact, the grouping and position of actors does change over time even as their labels may stay the same. As an example, while we can say that educational researchers are positioned in the production of power, their groupings and position change as the regulatory patterns are reconstituted. In this sense, there are neither old nor new actors who hold power, just patterns of relations.

The production of power, then, can be understood as relational to the patterns in which the actor is constructed and constituted. While most analyses of the politics of reform apply structural concepts of power (i.e., questions about who rules and are ruled), the subjectivities in the educational arena are formed through an amalgamation of ideas, technologies, and relations that are historically contingent. In other words, the “reasonable” governmental bureaucrats who “monitor” the reforms, the educational research community which produces systems of reflection and self-reflection, as well as the teacher and children who classify their practices are not, as they might appear to be, universal and neutral categories, but are instead situated in time and space. The refusal to make the subject problematic is one of the major difficulties of policy and studies of education.

Another dimension is pedagogy as a technology of power. Pedagogy links political rationalities to autonomous self-examination, self-reflection, and self-care of the individual. But its importance in the problem of governing is not only that of production. It also inscribes systems of differences and distinctions that include and exclude. This occurs, I argued, through practices of normalization that applied local dispositions and sensitivities as universal and natural to all. The normalizations and practices of inclusion/exclusion in pedagogy should not be viewed as an epi-phenomenon of other, more primary “causes.” The exploration of homologies in politics, art, economics, and the educational arenas, as well as the governing technologies of constructivist pedagogy, suggest relations that are not of correspondence or evolutionary, but of multiple historical trajectories in which the technologies that govern subjectivities are constructed that have no single origin.
I thus return to a point where I started. Discussions about conservative restorations, privatization, marketization, and the dichotomy between State and civil society obscure the changes occurring through their systems of reasoning. These categories are often constructed within a field of political rhetoric and brought into social and educational sciences as the phenomena to explain. The reasoning applied, however, assumes the State as a "real entity" with stable actors. Further, such analyses assume what has to be made problematic—that is, the subject of the state as government. The assemblage of actors, techniques, and images that intersect in the construction of governing are left unscrutinized. This assemblage is neither evolutionary nor structural, but historically contingent. I argued that there are long-term shifts in the problems of governing that require different analytic distinctions to interpret the alternatives offered than those of the State as an sovereign entity related to its territory. While it is clear that the moral and political rhetoric of educational struggles has shifted, such analyses beg the question of the changes in the historical conditions through which power is constructed and deployed. Again, if the comparative discussions about homologies among politics, arts, science, economics, and education and the constructions of differences among national educational arenas are historically appropriate, then the changes that we now witness in the school arena are changes involving uneven movements over a long duration in multiple arenas, beginning before Reagan and Thatcher took office.

Notes

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1. I use arena to think of educational practices as occurring as in a field of changing relations. These relations entail one of positions among actors and discursive practices. I use arena, therefore, as a historical concept to consider the changing social positions and power within education. The concept is discussed in Popkewitz and Pereyra, 1993. The notion of arena borrows from Bourdieu's (1984), view of "field; and the notion of discourse is related to both Foucault's (1979) arguments about science as a normalizing and disciplining practice. My particular way of relating these two concepts is discussed as a social epistemology in Popkewitz, 1991.

2. I use the notion of actor to speak about social grouping in the arena. I am not concerned with actors in the individual sense nor from the perspective of structural theory. When State is capitalized, it refers to an essentialized entity; when state is not capitalized, it indicates a problematic of governing.

3. To cite a few statistics in education to illustrate (Kallós, 1995). There were 2700 municipalities as late as 1957, and in 1995 there were only 286. The Ministry of Education in 1967 had a staff of 90 persons, the National Board of Education had 550, and the Office of the Chancellor of the Universities about 100. The National Board of Education in 1977 allocated approximately 60 percent of all educational financing.

4. In the United States, for example, educational sciences received institutional "pushes" through its ties to normal (teacher training) schools during the rapid expansion period of mass schooling at the turn of the century and during World War I, in which there was a great demand for military discipline. Psychologists were deeply involved in the problems of recruitment and training; as well as in the search for ways to develop peaceful, democratic dispositions after the war. (For the later, see Freedman, 1987; also see O'Donnell, 1985.)

5. It is interesting to note that many Scandinavian countries have a Germanic tradition in which the word profession tended not to be used in talking about an educated occupation such as law or medicine. Also the strong State-centered tradition tended to make the educated occupations tied more closely to the government with a less autonomous civil society. It is also important to note that hidden in discourses of professions is a relation of the state, the development of capitalism, and issues of gender (see, e.g., Popkewitz, 1993a).

6. My assumption, borrowed from Giddens (1990), is that professional knowledge plays an important role in mediating between social changes and those in which the person interprets and acts in modernity. Further, I also view the concept of professionalism as a particular one associated with state developments (see T. Popkewitz, 1993a).


8. This discussion is drawn from Popkewitz, 1991, 1993b.

9. My involvement in Russian education started in 1976, while I attended a U.S.-Soviet seminar in Washington, and continued with a Fulbright in 1981 where I spent a semester with the Soviet Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, and continuing into the present. My observations about South Africa is related to an Oppenheimer fellowship given to me to lecture in universities and meet with its academic communities in May–June 1993. I provide this "credentialing" with great hesitation as I recognize the situations within these countries are far more complex that I can grasp here.

10. Russians have had to construct laws in areas about which they had no experience since the first decades of the century: on private property, banking, finance, bankruptcy, private schools, and so on.

11. For insightful discussions of the changes in South Africa, see Cloete (1993); and in Russia, see Kerr (this volume).

12. The rationalizing involving various sets of actors in the construction of regulation may have been necessary, if only to prevent a civil war, which, to this point, has been successful.
13. During the political negotiations among the South African parties, a member of a teacher’s union commented to me that much of the discussion about restructuring the educational system existed with categories related to the priorities set by the World Bank. Even though the bank would not be involved in South African reforms until the transitional period, the bank, the unionist thought, was part of the horizon of negotiation. The two major parties wanted to be able to say to the electorate that they had access to World Bank money in the restructuring.

14. The mobilization of intellectuals is evident if we consider the movement historically. Whereas previously only the elites of intellectual life moved in international circles, today it is commonplace; the European Community’s ERASMUS program is an official recognition of such mobility. One can also examine the increased use of English as the lingua franca of scientific communities, as well as the increased and quick translations of social scientific texts occurring from English and into English.

15. I use the word homology to suggest a historical relation among events and discourses. It is not meant as a causal relation.

16. While we can understand “constructivist” as having many different views about teaching and learning, there are particular epistemological standards and rules from which the diversity occurs. My use of “constructivist,” therefore, is to focus on the general standards and rules, paying only partial attention to its inner distinctions. In certain ways, my focus on constructivism can be likened to Thomas Kuhn’s (1970) discussion of the problem solving within a paradigm of “normal science.”

17. I draw this distinction from an International Labour Organization discussion about the changing characteristics of metal-working skills and the labor of metal working. They compare the new conditions of work with that of a Fordist model that focused on the competencies of the worker rather than on the capabilities. While I use this formulation, my intent is to signal changes that are cultural and social as well as economic. Many of these changes, as Wagner argues, occur within social movements that cannot be reduced to economic changes (Wagner, 1994).

18. I recognize that the calls for multicultural curriculum and education that appreciates cultural diversity have multiple agendas in reorganizing the governing patterns of the subjectivities produced in schooling. My argument is that the discursive practices are located within rules of pedagogical reasoning that position children as “the other” within a sameness. See, e.g., Young, 1990, for a discussion of this notion of colonialization as it crosses liberal and oppositional left discourses.

19. These differences are in the production of different “habitus,” and occur through distinctions and manners available to different groups, from tastes in what is eaten, read, watched, bought, talked about, and seen as valuable and useful. They are found in the tastes that we have in the reading of newspapers, the movies that we see, the books that we buy, as well as the food we eat and our manners of eating. These sensitivities, distinctions, and differentiations construct power.


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