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Subjectivities of the lifelong learner in 'humanistic generation' - Critical policy analysis of lifelong learning policies among discourses of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD

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ABSTRACT

Lifelong learning has for decades been considered a 'holy grail' that can help resolve societal problems and boost the economy. The current hegemonic discourse surrounding lifelong learning has included economic objectives since at least the 1980s; however, this has not always been the case. At least three different conceptual generations have been distinguished throughout the history of the politics of lifelong learning: humanistic, economic and 'soft' economic. In this article, we examine the politics of lifelong learning in the humanistic generation. Our research comprises eight policy texts from UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD. We apply Foucauldian approach with the aim of understanding the subjectivity types of lifelong learners that have been constructed within the policy texts. We apply Carol Bacchi's '*What is the problem represented to be*?' (WPR) method together with Foucauldian elements of ethical relations as a new modified tool for analysing educational policy texts. The study enhances our understanding of current lifelong learning discourses by analysing their 'humanistic roots' and subjectivities in the humanistic era. Moreover, it challenges the extent to which the politics of lifelong learning was considered humanistic at that time.

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Introduction

Economic emphasis is recognised today as intrinsic to the politics of lifelong learning (Kinnari, 2020b; Larson & Cort, 2022). However, the current entrepreneurial character of lifelong learning is a relatively recent construction (Kinnari, 2020a). The lifelong learning concept has been (re)defined by various interest groups and organisations, and various definitions have been adopted to varying degrees by governments and other political actors worldwide. Thus, several 'truths' regarding lifelong learning have existed over time. Several scholars (e.g. Centeno, 2011; Larson & Cort, 2022; Rubenson, 2006) have identified three generations in the history of the politics of lifelong learning: humanistic, economist and 'soft' economist.

The idea that the first generation of lifelong learning – from the end of the 1960s up to the end of the 1970s – was humanistic stems largely from the significant role that UNESCO played in lifelong learning policies during that period (Lee & Friedrich, 2011; Milana, 2012; Rubenson, 2006). The publication of *Learning to Be* (also known as *The Faure Report*) in 1972 constituted a major milestone in the politics of lifelong learning in humanistic generation. The Faurean humanistic discourse on lifelong education differed considerably from the conceptualisation of lifelong

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learning that has formed over the last three decades, during which the OECD and the European Union have taken the lead in defining lifelong learning as an instrument of competitiveness, economic growth and matching in the labour market. Lifelong learning politics at the time included other players besides UNESCO: the Council of Europe (1973, 1975, 1978) introduced permanent education as an alternative and rival to lifelong education, while the OECD (1973, 1975) introduced recurrent education, which was far from humanistic in its emphasis on labour market-relevant education. Interestingly, rapid social and technological development were represented as the salient problems and justifications in the lifelong education, permanent education and recurrent education discourses. However, the objectives differed in all discourses from each other.

The last 60 years have revealed lifelong learning to be an 'empty jar' filled with different policies at different times. Current educational policy texts produced by supranational organisations, such as UNESCO, the OECD and the EU, represent lifelong learning as a necessary response to growing economic, technological and societal pressures (c.f. Biesta, 2006; Kinnari, 2020a; Larson & Cort, 2022). Since the 1990s in particular, arguments for the necessity of lifelong learning have been essentially economic in their nature (Olssen, 2008). Lifelong learning has been considered as an effective tool not only for improving competitiveness and enhancing growth, but also for advancing social inclusion and active citizenship (e.g. Fejes, 2005; Kinnari, 2020a; Larson & Cort, 2022; Normand & Pacheco, 2014; Olssen, 2008). Over time, the politics of lifelong learning has transformed to a self-evident idea promising profit for both the individual and the whole community (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2013). At the same time, lifelong learning functions as a self-governing policy that constantly reconstructs the learner's subjectivity using a variety of techniques, including self-observation, self-evaluation, confession of one's needs and deficiencies, regular updating of skills and moulding of one's attitudes and emotions to become an active, entrepreneurial and profitable citizen (Fejes, 2005, 2006; Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2013; Kinnari, 2020a; Larson & Cort, 2022).

The historical roots of lifelong learning and the rhetoric of the 'ideal lifelong learner' in the humanistic generation are studied from a governmentality perspective (c.f. Foucault, 2009). We analyse policy documents published by three major international organisations: UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD (see also Kinnari, 2020a). Of particular interest are the questions of *how* the *ideal* or *norm* of the lifelong learner's subjectivity was constructed and which societal problems lifelong learning is considered to address. Our research questions are as follows: (1) To what problems has lifelong learning been presented as a solution in the humanistic generation? and (2) What type of conception of humanity has lifelong learning been used to construct in the humanistic generation?

Our research material comprises eight documents published by UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD. These documents are analysed from a post-structural perspective by applying Carol Bacchi's *What is the Problem Represented to Be?* (WPR) method (Bacchi, 2000; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016) and Foucauldian elements of ethical reasoning (Foucault, 1986), which provide a toolkit for understanding what types of subjectivities are *presented* in policy texts. Accordingly, the foci of this study are the problems to which lifelong learning has been regarded as a solution, the required knowledge and the requirements of the learner. We understand policies as discourses that are interconnected with political rationalities (Bacchi, 2000; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). In recognising the problems presented in policy texts, it is possible to identify the legitimated knowledge that serves the objectives of lifelong learning. We understand the politics of lifelong learning as contingent, whereby the 'truth' of the lifelong learning is connected to society's power dynamic.

By applying Michel Foucault's (1986) *elements of ethical reasoning* to the analysis of policy texts, we analyse what kind of subjectivities are constructed and presented in policy texts regarding lifelong learning. By applying the elements of ethical reasoning to policy analysis, we introduce a new methodological tool for analysing policy texts. Lifelong learning has been a topic of interest to researchers in the field of education policy for several decades. However, the ethical dimension and moral order of lifelong learning in education policy have rarely been investigated. From a governmentality perspective, education influences individuals' minds, bodies and souls (Fejes &

Dahlstedt, 2013). Liberal governing shapes autonomous individuals' conduct to given direction by helping them identify desired values and objectives (Foucault, 2009). By applying Foucauldian (Foucault, 2009) elements of ethical reasoning, it is possible to study the technologies of the self more precisely. These technologies of the self (c.f. Foucault, 1988) allow the individual to shape the self so that they may become the desired lifelong learner represented in policies. In a 'material world', it is impossible to know how well people adopt these 'given subjectivities' and for that reason, we focus on the rhetorical level.

Governmentality of the politics of lifelong learning

According to Michel Foucault, governmentality comprises three factors: knowledge, power and truth. Every society has its 'régime of truth, its "general politics" of truth' (Foucault, 1980, p. 131). For example, each policy discourse concerning the history of the politics of lifelong learning includes typical conceptions of humanity and society. The mechanisms and instances within these discourses establish true and false statements. Techniques and procedures legitimise the acquisition of truth, and those who have attained legitimate status are obligated to say what counts as true (Foucault, 1980, pp. 131–132).

Knowledge and truth are dependent upon one another, and this interdependency is required to establish power relations. Knowledge is an essential condition for the formation and further growth of an industrial, technological society. However, for Foucault (1980), knowledge and power are not interchangeable: rather, they have a correlative connection that is determined in the context of its historical specificity (Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982). Foucault perceives 'a battle around truth' and an ensemble of rules that separate truth from fiction (Foucault, 1980). A constant battle also surrounds the legitimatisation of truth in the politics of lifelong learning.

Political rationality (such as neoliberalism) is 'a kind of intellectual machinery or apparatus for rendering reality thinkable in such a way that is amenable to political programming' (Rose, 1996, p. 42). Political rationalities are characterised by certain regularities and a moral form that legitimates authority and the distribution of authorities in different fields (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). This moral form guides how political, pedagogical, ecological and familial principles and authority are exercised in the name of the common good and are manifest in ideas of freedom, justice, equality, responsibility, citizenship, sustainable development and autonomy (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016; Rose, 1999). Political rationalities are also epistemological in character, espousing certain conceptions of objects, such as population and economy, and subjects, such as citizens and individuals, in addition to ideas around how to be governed (Dean, 1999/2010; Rose, 1999). Distinctive language and vocabulary also characterise each political rationality (Rose, 1996, 1999).

Political rationalities offer ways to link various practices and techniques and integrate them in thought so that they appear to conform to a coherent logic (Lemke, 2012). To make rationality translatable, the logic is to transform conceptions and meanings so that they are perceived in the same way as rationality (c.f. Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016; Rose, 1999); for example, under a neoliberal rationality, lifelong learning is measured in economic terms (Kinnari, 2020a). Rationalities are then embodied in the various practices and technologies that regulate economic life, medical care, welfare benefits, professional activity and so on (Rose, 1999). In political rationalities, these practices and technologies define the lifelong learner and determine who may (or may not) qualify as a political subject or citizen (Lemke, 2012).

Political rationalities and *technologies of government* resemble thought and action in that their existence is interdependent (Walters, 2012). Foucault (1988) distinguished four technologies of governmentality, two of which are relevant for understanding the governmentality of the politics of lifelong learning. First, *technologies of power* govern individuals' conduct towards certain desired outcomes. In doing so, the subject becomes objectivised. *Technologies of the self* in turn enable individuals to conduct themselves autonomously through several operations of their own bodies, thoughts and behaviours. Through these technologies of governmentality, individuals orient their

thinking and direct themselves to attain respect, perfection, wisdom, happiness and salvation (Foucault, 1988; Rose, 1996, 1999). In the politics of lifelong learning, these technologies guide and encourage people to become amenable, employable, profitable and active participants in society. By using the Foucauldian (Foucault, 1986) elements of ethical reasoning, we analyse what kind of technologies of the self are given in policy texts.

We understand the politics of lifelong learning to be a technology of governmentality and an organic part of political rationality (c.f. Fejes, 2005; Olssen, 2008). The governmentality of lifelong learning refers to power relations: the individual regulates their own conduct (the conduct of conduct) through learning based on taken-for-granted rationalities; these, in turn, depend on the power relations that exist in society (Foucault, 1986, 2009). Foucault's work on governmentality suggested that it is possible to identify specific political rationalities emerging in precise sites and specific historical moments that are underpinned by coherent systems of thought. These systems of thought convey the 'nature' of governmentality (Foucault, 1991; Rose, 1999).

From the perspective of analytics of government, generations are related to liberal governmentality and to the change from social to neoliberal and subsequently to post-neoliberal political rationalities (Dean, 1999/2010; Rose, 1996, 1999). Thus, policies for lifelong learning not only concern the provision of learning opportunities but have also constructed desired subjectivity (Fejes, 2006; Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2013). In the lifelong learning model, subjects are governed according to their relationships with their communities (Olssen, 2008). The politics of lifelong learning includes disciplinary techniques and creates distinctions, such as 'good – bad' and 'normal – abnormal', by which individuals' qualities, skills and aptitudes can be ranked (Edwards, 2002; see also Kinnari, 2020b; Kauppila et al., 2020). However, the ideal citizen (or desired subject) in policy texts was constructed considerably differently in the humanistic generation of the 1960s and 1970s to how it is constructed today (see also Fejes, 2006; Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2013).

Research material and methodological approach

Historically, scholars have distinguished three phases or 'generations' of lifelong learning (c.f., Centeno, 2011; Rubenson, 2006). These generations are not clear-cut epochs but rather periods that overlap one another. The concept of lifelong learning as spanning generations (e.g. Biesta, 2006; Dehmel, 2006; Rubenson, 2006; Schuetze, 2006) reflects the varying roles played by the state, market and civil society and the connections between them (cf. Desjardins, 2015). These ideological dimensions are interconnected with changing political rationalities. In this article, we analyse how the concept of human was constructed in policy texts by UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD during the era referred to as lifelong learning's humanistic generation – from the late 1960s through the end of the 1970s – when the UNESCO discourse was dominant (see Kinnari, 2020a; Rubenson, 2006). This generation was at its 'strongest' during the era of 'social' rationality, when ideas rooted in social liberalism contributed to the stronger role that society played in the politics of lifelong learning (c.f. Rose, 1999).

Our analysis consisted of three phases, modified from the six phases originally presented by Carol Bacchi (Bacchi, 2000; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016). The reason for using only selected elements of the WPR-model was that the specific aim was to focus on the subjectification constructed in policy texts. We combined the WPR approach with the Foucault (1980) interconnected concepts of knowledge, power and subject. We were interested in how the representing problems and the given solutions to the problems, and the objectives are part of the governing. Knowledge is used as a tool of power when certain problems are represented in policy texts. Power operates through knowledge shaping what is true or false, normal or abnormal when objectives and solutions for represented problems are examined in policy texts. Subjects are positioned and regulated by power relations in policy objectives.

In the first phase, we applied the WPR approach in our analysis (see e.g. Bacchi, 2000; Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016), which allowed us to focus on how political problems were created – in particular, policy discourses (Bacchi, 2000). We investigated what the problems were and how lifelong learning was proposed as a solution (knowledge) to the represented problems in policy texts. In the second phase, we focused on how the policy documents' main objectives were represented in relation to the problem from the perspective of governmentality. We identified the main justifications for lifelong learning – that is, how governmentality of lifelong learning (power) was legitimated in policy texts. We contextualised the analysis within political rationalities. In the third phase, we explored how subjects were made objects of the legitimate knowledge of lifelong learning through power – that is, how 'the norm' or 'ideal' of the lifelong learner (subject) was constructed in political rationalities within the policies. In doing this, we applied Foucault's elements of ethical reasoning to understand how the ideal of the moral subject of the lifelong learner was constructed in policy texts (Foucault, 1986).

Foucault (1986) proposed that ethical analysis (as the free relationship to the self) could be examined through four dimensions: ethical substance, mode of subjectivation, ethical work, and telos of the moral subject. For Foucault (1986), ethical substance means the manners that the individual must embody within certain specific moral contexts. In the context of the politics of lifelong learning, we seek the ethical substance of the conception of human upon which lifelong learning is based and ask why lifelong learning is regarded as important. Foucault (1986) defined mode of subjectivation as the ways in which the individual understands their relationship to the rules and recognises their obligation to implement these rules. In the context of the politics of lifelong learning, we ask what kind of competence is important for the individual and society? What obligations is the lifelong learner required to assume? For Foucault (1986), ethical work signifies the means by which we transform ourselves into ethical subjects. In this article, we ask what are the practices by which the lifelong learner should modify their behaviour? Finally, Foucault's (1986) concept of the telos of the moral subject refers to a certain mode of being that is characteristic of the ethical subject. In the context of lifelong learning, we ask what is the goal of the politics of lifelong learning and mode of the lifelong learner?

We selected the empirical material by reading numerous documents relating to the politics of lifelong learning that had been produced by the three supranational organisations. The number of relevant documents produced during the humanistic generation was relatively small. Our empirical material includes eight reports published by UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD (see Appendix 1). The selected documents and the identified discursive constructions are treated as negotiated products of debate among numerous actors within organisations whose interests diverge (Edwards & Boreham, 2003; Lange & Alexiadou, 2010). The documents also communicate with one another and make reference to previous policy alignments, thus construing a shared understanding of the state of affairs. Discourses are not coherent even within a single organisation: conceptions, such as that of a 'learning society', are in constant flux (e.g. Edwards & Boreham, 2003).

The governmentality of the politics of lifelong learning in the humanistic generation

Lifelong learning emerged as a key topic in international debates during the 1940s, although it was not afforded more serious discussion until the 1960s (Kinnari, 2020a; Larson & Cort, 2022; Milana, 2012). These debates tended to be the preserve of intergovernmental bodies, such as UNESCO, the OECD and the Council of Europe. Although the OECD (documents on 'recurrent education') and the Council of Europe (documents on 'permanent education') published important documents in the field of lifelong learning, the most significant was UNESCO's *Learning to Be: The World of Education Today and Tomorrow*, also known as '*The Faure Report*' (see also Centeno, 2011; Dehmel, 2006).

Lifelong education

Learning to Be is widely regarded as the first comprehensive document outlining the concept of 'lifelong education', as it was called in the UNESCO discourse (Schuetze, 2006). The report formulated the philosophical – political concept of lifelong learning as a humanistic, democratic and emancipatory system of learning opportunities for all, irrespective of social class, race, financial means or the learner's age (UNESCO, 1972; Centeno, 2011; Dehmel, 2006; Kinnari, 2020a; Larson & Cort, 2022). The prevention of alienation and the encouragement of emancipation were crucial factors in the legitimisation of lifelong education (UNESCO, 1972; Elfert, 2015; Kinnari, 2020a).

In the lifelong education discourse, people were encouraged to become active members of the democratic society (UNESCO, 1972, p. xxviii). The represented problem was society's rapid development, which caused threats and risks to employment, the economy, and to society as a whole. The major concern was the alleged severe alienating effect of technical development on citizens (UNESCO, 1972, p. 91). Therefore, the focus was on *risks*; from the perspective of social liberal rationality, the state had a moral duty to look after its citizens and to invest effort in the improvement of social healthcare, social security and education to sustain economic growth (see Rose, 1999). Lifelong education and learning society were regarded as a solution that would prevent the alienation of individuals as employees and citizens, and the role of education in encouraging and supporting democratic participation was emphasised (UNESCO, 1972, p. xxxv).

> Education, in this context, also has two dimensions. It has to prepare for changes, show people how to accept them and benefit from them, create a dynamic, non-conformist, non-conservative frame of mind. Concurrently, it has to play the part of an antidote to the many distortions within man and society. For democratic education must be able to provide a remedy to frustration, to the de-personalization and anonymity in the modern world and, through lifelong education, reduce insecurity and enhance professional mobility. (UNESCO, 1972, p. 104)

Rapid technological change was considered problematic because of the perceived future threat, and it was mentioned that 'strong support must be given to democracy, as [it was] the only way for man to avoid becoming enslaved to machines' (UNESCO, 1972, p. xxviii). The concept of democracy was also associated with equal opportunities and problematic was seen the unequal education system. In its existing form, education was regarded as a mechanism that itself reproduced inequalities within societies (UNESCO, 1972, p. 57). As such, the objective was to encourage people to get participated to democratic processes:

> The essential thing in political education is not the more or less subtle or more or less excessive form it may assume, but for educational action to be linked to the just, efficient and democratic exercise of power. It is not enough to teach people about political machinery. *An individual comes to a full realization of his own social dimension through an apprenticeship of active participation in the functioning of social structures and, where necessary, through a personal commitment in the struggle to reform them*. (UNESCO, 1972, p. 151)

The knowledge that legitimated the objectives and governmentality of lifelong education was labelled 'scientific humanism':

> The search for a new educational order is based on scientific and technological training, one of the essential components of scientific humanism. [. . .] The kind of person it concerns is a concrete being, set in a historical context, in a set period. He depends on objective knowledge, but that which is essentially and resolutely directed towards action and primarily in the service of man himself. (UNESCO, p. 146)

The governmentality of lifelong education in *Learning to Be* was constructed from the principles of emancipation and self-development based on the belief that people who understand the mechanisms of economics and the structure of society will participate more actively in society. This perspective on lifelong education was humanistic, the idea being that people could fulfil themselves intellectually, emotionally and morally by pursuing education throughout their lives. The connection between education and the labour market was also emphasised; however, it was understood

that the labour market's needs should be addressed humanely without any recourse to de-personalisation, alienation or frustration.

In 1976, UNESCO published *Foundations of Lifelong Education* edited by R.H. Dave. Several articles continued the evolution of the Faurean discourse of lifelong education by introducing the philosophical, historical, sociological, psychological, anthropological, ecological and economic foundations for lifelong education. The need to establish the basic foundations was acknowledged based on the represented problems – the rapid expansion and development of technological knowledge, which was believed to present novel challenges for human society (UNESCO, 1976, p. 15). Lifelong education was therefore defined more explicitly and regarded as a 'master concept' – that is, a solution to large-scale global problems:

> As a positive response to these problems, the concept of lifelong education has been suggested as a possible solution by many educational thinkers, researchers and international organizations. In fact the very first recommendation of the International Commission on the Development of Education states: 'We propose lifelong education as the master concept for educational policies in the years to come for both developed and developing countries [. . .] The various applications of this idea will of course differ greatly. We may even say . . . that it could be applied in as many different ways as there are countries in the world . . . But we remain convinced that the question of lifelong education, the decision to take and the paths to follow in order to achieve it are the crucial issues of our time, in all countries of the world, even in those which have yet to become fully aware of this idea'. (UNESCO, 1976, pp. 18–19)

The Foundations of Lifelong Education was not a coherent representation of the humanistic discourse of lifelong education. In the philosophical, historical, sociological and psychological foundations of lifelong education, the represented problem was the fear of alienation amid a fast-changing global culture. It was feared that humans would become alienated as a result of technological capitalism and the altruistic 'spirit of man' would disappear (UNESCO, 1976, p. 98). According to lifelong education's economic foundations, the represented problem was that education was not widely regarded as productive (UNESCO, 1976, p. 288). The economic foundations introduced the human capital theory (c.f. Becker, 1962), which configures skills and knowledge as factors that increase economic growth (UNESCO, 1976, 289). Nevertheless, economic growth was not the main objective in the lifelong education discourse as propounded by UNESCO (UNESCO, 1976, p. 352). However, the human capital-oriented approach to lifelong education was recognised in the discourse advanced by UNESCO during the humanistic generation of the 1970s.

In 1977, UNESCO published *Lifelong education: A psychological analysis* (authored by A. J. Cropley), which aimed to deepen the understanding of the psychological foundations of 'Faurean' lifelong education. In the report, the concepts of lifelong education and lifelong learning were separated in UNESCO's discourse (UNESCO, 1977, p. 39). It was emphasised that education systems were regarded as structures that should encourage learning (UNESCO, 1977, p. 31). The lifelong learner was considered a subject who should be self-aware and self-conscious with respect to their own learning process throughout their life (UNESCO, 1977, p. 116). However, UNESCO's contemporary, Faurean approach to lifelong education was also self-reflected and the common critic towards it was represented. According to the received criticism lifelong education as a concept was seen vague and its utility defied empirical proof (UNESCO, 1977, p. 152). Similarly, lifelong education was also labelled as potentially dangerous and based on the interests of policymakers (UNESCO, 1977, p. 157). Its educational and self-developmental aspects had also gained critique, and it was argued that people's self-development had potentially become too much the norm (UNESCO, 1977, p. 159). However, the new introduced concept lifelong learning was emphasised to be more vocational and based on labour market needs than the previous one. The focus switched from structures (education) to the individual (learning), and the 'psychological nature of the lifelong learner' was introduced. The lifelong learner was introduced to be 'cognitively well-equipped, highly educable and motivated to carry on a process of lifelong learning' (UNESCO, 1977, p. 118).

The lifelong education discourse originated from social democratic liberalism and radical social democratic liberalism (Elfert, 2015; Lee & Friedrich, 2011). In general, lifelong education emerged from social rationality as an umbrella concept. The fear was that technological capitalism would alienate people from themselves and from society. Lifelong education was believed to be a tool that would support the integration of society and keep people involved in their communities. Through lifelong education, people were governed from the centre, and 'scientific humanism' legitimated the governmentality of lifelong education. The objective was to prevent alienation and encourage democratic processes in social civil society (c.f., Lee & Friedrich, 2011). Towards the end of the 1970s, the Faurean humanistic discourse had attracted criticism for its 'naïve' conception of human. The 'cognitively well-equipped lifelong learner' was a somewhat different ideal of the lifelong learner to that constructed in the Faurean discourse.

Permanent education

UNESCO's lifelong education discourse was not the only discourse in the humanistic generation, as the Council of Europe (1973; 1975; 1978) introduced the idea of permanent education. Similarly to lifelong education, the rapid changes facing society were represented as the main problem for education systems (c.f. Council of Europe 1973, p. 2), and the strengthening of democracy was considered a key objective of permanent education. Nevertheless, differences also emerged between the two discourses, with the Council of Europe placing greater emphasis than UNESCO on economic factors (c.f., Kinnari, 2020a; Pépin, 2007).

The main objective in the politics of permanent education was to achieve a cultural democratic society:

> *In cultural democracy the educational process is rooted in a socio-cultural situation which is dissociated from school; it is not set apart from a policy of social change; each member of the community is here committed to his own education.*

(Council of Europe 1978, p. 33). The knowledge that legitimated the objectives and governmentality of permanent education was socio-cultural animation (Council of Europe 1978). Socio-cultural animation signified empowering people for participating in society via direct democratic processes. Cultural democratic society required three main means that were disseminated through permanent education: *participation*, *globalisation* and *equality of opportunities* (Council of Europe 1978).

Individuals' 'participation' process was determined with reference to four life situations: 'the citizen's role in society', their 'work situation', their 'leisure situation' and their 'educational situation' (Council of Europe, 1978, p. 6). In each case, the focus was on the individual and their identity. Permanent education was aimed at encouraging individuals to participate in social activities for the purpose of achieving a cultural democratic society (Council of Europe, 1978a). Recognising life's different situations, permanent education focused on all sectors of life. The subject was governed through society, and this governance was legitimated and justified in the name of cultural democracy.

> Because education must develop people's ability to manage their own lives, that is, the various social, economic and cultural factors by which they are conditioned, one of the principles of permanent education se out in the 'Fundamentals' was the necessity for adults 'to manage and be responsible for their education'. (Council of Europe 1978, p. 6)

The term 'globalisation' signified globalisation of the personality. The objective was that permanent education would encourage the development of the personality and democratic participation in smaller communities in the belief that an emancipated and participating people would be more productive as employees and citizens (Council of Europe, 1973, 1975, 1978). Permanent education aimed to function in two life spheres: at work and in everyday life outside of work. Because of this double role, a redefinition of education was considered necessary; thus, globalised education was

established within the elements of everyday life and not set apart or deemed to take place outside it (Council of Europe, 1978, p. 16). The concept's second principle was to focus on individuals' personal development. Within the discourse, the self was regarded as a whole person, capable of taking their life into their own hands (Council of Europe, 1978).

> Globalisation is a term used in referring to projects, actions and methods which, in our view, seem to tend towards a certain globality. The term globality operates on two levels: man is global, and human functioning, in life situations which are themselves global, is of a global nature. The move towards a global education, one which relates to the whole person, arises out of this dual perception of man-in-a-situation. (Council of Europe, 1978, p. 16)

The 'equalisation of opportunities' within the discourse referred to positive discrimination, which the Council asserted as one of their primary political and policy decisions for reaching cultural democratic society. (Council of Europe, 1978).

> An education policy based on cultural democracy, on the other hand, will attack the very condition of 'marginality', following a comprehensive policy of positive discrimination. According to this approach, any action will endeavour to bring out (and find means of overcoming) the marginal status. Thus it will stand out against the social division of labour; thus it will tackle the problems of wages, housing and health; thus it will develop only insofar as it is supported by some degree of consistency in the action of the authorities. (Council of Europe, 1978, p. 28)

Permanent education emphasised democratic processes, direct democracy and the role of smaller communities, with ideas similar to Basil Yeaxlee's (1929) 'lifelong education' and reminiscent of Eduard C. Lindeman's (1945) and John Dewey's (1916) conceptualisations of democracy. The problem for which permanent education was represented as a solution was that societal structures were alienating people from themselves and from societal participation.

> A permanent education policy [. . .] would help to shape new social relationships on the basis of three closely inter-related principles: opportunities as equal as possible should be offered to everyone; the exercise of responsibilities should be made possible and responsibilisation and autonomy should be developed by bringing people to become as deeply involved as possible in their own education; every individual should be able to mobilise his potential by ensuring his development as full person, the condition for this being the globalisation of his education. (Council of Europe, 1978, p. 2)

The governmentality of permanent education was based on the ideal of autonomous citizens in a cultural democracy. The schooling system was represented as being in crisis and insufficient for addressing the changing needs of individuals and societies. In the utopia of a cultural democratic society, people were seen to be liberated from pressuring structures through exciting them to participate in direct democracy. The 'truth game' of permanent education was based on the ideas of personal growth (globalisation) and empowering participation in a democratic society. Although criticism focused on the existing structures of society and the education system, the governmentality of permanent education was socially executed. Society's duty was to enable empowering structures as well as integrating individuals as agents in cultural democracy (see also Kinnari, 2020a).

Recurrent education

If the preceding two discourses constructed a view that was influenced by humanism and democratic participation, the politics of *recurrent education* articulated by the OECD (1973, 1975) differed substantially. The rationality of the OECD's discourse was embedded in the context of economy and labour. The problem to which recurrent education was represented as a reform was that the education system's structures were regarded as too inflexible and incapable of responding to the labour market's needs (OECD, 1975, p. 8). The structural transformation and the role of the individual was emphasised:

> The concept of recurrent education as it is used in this report expounds the relationship between 'learning' and 'education' by putting it in the perspective of the necessity for a lifelong process of assimilation of new knowledge and experience at the service of a continuous openness to new situations and of enhancing people's ability to take their destiny into their own hands. (OECD, 1973, p.18)

Six represented problems for the need of recurrent education were introduced (OECD 1973, pp. 7–11): education was afflicted by an atmosphere of '*malaise*'; whereby a sense of quasi-reality was presented to the students; an imbalance had emerged between the supply and demand with respect to highly qualified manpower; adult education lacked sufficient resources, and education was not responding sufficiently to the rapid development of knowledge; and the increasing educational gap between generations. Overall, the objective of recurrent education was to function as a structural mechanism and a solution to the problems represented in policy:

> Recurrent education is a comprehensive educational strategy for all post-compulsory or post-basic education, the essential characteristic of which is the distribution of education over total life-span of the individual in a recurring way, i.e. in alternation with other activities, principally with work, but also with leisure and retirement. This definition of recurrent education contains two essential elements: a) it offers an alternative educational strategy to the conventional one by which all formal and full-time education is concentrated in youth, i.e. between the age of five, six, or 7 until the entry into active life, and it proposes to spread post-compulsory education over the full life-span of the individual. Thus it accepts the principle of lifelong learning. b) it proposes a frame within which lifelong learning will be organised, this being the alternation and effective interaction between education, as a structured learning situation, and other social activities during which incidental learning occurs. (OECD, 1973, p. 24)

Recurrent education had three objectives: *individual development*, *equality of opportunities* and *the world of work* (OECD, 1973, pp. 33–45). The policy's character was practical and instrumental: a development strategy for capitalist society. Initially, the full development of individuals and equality of opportunities were articulated in the context of working life (OECD, 1973, pp. 41–44). Individual development was introduced as a guiding principle for developing a self-regulating attitude in learning and development processes (OECD, 1973, p. 34). Later, the objective of individual development was omitted from the policy and was replaced by *allied social policy measures* (OECD, 1975, pp. 18–20). It emphasised freedom of choice and encouraged people to seek access to work through part-time employment. It also encouraged freedom of choice for pensioners and women on maternity leave to participate in the labour market. Moreover, the concept of equality of opportunities was later replaced by equity,[1] but for coherence reasons OECD kept the concept of 'equality' (OECD, 1975, p. 10). All three objectives encouraged close relations between labour markets and education, while the third objective – the world of work – determined the context for the other objectives. The ideals of flexibility and effectiveness, borrowed from the vocabulary of economics, emerged within the discourse of recurrent education (OECD, 1973, 1975).

> The suggestion that conventional post-compulsory educational provision, labour market training and adult education should be coordinated on this basis implies a challenge to educational institutions to adjust their admission policies and teaching methods; to employers to redefine their approach to the design of work and to review their social responsibilities; and to governments to forge links between education, manpower, employment and social policies which will make available to the individual a more flexible pattern of education, work and leisure. Recurrent education, therefore, is naturally to regarded as basically belonging to the educational policy, but one which will be effectively implemented only in conjunction with supporting social and labour market policies. The justification for it may be put forward under two headings: effectiveness and equality. (OECD 1975, p. 9)

The governmentality of recurrent education was encompassed in neoliberal rationality and primarily served the labour market's needs. The main problems were identified in the education system, which was not considered relevant to the labour market. The governmentality of recurrent education was legitimated by human capital theory, and individuals were governed as labour power and productive forces rather than as citizens of a society. Compared to the discourses of UNESCO and the Council of Europe, OECD texts placed greater responsibility on the self and the individual. The 'truth game' of recurrent education was based on economic growth, efficiency and well-functioning labour markets.

Subjectivities of the lifelong learner in the humanistic generation

From a governmentality perspective, lifelong learning is a mechanism by which society may reach a desired subjectivity (c.f. Fejes, 2005). Although the discourses put forward by the three organisations highlighted in the present work diverged, they did have one thing in common: they made it possible to address the risks and challenges of a changing society and to construct a new subjectivity: the socialised, collective and system-oriented self. Lifelong education, permanent education and recurrent education were all 'technologies of power' and 'technologies of self' and represented solutions to several issues attributed to societal changes, such as ageing, technological development and labour market instabilities. The humanistic generation was characteristic of an era during which citizens' abilities, skills and attitudes were influenced to prevent them from becoming alienated from society, the market, the economy and the whole democratic process. Emancipation, empowerment, the globalisation of the personality and individual development were examples of a) technologies of the self that supported the attainment of the desired citizen and b) subjectivity for the construction of the desired society. Next, we analyse the subjectivities constructed in policy texts using Foucauldian elements of ethical reasoning as tools (as explained above).

The ethical substance in the lifelong education discourse produced by UNESCO was constructed within the context of scientific humanism to prevent alienation in a fast-developing world (see Table 1). Lifelong education signified not only emancipation and self-fulfilment but also peace and democratic participation with the aim of becoming *homo humanus*. The modes of subjectivation were connected to the principles of emancipation, understanding, criticality and participation. It was necessary to understand that, within technological capitalism, a passive lifestyle might alienate the self from oneself and from society. Therefore, ethical work was not initially clearly outlined, but the psychological measures for self-development were given later. One had to work the self to be cognitively well-equipped, highly educable, motivated to learn and responsible for independently learning new knowledge and skills. The telos of the moral subject in the politics of lifelong education was to create emancipated, self-fulfilling and mature citizens in a global democracy, where people retained the idea of the spirit of man in concordance with themselves.

In the Council of Europe's discourse of permanent education, the ethical substance was constructed within the moral order of participation, globalisation and equalisation of opportunities. These attributes were believed to relieve humans of pressuring structures, enabling them to activate their potential to become a combination of *homo politicus* and *homo democraticus*. The modes of subjectivation were attached to the ideal of participatory, democratic and critical citizenship. People were encouraged to become global and active citizens who were autonomous and free from the pressures of societal structures. The ethical work was not explicitly mentioned but was implicit in the idea of removing outdated school structures that stifled the individual's potentiality. The telos was to realise the utopia of cultural democracy, wherein the ideal of the autonomous, active and participatory citizen was the legitimate base.

The ethical substance in recurrent education presented by the OECD was legitimated by the needs of the labour market. People were constructed as labour market citizens, a combination of *homo economicus* and *homo faber*, as human capital theory and adaptability defined the conception of being human. The modes of subjectivation were based on the needs of the labour market. People were pragmatically encouraged to learn labour market-relevant knowledge and skills and to develop the self to become motivated and flexible with regard to labour market changes. No thorough guidelines for ethical work were provided. The reformation of the education structures would make it possible for students to acquire sufficient labour market-oriented knowledge. The telos of the recurrent education policy was to create a knowledge economy. Recurrent education policy was a pragmatic tool for enabling human factors – that is, a qualified labour force for a capitalist society.

Discourses and vocabularies change over time, depending on power relations and political rationalities (Rose, 1996) in societies. The most prominent social and political phenomena that preceded and led to the era of humanistic generation were, e.g. post-war reconstruction period and optimism; rapid

technological development; the emergence of welfare states; arms race and Cold War tensions; the rise of mass media; awareness of Third World famine and poverty; civil rights movements and radicalisation of student movements. In the discourses of lifelong education and permanent education, people were governed in relation to so-called social or social democratic liberalism rationality (c.f. Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016; Dean, 1999/2010; Rose, 1999), whereby the theories, explanations, information and specialist services offered by experts were connected via complex systems that governed individuals in a social form. In social rationality, the idea was that the welfare state would be at the centre, programming, shaping, guiding, channelling, directing and controlling events and persons distant from it (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016; Rose, 1999). People were to be governed through society in relation to social norms and institutions so that they could express their experiences and evaluations in a social form (Rose, 1996, 1999). The 'truth' legitimated by experts was significant because, through the power of truth, people and distant events could be 'governed at arm's length' (Rose, 1996, 1999). Political rule was insufficient to establish the norms of individual conduct; the authority of experts was needed (Dean, 1999/2010). The subject of welfare was among the needs, attitudes and relationships governed in the name of collective solidarity and dependence (Rose, 1996).

Lifelong education and permanent education functioned as technologies of governmentality within the framework of 'social' rationality: people were governed *through society* by means of lifelong education and permanent education. The aim was to make people emancipated, democratic and equal citizens who would also become more productive and profitable for their communities and the whole society. The subjectivity was based on the solidarity and citizenship of a civil society wherein the standard of a subject (the self) was constructed and legitimated by social sciences and experts (c.f. Rose, 1999). In particular, lifelong education emerged as an 'umbrella concept' (c.f., Schuetze, 2006) that covered the problems not only in education but also in the field of social sciences. Social welfare states provided services aimed at combating unemployment, health issues

Table 1. Subjectivities of the lifelong learner.

	Ethical substance: What kind of conception of human lifelong learning is based on and why it is important?	Modes of subjectivation: What kind of competence is important for the individual and society? What kind of obligations does the lifelong learner need?	Ethical Work: What are the practices how the lifelong learner should modify the behaviour of oneself?	Telos of the moral subject: What is the goal of the politics of lifelong learning and mode of the lifelong learner?
UNESCO	Scientific humanism legitimated the principles of lifelong education and conception of human	Emancipation and democratic participation, critical attitude for preventing alienation	Not specifically defined, later psychological measures cognitively well-equipped, highly educable, motivated	Emancipated, self-fulfilling and mature citizens for global democracy
Council of Europe	The moral order of participation, globalisation and equalisation of opportunities legitimated the principles of permanent education and conception of human	Autonomous participation and integration for preventing alienation	Not specifically defined, liberation from outdated education structures	Critical citizen for cultural democratic society
OECD	The needs of labour market legitimated the principles of recurrent education and conception of human	Pragmatic and efficient labour market relevant learning	Not specifically defined, labour market-oriented knowledge executed in education systems	Qualified labour market citizen for the capitalist society

Table 2. Represented problems, objectives and the legitimating knowledge in lifelong learning policies of UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD in the 'humanistic generation'.

	Represented problems	Objectives	Legitimating knowledge
UNESCO	Vast development of societies and technology, expansion of knowledge	Preventing alienation, encouraging emancipation	Scientific Humanism
COUNCIL OF EUROPE	Social structures (such as school) were alienating people from themselves and from societal participation	Liberation from pressuring structures, direct democracy	Sociocultural Animation
OECD	The structures of the education system were considered inflexible and incapable of answering to needs of labour market	Labour market-relevant education system with permanent study leaves	Human Capital Theory

and ignorance, and the main objective of all lifelong learning discourses was to respond to the risks of the rapidly changing world. Governmentalisation of the state was materialised in the measures aimed at guiding individuals towards 'normal citizenship' (c.f., Rose, 1999).

Recurrent education introduced a human capital-legitimated development strategy for capitalist society. Individual skills were regarded as assets for economic growth. Governing was legitimated in the name of the future – the future of the economy, competitiveness and human capital. Recurrent education was hailed as a tool that could be used to strike a balance between the demands of a changing economy and a changing social environment. The recurrent education discourse anticipated the era of emerging neoliberalism, the changing global economic climate and unfavourable demographic trends. The subjectivity in recurrent education was constructed on the autonomous and labour market-oriented self.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to analyse (1) to what problems lifelong learning has been suggested as a solution (see Table 2), and (2) what conception of human was constructed in policy texts by UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD during the humanistic generation (see Table 1). Thus, the contribution of the analyses presented in this article is two-fold: (1) more accurate description of the international lifelong learning policy in the era of 'humanistic generation', and (2) description of the pursued subject, the ideal citizen, of the three organisations in the 'humanistic' generation. In addition, the analysis of subjectivities by using the Foucauldian tool (elements of ethical reasoning) is the major methodological contribution of the article.

The analyses reveal that the main problems represented by the three organisations stem from the rapid structural changes and technological developments to which labour forces and entire adult populations needed to adapt. The differences between represent problems and objectives in the discourse of lifelong learning promoted by UNESCO, the Council of Europe and the OECD are rooted in the objectives of the organisations. They had different audiences, as well as constituencies. Of the three, UNESCO was the most global and all-embracing in its concern for problems in the third world, the developing countries. In UNESCO's constitution (1945) the purpose of the organisation was declared to contribute to peace and security by promoting international cooperation in education, sciences, culture, communication and information in order to respect justice, human rights and freedom without distinction of race, sex, language or religion. According to Council of Europe (1973), the goal of the Council for Cultural Co-operation, (CCC, established in 1962) responsible of creating the documents of permanent education, was to help create conditions for educational opportunities for young Europeans regardless of their background and facilitate their adjustment to altering political and social conditions. OECD's object was to increase sustainable economic growth and employment, standard of living, financial stability; contribute the development of world economy and economic expansion, and contribute the expansion of the world trade (OECD, 1973; 1975).

For UNESCO and the Council of Europe, lifelong learning was regarded as an instrument to combat alienation and advance emancipation and participation in society's democratic processes. The humanistic approach to governing societal and technological changes was not equally espoused by all three organisations. In particular, the OECD emphasised the economy's needs in its calls for more labour market-oriented learning. Internationally, UNESCO may have been the most prominent advocate for adult and lifelong learning from the late 1960s to the late 1970s (c.f. Lee & Friedrich, 2011), but analysis of all three organisations' policies at that time reveals that the rendition of the era as purely humanistic is not wholly accurate. This study has demonstrated that human capital theory-oriented ideas of lifelong learning with emphasis on labour market skills already existed in humanistic generation. The Council of Europe's policy discourse of permanent education was somewhere between that of the OECD and UNESCO in emphasising the role of civil society and democracy. The represented problems in all discourses were relatively similar to one another, but the policy objectives diverged (see Table 2).

From a governmentality perspective (Foucault, 2009), the politics of lifelong learning itself is also 'ethical work' in political rationalities. Lifelong learning itself is a 'technology of power' and 'technology of self' for governing people. Through lifelong learning, citizens must adapt themselves to become employable as part of the labour force (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2013). Individuals must update themselves to conform to the labour market citizen norm (Olssen, 2008). The current moral order of the politics of lifelong learning has been founded on the legacy of 'recurrent education'. The emphasis of human capital theory in the politics of lifelong learning is undoubtedly more significant today than in the humanistic era. In the 1990s, the ideas of competitiveness fulfilled the politics of lifelong learning close to completely (c.f. Kinnari, 2020a; Larson & Cort, 2022). The growing emphasis on entrepreneurship education and the ideas of the 'entrepreneurial self' penetrated in the early 2000s to lifelong learning policies (Kleibrink, 2011; Kinnari, 2020a, 2020b; Laalo et al., 2019). Similarly, key competencies were defined in lifelong learning policies. In 2020s, the ethical work of lifelong learning has emphasised the need to become an 'ability-capital machine' (Kinnari, 2020a, 2020b) who possesses different abilities (skills, knowledge and attitudes) and different forms of capital to attain a standard of employability with respect to knowledge capitalism (see Kinnari, 2020b; Larson & Cort, 2022; Kleibrink, 2011).

Note

1. According to Espinoza (2007), 'equity' is linked with human capital theory and based on utilitarian considerations. Meanwhile, 'equality' is linked with the democratic ideal of social justice and encourages equality of results. Espinoza continues that greater equity does not necessarily denote greater equality. The encouragement of equity can lead to equal shares but also shares that are determined by need, effort expended, ability to pay, results achieved and so on.

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Appendix

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