

# PEDAGOGICAL RISK AND GOVERNMENTALITY: SHANTYTOWNS IN ARGENTINA IN THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

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In Latin America and in Argentina, the notion of risk is used to refer to the growing impoverished population. In this paper we present research carried out at the intersection of governmentality, pedagogical devices and the production of subjectivity in shantytowns. The notion of *pedagogical risk* is crucial to educational debate and planning, where the primary aim is for schools and their actors to measure and foresee levels of risk through quantitative and qualitative indicators. These actors are expected to make individual decisions and to effect changes in their behaviour. We propose that pedagogical risk management involves a new way to operate power, a new rationality and technology of "conduct of conduct," characterized by an attempt to produce a sense of individual responsibility for achievements and failures. Hence, in school, young people are taught that poverty is a question of the self and individual responsibility.

## 1. Introduction

During the nineties, we were asked to admit that something had shifted; this shift, we were told, was born of a state of crisis; things would never be the same again. One must confront this change with a strong will and a new subject would emerge, one that schools must produce. Those of us already in the world mustn't fear this change; we must, rather, *become* innovative and well-adapted, flexible and ambitious, creative and responsible subjects, and we must produce like subjects in those just coming into the world.

In this framework where governmental narratives and programs were being reconfigured, we undertook a research project on statements produced in the field of education. We investigated statements that articulate a new narrative, one that calls on subjectivity to reform itself, to be held accountable for the production of its own life. In this paper, we will focus on the notion of pedagogical risk as a principle of government and, as such, as a narrative of the formation of subjectivity in the context of extreme urban poverty in what we have called *management societies*<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> We use the notion of *management society* to describe shifts in the now outdated disciplinary devices. Gilles Deleuze (1996) referred to these shifts through the notion of *control societies*; in keeping with this hypothesis, we propose here the idea of *management* insofar as it explains the ways that pedagogical discourses, if not only or exclusively, set out to regulate the life of institutions and of subjectivity.

We base this work on studies of governmentality which, according Rose (1999), “are studies of a particular ‘stratum’ of knowing and acting. Of the emergence of particular ‘regimes of truth’ concerning the conduct of conduct, ways of speaking truth, persons authorized to speak truths, ways of enacting truths and costs of so doing. Of the invention and assemblage of particular apparatuses and devices for exercising power and intervening upon particular problems.” (19). Hence, from our perspective, “studies of governmentality, however, are more concerned with how thought operates within our organized ways of doing things, our *regimes of practices*, and with its ambition and effects.” (Dean, 1999: 17-18)

We suggest that we are witnessing a new logic in the exercise of power. Just as Foucault describes, in the 19th century biopolitics is established as a double power over life: on the one hand, it produces life and, on the other, it lets it die (make live or let die). Its legitimacy, as Agamben (1998) points out, the source of its power over life, was based on a two-sided exception. He illustrates this through the figure of *Homo Sacer*, whose life can not be sacrificed but whom, nonetheless, can be killed without committing homicide. The politicalisation of life operates in the place where life becomes something that must be produced, preserved and taken care of, where sovereign power takes responsibility for it. Yet, with that responsibility the State also gains the right to kill without committing homicide. Thus, says Agamben, politics becomes biopolitics; what is at stake is determining the most efficacious way of organizing care, control, and pleasure in the *nuda vida*, thus broadening the sphere of the sovereign decision on life<sup>2</sup>.

To what extent have these very regimes been changed such that politics has repositioned itself at the place where life and its making are no longer the responsibility of the sovereign sphere but, rather, a problem of the self? To what extent has this shift been effected without that sphere’s losing control over life? A new governmental rationality that no longer consists of making live and letting die, but rather *making oneself live or letting oneself die*. A rationality, we suggest, that underlies the principles that regulate education in those very spaces, like shantytowns, where subjectivity is left to its own devices.

In this paper, we delve into this logic. Specifically, the way that, through the category of risk, government statements in education have articulated a self-knowledge that entails a reform in the production of life and, most certainly, in the formation of the subject or, to use Rose’s term (2003), in subjectification. This study is based on an analysis of documents produced for various Ministerio de Educación de la Nación (Argentine National Department of

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<sup>2</sup> Referring to Hanna Arendt and Foucault, Giorgio Agamben states: “...the implications of the *nuda vida* in the political sphere constitute an originary -if hidden- core of sovereign power. It could even be said that the production of a biopolitical body is the original contribution of the sovereign power. Biopolitics is, in this sense, as old as the sovereign exception. By placing biological life at the heart of its calculations, the modern State is doing nothing other than exposing the secret link between power and *nuda vida...*” (1998: 16).

Education) programs starting in 1995<sup>3</sup>, specifically documents and materials produced to orient schools in contexts of extreme urban poverty.

We will first present the overall debate on the notion of risk and then delve into the ways this notion has been articulated in the field of education.

## 2. Governmentality and Risk in Contexts of Extreme Urban Poverty

For the last decade, one of the issues on the agendas of political debates- both in Argentina and beyond- has been connected with a set of problems often grouped under the term “governability.” Fruit of, among other things, structural adjustment policies, the restructuring of the employment market and, at the same time, new State logics, governability became the political side of the problems of urban poverty in this no-longer-new setting. Although this issue is not limited to the Argentine political agenda or even to Latin America, in this region it is particularly important. This is due, in part, to the steady increase, since the eighties, in the rate of extreme urban poverty.

The new pariahs become a problem when they threaten to provoke unmanageable, systemic unrest. Thus, political planning is seen to revolve around the notions of governability, risk and prevention. In this framework, focalized social policies are geared towards foreseeing and preventing the uprisings that “the new social question” produces. This is due to the fact that “what is at stake... is the *end of well-paid, steady wage labour* as a real and feasible possibility for much of the available workforce ... (therefore), it can be said that a return to steady employment has become a utopia; what’s important is rendering its absence tolerable for those effected.” (Nun, 2001: 274).

In this context, and in keeping with the concern with governability, it is possible to identify a set of narratives that indicate that we live in a risk society. According to Rothstein (et. al., 2006), “risk, however, is increasingly emerging as

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<sup>3</sup> We have focused on the analysis of official documents (from the National Department of education) produced since 1995, when what has been called the Transformación Educativa (Educational Reform) was implemented. This decision (mainly, the criteria used in the selection of sources) is based on the following: starting that year, the National Department enacted various programs linked to implementing changes in school life. These nationwide programs act directly on provinces and, indeed, schools themselves. Examples include the Plan Social Educativo (Social Educational Plan), the Programa de Evaluación de la Calidad (Quality Assessment Program), the Programa Nueva Escuela (New School Program) and a vast direct training plan for the system's upper levels (provincial department staff members, supervisors and principals). All of these programs produced documents that evidence the new contents for schooling; they include proposals about the orientation of the institutional change, defining new roles for principals, teachers and students as well as new ways of relating to parents and the community. In all these documents, it is emphasized that the educational reform is more than a change in the structure and the contents of the curriculum; instead, it entails an overall transformation of the system, creating a new way of “positioning” education in the face of the new social challenges, appealing to subjects to make a commitment to this change.

a key organizing concept for regulatory regimes and extended governance systems within a wide range of policy domains and organizational settings... Risk is no longer the exclusive reserve of scientists and technocrats, but fast becoming the *lingua franca* of business and even of general public policy" (92). In the words of Rose (1996), "... it seems as if we are seeing the emergence of a range of rationalities and techniques that seek to govern without governing society, to govern through regulated choices made by discrete and autonomous actors in the context of their particular commitments to families and communities." (328).

This notion makes reference to the more general question of balance and to the implementation of actions that offset effects that might jeopardize the system;<sup>4</sup> it is something that might happen or, in fact, is going to happen if nothing is done to avoid it. Hence, as O'Maley points out "crime increasingly comes to be understood not as a matter of personal and social pathologies in need of correction, but as a set of risks, more or less inevitable in some degree, but predictable and manageable in aggregate terms" (1996: 190).

In countries like Argentina, this has been palpable in the logics of social policy (Grondona, 2005) since the late nineties; social policy is asked to anticipate and, of course, prevent the consequences of having 20% of the population living under the poverty line; the school-age children of this population are often the third or fourth generation of unemployed people.

## 2.1. Risks and Social Policy in Shantytowns

Let's take a brief pause to describe shantytowns in countries like Argentina. The shantytown is the territorial expression of the increase in marginality and extreme urban poverty. In these terms, it is important to distinguish between a settlement and a shantytown. The first refers to an urban site where a piece of land is taken by agents who, after filing requests with the city, are granted a lot that extends the planning of the adjacent neighbourhoods. Blocks are outlines and lots divided. Usually, the residents leave room for building a school and a first aid centre, as well as a playing field or a park. The construction of the neighbourhood's infrastructure is, in this case, collective. In shantytowns, on the other hand, the occupation of the lands is individual, called *hormiga* (Translator's note: Literally "ant," this term refers to constant individual arrival to

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<sup>4</sup> Just as system theory formulates, two movements occur in the system: "entropy," or the natural tendency towards a process of inner disorder, and "negentropy," which is just the opposite: the pressure exerted by someone or something to keep inner order. Forces for change and crisis come from the first in that they exert pressures on the system that lead to random changes in different parts of the social system. Yet, the negentropic factors establish the dynamics of social control which revolves around the organization and orientation of re-balancing. This is nothing other than the tendency towards emergence, care and maintenance of rules and laws that order society and that, once established, are difficult to change.

these areas). Each family or individual arrives to the land on its own and builds its house as best it can; there is no urban organization in the shantytown; there are no streets, just passageways. Even the common spaces are not planned (see, among others, Ratier, 1974). The lands- which in the urban registries are considered empty lots- are occupied illegally.

Although the emergence of the shantytown can be traced back to the early 20th century, the growth of this sort of space has been constant since the seventies. They have grown especially in times of crisis or economic upheaval, which produce a mass influx of people to these neighbourhoods. Thus, the demographic growth of shantytowns came along with the foreign debt crisis of the eighties, the privatization of State-owned companies in the nineties, and the crisis at the beginning of the 21st century (which was driven, among other things, by the constant growth in the country's risk rating). It is important to point out that these sorts of sites are not limited to a specific space in the city and its surroundings; they are found, in public lands, in an array of neighbourhoods (from the affluent to the lower-middle class, from downtown to the outskirts). The shantytowns were once temporary places of residence but, in recent decades, they have become more and more established sites where people live.

In this context, the possibility of uprisings and *piquetes* (Translator's note: This is one of the new social movements that arose in the nineties. It involves groups of newly organized unemployed people blocking traffic on major highways and streets) is always present; hence, social policy, through clientelism in the distribution of welfare plans, anticipates these upheavals, reducing the margins of discontent and, hence, the risk of social unrest. Here, we witness a form of letting live in which the State does not seem to guarantee and/or protect life. The neighbourhoods (shantytowns) are areas full of people without legal documentation who silently arrive and, as long as they don't cross the boundary and unsettle the outside world, can wander the alleyways of the shantytown unbothered. Yet, they must take care of themselves because they are the group of bodies that does not matter; they are abject bodies (Butler, 2002), undocumented masses, NN.

The core of the problem of risk lies in systemic theory, and its perspective is evident in the way urban poverty has been dealt with since the nineties. What's specific about the marginal masses is how its non-functionality indicates a virtual low level of inclusion in the system, an imbalance whose solution organizes forms of social inclusion compatible with the prolongation of current social relations. In the words of Nun, "...in determined circumstances, a certain fragmentation of the whole is the only possible unitary strategy. In this way, the non-functionality of the marginal masses is rendered afunctional, favouring various degrees of autonomy in the subsystem in which it lies ... But if it is accepted that the prolongation of the system as a *whole* demands reducing the interdependence of its parts, threatening the autonomy of those parts also endangers the whole ..." (2001: 242-244).

Hence, the task of government consists of identifying and preventively acting on these entropic forces, and defining strategies that, if unable to annul

them, at least conduct them. This is the point where government and risk intersect: if the risk of uprising is imminent, the problem is how to govern that risk, prevent it, channel it so that it does not occur and produce irremediable problems. Thus, in the words of Kelly (1995) "To err is human; to manage error is system" (197). Although strange, this phrase seems to express "the spirit" of this new body of statements where all major problems are questions of degree of risk (Callinicos, 2000). Politics, economic policy, planning—now strategy — must concern themselves with structuring the mechanisms and tactics that can manage these problems. Indeed, this was one of the criticisms that the government levelled at itself when the uprisings that paralyzed the major cities began: "Our mistake," said a public official to the media in early 2000, "was not to have foreseen what was going to happen ... we should have acted earlier." What did come to pass was protest that brought state troopers to the streets and killed two demonstrators.

In keeping with Rose (1999) "we can crudely distinguish two families of control strategies: those of inclusion and those of exclusion. And, as far as strategies of exclusion are concerned, I suggest a further division. On the one hand there are strategies that seek to incorporate the excluded, through a principle of activity, and to re-attach them to the circuits of civility. On the other, there are strategies which accept the inexorability of exclusion for certain individuals and sectors, and seek to manage this population of anti-citizens through measures which seek to neutralize the danger they pose." (240). Thus, the social question becomes an individual problem. Given a scattered group of individuals unable to manage themselves and make the most of their existence, an attempt is made to move from dependence on the other (the State) to activity centred on making oneself live. The first set of strategies refers to technologies of the ego connected to the search for and construction of identity, personal satisfaction, the development of self-esteem and, through it, personal fulfilment and life projects. But, when these strategies don't work, the task become collectivizing the responsibility in this area, preventing risky behaviour and situations through solidarity/community action. In the logic of the grammar of risk, this is expressed as follows: "sharing risks or the socialization of risk can, in my opinion, become a powerful basis for community" (Beck, 2002: 25). As we shall suggest later, in the modalities of social policy (in this case, in education), it is possible, in Argentina and similar countries, to identify the ways that these two strategies are combined.

Hence, a form of socialization of damage is constituted where, more than alleviating or indeed questioning the effects of an increasingly unequal capitalism, the task becomes to treat its effects. As Sennett points out (2000), the community, the "us," becomes a form of self-protection for those who are destined to share the same concerns; a way to give peace-of-mind "to each individual by assuring him that struggling alone against problems is what everyone does every day... what one learns in the company of others is that all that company has to offer is advice on how to survive in the irreparable solitude of the self and that life is full of risks which must be faced entirely alone" (Baumann, 2003: 24). Risks that, though they might affect everyone, are individual, like the actions taken in relation to these risks. The individual, as a

rational actor, must make decision based on a cost-benefit analysis of his course of action.

According to Beck, risk society is the second moment of modernity: reflexive modernization which, given the contingency of risks, forces the individual to make decisions in relation to these risks and become responsible. A *decisionism* taken to the extreme with those who are able to decide little or nothing; decisions which, at the same time, are a collection of individual questions that can not be transferred to common struggle except as a way of sharing the damages resulting from or the responsibility for decisions.

In this context, the notion of governmentality is a key to an analysis of the changes that have taken place. A paradox in a society that seems to have "decided" that it has no use for 10 to 20% of its population, governability and risk calculation express- in management societies- the problem of governing the population in relation to new concerns and a set of statements and techniques that involve: different ways of rationalizing risk, or an *episteme* of risk; techniques or a *techne* of risk; new forms of social and political *identity*; different political and imaginary agendas invested with a specific *ethos* (Dean, 1999).

According to Beck (2002), risks do not refer to something produced, but rather to an intermediate state between security and destruction; they are a virtuality that can become real and render the invisible visible. Here, he points out that the concept of risk inverts the relations between the past, present and future: there is a lurking future about which one must make decisions. But where that author sees the new promise of these societies as they deliver us to a new form of altruism and moral responsibility, we see, instead, a 21<sup>st</sup> century rationality of governing the population where risk has become political technology.

Speaking of risk implies speaking of the uncertain, while including in this uncertainty measuring that uncertainty. Through the narrative of calculation and the reduction of the world to a number of manageable variables, rendering the world certain has been at the core of the technical and instrumental reason of this governmental *episteme*. This is a calculation performed on the basis of something new, the political economy of uncertainty (Bauman, 2001). The world has become, to use a pun, certainly unforeseeable. But this uncertainty only affects a part of the population; for those who have been left out of salaried employment and its society, poverty and marginality are a certainty. And hence, from now on, the problem becomes thinking of categories that can act on the uncertain or the unpredictable or, simply, prepare us to act in the face of certain marginality.

As a result, governing in the current context entails rendering certain a society assumed to be uncertain, and this certainly entails guiding the population's conducts. Acting in relation to risk is obtaining social governability. As we shall see, this group of categories is present in the narrative of education and in the mediation/prevention of pedagogical risk. Yet, this category is not employed for the entire population but rather for those who will certainly be marginal. We will look at this further in the coming pages.

### 3. Narrative of Pedagogical Risk

As we have said, the logic of risk initially entails two questions: first, that the population or, rather individuals, are potentially at risk and second, that this potential can and *must* be calculated and foreseen so that appropriate action can be taken. This will make it possible to reduce the margin of this potential risk, that is, manage the risk or perhaps reduce its collateral effects. As we said at the beginning of this paper, the documents that we have studied were written in the context of the logic of focalizes official programs aimed at schools located in situations of extreme urban poverty.

Hence, risk factors are discussed as a preventative resource based on a "non-catastrophic hypothesis that in any individual there is a degree of likelihood—on a wide scale that goes from zero to an almost infinite- or indeed infinite- degree – that he will manifest conduct problems. This base-level probability, which in itself needn't imply in the more or less near future the conducts that we are now concerned with, is affected positively or negatively by factors (necessary or contributing causes) that determine the real probability that this possibility be manifest as one or several conduct problems. These factors are bio-psycho-social and they act phenotypically or genotypically. 'In keeping with Martí (1987), who refers to Plaut's formulations (1984), this "expectancy" or likelihood has a direct relation to the time of exposure to risk factors (exposure factor)' " (Moreno Oliver, s/d).

"Guided by actuarial data on risks... and on the delivery of relevant services and expertise... the rational and responsible individual will take prudent risk-managing measures. Within such prudential strategies, the calculative self-interest is articulated with actuarialism to generate risk management as an everyday practice of the self." (O'Maley, 1996: 200)

In schooling in areas of urban marginalization, this is expressed particularly fervently. Education is, perhaps, the first place of anticipation and precaution as it entails acting on subjects or, indeed, educating subjects in order to diminish the likelihood that they become risky. Security, the main concern of government of population (Foucault, 2006), is a core theme in schooling. Schools must take children off the streets, anticipate and examine their conduct as a part of daily education in the self and self-esteem.

These statements are based on arguments articulated in terms of risk, security and prevention. When speaking of these issues, these documents start out by pointing out that *pedagogical risk* exists and, therefore, that institutions must detect it and act accordingly.

It is assumed that children are living on the street because they have no other choice due to the fact that their family can not offer them an alternative; the lack of support produces youth that can not put together a life project, and hence the aim of school programs becomes:

"In every neighbourhood there is a park or a corner where a large number of teenagers and young people gather, often leading to violent occurrences that increase society's suspicion of the very fact that these young people are there. This image of "youth," without anything to do with their time since they don't go to school or work, is the representation society has of [this sector]... This situation, along with the context and failed educational experiences, makes it difficult to insert or keep these kids in the educational system... The description above outlines a panorama where the family, the school and the community encounter difficulties supporting, keeping and reincorporating socially vulnerable teenagers and youth in schools, as well as helping them find a purpose. According to an array of diagnosis carried out by these organizations, it can be said that both youth and the community are critically disaffiliated from institutions and other contexts for circulation." (D16).

The problem, then, is disaffiliation; the kids are in the street because the institutions (families or schools, it makes no difference) have not acted appropriately in relation to them. The problem is not being disaffiliated from social life or, indeed, the fact that social life and the logic of flexible accumulation have effectively, disaffiliated them; rather, the institutions do not perform as they should and, as a result, children have lost interest. The classic Durkheimian concept of anomie is used, thus, to explain the need to establish bonds that would make affiliation possible. Yet, unlike the beliefs of that author, these bonds do not entail the development of any organic solidarity or the disappearance of the anomic division of labour, but rather,

"This makes it necessary to intervene from several fronts, comprehensively, prioritizing keeping children in the school environment and enhancing self-esteem through meeting goals that excite them." (D16).

But how have we come to think in these terms? What effects does that have? To delve into these questions, we will look at some of the expressions in these documents.

The question formulated in the documents on these concerns is linked with something called the identification of individuals at risk:

"The first phase entails getting a grasp of the dimensions of the problem. It involves identifying those at pedagogical risk because they are repeating a year, because they have to take many make-up exams, because they are frequently absent, that is, because they are at risk of dropping out of school or staying on but not getting much out of it." (D 10)

Identifying is the central task of this device; it is the first step to getting a sense of the size of the problem, that is, recognizing and determining those who are or could be involved in the problem in order to act accordingly. Given that this device entails direct action on concrete individuals differentiated from the rest, identification is necessarily crucial to it.

This is where a new logic of the production of information begins to operate or, rather, where information systems are constituted on the basis of management. If managing means steering a boat that might go astray, then the cornerstone of management/anticipation is information. But not just any information.

Pedagogical risk management makes use of a series of categories through which it is possible to grasp the dimension of the problem: repeating years and being absent which, in calculating risk, are key to identification. This is where the idea of sizing up the problem takes on a particular meaning: it makes it possible to consider the degrees to which a single phenomenon is manifest in different persons and, thereby, the level of risk each person bears.

But this is not enough. Insofar as the aim of this process is to prevent things that happen to individuals, it is not enough to assess effects on an undifferentiated population; it is necessary, instead, to personalize individuals and their characteristics. These procedures, then, require the definition of categories, providing a series of characteristic that allow for a quick and efficient identification of individuals. As we shall see, this does not entail new categories (after all, repeating years and being absent are not new categories). It does, however, entail a new use of these categories.

We are before new practices and strategies of individualization. It is no longer enough to talk about percentages and populations at large; it is now necessary to revise name by name, individual by individual, to personalize. It could even be thought that this new group of practices is not aimed at an “undifferentiated category” like population; it is, rather, based on persons, one at a time. Here lies the core of the information systems, partly due to the unlimited accumulation of data possible in digital formats.

“It is possible to re-work the aforementioned records in order to personalize them, that is, so that the information in them is connected to the identity of the student...

Table 5 Identity of First and Second Year Drop-outs

Grade	First and last name	Moment at which they dropped out	
		Don't start at the beginning of the school year	Drop out in the course of the school year
1st Semester			
Total			
Previous year			
Total			

“Table 3 Identity of Students to Repeat 1<sup>st</sup> and 2nd Year

First and last name	Grade (1st and 2nd)	Section	Factors connected with Repeating the Year			
			Poor performance	Warnings	Frequently absent	Re-admissions

This table identifies the first and last names and sections of each of the students who is repeating first or second year; it also designates the main cause for repeating. It attempts to personalize the information in the earlier table, providing the subjects that repeat, not only numbers and percentages." (D 6)

It is clear, then, that these tables no longer refer to levels and categories containing individuals in general. It is no longer the classification of the population; instead, we are before a type of categorization that refers to individuals by their *first and last names*; it attempts to *bring out* the subjects hiding behind percentages.

A whole new rationality that consists not of the classification of groups/masses, but rather of persons. Effecting this personalization entails the use of an assessment of persons by means of a combination of factors and their role in each case. "These items of information can be collated, thus grouping together types of factor which are totally heterogeneous... The presence of some, or of a certain number, of these factors of risk sets off an automatic alert." (Castel, 1991: 287)

To make use of Deleuze's pun (1996), the individual has become divisible and the task is, in fact, to produce *dividual* information in order to be able to identify each person with the risk potential he bears. There are no longer individuals in a certain level or category; instead, characteristics are combined to constitute a risk index. Hence, although the information gathered and produced is no different from classic educational indexes on educational inequality, what is spoken of or, rather, what is invoked is a new object: no longer the population and the groups that make it up, but rather the *dividual subject* (that is, the person and some of his characteristics).

This *dividual* logic in the production and use of information is perhaps one of the most innovative of our time. It is used not only to calculate pedagogical risk, but also social and loan risk, as well as to market a new product to a certain segment of the population. It operates according to a logic of segmentation and fragmentation of subject categories: "not with subjects with a unique personality that is the expression of some inner fixed quality, but with elements, capacities, potentialities." (Rose, 1999: 234) Hence, it makes use of a large amount of undifferentiated- and sometimes insignificant- data which, when combined, can permit one piece of information to construct a classification that places an individual in one of its categories. This is because "nothing is a risk in itself; there is no risk in reality. But on the other hand, anything can be a risk" (Ewald, 1991: 199).

In a certain way, we are witnessing the organization of an avalanche of information, of chaos which requires, more than order, a re-defined criteria by which to filter everything so that this multiplicity can give rise to different organizations and classifications according to the *needs or decisions of the moment*. According to one set of criteria, a person might be at risk while, according to another which uses the same information to other ends, he might form part of a market segment. He can be black, a woman, poor, a music lover, young, athletic, each by itself or all together. Flexibility in information systems, order in chaos or *dividual* information? Certainly all of the above.

Information systems, specifically in the case of risk calculation, act on the supposition that we can not think that a single factor or variable can serve to identify wholly; when we read reality, we must keep in mind that it is not homogenous because individuals are not. Hence, it is necessary to include difference in the calculation. To manage is to administer difference (Rose, 1999):

“The aim of this first phase of the process, then, is to:

- produce information about drop out levels at each school;
- produce information about students who live in a situation of pedagogical risk” (D. 7).

The key question, then, revolves around *how*. Risk does not have a single *way of being*; it is not always manifest in all schools and, more importantly, all individuals in the same way. “What that new preventive policies primarily address is no longer individuals but factors, statistical correlations of heterogeneous elements. They deconstruct the concrete subject of intervention, and reconstruct a combination of factors liable to produce risk. Their primary aim is not to confront concrete dangerous situations, but to anticipate all the possible forms of irruption of danger.” (Castel, 1991: 288)

According to the document analyzed, it is not enough to know that some risk factors are manifest; it is necessary to know how they are manifest. Assuming difference entails recognizing that in each person the same set of factors can produce different results.

This strategies and technologies of government entail levels of individualization that imply both students and schools, the teachers at these schools and their specific students. What is at stake here is a different way of thinking and acting. Becoming a risk can only be manifest in individuals and, hence, can only be detected in them. As a result, it is in relation to them that action must be taken just as they can/must act in relation to themselves. Persons are the ones who bear these problems, who can become risky and, hence, knowledge and action become focused.

“The second stage consists of defining and carrying out some focalized actions to keep students in schools... The overriding criterion is focusing,

that is, concentrating efforts on students who can no longer wait... compensatory action as an urgent response to situations of risk..." (D17).

Are we witnessing a new economy of the visibility of power? Or is it a deepening of the gaze? We might not be mistaken, might not fall into a logical contradiction, if we said that both were true. The combinatory analysis, the construction of the risk index, composes a new series of knowing and power. The information is about each student, each teacher and certainly each institution. The analysis refers to a particular that is known and acted upon, though he mostly must act on himself.

Firstly, if, as Foucault claims (1996), disciplinary societies were built on the basis of the inversion of the visibility of power in relation to forms of visibility in sovereign societies, then this is certainly a process of deepening the gaze which, like a zoom lens, focuses in on its subject. Yet, in this logic a new series is composed, a new matrix of gazes in which individuals cease to be composed and distributed in groups and categories and, instead, become those very categories.

This zooming-in is constituted in a new logic which no longer involves the one who identifies and later acts in relation to what has been identified; now a subject must identify his potentially risky qualities and take action to correct himself.

"For example, table 5, which identifies the students who dropped out, could be available to both teachers and students as it could facilitate awareness of the dimension of the drop-out problem; both players could provide complementary information and make a commitment to participating in specific actions." (D 7)

Becoming aware and making commitment are the core themes that articulate risk assessment and focalized actions. In this framework, pedagogical risk assessment entails identification insofar as focalization or, indeed, identification itself allows for specific action. But perhaps the key to focalization lies in a second characteristics indicated in the recently cited paragraph as the awareness and commitment of those involved.

Here, in our opinion, lies one of the crucial changes in the strategies of conduct of conduct; it now involves knowledges and techniques that directly involve the particulars of whom it speaks. In other words, modern devices have rendered man both subject and object of knowledge/power, while conceiving him as a third party whom must be guided. Currently, we are witnessing a process in which man becomes his own subject and object, where it is fundamental not to harness an other, but to harness oneself.

Although the techniques of the self have already been discussed by Foucault, we believe that we are before a new technology of government. Indeed, it is important to point out that not to see continuities or, hence, ruptures in the exercise of power would entail reductions in relation to our emerging sociability. Even when "the information society" is constituted on the basis of

statistical knowledge and instrumental reason, given its new dynamics and even technical possibilities it constitutes a new episteme though one already imagined in science fiction movies. And we, the subject produced by these new devices, are no longer who we were but, then again, neither is society.

Speaking of a risk society entails a new rationality of power as well as, indeed because, it implies approaching this problematic as something that is produced per se. In other words, risk assessment assumes that risk exists and that, in different ways, it will continue to exist. Hence, it entails building awareness of risk and acting accordingly. It is from this perspective that this new assessment operates in terms of prevention-focalization; that is, not so much in relation to the reasons for risk which are assumed to be inevitable, but rather acting on risk by keeping it in check.

In the words of Beck, risks constitute a mathematical morality involving questions of fact and judgment that are delivered onto individuals as *how we want to live*. These individuals are called upon to decide and assume responsibility for that question. In keeping with Dean (1999), this entails the “governmentalization of government. The hypothesis is that the governmentalization of the State... is today meeting, being partially displaced by, reinscribed and recoded within another trajectory whereby the mechanisms of government themselves are subject to problematization, scrutiny and reformation. This turning of the government of the state upon itself can be described as the governmentalization of government. What results might be called ‘reflexive government’.” (193).

A reflexive government that acts in and on these processes because it is there that risks occurs and must be redirected. According to the way that the notion of pedagogical risk is presented, subjects are the ones that must face the challenge of redirecting such that marginality is the result of an individual incapable of self-management, of making the most of his existence or perhaps we should say that the calculation has failed him.

#### 4. A Final Reflection, the two faces of Janus: risk and responsibility

We have shown that risk is a relatively new category to classify, categorize and govern the population. It makes use of a set of statements and strategies by which it is possible to calculate and act in relation to the population while focusing on and in individuals. Although the idea of risk is used to refer to different areas of sociability, in terms of the population it is often used as a synonym for marginality.

The redefinition of the social and/or of social policy and, as a result, the action of the State involves new practices of knowledge-power, new relationships between subjects and the creation of connections that relocate the problem of government in situations of extreme urban poverty.

Pedagogical risk could, in this framework, be understood as the formation, the early conduct of conduct, in individuals which, if successful, keeps subjects from dropping out and, hence, allows them to be in schools long enough to learn how to conduct themselves.

Risk management implies a set of planning, administrative and educational tools that emerge in an episteme that assumes that everything that can be thought can and must be managed. The central technical reason for the construction and functioning of modern societies has not ceased to be the rationality that supports, makes possible and creates the conditions and principles around which risk calculation can be thought and acted on.

Given the constant and increasingly constant growth in urban poverty and social polarization (probably the only constant in these societies), the rationality of risk involves the creation of new government technologies, in this cases, pedagogical technologies. We have suggested that, in Argentina and Latin America in general, these operate around two main themes: a) the management and administration of differences, where the organization of information systems makes it possible to employ social and *dividual* categories. Thus, the NN, the undocumented people who live in the shantytowns become visible to others and to themselves without this entailing the slightest responsibility for the State or society; b) work on and in relation to the self; as early as the detection phase, the Subject or his family is directly involved, making him self-monitor and self-examine in order to become aware of his risks, make decisions to avoid them and take responsibility for damage done.

In this way, poverty and its constant growth are individual outcomes and responsibilities. Becoming responsible, in this sense, also means becoming committed; it is a must-do that results from a want-to-do. To put it differently, subjects are called upon to participate in making decisions, in defining tasks, setting goals, debating, etc. In the context of decentralization and focalization, the spaces about which subjects can express opinions and debate, the feeling of freedom, expands. This entails defining one's own goals to correct oneself in order to achieve and direct action to achieve established goals. Once faced with a centralized machine where everything came from the core and, hence, action moved from the top down, we now find ourselves before a peak that has been decentralized, that has become a complex network organized in nodes. The creation of the responsible individual was possible (Rose 1996, 1999, Dean 1999, O'Maley, 1996) thanks to the development of a new device that implicates subjects in a moral nexus of identifications and loyalties by means of the same process in which they seem to represent their most personal choices. We are witnessing the reconfiguration of a rationality of government that allocates new fields of obligations as it opens new spaces for decision and action.

Hence, in the classic Durkheimian call for socialization in a common morality, education must serve to prevent/avoid danger. Yet, in fragmented societies where, as Castel would say, a high percentage of the population has become useless for the world, this is impossible. These populations are

“necessarily” dangerous as they lack any connection that pulls them back into the social matrix.

We find ourselves in the midst of- or perhaps watching from front row seats- a social process clearly opposed to the one established by disciplinary societies. Education must occur in the context of two new realities that are expressed, first, in the production of a flexible worker's subjectivity and, second, in strategies aimed at the mass of population that is assumed no longer “necessary,” euphemistically called population at risk. Foreign to circuits of consumption, to the new logics of the circulation and production of merchandise, in short, disaffiliated, the question is no longer making these populations productive as industrial society had. Instead, the aim is to make them, in a way, invisible; keep them from derailing the train of sustained development, the growth society, the happy world that technology will allow us to obtain and enjoy. Useless because the market no longer needs them as consumers or as workers, we witness this scene as those beholding a horror film. We are faced with a narrative of education that, through the use of categories like lifelong education, educatability (the degree to which a young person is able to receive education) and resilience (a person's ability to confront adverse situations), is moving towards the production of a subject called on to commit to and take responsibility for his own marginality. It is, then, in schools where these new logics of government are learned, “guided by actuarial data on risks... and on the delivery of relevant services and expertise... the rational and responsible individual will take prudent risk-managing measures. Within such prudential strategies, then, calculative self-interest is articulated with actuarialism to generate risk management as an every day practice of the self. This is backed up by a moral responsibility or duty to the self...” (O'Malley, 1996: 200)

We believe that this obligation towards the self in shantytowns is a sort of *homo sacer* (Agamben, 1998), who is left to his own devices not only because he is in an exceptional situation but also because if he wants to keep living he must assume the responsibility for this exception. Now this exception has become the rule. If industrial capitalism was a society in which subjects were inscribed, in this paper we have tackled the forms of subjectification of those who have been expelled from factories and failed to find themselves, indeed are not called to, anywhere else. Thus, just like the terrains where shantytowns are set up which, for official registries, are uninhabited, empty areas, the denial of these existences, the transferral of responsibility and decision to the individual, the management of risk, like management in itself, cynically constitute the principles according to which government in the 21<sup>st</sup> century handles a mass population which, like a moebius strip, is outside without being outside.

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