

The Past in the Future of Social and Educational Sciences




29 September 2010, 6.15 p.m, Campus Walferdange, Audimax

Prof. Dr. Dr. hc. mult. Thomas S. Popkewitz (Madison/WI)

Introduction: Prof. Dr. Rolf Tarrach (UL-President), Prof. Dr. Lucienne Blessing (UL-Vice-President),
Prof. Dr. Michel Margue (Dean FLSHASE)

Abstract: During the Cold War, a prominent American sociologist wrote about the two different Marxisms: the intellectual project to understand critically and historically the conditions that made the present possible and the political project to plan for the future utopia. One Marxism worked and has been extremely influential; the other fell apart after its 70s birthday. This distinction between the study of the present and the planning for the future, however, is not merely a remnant of the Cold War. In the upmost of utopian futurism, the European Union's strategies are to remake the present in the image of "The Knowledge Society." Science is public management, PISA as the expectations of the future's practical knowledge, and foresight analysis as the collaboration to anticipate what is to come. The American dream in educational reform policies and sciences is called "The Race to the Future".

From the urbanism of the early 20th century to the current urbanism of modernizing for the globalized "Knowledge Society", there is little empirical evidence about the efficacy of social science as a planning device, except perhaps for disciplinary growth in the welfare state. This lack of empirical evidence is ironic. The claims for such planning are made on the basis of empiricism that ignores or does not seek evidence in such matters, an anti-empirical empiricism.

 **All doctoral students and postdocs are invited to work with Thomas Popkewitz on Thursday the 30th September and Friday the 1st October from 9 am in room Vygotsky, Campus Walferdange. Please register via ragnhild.barbu@uni.lu.**