

Capital, inequality and education in conflict-affected contexts

Article (Accepted Version)

Novelli, Mario (2016) Capital, inequality and education in conflict-affected contexts. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 37 (6). pp. 848-860. ISSN 0142-5692

This version is available from Sussex Research Online: <http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/60135/>

This document is made available in accordance with publisher policies and may differ from the published version or from the version of record. If you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the URL above for details on accessing the published version.

Copyright and reuse:

Sussex Research Online is a digital repository of the research output of the University.

Copyright and all moral rights to the version of the paper presented here belong to the individual author(s) and/or other copyright owners. To the extent reasonable and practicable, the material made available in SRO has been checked for eligibility before being made available.

Copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided that the authors, title and full bibliographic details are credited, a hyperlink and/or URL is given for the original metadata page and the content is not changed in any way.

Capital, Inequality and Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts

January 2016

Professor Mario Novelli,
Centre for International Education, University of Sussex

m.novelli@sussex.ac.uk

To be published in The British Journal of the Sociology of Education 2016

Suggested Citation:

Novelli, M (2016 in press) Capital, Inequality and Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts, *British Journal of the Sociology of Education*.

Abstract

Piketty's Capital in the Twenty First Century has brought the issue of inequality to the centre of political debate. This article explores contemporary research on the relationship between education and inequality in conflict-affected contexts with a view to seeing how Piketty's work speaks to these issues as a field of research and practice. The article provides a critique of Piketty's approach, arguing for a broader, interdisciplinary and holistic approach to exploring and addressing inequality in education in conflict-affected contexts in their multiple economic, cultural and political dimensions. In doing so the article also lays out an analytical framework inspired by cultural political economy for researching education systems in conflict contexts which seeks to go beyond narrow human capital framings of education and address the multiple potential of education to promote sustainable peace and development in and through education.

Keywords

Inequality

Political Economy

Conflict

International Development

Education

Social justice

Thomas Piketty's 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century' (2014) has managed to break out of the often-sheltered world of academia and reach a mass audience. In doing so, he has brought the issue of global inequality to the forefront of debate. In nearly 600 pages he develops a detailed argument, empirically demonstrating rising income inequality, not least in the UK and the USA, and asserts that apart from a brief historical blip, between 1930 and 1970, capitalist development over the last three centuries has tended to increase such inequality. His evidence inverts the 'Kuznet's Curve' theory, hitherto dominant in economic circles, that as a country develops inequality reduces, and points towards the need for global and national political intervention to avert this tendency (Kuznets, 1995).

While there is much to critique in Piketty's book, and it has received many reviews from prominent intellectuals and thinkers (c.f. Wade, 2014; Milanovic, 2014; Harvey, 2014; Mann, 2015), he has done a valuable service to all of us who believe that the contemporary global capitalist system is fundamentally unjust, undermines human potential, divides rather than unites, and threatens to devour the finite resources of the planet. For this he should be warmly praised. We should also recognise that his work is an internal critique, a capitalist critique, that seeks not to radically transform, but to reform and breathe new and more 'productive' life in to capitalism. We should similarly recognise that Piketty's arguments are not new, neither for Piketty nor for many political economists that have charted the worrying rise in inequality around the world (Stiglitz, 2012; Therborn, 2014). Piketty should therefore also be commended for his timing. His book – and the debate on inequality that is at its heart – landed in the public domain at a time when powerful people and institutions were becoming concerned about the effects of inequality. From a phenomenon that was seen as a necessary catalyst for growth, inequality has increasingly become a global problem with many hitherto cheerleaders becoming critics (see Ostry et al, 2014; Wolf, 2014). Furthermore, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe we are witnessing an increasingly unstable and dangerous world. The fallout from the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and the roll-back of the Arab Spring have led to the spread of ISIS across the Middle East, North Africa and parts of Asia. Mass migration has rapidly increased as people desperately scramble to find a better life elsewhere, but risk

both death in getting to their destination and xenophobia when they arrive. While national and global inequality are not the only drivers of these contemporary conflicts, it is certainly a catalyst (see Stewart 2008, 2010; Cramer 2003) that is making our global village a dangerous place and this threatens the very foundations upon which the global capitalist system is built upon. Just as Keynes, another reformer, wrote his famous work '*The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*' in 1936 as fascism was spreading across Europe, offering an alternative to neoclassical economics (Keynes, 2006), so Piketty himself provides us with both a timely critique and reforming ideas to stave off another future catastrophe, whose imprints can be seen in the present (Mann, 2015).

Having briefly contextualised the content and reception of Piketty's work, I now want to turn to reflect on what this brings to our debates on education; specifically for those like myself who have spent much of our careers working in the global south in and on issues related to education, conflict and international development. In doing this I want to take the central problematic of Piketty's work – increasing inequality – and explore this in relation to educational issues in these contexts, reflecting on aspects and absences as I go. Central to my argument throughout the paper is that Piketty's focus on economic inequality is necessary but insufficient and needs to be broadened to explore cultural and political processes linked to inequalities and injustices, not least when looking at education systems, one of the central cultural and socialising institutions of the modern capitalist state.

A broader approach, I will argue, could help us in better understanding the ways that education systems relate to the production of inequality in complex and contradictory ways. That is to say that while education can be a powerful driver of economic growth and social mobility and vice versa (Schultz, 1961; Becker 1964), it can also be an influential medium for social stratification, a vehicle for social reproduction and elite closure (Apple, 1995; Bourdieu, 1990; Bowles and Gintis, 1976); it can undermine as well as promote peace, social cohesion and reconciliation (Bush and Saltarelli, 2000; Davies, 2004; Smith, 2003) and reproduce colonial educational legacies and contemporary north-south inequalities (Carnoy, 1974; Samoff, 2007; Klees, 2008). Furthermore, as Paolo Freire's work constantly reminds

us, education can also be a mechanism for radical and revolutionary social change (Freire, 2000; Arnove, 1986; Kane 2001).

For all these reasons, the key issue at stake is not merely how much resources are spent on education – though this is important – but where, on what, for what purposes, for whom, and with what effects on both growth and inequality? Educational research to address this needs to ask questions on the governance, coordination and management of the education sector as well as its content, teaching and outcomes. In an increasingly globalised and interconnected world, we must also recognise that that research cannot begin and end within the borders of the nation state and we must also explore the complex roles of regional and global actors, both public and private, in shaping national educational agendas, not least the World Bank, the OECD and the major bi-lateral donors (Dale, 2005).

My broad approach is indebted to the work of Robertson and Dale (2015) in their attempts to develop a critical cultural political economy of education (CCPEE). CCPEE has emerged as an approach to researching the relationship between education and contemporary processes of globalisation. It draws on foundations developed by theorists in sociology, geography, political science and linguistics who have developed Critical Cultural Political Economy (CCPE) as a response to the cultural turn in social theory. At its core CCPE seeks to overcome tensions between critical poststructuralist and critical historical materialist approaches prevalent in the literature on globalisation and bring culture, politics and economics into discussion without any necessary fixed or a-priori prioritisation. Pioneered by the work of Fairclough, Jessop and Sayer (2004; see also Jessop 2004, Sum & Jessop 2013) it aims to analyse the complex relationships between discourse/agency and structure and to go beyond simplistic structure/agency debates, avoiding the false binaries of Marxist/Poststructuralist thinking and allowing research that brings a range of different theories into dialogue. CCPE is also firmly rooted in Critical Realism, and its concerns with different moments of reality: the real, the actual and the empirical (ibid). This ‘cultural political economy’ orientation is underpinned in part by a recognition that ‘orthodox political economy tends to offer impoverished accounts of how subjects and subjectivities are formed’ (Jessop, 2004:3). The orientation to

the 'cultural' is thus in part underpinned by a concern to enrich analysis of subjectivity or individual agency and social formation while retaining the concern of political economy with the constitutive role of the interconnected materialities of economics and politics (Jessop, 2004:1).

Robertson and Dale's (2015) work on education builds upon these foundations to bring together culture, politics and economics in critical, open and non-deterministic ways. Importantly, they recognise that seeking to pull these areas together is merely the beginning of the task, rather than the endpoint – for the cultural, the political, the economic each have multiple definitions and interpretations which are dependent on particular theoretical approaches and are linked in varied and complex ways. Therefore CCPEE, whilst responding to the cultural turn in social theory, does so without abandoning the potential of Marxist and Critical theory inspired thinking to assist in explaining social reality – more so, it has emerged in the spirit of internal critique aimed at addressing some of the blind spots and weakness of these approaches, particularly in relation to culture, religion, gender, identity, etc.

In relation to exploring Piketty's work I think this approach can reveal several important methodological limitations. Firstly, not everything that is important can be measured and counted and not everything that can be measured is important. That is to say that Piketty's empiricism, has its limitations, and inequality, as we will explore, has many more dimensions than income inequality and some are difficult to reveal through quantitative datasets. Secondly, not everything that matters can be seen. As the work of critical realism asserts, the empirical is but one layer of social reality. For this reason, theory building is important to grasp the complex and multifaceted social reality under investigation. Thirdly, while capitalism is an economic system, economics tell us only a part of the story and sociology, politics, international relations and geography can also help us to understand different dimensions of the way inequality is produced and reproduced in different locales. While Piketty recognises this, his writing still remains anchored within a narrow empiricist political economy tradition (Engelen & Williams, 2014) that fails to understand the role of imperialism and its multiple economic, cultural, political and military dimensions, which is central if one is to understand inequality beyond the

core capitalist states of the world economy and extend the analysis to the majority world.

Having laid out my own theoretical cards, the paper will proceed in a series of stages. Firstly, I want to raise several issues about the field of International Development and Education to highlight some of the contradictions and North-South inequalities that have permeated it as a field of both practice and research since its inception and which challenge its commitment to redressing inequalities. In this I also want to reflect on the relationship between international development, inequality, education and violent conflict. Secondly, I want to explore the literature on three inter-related processes that have shaped educational experiences in developing contexts and produced inequalities: capitalism, modernity and imperialism, and which I will argue are increasingly linked to the production of violence. Thirdly, I will lay out an approach to analysing inequalities in education systems in conflict-affected contexts inspired by CCPEE and intended as a policy relevant intervention intended to go beyond human capital approaches to education and development. Finally, I will make some concluding comments to bring the paper to a close.

International Development and Education

International Development and Education is both a field of practice and a field of intellectual inquiry, and for many of us who work in this area there is both movement and close collaboration (albeit with different temporal, institutional and intellectual constraints) between Universities, UN agencies, national development agencies, national government officials from developing contexts, NGOs and civil society organisations and networks. It is a varied and contradictory community of research, policy development and practice, which reflects the deep contradictions or tensions that lie at the heart of the field.

On the one hand, the field of International Development and Education carries with it a utopian and internationalist tradition, where the aspiration remains for the rest to catch up with the west, encapsulated in calls for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) and international solidarity (Prashad, 2007). In this imaginary the 'Third

World' represented an emancipatory ideal for bringing forth a rebalancing of global power. Within this, education itself is seen, at least partially, as an emancipatory vehicle for transforming the lives of the poor, imagining the power of education and literacy as a tool to overcome oppression, social stratification and global domination. On the other hand, international development and education is seen as an imperial technique, emerging out of the collapse of colonial empires to facilitate the transition to new modes of dominance and dependence, where 'development machinery' and 'development partners' shape the futures of the less developed in line with dominant Northern priorities and interests and where education reproduces social and global stratification, conditions minds in suppliant ways, crushes emancipatory ideals, humiliates and alienates, and often reproduces the status quo in our highly elitist, unequal and exclusionary world (Veltmeyer, 2005).

This contradiction is best expressed when comparing two quotes that occurred more or less at the same time, as the world emerged from the carnage of World War II with the USA at its helm and a myriad of new post-colonial states were born out of independence struggles. The first is from then US President Truman, in a public speech, which many see as a foundational moment for the emergence of the field of practice and research now known as 'International Development'.

We must embark on a bold new program for making the benefits of our scientific advances and industrial progress available for the improvement and growth of the underdeveloped areas....I believe that we should make available to peace loving peoples the benefits of our store of technical knowledge in order to help them realise their aspirations for a better life.....The old imperialism - exploitation for foreign profit - has no place in our plans. What we envisage is a program of development based on the concepts of democratic fair dealing. (President Truman, 1949)

The second is a US National Security Policy report that was made public several decades after the meeting took place:

the US has about 50% of the world's wealth, but only 6.3% of its population...In this situation, we cannot fail to be the object of envy and resentment. Our real task in the coming period is to devise a pattern of

relationships which will permit us to maintain this position of disparity. (US Department of State, 1948, page 524)

The two quotes highlight both the upbeat idealism and the 'realpolitik' that continues to penetrate the field, with the US both offering a helping hand, whilst simultaneously developing a political and military strategy to ensure the reproduction of its own hegemonic position. This was clearly evidenced and documented during the Cold War (Christian Aid, 2004) and despite a brief blip after the collapse of the Soviet Union, the relationship between western security interests and development reappeared in the guise of 'humanitarian intervention' in Africa and the Balkans in the 1990s and has become increasingly intertwined since 9/11 where the link between conflict and state failure in some parts of the global south was becoming increasingly associated with terror attacks in the west. Since then more and more 'development' assistance has been targeted towards conflict-affected contexts in the global south through peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction assistance (see Novelli, 2010, Duffield 2001, 2010).

As a researcher/consultant working on issues of education in conflict-affected contexts these contradictions are heightened further as we move between hotels, high walls, UN compounds and high security, engaging with national and international elites - talking poverty and programming in relative safety and comfort as conflict often rages on outside. Inequalities abound, not just in the economic domain, but in terms of knowledge, language capacities, power and participation. While these are not unidirectional, the parallels between colonialism and development, missionaries and aid workers (Manji & O'Coill, 2002) has at least a partial ring of truth to it.

This leads me to a conceptual point, beyond my own existential angst, on the question of the multiple dimensions of inequality – that go beyond the economic to the cultural, political, social domains. Piketty's central thesis is that capital in the form of assets - inherited wealth, land and property - have increased in value disproportionately to revenues accumulating through economic growth, productive investment and wages. As a result 'the past devours the future' and inequality has the tendency to increase. He argues that this is a fundamental economic law

operating over several centuries and only disrupted by the destruction of capital during war. While seductive, it strikes me as both too economic and deterministic, neglecting the political decisions that states can make (which he himself asserts are necessary in his conclusions) to alter this process and the multiple dimensions of the phenomenon. In order to illustrate this, in the next section I will argue that the production and reproduction of inequality in the global south is driven not only by capitalist laws and tendencies, but more so by intersecting capitalist, imperialist and modernising processes.

Reproducing Global Inequality: Neoliberal Capitalism, Modernity and Empire

For the last four decades some of the most important writers in the field have sought to understand the complex relationship between international development and capitalism, modernity and imperialism (c.f Escobar, 2004; Santos, 2002). These key social theory concepts and concrete processes have shaped the destinies of billions of people and while inter-related, they each have particular effects and outcomes that can be analysed to reveal the complex cultural political economy of inequality in and through education in the global South and the resistance that mediates its effects.

Neoliberal Capitalism, Education and Development

In his approach to education, Piketty draws greatly from human capital theory (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964). The central premise of human capital theory is that investment in education is a key driver of economic growth (Schultz, 1961, Becker, 1964). As Schultz put it, “knowledge and skill are in great part the product of investment and, combined with other human investment, predominantly account for the productive superiority of the technically advanced countries” (Schultz, 1961: 3). If low-income nations followed these prescriptions, they too could enjoy the living standards of the ‘advanced’ societies. The West’s role in this process was to ‘help’ low-income countries through aid and technical expertise. Human capital theory, despite its many critics, has played a central role in shaping education policy and practice throughout the world over the last five decades. The theory’s emphasis on the relationship between education and growth has played an important role in

justifying much of the activity of the World Bank (Klees, 2002; Jones, 2005) in the education sector, and from the 1960s onwards assisted the World Bank, rather than UNESCO, in becoming the major UN authority and funder of educational loans and assistance to education systems in low income countries.

Piketty (2014) draws on human capital across his work, but challenges two central tenets of the theory. The first is whether it can really be termed 'capital' - as apart from slave societies, humans cannot be brought and sold on the market in the same way that other forms of capital can. Secondly, he questions whether in our contemporary unequal capitalist societies whether human capital has sufficient power to redress inherited capital – dead capital – that can gather a far higher return:

no matter how potent a force the diffusion of knowledge and skills may be . . . it can nevertheless be thwarted and overwhelmed by powerful forces pushing in the opposite direction” (ibid. p. 22)..

While these critiques are welcome, Piketty still fails to go beyond the education /growth debate. In doing so, like many other economists of his generation, he reduces education, teachers and students to carriers of capital, rather than of solidarity, culture, social justice, tolerance and wisdom – alongside that capital. He also fails to get beyond treating education as an 'input' rather than seeing it as a complex national and international system which affects and is effected by local, national and global political economy choices and preferences. In order to illustrate this, I want to explore education's relationship with neoliberal economic policy and practice over recent decades, particularly in the field of international development.

Neoliberalism, which emerged as an alternative to Keynesian economics in the late 1970s, represented a counter-revolution in economics, seeking to reduce the direct role of the state in national economic development and to increase market and market-like mechanisms to determine supply and demand. These policies became known as the Washington Consensus and included a preference for the private over public provision of goods, decentralisation, privatization, fiscal austerity, the opening up of national markets to external competition and the removal of barriers to free trade (Williamson, 1994).

In line with broader neo-classical economic solutions, the Washington Consensus was exported across the global south. Its spread was facilitated by the disciplinary mechanism of the debt crises in the early 1980s and the conditionality attached to IMF and World Bank loans (Samoff, 1994). The Washington Consensus included macroeconomic stabilisation mainly through fiscal discipline, structural reforms and trade liberalization to 'open up' national economies to global competition and foreign direct investment.

In the Northern literature, neoliberalism – as Connell and Dados (2014) have recently pointed out – is often depicted as the hyper liberal, advanced industrial phase of capitalist development, where states are shrunk, technology overcomes time-space contradictions, and liberal democracy and consumption patterns spread. Yet in the Global South – where four-fifths of the world's population reside – neoliberalism is often understood and felt very differently – as a process of re-colonisation, as militarised and very 'illiberal'. There, the immediate figureheads are not Thatcher, Reagan and Kohl but the likes of Pinochet in Chile, and the key 'starter events' and 'processes' are the military dictatorships in Chile (1973), Argentina (1976) and more broadly across the southern cone of Latin America, regimes made infamous by their brutal human rights records (Corradi & Fagen, 1992).

The educational recipe that emerged from neoliberalism's vaults during this period was as prescriptive as the Washington Consensus, and included reduction in national education budgets (as a necessary part of fiscal austerity); cost-recovery for school fees; community financing; decentralization of educational governance; the promotion of the private sector in education; the prioritization of basic education over higher education funding based on rates of return analysis rooted in human capital theory; and a range of other neoliberal inspired reforms (Robertson et al., 2007).

Criticisms of the reforms are widespread, in terms of their narrow and economic approach to national development, its lack of attention to non-market issues and systems, and particularly the way in which it reduced the role of economic and education policies to deal with 'externalities', assuming that the externalities are the only obstacles to optimal outcomes. Similarly, it is critiqued for its failure to

recognise unequal power relations, both north-south and class relations as factors in understanding the prospects for economic and social development. In terms of policy outcomes, the Washington Consensus has been accused of worsening the economic and social development of broad swathes of the world's poor, reinforcing north-south inequality and dependency; and devastating health and education systems in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America during the 1980s and early 1990s (Amin, 1997, 2003; Chossudovsky, 1997). In the educational domain it has been critiqued for its lack of attention to educational governance issues, the negative effects of its promotion of private education on social equity indicators, and its reliance on increasingly questionable rates of return analysis to justify education policies that have undermined funding for higher levels of education in low income contexts (Robertson et al 2007; Samoff 1994; Klees 2008). While its architects, like the World Bank, later recognised aspects of policy failure – it seemed not to effect the policies onward march. Jamie Peck (2010), the human geographer, in his work on neoliberalism talks of it as a process of 'failing forward' – a process seemingly impervious to critique, and tenacious in its capacity to present itself as the prescription.

This spread of a 'global menu' of neoliberal education reforms remains pervasive (see Verger, Novelli and Altinyelken, 2012), not least with on-going privatization of education in many parts of the world, which further guarantees the intergenerational reproduction of unequal life chances. The promotion of private schooling as a solution, not just for the rich - as it has always been - but also for the poor, marks the latest phase of evolution of neoliberal ideals in education, which emerged revitalised after the 2008 financial crisis. We are currently witnessing a massive explosion of 'low fee private schooling' in poor and middle-income countries, with its promise of quality education and profits too tempting to resist for many governments. The work of Verger and Bonal (2012) along with other scholars (Srivastava, 2013; Harma, 2011) have done a convincing job of dismantling the equity arguments of the advocates of 'low fee private schooling', but as noted above, negative 'evidence' has rarely been an obstacle to the forward march of neoliberalism and its 'failing forward' continues.

In concluding this section on neoliberalism and education, one further key development needs to be noted, that is absent from Piketty's understanding of education. This relates to the way education has been transformed over the neoliberal period not only into a factor in production and growth (human capital) but into a commodity in its own right, that can be bought and sold on the global marketplace. Recent estimates put education as the fastest growing global industry worth more than four trillion US dollars (Strauss, 2013). The making of a global education industry (see Susan Robertson in this issue), particularly in higher education and in middle-income countries, is one of the great transformations of the sector in the modern era (see Ball, 2012).

Modernity, Modernization and Education

Modernity, while linked to capitalism, has its own trajectory and dynamics. In International Development, Modernisation Theory informed the policy advice of international organisations and Western governments from the early 1960s onwards. As articulated by W.W Rostow's (1960) *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-communist Manifesto*, modernisation theory developed a set of prescriptive policies that would enable less developed countries to 'take off' and catch up with their developed counterparts. Rostow's theory embraced a linear view of history, with Western and particularly the US model as the ultimate example and destination.

It was both a theory and a prescription that had significant implications for educational policy (Dale, 1982). A body of work in this tradition focused on culture and politics and the need for inculcating the 'right values' or developing the 'right skills' necessary for the success of a market-based economic system (Coleman, Azrael et al. 1965). For Inkeles and Smith (1974), education played a central role by creating 'modern' individuals, while Harbison & Myers (1964: 3) suggested that education was "the key that unlocks the door to modernization". For Coleman, Azrael et al. (1965), education was fundamental in the development of the 'necessary' technical and cultural skills needed for economic development; while a mass education system itself was a key pillar of a 'developed' society. This faith in education as the vehicle for economic and social progress was deeply rooted in

these theorists and contagious amongst many newly independent post-colonial states.

In its approach to education, modernisation theory overlaps with the human capital approach to education (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1964) seeing education as a necessary investment on the road to progress and development. The modern school was seen as the ideal route to transforming 'traditional' cultures into 'becoming modern'. In these processes national languages were taught, national histories embraced, and progress linked to scientific rationality and industrial development privileged.

There are two major critiques of the modernisation approach to development and education. First, its conceptualisation of culture was, as Escobar (1995: 44) notes, the product of a deeply ethnocentric understanding of history that saw non-Western culture as "a residual variable, to disappear with the advance of modernization". Secondly, and related to the first, it presented the major obstacles to development as being located within national boundaries and within the particular nation's socio-economic and political practices. There was little appreciation of any external obstacles to national economic development that may be caused by the highly unequal global world order. These critiques also extend to the 'education' modernisation theorists who often treated indigenous culture as a problem rather than resource, saw western education models as unproblematic solutions to southern problems, and were blind to the way that highly unequal global economy and polity might undermine national educational independence and development in low-income post-colonial environments.

In so many ways 'modern' schooling for the vast majority of people in developing countries has failed in its promise – instilling fear and failure, inferiority and indoctrination, providing technical skills divorced from labour markets and producing graduates without jobs. It is also often a place of violence, hierarchy and fear (Harber, 2004). To paraphrase the findings of a recent study on education and conflict and the Masai in Kenya, modern schooling takes people away from their communities, cultures and heritage, negates their traditional identities and forms of dress, and offers them a white collar dream of public jobs, which rarely materialise. It alienates them from their origins, adrift in urban and semi-urban areas without

jobs and with little hope, leaving them vulnerable to criminality, extremism and precarious existences (Scott-Villiers, 2015). Little wonder then that 'modernity' and the 'modern school' is a key focus of attack in some parts of the world, not just by Boko Haram and the Taliban, but also by movements calling for the de-colonisation of education in Latin America.

Empire, Imperialism and Development

Debates around empire and imperialism within the field of international development and education seek to explore the complex ways that global inequalities between North and South are systematically reproduced through the powerful practices and activities of key education and development actors – from the World Bank and beyond. During the colonial period, schooling was very much part of the 'mission civilisatrice' – elitist and closely linked to Christianity with 'civilisation' understood as very white and very western. It also played a key role in producing an indigenous civil service to administer the colonial territories. As notes Macaulay, back in 1835:

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, --a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. (Macaulay, 1835, para 23)

In the post-independence period dependency theory emerged as a direct challenge to modernisation theory. It raised critical questions about the relationship between national state development and the international capitalist economy (Frank, 1971; Rodney 1972; Amin, 1976). Where modernisation theory had emphasized the role of 'internal' obstacles to 'development', dependency theory focused on 'external factors'. According to this theory, Western advanced countries had 'developed' not merely through the wise use of internal resources and education (as suggested by Schultz and Becker) but on the back of slavery and colonial exploitation. While varied in their emphasis, the central focus of dependency theories lay in the unequal power relations within the world economy which forced 'low-income societies' and peoples

into particular and subservient roles and kept them there (as exporters of primary raw materials, low paid labour, and so on).

The work on education informed by dependency theory viewed educational structures and content as the means by which the centre (developed countries) exercised control over the periphery (less developed countries), reproducing the conditions for the centre's survival and advancement. This control operated not only in obvious ways (military power) but also more subtly through education systems (Altbach and Kelly, 1978; Carnoy, 1974; Watson, 1984). The dependency authors provided strong critiques of the assumptions of modernisation and human capital theory and addressed the issues of imperialism, colonialism and class exploitation and reproduction that modernisation theory ignored.

Dependency theorists in turn were criticised for paying insufficient attention to the internal obstacles to economic, social and political development and accused of being incapable of differentiating between different low income countries' development. They were also accused of providing a pessimistic view of the possibilities of national development and remaining at the level of theoretical abstraction that had little policy relevance. Educational critiques followed similar trajectories, suggesting that dependency theorists over-emphasised the power of external actors in national education policy development and underplayed the positive role that international educational co-operation might play in national development (Noah and Eckstein, 1988).

Having reflected above on the relationships between education, capitalism, modernity and imperialism in developing contexts, my intention has been to highlight the way inequalities and injustices in education cannot be reduced to economism and human capital and needs instead to link economics, politics, geography and culture together for a more comprehensive picture. In doing so, we not only reveal agency in the politics of inequality, but we also get a picture of the complex political, economic, cultural and social dynamics of that politics.

Capital, Inequality and Education in Conflict-Affected Contexts: Towards a Research Framework

Since 2000, the recognition of both the importance of working in conflict-affected contexts and the growing evidence of the effects of conflict on educational access and quality has led to increased funding in the sector (Novelli and Lopes-Cardozo 2008). This has also led to an interest in understanding the particularities of the educational challenges faced in conflict-affected contexts, and to a growing recognition that policy makers, donors and practitioners working in the education sector in conflict-affected contexts are faced with huge and distinct challenges and priorities requiring new and innovative ways of funding, planning, governing and evaluating education policy interventions (Davies, 2009). As a result of this rising interest, the literature on education and conflict has expanded greatly over the last decade (Bush and Saltarelli 2000, Smith 2003, Davies 2004). There is also growing interest in better understanding the relationship between education, conflict and peacebuilding and the way education systems might become more conflict sensitive (Novelli & Smith, 2012). Linked to this is interest in political economy research in the sector, and a mushrooming of political economy tools to facilitate policy development and planning (Novelli et al 2014).

In this section I want to outline what a CCPEE framework for exploring inequality in these contexts might look like. This framework has been developed with colleagues from the University of Amsterdam and the University of Ulster (Novelli et al, 2015) and applied in research in eight conflict-affected contexts (Pakistan, Rwanda, South Sudan, Kenya, Myanmar, Uganda, Rwanda and South Africa) to explore educational governance and policy in relation to education and peacebuilding. The framework's central normative position was that inequalities and injustice (including within the education system) were central to understanding the reasons for the outbreak of civil wars (the drivers of conflict) and that addressing inequalities (including in education) was necessary to bring about 'positive peace' and overcome the legacies of conflict.

In line with the thinking outlined in this paper, we also recognised that economic inequalities in education might be only part of the story. For this reason we drew on a version of Nancy Fraser's theory of social justice, exploring educational inequalities

in terms of Redistribution, Recognition and Representation (Fraser 1995; 2005). In our work these were linked to economic inequalities relating to the funding and management of education - *Redistribution*; inequalities and injustices related to cultural representation and misrecognition – *Recognition*; and finally inequalities linked to participation and democratic deficits in the governance and management of education – *Representation*. These 3 Rs helped us to explore different dimensions of educational inequalities (economic, cultural and political) – as drivers of conflict, in education. We also added a 4th R – *Reconciliation*, which allowed us to explore not only the potential drivers of conflict, but also the legacies of conflict and how in and through education we might bring communities together through processes of healing and psycho-social interventions and transitional justice (truth, justice and reparations). The ‘4 R’ approach then allowed us to develop a theoretically informed heuristic device to explore the multi-dimensional ways that education systems might produce or reduce educational and societal inequalities and in so doing undermine or promote sustainable peace and development in and through education (see Figure 1 below) .

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

While the approach remains a work in progress, it allows for a much sharper focus on the complex ways that inequalities within education, in their multiple and varied manifestations, might be linked to conflict drivers. Furthermore, it allows us to go beyond the narrow ‘access’ and ‘quality’ debates prevalent in the field of education and international development – both from a human capital and a rights-based perspective - and allow us to reflect more holistically on the education systems relationship to economic, social, cultural and political development processes and its role and relationship to the production of inequalities that fuel the grievances that often drive conflicts.

As an example of its potential utility, in applying this framework in South Sudan (see Novelli et al, 2016) what the approach allowed us to reveal was the complex way that the economic marginalisation of cattle-herding communities was compounded by an education curriculum that either ignored or vilified their traditional ways of

life, was silent on their communities 'heroes' in the history texts and their contribution to national development, and was insensitive to their work/life rhythms and local economic demands. Urban prejudices towards these rural communities, reflected by national government interviewees, often projected them as 'backward' and 'under-developed', blaming cattle-herding communities for their own educational failures, and ignoring issues of relevance and inclusion. All of these dimensions fuelled feelings of political marginalisation and resentment towards national government thus undermining national unity and peacebuilding processes. While diagnosis is no guarantee for a cure, the analysis and recommendations that ensued from the research challenged educational reforms currently taking place in South Sudan and being supported by both national and international actors that bypass the nuanced and complex issues raised and reproduced a generic 'education menu' that appeared ill-suited to the context and the scale of the conflict and education challenges in the country.

Conclusions

In this final section I want now to draw together the main fragments of the paper. Firstly, I want to reiterate the value of Piketty's work and its relevance for education. Inequality is without doubt a defining issue of our time and his marshalling of the evidence has been a milestone in ongoing debates. Secondly, its popularity and widespread consumption also reflects recognition on the part of international elites that inequality is no longer something that can just be avoided and ignored as the unfortunate by-product of growth. Thirdly, that while economic inequality is an important indicator, cultural and political inequalities also need to be explored to better understand its damaging and pervasive effects. Fourthly, from the perspective of the field of international development – we must also realise that there are deep and contradictory tensions in actors and objectives, which make commitment to addressing inequality – globally, nationally and locally, in education and beyond, a highly political process that needs to be analysed as alliances are formed and objectives developed. Fifthly, while capitalism, and the logics of capital are absolutely crucial to understanding inequality in and through education; imperialism

and modernity, and the inter-relationship between cultural, economic and political factors can better help us to explore education's complex role in reproducing inequalities in the global south and the education system's role in both driving conflict and potentially in promoting peace. Sixthly, I laid out the '4 Rs' analytical model for exploring education systems in conflict-affected contexts, which we have developed to contribute to policy relevant analysis of education's role in both reproducing and overcoming inequalities and being a catalyst for either war or peace.

Finally, I want to now return to Piketty's work and its meaning for work on education in conflict-affected contexts. Our world today is riddled with anger and grievances linked to feelings of injustice and inequality. Whether perceived or real, economic, cultural or political - inequalities underpin many movements that use violence to achieve their aims. Education systems can fuel these grievances or reduce them. The state education system, has its representatives and its buildings in massive urban conurbations and rural hamlets, its reach is unique, and through that reach can play a unifying and equalising role in redressing the complex economic, cultural, political injustices that prevail outside and inside its doors.

While education cannot resolve all the inequalities outside its gates, it does not have to merely reproduce them. Instead, it can act as a beacon of inclusion, equity, justice and tolerance, and educate a new generation of citizens committed to social justice and solidarity whilst simultaneously equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary for employment success. For this to happen we need to go beyond seeing children as human capital and instead see them holistically in their multiple economic, cultural, political and social manifestations. Piketty has placed the issue of inequality in the public domain, we now need to address it in all its complexity.

References

- Altbach, PG & Kelly, GP (1978) Education and colonialism. New York: Longman, 1978.*
Amin, S. (1976) *Unequal Development*, New York: Monthly Review Press.
Amin, S. (1997) *Capitalism in the Age of Globalization*, London: Zed Books.
Amin, S. (2003) *Obsolescent Capitalism*, London: Zed Books.

- Apple, M.W. (1995). *Education and power*. London: Routledge.
- Arnové, R.F. (1986). *Education and revolution in Nicaragua*, New York: Prager Publishers.
- Ball, S. J. (2012). *Global education inc: New policy networks and the neo-liberal imaginary*. Routledge.
- Becker, G.S. (1964) *Human Capital: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis, with Special Reference to Education*, New York: National Bureau of Economic Research; Distributed by Columbia University Press.
- Bourdieu, P. and Passeron, J. C. (1990). *Reproduction in education, society and culture* (Vol. 4). London:Sage.
- Bowles, S. and Gintis, H. (1976) *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*, New York: Basic Books.
- Bush, K.D. and Saltarelli, D. (2000) *The Two Faces of Education in Ethnic Conflict: Towards a Peace-Building Education for Children*, Florence: Innocenti Research Centre.
- Carnoy, M. (1974) *Education as Cultural Imperialism*, New York: D. McKay Co.
- Christian Aid (2004) *The Politics of Poverty: Aid in the new Cold War*, London: Christian Aid.
- Coleman, J.S. and Azrael, J.R. (1965) *Education and Political Development*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Connell, R., and Dados, N. (2014). 'Where in the world does neoliberalism come from?', *Theory and Society*, 43(2), 117-138.
- Corradi, J.E., and Fagen, P.W. (1992). *Fear at the edge: State terror and resistance in Latin America*. Berkeley, California: University of California Press.
- Cramer, C. (2003). 'Does inequality cause conflict?', *Journal of International Development*, 15(4), 397-412.
- Dale, R. (1982). Education and the capitalist state: contributions and contradictions. *Cultural and economic reproduction in education*, 127-161.
- Dale, R. (2005) 'Globalisation, knowledge economy and comparative education,' *Comparative Education* 41 (2), 117-151.
- Davies, L. (2009) *Capacity Development for Education Systems in Fragile Contexts. Working Paper*: European Training Foundation.
- Davies, L. (2004) *Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos*, London: Routledge Falmer.
- Duffield, M. (2001) *Global Governance and the New Wars: the Merging of Development and Security*. London: Zed Books.
- Engelen, E. and Williams, K.(2014) 'Just the facts: on the success of Piketty's Capital', *Environment and Planning A* 46.8 (2014): 1771-1777.

- Escobar, A. (1995) *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Escobar, Arturo (2004). "Beyond the Third World: Imperial Globality, Global Coloniality and Anti-Globalisation Social Movements". *Third World Quarterly* 25 (1): 218
- Fairclough, N., Jessop, B. and Sayer, A. (2004) 'Critical Realism and Semiosis', in J. Joseph and J. M. Roberts (eds.), *Realism, Discourse and Deconstruction, Routledge Studies in Critical Realism*, Abingdon: Routledge.
- Frank, A.G. (1971) *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, (revised Ed.), Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Fraser, N. (1995). From redistribution to recognition? Dilemmas of justice in a 'post-socialist' age. *New Left Review* 1 (212), 68–93.
- Fraser, N. (2005). Reframing justice in a globalized world, *New Left Review* 36, 79–88.
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Harber, C. (2004) *Schooling as Violence: how schools harm pupils and societies*. London:Routledge
- Harbison, F.H. and Myers, C.A. (1964) *Education, Manpower, and Economic Growth: Strategies of Human Resource Development*, New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Harvey, D. (2014). 'Afterthoughts on Piketty's Capital', in *Reading Marx's Capital with David Harvey*. Available online: <http://davidharvey.org/2014/05/afterthoughts-pikettyps-capital/>
- Inkeles, A. and Smith, D. (1974) *Becoming Modern: Individual Change in Six Developing Countries*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Jessop, B. (2004) 'Critical Semiotic Analysis and Cultural Political Economy', *Critical Discourse Studies* 1 (1): 1-16.
- Jessop, B. (2010) 'Cultural Political Economy and Critical Policy Studies', *Critical Policy Studies*, 3 (3-4): 336-356.
- Jessop, B. & Oosterlynck, S. (2008) 'Cultural Political Economy: On making the cultural turn without falling into soft economic sociology', *Geoforum* 39: 1155-1169.
- Jones, P.W. with Coleman, D. (2005) *The United Nations and Education: Multilateralism, Development and Globalisation*, London: Routledge
- Kane, L. (2001). *Popular education and social change in Latin America*. Latin America Bureau.
- Keynes, J. M. (2006). *General theory of employment, interest and money*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Dist.
- Klees, S.J. (2008) 'A quarter century of neoliberal thinking in education: misleading analyses and failed policies', *Globalisation, Societies and Education* 6 (4) 2008
- Klees, S.J. (2002) *The Implication of the World Bank's Private Sector Development Strategy for Education: Increasing Inequality and Inefficiency*, University of Maryland,

available at http://www.servicesforall.org/html/tools/Klees_PSD_Paper_1-15-02.shtml.

Kuznets, S. (1955) Economic Growth and Income Inequality. *American Economic Review* 45 (March): 1–28.

Macaulay, T.B. (1835) Minute on Education, in H. Sharp (ed.) (1920) *Selections from Educational Records, Part I (1781-1839)*. Calcutta, India: Superintendent, Government Printing, 107-117. Available online: http://www.columbia.edu/itc/meaac/pritchett/00generallinks/macaulay/txt_minute_education_1835.html

Manji, F. and O’Coill, C. (2002), The missionary position: NGOs and development in Africa. *International Affairs*, 78: 567–583. doi: 10.1111/1468-2346.00267

Mann, G. (2015) ‘A General Theory for Our Times: On Piketty’, *Historical Materialism* 23.1: 106-140.

Milanovic, B. (2014) ‘The return of “patrimonial capitalism”’: A review of Thomas Piketty’s Capital in the Twenty-First Century’, *Journal of Economic Literature* 52(2): 519-534.

Noah, H.J and Eckstein, M.A (1988) ‘Dependency Theory in Comparative Education: Twelve Lessons from the Literature’, in Jürgen Schriewer and Brian Holmes, eds., *Theories and Methods in Comparative Education* pp. 165-192, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, reprinted by permission of Peter Lang Publishers.

Novelli, M., Daoust, G., Selby, J., Valiente, O., Scandurra R., Deng Kuol, L., Salter, E. (2016) Education sector governance, inequality, conflict and peacebuilding in South Sudan, Research Report Unicef Eastern and Southern Regional Office (ESARO), forthcoming.

Novelli, M., Lopes Cardozo, M.T.A., Smith, A (2015), A Theoretical Framework for Analysing the Contribution of Education to Sustainable Peacebuilding: 4Rs in Conflict-Affected Contexts. University of Amsterdam, available online: <http://learningforpeace.unicef.org/partners/research-consortium/research-outputs/>

Novelli, M & Smith, A (2011) The Role of Education In Peacebuilding: A synthesis report of findings from Lebanon, Nepal and Sierra Leone. UNICEF: New York.

Novelli, M; Valiente, O; Higgins, S, Ugur, M, (2014) The Political Economy of Education Systems in Conflict-affected States. London: DFID

Novelli, M. (2010) ‘The new geopolitics of educational aid: From cold wars to Holy wars?’, *International Journal of Educational Development* 30: 453-459.

Novelli, M. & Lopes Cardozo, M. T. A. (2008) ‘Conflict, education and the global south: New critical directions’, *International Journal of Educational Development* 28(4): 473-488.

Ostry, M. J. D., Berg, M. A., & Tsangarides, M. C. G. (2014). *Redistribution, inequality, and growth*. International Monetary Fund.

Peck, J. (2010). *Constructions of neoliberal reason*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Piketty, T. (2014) *Capital in the 21st Century*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Prashad, V (2007). *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World*. New York: The New Press
- Robertson, S, Novelli, M, Dale R, Tikly, Dachi, H, Ndebela, A (2007) *Education And Development In A Global Era (Vol II): Ideas, Actors And Dynamics In The Global Governance Of Education* London: DFID.
- Robertson, S. L., & Dale, R. (2015). Towards a 'critical cultural political economy' account of the globalising of education. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 13(1), 149-170.
- Rodney, W. (1972) *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, London: Bogle-L'Ouverture Publications.
- W.W. Rostow. (1960) *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Santos, B de S (2002) *Towards a New Legal Common Sense* (London: Butterworth).
- Samoff, J. (1994) *Coping with Crisis: Austerity, Adjustment and Human Resources*, London/New York: Cassell with UNESCO.
- Samoff, J. (2007). Education quality: The disabilities of aid. *International Review of Education*, 53(5-6), 485-507.
- Schultz, T.W. (1961) Investment in Human Capital (Presidential Address at 73rd Annual Meeting of American Economic Association 1960), *The American Economic Review* 51(1): 1-17.
- Scott-Villiers, Patta' Sarah Wilson, Alastair Scott-Villiers, Diana Ndung'u, Nathan Kabala, Molu Kullu (2015) *A study Of Education And Resilience In Kenya's Arid Lands* Nairobi: UNICEF ESARO
- Smith, A. (2003). *Education, Conflict and Development*. London, DFID.
- Srivastava, Prachi, ed. "Low-fee Private Schooling: aggravating equity or mitigating disadvantage?." Symposium Books Ltd, 2013.
- Stewart, F. (Ed.). (2008). *Horizontal inequalities and conflict*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Stewart, Frances. "Horizontal inequalities in Kenya and the political disturbances of 2008: some implications for aid policy." *Conflict, Security & Development* 10.1 (2010): 133-159.
- Stiglitz, J. (2012) *The price of inequality*. Penguin UK.
- Strauss, V. (2013), 'Global education market reaches \$4.4 trillion — and is growing', *Washington Post*, February 9th, 2013.
- Sum, N. L., & Jessop, B. (2013). *Towards a cultural political economy: putting culture in its place in political economy*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Therborn, G. (2014) *The killing fields of inequality*. John Wiley & Sons.

Truman, H.S. (1949) *Inaugural Address. 20 January 1949*. Available online: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=13282>

US Department of State (1948) Policy Planning Staff paper 23 (PPS23) Review of Current Trends: US Foreign Policy, In *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) Vol 1, Part 2*, pp.509-529.

Veltmeyer, H. (2005) Development and globalization as imperialism. *Revue canadienne d'études du développement Canadian journal of development studies.* , 2005, Vol.26(1), p.89-106

Verger, A., & Bonal, X. (2012). All Things Being Equal?. In *The World Bank and Education* (pp. 125-142). SensePublishers.

Verger, A; Novelli, M & Kosar-Altinyelken, H. (Eds) (2012) *Global Education Policy and International Development: new agendas, issues and policies*. London: Continuum. 296 pages.

Wade, R.H. (2014) 'The Piketty phenomenon: why has Capital become a publishing sensation?', *International Affairs* 90(5): 1069-1083.

Watson, K. (1984) *Dependence and Interdependence in Education: International Perspectives*, British Comparative and International Education Society Conference, London: Croom Helm.

Williamson, J. (ed.) (1994). *The Political Economy of Policy Reform*. Washington, DC: Institute for International Economics.

Wolf, T. (2014) A More Equal Society Will Not Hinder Growth. *The Financial Times*. April 14th, 2014. London: Financial Times