

## **Consequence of Pedagogy**

### a personal narrative adding up to Critical Practitioner Inquiry

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This narrative tells a story that from a personal perspective adds up to what we today call Critical Practitioner Inquiry (CPI). Other stories can also add up to CPI and through that show the significance of narrative. Narrative can even be seen as a critical resistance towards the present neo-liberal policies. As Sennett<sup>1</sup> (2006: 183-184) puts it “events in time connect, experience accumulates” and what the present economic and institutional culture does is that it strips people of their narrative agency as

insecurity is not just an unwanted consequence of upheavals in markets;  
rather, insecurity is programmed into the new institutional model. This is,  
insecurity does not happen to a new-style bureaucracy, it is made to happen.  
(Op cit. p. 187)

Therefore, narrative matters not least as a form of collective and individual social resistance, but more importantly as a way to create a sense of security, voice and meaning to what at an instant glance can look unrelated, as that is the way we are told to interpret social events under the present global capitalism to keep us in the insecurity trap.

#### **... creating space and pace for students ...**

This narrative starts in experiences as a remedial teacher in basic education for 14-16 years old students who were told that they did not fit into ordinary classes in a school system that was officially designed to include everyone. Therefore, these students ended up as disaffected students and placed in a separate class, where I was supposed to teach them and to keep them away from ordinary classes where they were considered disturbing elements. All students in this class saw themselves as failures and reacted to this social stigma in destructive ways, extrovertly or introvert. Therefore, some of them always ended up in trouble and conflict, while others just ‘disappeared socially’ through their own self-neglecting behaviour. As their teacher, it became important to restore self-respect amongst the students and to develop the classroom to a kind of social sanctuary where students felt needed before anything else was considered. This led to alternative solutions of pedagogy in the sense that we could not work following a ‘normal’ textbook-led classroom practice but had to create space and pace for the students’ own initiatives. Language studies were integrated with own writings even including poetry based on the students own experiences and social studies were organised as projects related to events in the community. The organisation of classroom work became dependent on the students own efforts and contributions, and comments were now and then made that ‘all are needed in the classroom to make it work’ as absenteeism used to be a common problem for the students and which occasionally reappeared.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard Sennett (2006) *The Culture of the New Capitalism*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press.

A major project about the functioning of local community democracy became a hallmark example of the work amongst the students. This project started in a newspaper article about the plans to demolish old houses in the middle of town. We read and discussed this article and decided to use the issue under discussion as an example of how local decisions were taken. The students had to orientate themselves in the local administration to find the authority responsible and to interview some of the politicians and civil servants about their plans. Further on, they also interviewed citizens living in the area and also discussed their own views about the plans. After much effort, note taking and writing they managed to outline the different views and decided to make these views public, by arranging a public exhibition where the different opinions were represented together with their own model of how the students themselves saw the future of the area. The students received many encouraging comments from the public, which in many ways boosted the students' self-image. In the school we met many surprised teachers who did not think 'these students' were capable of carrying out such a project as it also was recognised by the local media, verifying that schooling itself individualises problems as 'students' problems' that actually originate in structural issues in society, in faulty assumptions about pedagogy and what it means to become educated.

After some years as a remedial teacher I got the opportunity to work as a teacher educator for remedial teachers during a time when university studies in Sweden went through a major official shift by the decision that the official pedagogical power over university studies was decentralised through the local production of steering documents like syllabi. As a newly recruited teacher educator I ended up in a situation, which was marked by a strong politico-ideological discourse on educational practices.

### **... pedagogy beyond boundaries ...**

The politico-ideological struggle became expressed through two differing views on how to look at students with some sort of physical or mental 'handicap'. The hegemonic view, which also had been broadly accepted as the common sense in remedial teaching, was based on what was considered as 'normal' and 'deviant'. This view was operationalised through the listing of a number of handicaps, which then were translated into a number of competencies that teachers could gain through training and thus becoming legitimate or certified experts within these fields. The alternative view that I and some of my colleagues supported was based on the idea that it is the social structures in society that create the stigma for people who do not fit the norm and that the ultimate goal of education is to create realities that make all people develop socially, emotionally and intellectually by refusing to reduce social stigma to individual handicaps. This struggle continued in relation to the local steering documents that we were set to produce as a common document for all and developed sometimes to desperate attempts to keep track of the 'enemy's' argumentations as we at one occasions found out that a member of our opposition was recording meetings and asked someone to transcribe our dialogue hoping that it could be used against us following a 'Watergate'- model. Under these circumstances there was no other option than to divide the staff into two groups that could carry out our ordinary work in parallel, that is to carry out a one-year teacher education programme for remedial teachers, by also dividing the students into two groups that followed two different versions of the programme in line with the basic pedagogical ideas of each group of teacher educators; our team then modelled an approach that in retrospect can be named a critical-participatory project model, which in short is described here.

### *A critical-participatory project model*

The basis for this model was the fact that the students/teachers going through the programme were well experienced teachers, who in most cases had been teaching for 10-15 years as uncertified remedial teachers and the present programme was meant to give them the necessary certification to be able to be employed as remedial teachers with effects like safer working conditions and higher salaries. Other participants had entered the programme for other reasons like to get a break from their work as subject specialist teachers, which for some were considered more or less as a sabbatical. By looking at this situation we assumed that the amount of knowledge and experiences that our group of 60 participating possessed had to be seriously considered and also critically reflected upon. Therefore, we often started the course by challenging the participants' common sense about university studies as well as our different roles as teacher educators and students/participants. This was done in different ways and once through a mock diagnostic test of their knowledge through a speeded paper and pencil test with multiple-choice questions (as a critical reflection of the testing hysteria for the diagnoses of deviant behaviour). Further on, we always introduced ourselves to the participants by telling them about the areas of teaching, learning, and general education that we had experiences from and knowledge about, how we as a team could be made available to the participants, and the amount of extra resources there were available for us to call in other people as experts or people with experiences worth listening to. After that the participants were divided into two groups of 30 each and each group had to plan their own programme and negotiate with each other and the team of teacher educators how to use the extra resources as well as the team of teacher educators. This process usually took around 2-3 months and involved a lot of discussions about what was important to know as a remedial teacher and how to get access to new knowledge. Already at this point there were some participants, who had hoped for a ready-made programme that they could sit through or avoid to get engaged in, and for that reason were very critical to the fact that they were demanded to get involved, while most participants for the first time in their professional life saw the possibilities with the participatory approach of the programme, which also influenced their perspective on education far beyond the programme itself.

The major part of the programme was then organised as project work, when smaller groups worked on specific issues related to what they considered as important aspects of formal education. Study visits, invited speakers, lectures, and team building activities became integrated parts of the studies and to a certain extent you could say that the learning process did not stop when the programme came to an end. In fact, many of the participants and the teacher educators continued to meet on an annual basis to discuss their experiences 'from the field', to document their experiences, and some of them were also called back to the programme to act as resource persons or started to run seminars and workshops for other teachers and in that way the ideas that the programme was based on were influencing many practitioners.

This programme became a turning point for many dedicated teachers and created many instances of hope for the future of formal schooling. Mistakes were also made that were used as evidence against us when traditionalists and the state bureaucracy saw a need to move things back to the sphere of 'normality' through a Swedish model of 'Beruf Verbot' – work prohibition - when we were called to a meeting only to be told that we had our pedagogical freedom, but that the state still had the possibility to decide on which programme to support

economically in the future. This and other coincidences led up to a voluntary post as In-service Education Officer in the northern part of Botswana in Southern Africa.

### **... continued work against the mainstream...**

In 1980 I started to work as a volunteer and In-service Education Officer in Northern Botswana in a project that was subtitled 'A different sort of thing'. This project was later on overrun by a major USAID project introducing neo-colonial and neo-behaviourist measures under the guise of learner-centred pedagogy. The USAID project has been thoroughly analysed and described by Tabulawa (2003)<sup>2</sup>. However, before this overrun took place my job was to support local school development and it entailed work together with teachers at village schools to improve the education for primary school children. I soon realised that much of the school content was alien to the students and was learnt by heart usually through chorus repetitions after the teacher, the main characteristics of what happens in many African schools until this day. Therefore, I started to cooperate with teachers to develop education material that was based on local conditions and experiences as a way to acknowledge 'the local' and by that demystify and decolonise the content of schooling. Booklets with stories written by teachers and students based on local conditions were produced with titles like 'Makaleng - Our village' that told about the historical and present life of a village and 'Mr Molobe's Minibus and other stories' that was based on locally collected information describing different aspects of social life related to e.g. transport, housing, and food. We also developed a language learning approach that was called the 'Language Experience Approach' that was based on the collective production of texts based on the experiences of the students. I also realised that teachers and villagers had very little knowledge about the apartheid system that was still reigning beyond the borders with South Africa and Namibia, even though a constant stream of refugees passed by Francistown, the main city in the area, on their way to the refugee camp at Dukwe, 50 kilometres away. Therefore, during my trips to the villages in the region I brought with me a projector, a generator, petrol, and educational films borrowed at the UNDP office in Gaborone. In the evenings, after the work at the school was done, we arranged outdoor film shows on the school wall for all villagers. The most appreciated film was titled 'Generations of Resistance' and told the history of the political struggle against apartheid in South Africa from Chief Bambata at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century over the Sharpeville-massacre in 1960, when ANC was banned, until the school boycotts of the late 1970s. In addition to educational booklets based on local experiences and conditions mentioned above, we also published a booklet with stories from black townships sent to me by activists working for Molo Songololo, a children's magazine in the Cape Town area. However, this became too much for the 'education experts' from Sweden and the USA working for the Ministry of Education in Gaborone, who thought that reading material in schools should only tell nice stories about 'family and animals'. Once again, I was called to a meeting, this time at the Ministry of Education in Gaborone. There I was warned, through an influential Swedish consultant, as an early warning to the overrun to come, that it was not part of my job description to produce school material. I refused to accept this attempt to direct my educational activities and continued to produce locally relevant school material as well as started to cooperate with Patrick van Rensburg and his organisation Education with Production.<sup>3</sup> The ambition was to transfer the education with production idea to primary level

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<sup>2</sup> Tabulawa, Richard (2003) International Aid Agencies, Learner-centred Pedagogy and Political Democratisation: a critique. *Comparative Education*, Volume 39, No. 1. 7 – 26.

<sup>3</sup> Van Rensburg, Patrick (1984) *Looking Forward from Serowe*. The Foundation for Education with Production, Botswana.

by adapting it to the pedagogy of the French educator Celestin Freinet.<sup>4</sup> However, the innovative ideas represented by the brigade movement and the education with production concept had already at this time become a threat to the liberal and mainstream pedagogical ideas of schooling in Botswana and once again state power and the lack of financial government support marginalised the ideas by incorporating the brigade movement into the 'normal' way of doing vocational training by isolating schooling from society at large in combination with an adapted practice on terms set by private and corporate capital interests. After more than 2 years' work in Botswana, my educational activities continued in Angola together with the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO), a liberation movement that fought for the liberation of Namibia, mainly from bases in southern Angola.

### **... within the liberation movement ...**

When I came back to Sweden in 1983, I attended a seminar organised by the Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) and was approached by the Head of the Education Department who asked whether I would be interested in travelling to a refugee camp in Angola, called Kwanza Sul, for exiled Namibian citizens. The job was to look into the possibilities to support teachers and students at the education centre in the refugee camp where Sida was busy building new classrooms to replace the tents and the open spaces now used as 'classrooms'. My first visit to Kwanza-Sul developed into an in-service programme for teachers at the centre as well as to a three year pre-service programme called the Integrated Teacher Training Programme (ITTP), which made me, my colleagues, and our student teachers to commute between Sweden and Angola until Namibia's independence in 1990.

After independence we were instructed by the coming Minister of Education that we should continue with the ITTP inside Namibia until the end of 1992 as a counterforce against the interim programmes, set up by the previous regime as an attempt to hinder a national reform to take place.<sup>5</sup> The ITTP operated from Ongwediva College of Education (OCE) the largest college in the northern part of Namibia with the aim to show Namibians that teacher education could be organised differently from the interim programmes and its behaviouristic basis called 'fundamental pedagogies'.<sup>6</sup>

The ITTP became an optimistic possibility that challenged many of the hegemonic and taken for granted ideas about teacher education, both those grounded in the previous colonial system as well as those driven by educational ideas supported by the World Bank and other Western donors and their development rhetoric.

The ITTP integrated pre-service and in-service education in the sense that when ITTP students carried out their school-based studies the class teachers at times were brought to the college for their own up-grading. ITTP students carried out school projects that engaged parents and other community members in improving the conditions for schooling by developing school gardens, building school toilets, improving the water system and building

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<sup>4</sup> Freinet, Celestin (1975) *Pour l'école du peuple* (För folkets skola) Stockholm: Wahlström & Widstrand; Castle, Stephen & Wustenberg, Wibeke (1979) *The Education of the Future*. London: Pluto Press.

<sup>5</sup> Mayumbelo, Chuma & Nyambe, John (1999) Critical Inquiry in Pre-service Teacher Education: Some initial Steps Toward Critical, Inquiring, and Reflective Professionals in Namibian Teacher Education. In Zeichner, Ken & Dahlström, Lars (Eds) *Democratic teacher Education Reform in Africa. The Case of Namibia*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press. 64-81.

<sup>6</sup> Van Harmelen, Ursula (1997) Education Theory 2. Part One: Where have we come from? Unpublished Study Material. Grahamstown: Department of Education, Rhodes University.

new classrooms. The ITTP students also carried out inquiries that were reported as part of their examination and produced local school material for different subject areas like languages, social studies, maths and sciences. The programme also published a teacher's magazine called 'The Frontline Teacher' with articles about different educational topics across traditional boundaries. The studies in the programme were often integrated under themes and operated closely together with a selected number of schools with the intention to develop the conditions at these schools in a sustainable way.

Before the ITTP came to an end, we were told that Sweden and our university was considered, mainly because of our previous engagements, to assist Namibia in creating a new national teacher education programme, democratic in nature and free from the racist notions on which previous programmes in Namibia had been built. This work became a demanding travel, which succeeded to develop a unique teacher education programme, not least through the prolonged support from scholars like Staf Callewaert from Copenhagen University in Denmark, Ken Zeichner from University of Madison-Wisconsin in the US and John Elliott from University of East Anglia in Britain. The Teacher Education Reform Project (TERP), became responsible for the main external support to teacher education reform in Namibia during a period of 8 years. The national reform process, which I have described and analysed thoroughly elsewhere, became a two-front war of position against, on the one hand, traditional intellectual identities represented by Namibians who had served the previous system and, on the other hand, traditional intellectuals with an outsider identity amongst foreign advisers, who embraced the hegemonic donor views of technical rationality and originated from affluent countries in Europe or America and others who were commonly known as 'suitcase academics' from other African countries, working at the University of Namibia (UNAM) and who by their sole position thought that they had the preferential right of interpretation over teacher education.<sup>7</sup> The operation of the still prevailing system, which we were set to replace, can be illustrated from a steering committee meeting for the interim programmes that I attended at an early stage after independence 1990. At this meeting the members of the steering committee, representing the previous college for Whites and the Faculty of Education at UNAM, were to report on their flying visits to the colleges in the North. For that reason the Rectors from the three northern colleges had been called to Windhoek, which also created an opportunity for us to meet them for the first time as a group. However, the meeting became a long and painful exercise of social humiliation, when the Rectors were talked to like children and told how inefficiently and unprofessionally they were running their business. The committee members even gave 'proof' by showing pictures that they had taken during their flying visits. One of these pictures showed how overhead projectors that the committee had distributed to the colleges were stored in a cupboard instead of placed and utilized in the classrooms. The committee wondered whether this was a sign of disregard or lack of gratitude for the committee's efforts to improve the conditions at the colleges. It was not until after the meeting that one of the scolded Rectors dared to tell us that his college operated without electricity, thus giving a perfectly accurate reason for not using overhead projectors in the classrooms and also demonstrating the contextual ignorance of the so called professionals set to control the practice of the interim programmes.

**... on a national arena ...**

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<sup>7</sup> Dahlström, Lars (2002) *Post-apartheid teacher education reform in Namibia – The struggle between common sense and good sense*. Umeå University: Department of Education. Sweden.

The Basic Education Teacher's Diploma (BETD) was initiated in 1993 after a speedy groundwork mostly carried out at the newly established Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) in the capital Windhoek. The Minister of Education said that the reason was due to political demands for actions, when questioned about this speedy introduction, and added that we should look at the reform as a national tryout. However, already at this stage, the traditional intellectuals received an upper hand as most of the curriculum conveners had to be drawn from representatives available in Windhoek, which happened to be the stronghold of traditional intellectuals from the old regime, thus leaving many of the recently 'liberated' Black teacher educators at the northern colleges behind. We tried to repair the initial damage made by embarking on a continuous curriculum development strategy, which would give teacher educators time and possibilities to engage in the curriculum process and by that gain ownership over their own programme.

The BETD Broad Curriculum gave the programme an innovative approach and many possibilities for internal development. First, the combination of a foundation and a specialisation block was created with the purpose to introduce students to the teaching profession through their own investigations to counteract the narrow perspective students carry with them from their previous experiences as students, which Ahlström (1983) has named the apprenticeship of observation, i.e. students' understanding of education from their student perspective.<sup>8</sup> It is this apprenticeship of observation, which has a tendency to narrow students' perspectives and by that contribute to a reduction of education to a technical rationality. The foundation block was created with the vision that the first part of the studies in the BETD would open the eyes of the students for the intrinsic social fabric of education through inquiries into the general areas of language learning, mathematical learning, social and scientific learning, as a foundation for future studies. However, this rarely happened as the common sense of the traditional intellectuals dominated the scene on the ground and turned the foundation block into what teacher education in Namibia always had been concerned about, namely the students' lack of subject knowledge. Secondly, during the first School-based Studies (SBS) in the programme, taking place at the end of the first year, students were instructed to start their specialisation studies by making inquiries at schools related to the learning of the specialisation subjects. This would entail students to collect information about available textbooks, teachers' approaches to teaching, and students' way of learning. This information was brought back to the colleges and used for further analysis and as background information for the development of teaching and learning strategies as part of the students' knowledge production. However, this never developed into the inquiring activity it was meant to be and therefore it neither became the initial foundation for further learning in the programme. Thirdly, the SBS was together with the subject Education Theory and Practice (ETP) modelled as the core of the BETD programme. It was the SBS and the ETP that made the difference between the BETD and previous teacher education programmes in Namibia. The ethos of the BETD was to create a critical perspective on teacher education that combined empirical analysis and critical theoretical perspectives with the development of strategies for learning as a way to knowledge production. Therefore, one of the overarching professional themes in the BETD was named Critical Practitioner Inquiry (CPI). Students were supposed to develop a critical inquiry into their practice and the CPI was carried out during the three years of study as part of SBS and ETP. Students CPI projects started the first year with the investigations into the specialisation subjects described above, it continued the

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<sup>8</sup> Ahlström, K-G. (1988) *The University and Teacher Training*. Uppsala: Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis. No. 56.

second year with investigations into the conditions for schooling (views about schooling, school administration, schooling and society, etc.), and was concluded the third year with an independent study and development project that combined the CPI into a written report that demonstrated the students' skills and educational knowledge gained during the programme. All reports carried out by BETD students would eventually add up to a new type of knowledge base for education when properly documented, organised under emerging themes for teacher education and by that integrated into an ever growing and changing basis of knowledge production. Each college was empowered with an Educational Development Unit (EDU) that was envisaged to be the hub for such developments.

The first period of the curriculum development process was manifested through an annual BETD National Seminar when all teacher educators in the country were invited to a week long working session on the programme. The National Seminars were also an attempt to create a national reform agenda by bringing all stake holders together to discuss general aspects of education like what constitutes a subject area, what assessment policies could be applied, and what the relationships between educational theory and practice could be. Many general aspects of education had to be brought up for discussions as the pervious system of apartheid education continued to haunt believes and practices behind the official scene. For example, the area of assessment became one of the most problematic areas to deal with as assessment had a very specific function in the apartheid system as one of the main means through which the racist system of education tried to prove itself. Examinations and assessments were constructed in such a way that it was designed to create failure, especially amongst Black students. As a contrast, the BETD programme was designed to create success, by the introduction of continuous and formative assessment. However, the new assessment policy created many problems and was even redefined by the traditional intellectuals to fit their common sense about assessment. At one instance Staf Callewaert was even asked to explain the new assessment system at prime time on the Namibian Television and dared to say that the BETD was designed to create success to the dismay of traditional intellectuals, who had the opinion that a 'good' programme was one that could sift the wheat from the chaff by creating failures. Many traditional intellectuals turned the continuous assessment policy into a continuous testing model with tests every week with little formative function. A related strategic mistake was made when an independent examination authority was created, a responsibility that initially was part and parcel of the policy formations carried out by the National Institute for Educational Development (NIED). An examination authority that looked at itself as independent from the policy formations soon started to live its own life and to create examination-driven rather than policy-driven demands on teacher education and other parts of the education system. Examination became the sole measurement of failure or success and as examination had been allowed to get a paramount position in the education system it soon generated 'objective' demands on the policy arena, like competency-based criteria with a measurable value.

The second period of curriculum development became influenced by these examination worries and the international trend of competency based curriculum development that in combination redirected teacher education and by that moved the power over teacher education closer to the traditional intellectuals. When the final version of the BETD Broad Curriculum was approved in 1998 it had gone through three previous draft versions and ended up as a policy document that was based on criterion-referenced assessment with a stronger emphasis on subject knowledge learning. The unique characteristic of the BETD that initially looked at teacher education as a means to transform the culture of schooling in accordance with human and social development goals expressed through a set of values to be realised (Ebbutt &

Elliott, 1998)<sup>9</sup>, rather than predefined entities of technical rationalities, became marginalised and evaporated in the transformation process from policy goals to assessment goals.

One could say that it took the traditional intellectuals more than 15 years to get back in power, which is confirmed today by the recent influences from World Bank agendas on the Education and Training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP), a sector wide reform programme that will have detrimental effects on the reform efforts that grew out of the liberation struggle for independence (Government of the Republic of Namibia, 2007).<sup>10</sup> However, Namibian educators have learnt a lot during these 15 years and will eventually strike back through the counter-hegemonic pockets of resistance that still prevail through experiences such as Critical Practitioner Inquiry.

### ... the CPI promise ...

The teacher education reform in Namibia generated a lot of international interest from critical scholars as it initially followed an alternative route critical to the mainstream ideas about teacher education. First, teacher education took the lead in the national reform rather than being an add-on. Secondly, it did not accept the preferential right of interpretation over teacher education normally taken by university departments and subject specialists, but aimed at creating a new kind of educational knowledge and pedagogy. Thirdly, it initially did not accept the demands put forward from powerful donor organisations like the World Bank. It was such stances that created degrees of freedom for alternative developments such as Critical Practitioner Inquiry (CPI).

In our attempts to create the basis for a different teacher education system we soon realised the need for a staff development programme mainly focusing on teacher educators. A report by Staf Callewaert (1995) contributed to the basis for such a programme and this report became an important contribution to the development of CPI and the future CPI position paper.<sup>11</sup>

CPI has developed far beyond the Namibian borders e.g. into teacher education in Laos and Ethiopia. Our recent experiences have taught us about the potential of CPI as shown by other documents at this website. Even though not institutionalised the way we had hoped for, our experiences from Namibia and Ethiopia, has shown that the type of education that we have worked for through the BETD programme and staff development courses following a CPI approach, has had an important impact on groups of educators and their views on education. They will be the future carriers of critical educational ideas in dear need these days, when new voices are called for to alter the present onslaught on education by the sickness that towards the end of the twentieth century, according to Amin (2004:6)<sup>12</sup>, struck the world: "Not everyone died, but all suffered from it. The virus which caused the epidemic

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<sup>9</sup> Ebbutt, David & Elliott, John (1998) Supporting Teachers' Professional Development in a Developing Country through Practice-based Inquiry and Distance Learning: some key issues. *Educational Action Research*. Volume 6. No. 2. 205-218.

<sup>10</sup> Government of the Republic of Namibia (2007) Education and training Sector Improvement Programme (ETSIP). Planning for a Learning Nation. Programme Document: Phase I (2006-2011). Windhoek: Government of the Republic of Namibia.

<sup>11</sup> Callewaert, Staf (1995) A postgraduate education programme and related issues concerning teacher education for basic education in Namibia. Okahandja: NIED/TERP Document. See also the Position Paper at this website.

<sup>12</sup> Amin, Samir (2004) *The liberal Virus –Permanent War and Americanization of the World*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

was called the liberal virus” and turned all human activities, including public activities such as education and social welfare, into commodities that could easily be measured, objectively defined in advance, and as a consequence be challenged following a cost-benefit logic. Or as Staf Callewaert so clearly expressed it in his postscript to our book, *Critical Educational Visions and Practices in Neo-Liberal Times*, based on the Ethiopian experience of CPI:

Working with education in Ethiopia is a wonderful and painful experience certainly for Ethiopians, but also for participating foreigners. It is wonderful to discover or rediscover a patchwork of regions, societies, cultures, languages, religions and most of all the people who live them. As a European you will soon discover that much of what you believe is your own particular European culture, apparently pretending to become the global culture, was already in full bloom in Ethiopia when your own ancestors were still living their primitive way of life in the forest. You will discover an African country without a colonial past. As an educationalist you will perhaps for the first time in Africa work with faculty lecturers and students who have the same educational level as yourself and your own students in Europe. But at the same time, your experience will soon be accompanied by an underlying suffering, when you discover that even here you will meet what may become the tragedy of our time, the radical change from education by educationalists to education by neo-liberal management. This radical change, which we have met in the USA, the UK, Scandinavia, Namibia and Mozambique, is constantly disrupting our combined professional efforts across national borders to achieve both a broader competence and social justice. This turn in education has been initiated and constantly feed by the blessings of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, and even at times by bilateral donors and their governments. (Callewaert, 2006: 127)<sup>13</sup>

The hope is in our future!

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<sup>13</sup> Callewaert, Staf (2006) Looking back, but not in anger. In Dahlström, Lars & Mannberg, Jan (Eds) *Critical Educational Visions and Practices in neo-liberal times*. Umeå University: Global South Network Publishers. 127-132.