EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION

Islam and Education

The post-September 11 climate has prompted renewed interest in the Islamic world, particularly regarding issues of democracy, poverty, gender, and education. This has generated a flurry of critical attention on the subject of Islam and education and education in Islamic countries by the popular media and academic journals, as well as an impetus for self-reflective educational research and policy recommendations. Theoretical constructs that place religious/secular, traditional/modern, public/private approaches to education at opposite ends of a continuum have been inadequate in characterizing education in predominantly Muslim countries, raising important questions about the construct "Islamic education." Though the role of Islam in education and of education in Muslim countries has been hotly debated both by Muslims and non-Muslims, it has not been adequately studied by scholars of comparative education.

This issue of CICE extends the theoretical debate surrounding education in the Islamic world and examines the different ways in which education in Islamic countries and Islamic education (in predominantly Muslim countries and elsewhere) are being framed by researchers, practitioners, and the media in light of current international affairs.

Susan Douglass and Munir A. Shaikh provide guidelines for terminology relating to Islam in Defining Islamic Education: Differentiation and Applications as a means to enhance understanding of Islam and of Muslims. Focusing on the American context, they chart out a typology of Islamic education in various institutions, illuminating concepts of education that are associated with Islam and Muslim educational traditions that are parallel to concepts within Western education.

In The 'Islamic' in Islamic Education: Assessing the Discourse, Farid Panjwani critically assesses the dominant discourse on 'Islam and education' and argues that, at various levels of analysis, the discourse suffers from serious conceptual and empirical weaknesses. He suggests that in order to overcome these weaknesses, the discourse will have to reconceptualize several elements, including its exclusivist approach and its approach to the history of Muslims.

Jeffery Milligan's article on Islamization or Secularization? Educational Reform and the Search for Peace in the Southern Philippines considers how the Filipino government has historically dealt with educating its minority Muslim population, suggesting that the use of secularization policies has not always been effective. He contends that the recent autonomy given to Muslim Mindanao by the Philippine government has provided Muslim educators with the freedom to challenge the secularization thesis and possibly to offer a viable alternative to the assimilative and alienating policies of the past.

In Islam, Democracy and Citizenship Education: An Examination of the Social Studies Curriculum in Pakistan, Iftikhar Ahmad discusses the ongoing power struggle in Pakistan between the Islamists and Moderates through an examination of the government mandated social-studies curriculum.

Caroline Pryor and Zohreh Eslami-Rasekh investigate the philosophical approaches to teaching held by pre-service teachers in Iran and the US in Iranian and U.S. Pre-service Teachers' Philosophical Approaches to Teaching: Enhancing Intercultural Understandings. The comparative study points to similarities and differences in teaching approach, w ith a view to enhancing understanding about cultural values and applications in educational settings.

Finally, Lene Kofoed Rasmussen analyzes the discourse of female Islamists in which the higab and Islamic activism are described as matters of self-education in Higab and the Education of the Self. The paper argues that this discourse promotes a modern approach to education.