**Education in the Muslim World: Different Perspectives**
ROSARII GRIFFIN, (Ed.), 2006
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This is a collection of papers on Muslim education mainly in Muslim countries (but not Malasia or Indonesia) and including a chapter on Britain and Europe. It assumes that Muslim education is not a monolith but heterogeneous, and describes itself as eclectic (p.23). It is an opportunity sample of interests and not comprehensive; it is however rare to find Muslim education covered in detail so this is a welcome addition to that literature. For this journal, I focus on particular questions that research needs to illuminate: what is meant by "Muslim education"? what are the aims (i.e., what are Muslims educated for)? What are Muslim women educated for? what are the tensions between traditionalism and modernism? And what are the implications for in-service work with teachers?

Singh (pp.25-39) describes ways that Muslims have contributed to world education over their first thousand years. Shaw (pp.41-54) explores how, despite large funding going into Saudi Arabia, the results are a high dropout rate, rote learning, school leavers poorly trained for work, and the negative influence of poorly educated nannies. Mazawi (pp.55-76) sees Saudi Islamic universities as "sites where both state hegemony and oppositional politics clash" (p.56) – good, at least this means debate. The interest in Islamic studies is growing there. Niyozov on Tajikistan (pp.77-128, the longest paper) gives a picture of conservative dedicated teachers and admistrators under the spiritual authority of the Aga Khan. There is an emphasis on developing local teachers. Some attempts to bring in new initiatives led to teacher strikes and threatened punishments. Demirel, on Turkey (pp.129-148) is an unproblematised and optimistic prospectus of national secular education policy. Levers, on Iran (pp.149-190) has an interesting discussion on teachers (and students) conformism and self-censorship, feeling vulnerable if they are critical of the authorities, or even if they criticize incorrect textbooks. In this very detailed and useful paper, Islamic piety is shown as the prime qualification for teaching. Kirdar (pp.191-210) finds education for Arab women neither promoted, nor appropriate in content. Brock, Dada and Datta (pp.211-238) find the disadvantaging of girls and women in Nigeria not rooted in policy but in the chavinistic attitudes of the Muslim men. Oh and Roberts (pp.239-256) focus on educational disadvantage amongst Palestians in all the countries they inhabit. Galloway (pp.257-270) reports slow progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina in using education to generate cross-cultural harmony, but sees hopeful signs of developing home-grown teacher development programmes to raise the educational game. Milligan (pp.271-287) describes tensions between the Muslim minority and the Christian government of the Philippines, who use education to create a unified national identity without proper consultation over the needs of Muslim pupils. Doyle's comparison of education for Muslim pupils in France and Britain (pp.289-303) discusses the French emphasis on secular critical rational education within a context of French citizenship. There is disappointing little new information, on the pressure for Muslim schools, or on evidence of disadvantage. The section on Britain is also disappointly general. Bahia (pp.305-322) summarises the state of higher education in Afghanistan, and current developments; Mina, on Egypt's poor record of teacher education, suggests ways forward if Egyptians are to contribute globally.

This is a depressing read about the general lack of progress in education for Muslims worldwide. It is descriptive of what happens and so does not, except for occasional comments, draw up and agenda for change. It reveals tensions amongst Muslims between traditionalism (including islamic studies) and modernism, the former often resulting in economically irrelevant education, the

latter an education that does not take account of islamic values. It reveals massive problems in education for girls and women. There is a great need therefore for teacher development at all levels on the questions, what is education for Muslims for? how can their education build employability attitudes and skills? for teachers in Muslim schools, can Islamic values be presented to pupils in ways which help their personal development rather than indoctrinate them? In this discussion, dominant (traditional male) voices most not drown out minority voices since these have much of value to contribute. The understanding of non-Muslim teachers generally about Muslims and Islamic values needs desperately to be built up, nationally and globally, as witnessed by the Islamophobia report (reviewed in JIE 30 (3), 2004:477-480) if effective bridges are to be built that support Muslim pupils and students.

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