Revolution in the Middle East: Should We Blame or Praise Education?
by Manar Sabry, PhD
University at Buffalo, SUNY

Studies in the field of education in the Middle East have always pointed to the challenges facing the region due to its growing youth population. It is these young people who have been at the forefront of the recent movements toward democracy in Tunisia and Egypt. Youth, in particular educated youth, have played a central role in each revolution, equipped with social media (such as Facebook and Twitter) to exchange information, plan demonstrations and determine when and where to meet.

The Middle East/North Africa region has one of the youngest populations in the developing world and has suffered from a low capacity to create jobs. Many factors have deepened the challenges facing youth, including the mismatch between university graduates and the labor market, the global economic and financial crisis, and the ongoing restrictions facing immigrants from Muslim countries after 9/11. Unemployment rates among university graduates are estimated to be at least 27% in Egypt and 20% in Tunisia. The rates in other Arab countries are equally high. Adding those who are underemployed and those who have given up seeking employment, particularly women, to the ranks of the unemployed, easily doubles the rate of unemployment.

The revolution in Tunisia, for example, was triggered by the self-immolation of a young, unemployed, college graduate who could not earn a living except by selling fruits and vegetables on a hand pushcart. Furthermore, extensive corruption and social inequalities only exacerbate the limited opportunities facing youth.

It is necessary to take a deeper look at the achievements of the highly educated in these countries. The educated populations in Tunisia and Egypt are credited for ending an era of oppression, fighting corruption and autocracy, and establishing what many hope, including myself, will be more democratic and accountable regimes. The change to come in the Middle East is also the fruit of international education, which has played an important role in exposing students from the region to freedoms and democratic institutions found in other countries.

The overthrowing of Presidents Ben Ali in Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt shocked many observers. Many more political manifestations are expected to emerge in the coming months as young people demand economic, social and political reforms. Public and scholarly interest in and about the region will certainly increase.

For many observers the role of education is more critical than ever. The design of educational policies should mirror emerging Middle East realities and be responsive to recent social and political transformations. Indeed, education has been enormously influential in empowering people and promoting political awareness in Egypt and Tunisia. Despite the many challenges that lie ahead, it is hoped that the emerging democratic systems will bring greater accountability to those empowered with authority and support efforts to minimize corruption. I would like to see serious reforms in the region’s educational systems towards greater autonomy and accountability, so that all stakeholders—including students—are given more voice to determine the substance of educational policies. Only then can education bring about real economic growth and job creation. The effects of education not only benefit the individuals who experience it, but have multiple spillover effects on society. The time has come to focus on the potential of educated youth to bring about long awaited social changes.
Redesigning the Newsletter

Education is about transformations—cultural, political, economic and individual. CIES embodies a US-based, though internationally-oriented professional home for scholars, analysts and practitioners who examine—and often work to transform—a multiplicity of educational structures, policies and practices. The insights and critical perspectives that CIES members bring to understanding education, as a force for societal change, are vivid, informative and timely.

This newly designed Newsletter seeks to capture and enliven the collective imagination of the CIES membership. In addition to providing a platform for information sharing, CIES Perspectives aims to nurture discussion and debate, from diverse perspectives, about CIE issues and current topics, as well as the activities of the Society.

In this issue of CIES Perspectives, you will read about the role of education in recent revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, a literary memorial for Philip Foster in Ghana, education as a change agent in rural communities, impressions from a CIES regional meeting, improving reading fluency in Liberia and much more. You will also learn about the Secretariat’s new institutional home.

My colleagues and I at University at Albany are honored to be given the opportunity to host the CIES Secretariat, and to develop a Newsletter that we hope will inform and engage CIES members.

We wish to express our gratitude to Hilary, Ben Baez, Tom Kinser, and Fernanda Pineda for creating a professional home for scholars, analysts and practitioners who examine—and often work to transform—a multiplicity of educational structures, policies and practices. The insights and critical perspectives that CIES members bring to understanding education, as a force for societal change, are vivid, informative and timely.

This Newsletter draws upon the contributions of many CIES members, and calls on others to contribute in the future. Treisy Romero and Tom Kinser, UAlbany doctoral students, ably assisted in compiling relevant materials and in creating a redesigned CIES Perspectives.

I also welcome the incoming Editor, Dr. Kevin Kinser, who will prepare subsequent editions of the Newsletter. The next one will be distributed following the 2011 annual meeting in Montreal.

Kevin and I welcome your comments about the contents and format of this Newsletter, as well as your suggestions for ways it can be improved in the future. Send your emails to:
abenavot@uamail.albany.edu or KKinser@uamail.albany.edu
All the best,
Aaron Benavot (acting Editor)
A literary memorial in Ghana to Philip Foster

In recent weeks 13 boxes of scholarly books (weighing more than 600 lbs!) were shipped from Albany to the University of Cape Coast in Ghana. These books–spanning the fields of comparative education, sociology and anthropology–belonged to the late Professor Philip Foster, who was a distinguished CIES member until his death in 2008, and to his wife, Dr. Paula Foster, a well-known anthropologist of Africa.

The book shipment to Ghana culminated months of preparation. It began last summer when Graham Foster, one of the Fosters’ two sons, contacted the School of Education at UAlbany and expressed an interest in finding ways that the many scholarly books left by his parents would be put to good use. After several inquiries, Prof. Steve Heyneman (Vanderbilt), a former student of Philip’s, put the Department in contact with Mr. Clement Entsue-Mensah, who serves as Librarian at the University of Cape Coast. After learning of Philip Foster’s long-standing scholarly interests in Ghanaian education, and in light of the University of Cape Coast’s degree programs in the educational and social sciences, Mr. Entsue-Mensah enthusiastically agreed to receive the Foster book donation, which will supplement the institution’s existing collection in these fields.

Then in the fall, with the help of many EAPS students—mostly international (including one from Ghana) and some from the US—all the books in the Foster collection were boxed, categorized, labeled and prepared for shipment to Africa. For the Foster children, and for Philip’s many colleagues and friends, it is hoped that these books will serve as a small, but important living memorial to Paula and Philip Foster.

Philip Foster: A Distinguished Career

Among the many things that have been written about Philip Foster, here are select excerpts that describe his background and some of his many accomplishments in comparative and international education:

Born on 22 January 1927 in London, Philip Foster grew up with a particular British accent, which made it clear that his family was neither privileged nor wealthy. He attended secondary school during WWII and, contrary to popular expectations given his working class origins, successfully completed his ‘A’ levels. After the war, Philip enrolled in the London School of Economics and Political Science, where he specialized in sociology; later he did graduate work at the University of London’s Institute of Education (1954-55). He then took a position in the British foreign service and served as an education officer in the Acholi province of Uganda (1955-58). During this period he met an anthropologist, Paula, who later became his wife and the mother of his two sons, Michael and Graham. In 1958 he decided to continue his graduate studies at the University of Chicago, but soon returned to Africa to become a visiting lecturer at the University of Ghana (1959-60), where, in addition to his teaching, he did field work for his PhD dissertation. In 1962 he was awarded his PhD for a dissertation that later became an award-winning book entitled *Education and Social Change in Ghana* (1965). Drawing upon his rich experiences in Africa he subsequently published (with Remi Clignet) a brilliant study of secondary education in the Ivory Coast entitled *The Fortunate Few* (1966). In 1961 he became a professor at the University of Chicago, where he taught and wrote for some 18 years, and also helped establish the University’s Comparative Education Center. He also spent several years on the education faculty at Macquarie University in Australia.

In 1981 Philip Foster was appointed Professor in UAlbany’s School of Education and served as EAPS Department chair from 1984 until his retirement in 1986. He also won a University at Albany Award for Excellence in Research in 1989-90.

Philip Foster’s intellectual leadership in the field of comparative and international education continues to impress. For years he was actively involved in CIES, and served as its President in 1970. In a classic article, entitled ‘The vocational school fallacy in development planning’ (1965), he argued that, within developing economies, especially in Africa, the presumed economic advantages of technical training and vocational education are highly problematic and that academic schooling provides more powerful longer term benefits for students and society alike. Indeed many of Philip’s ideas have become cornerstones in the field and have influenced the educational policies of a great many developing nations.

Philip Foster will be remembered by hundreds of friends, colleagues and students for his endearing wit, intellect, insight and expertise.

Winners of CIES 2011 International Travel Awards

Owing to the continued support of the George Soros and the Open Society Institute, CIES is awarding International Travel Awards to three educational experts who will be participating in the 2011 CIES conference in Montreal. Initially launched at the 2009 conference, these awards for Distinguished Service in Educational Reform seek to increase the presence of exceptional researchers and practitioners from developing countries who are involved in the implementation of international projects in education. Other international organizations are invited to contribute to this inter-agency endowment fund, initiated by CIES and OSI, to support the continuation of the travel award. The CIES Board joins the award committee–Beatrice Avalos-Bevan, Centre for Advanced Research in Education, University of Chile; Suzanne Majhanovich, Faculty of Education, University of Western Ontario; and Mary Ann Maslak, School of Education, St. John’s University—in congratulating the winners.

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Tarcilia Rivera Zea is a Peruvian, Quechua speaking indigenous leader who has been an activist for indigenous people’s rights for more than 25 years. Her passion for social justice has led her to work on behalf of indigenous women, children and youth in multiple areas at the national and international level, using the UN as the main space to seek recognition of indigenous peoples.

As a child Ms. Rivera decided to become a domestic worker in exchange for education. At 18 she learned Spanish and in 1985 founded CHIRAPAQ, a leading civil society organization that works towards building a plural and equitable society in Peru. As the organization’s President, she seeks forums, partnerships, leaders and networks that work to achieve social, cultural and economic development and respect for the rights of indigenous peoples, particularly women. CHIRAPAQ’s program topics include: recovery of wisdom and ancestral practices; the elimination of discrimination and racism; intercultural education; and food sovereignty.

Tarcilia Rivera is also dedicated to fighting the exclusion of women. She helped create the International Forum of Indigenous Women of the Americas and greatly contributed to the Organization of Andean and Amazonian Indigenous Women of Peru. For two decades she has been an active participant and consultant for the Board of Trustees of the UN’s Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and at the women’s and civil society conferences in Nairobi, Cairo, Beijing and Durban.

In the realm of education, Tarcilia Rivera holds the title of “wise indigenous leader” at the Intercultural Indigenous University, where she teaches and evaluates MA courses in the Intercultural Bilingual Education Program. Moreover, since 2004, she has sought to establish a regional intercultural education system in Ayacucho, Peru. As a firm believer that liberty is based in education, she has imparted culture reinforcement workshops to children who have been displaced by political violence; established a women and education program in the Latin American Indigenous People’s Fund; and influenced public opinion in intercultural education from the indigenous and gender perspective.

Kai Yu, China

Since 1990, Kai Yu has gained broad experience in the field of public service and human development. After getting his first Ph.D. in 1999, he worked for China’s Ministry of Education in its Higher Education Evaluation program, and established a set of evaluation indicators for 83 National Science Bases affiliated to top Chinese universities. In 1998, he served as a higher education expert on the committee of the Education Vitalizing Project for the 21st Century, which developed an extremely important education reform plan. In 2002, he designed a web-based database for a Higher Education Evaluation and Decision-Making System. This system connected more than 3,000 universities and was approved by China’s Council for Accreditation and Evaluation of Universities and Colleges.

Kai Yu’s strength in public service and policy studies can be seen in a variety of settings. In 2006, he worked in the UN’s Department of Economic and Social Affairs and helped draft policy reports that were submitted to the UN Evaluation Group. He also prepared a literature review on the coherence of the global development cooperation system and tabulated key policies and recommendations.

Kai Yu’s academic interests span topics from comparative higher education and higher education philosophy to educational evaluation and policy leadership. He was instrumental in conducting a nationwide survey of Chinese universities, which was one of 14 projects funded by China’s National Education Research Fund for scholars under 35. Beginning in 2003 he decided to work on a second PhD dissertation, which examined the problematic relationship between tracking and inclusive education in Chinese education.

Upon completing his degree in 2008, he took a faculty position in the School of Educational Administration of the Beijing Normal University and, in 2009, became an associate professor.

Bilen Kassa, Ethiopia

Bilen Kassa believes in three essential points in her professional life: positively contributing, sharing with others and learning from others. Her lifelong wish has been to tangibly contribute to the development path of countries and her decision to pursue a degree in economics emanated from this long-held interest. Growing up, being educated and working in Africa gave Bilen a chance to observe first-hand how development is challenged by multifaceted poverty. These experiences motivated her to re-think how to bring about fundamental changes.

What especially fascinates her are the lessons to be learnt from evolving development programs and policies. She views education as a key factor in different development arenas. And given resource scarcity, she understands the paramount importance of using resources effectively and efficiently. For her, girls represent a nation’s greatest resource due to the huge multiplier effects of educating girls. By contrast girls who remain uneducated can be a great source of poverty. Investing in girls has been ignored by many in the past even though evidence shows that such an investment contributes to resource efficiency.

Bilen Kassa has been working on girls’ education for six years. Time and time again she sees the importance of education in girls’ lives and their successes following enrollment. This great experience, the learning by doing and the satisfaction from the impact reaped, led Bilen to do research on girls’ education.

She currently serves as Senior Program Manager in five NGO-funded livelihood projects. In each one she assures that the issue of girls’ education is carefully addressed in a project’s design and implementation. Beyond this, she seeks to share experiences and the lessons learnt from these five projects on issues related to girls’ education.

In 2009, she presented a paper at the CIES conference, which examined how one project not only brought girls to school but also expanded their social capital. Discussing her paper and participating in other sessions increased her capacity to design future projects focusing on girls’ education. In Montreal she will present a study on conditional cash transfers and girls’ education and see lessons for many developing countries. She firmly believes in girls’ ability to succeed when they are given opportunities of which they had been formerly deprived. She hopes to open up more opportunities for them through her efforts and studies.
Words Unspoken, Themes Untouched
by Olena Aydarova
Michigan State University

The Midwest Regional Comparative and International Education Society convened in Ypsilanti, Michigan in 2010 and held much promise. Questions about research agendas and ideas for future directions were my top priorities for attending the conference. Yet, the session discussions shifted my attention from research to the ideological undercurrents of the conference events: from what was said openly to what was covered in silence.

The silence covering the topics of power, prestige and privilege permeated one particular session. During the roundtable discussion on globalization, the facilitator raised one perspective on globalization that focuses on open borders and increasing similarity between nation states. Some members comfortably continued the conversation about disappearing national borders and decreasing national differences. Others, including myself, kept an uncomfortable silence not because we had nothing to say, but rather because we were powerless to raise our objections. In this conversation, we belonged to the Other, the observed entity declared to have become more alike the western or North American “norm.” However, becoming alike is often a painful process of losing distinctiveness and uniqueness. These are not the objectives of the powerful, who conduct observations and measure Others’ progress towards the predetermined standards, but the objections of the powerless, the observed and measured.

Two responses finally broke the silence in an attempt to present our objections. A member of the Russian delegation spoke up: “Why do we have to look at globalization as the process of becoming more alike? Why can we not just come together and learn from each other? Why can’t we share what we know and take from each other what would be of value to all of us?” A different kind of uncomfortable silence ensued. This time it came from those who comfortably contributed just moments before. This silence was not a refusal to raise objections, but rather the awkward silence of disapproval. When the powerless seek a dialogue that would incorporate their perspective, their pleas are often left unheard (Streitwieser, 2004). Another person asked how it could be possible to discuss globalization and becoming more alike when most people do not even know the country she came from. Again, the question was followed by silence. Thus, even though much was said, the discussion ended without ever starting a dialogue.

Other events revealed similar disregard for the differences in perspective between the powerful and the powerless. One session on study abroad focused on the benefits for the American students or teachers who had gone on these trips. A question about reversibility of benefits for the advantage of hosts resulted in acknowledgment of how rare are the attempts to include hosts’ perspectives into the study abroad program design. Another discussion, this time following a presentation on varieties of English used for exams in China and Brazil, came to a standstill when one of the attendees raised questions about prestige, privilege, and power differentials that are reflected in the choices of varieties. Once again, after a presenter from Kyrgyzstan raised the issue of NGOs pursuing their own agendas and conducting pilot studies in his country for the sake of conducting pilot studies, no one asked questions or pursued further dialogue. Silence ensued again.

All these experiences led me to question how problems are framed and discussed in CIE. Do we ask enough questions about why the borders are disappearing for western forms of education but not for indigenous approaches? Why are educational philosophies of the West seen as the only way to conceptualize teaching and learning? When we raise questions of increased similarities, do we attempt to problematize the question of whose image is pursued to achieve the convergence? In research projects conducted in developing countries, whose interests and agendas do we pursue? Do we end up examining the powerless without reflexively examining ourselves? Do we recognize the depth of loss and the pain of obliterating the differences in those who want to maintain their national distinctiveness? Finally, but most importantly, do we hear the voices of the weak when they deliver a message divergent from our expectations or worldviews?

In response to similar questions, Aoki (1996) invoked the symbol of a bridge connecting divides as a place where we can learn to “dwell together humanly” (p. 316). Such dwelling together would require a dialogue, not a monologue, a dialogue where the voice of the powerless Other is not silenced but actively engaged in and heard. Entering that dialogue requires acknowledging power, privilege, and prestige differentials that exist between us (Delpit, 1988). Dialogue would also require humility in recognizing that those in power are no more holders of the truth than the powerless (Freire, 1970). In this dialogue, both sides should be transformed because the job of the humanist educator is to “liberate, and be liberated, with the people—not to win them over” (Freire, 1970: 153). In order to create this dialogue, uncomfortable silences have to be acknowledged and explored to achieve greater mutual understanding.

It is quite likely that at such a small regional meeting, it is difficult to tackle the big issues of power, privilege, and prestige. Yet, as researchers and educators we have to be cognizant of the power differentials and committed to pursuing the dialogue as well as hearing the voice of the Other. Education becomes liberating when we leave no words unspoken and no themes untouched.

Education for Rural Transformation (ERT) in Stockholm, Sweden
by Vinayagum Chinapah, PhD
Head, Institute of International Education, Stockholm, Sweden
and Monica Mincu, PhD
University of Torino, Italy

An international symposium on Education for Rural Transformation (ERT), hosted by the Institute of International Education at Stockholm University, was held on 8-10 November 2010. Attended by more than 30 experts from Australia, Bangladesh, China, India, Italy, Nepal, Romania, Tanzania, and USA, the symposium was organized in cooperation with the UNESCO International Research and Training Center for Rural Education (INRULED), Beijing Normal University, China; and the Maharaja Sayajirao University (MSU), Vadodara, India.

The meeting’s core purpose was to critically discuss concepts, policies and practices in the area of ERT. This included an examination of research, capacity building efforts, good practices as well as policy choices and programmes. The initial focus was on China and India, home to more than half of the world’s rural population, and will gradually include other countries and regions.

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Much of the discourse on ERT drew upon a 2001 study undertaken by INRULED and UNESCO, entitled Education for Rural Transformation: Towards a Policy Framework. Rural transformation, as articulated in this study, was based on certain premises:

“Rural areas are diverse and are in a state of transition... It is essential to turn the continuing and inevitable transition of rural areas, often with adverse consequences on the rural economy, environment and people’s life, into an active and positive process of transformation of rural communities. Educational programs have to become a vital part of this transformation through committed partnerships of the government, communities, businesses, and civil society. The paramount need, largely neglected so far, is to adapt, adjust and re-direct national educational priorities, strategies and resources to the specific conditions and needs of diverse and changing rural communities.”

The report sought to place ERT in mainstream national development strategies, and to contribute to the achievement of the EFA goals and Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In the decade since the UNESCO/INRULED study, the urgency of making education a vehicle for rural transformation has heightened, especially in light of new sources of vulnerability for the rural poor. These include, for example, the recent economic crisis originating in the financial markets of the West but affecting poor people everywhere; new threats to food security; and man-made and natural disasters including effects of climate change endangering life and livelihood of millions. These hazards have disproportionately affected rural populations.

Last year the UN reviewed progress towards the MDGs and emphasized that education targets will not be fully achieved. An important reason for this failure: widespread and persistent urban-rural disparities in educational investments and in the quality of teaching and learning. Thus, many of the world’s rural people remain deprived educationally, and miss opportunities to acquire skills and knowledge that would improve their capabilities and expand their life choices.

Developing countries have been struggling to address what some describe as the triple challenge in education: a) access with equity; b) quality and relevance; and c) efficiency and accountability. The shortfall in achieving the EFA goals by 2015 underscores the need to reassess and re-examine national plans and programmes and ensure that the rural dimensions of the educational agenda are adequately and specifically addressed.

What was addressed at the Symposium?

Papers at the symposium examined topics such as:

- The need for holistic thinking regarding the larger development context and the educational system in conceptualizing ERT; applying critical theories to ensure that people’s agency and transformation are given prominence; a ERT paradigm that emphasizes empowering people and enhancing their capabilities and choices through public policies and civil society participation.
- How children in general, and rural children in particular, are not acquiring the essential competencies in literacy, numeracy and cognitive development, necessary to build the foundation for further learning in Tanzania and India.
- Continuing disparities, deprivation and discrimination in the educational provisions of disadvantaged groups, such as the tribal and ethnic minorities, the extreme poor, and people living in remote areas, in Andhra Pradesh (India), Romania, Hungary and Poland.
- The potential of e-learning and information and communication technology (ICT) by describing specific initiatives in the rural districts of Pinggu (Beijing) and Ningbo (Zhejiang province); and through the national initiatives for bringing ICT resources to schools in India.
- The critical importance of teachers and teacher support in 30 pilot counties in 10 provinces in western China, and a research project of interschool collaboration between more advanced schools and weaker ones in rural areas of China.
- The integrated development of educational services by local education authorities as in Lucheng district in Wenzhou City and in Chengdu, Sichuan Province.
- Civil society’s role in defining and guiding educational service improvement in the Vizianagaram district in Andhra Pradesh.
- The roles and contribution of higher education to rural transformation: integrating rural students in Punjab tertiary institutions; redesigning academic programmes for graduates of Chinese higher education into a source of brain-gain for rural areas rather than brain-drain; and a comparative study of the rural transition of agricultural university of Hebei and the Charles Darwin University in Australia.
- Appropriate and relevant vocational skill development through the streaming of academic and vocational programmes in rural junior high schools in China.
- The adult literacy challenge and creating lifelong learning opportunities for the rural people and the approach followed in Nepal.

The way forward...

The meeting participants proposed that the ERT initiative should be broadened to other regions and countries including holding symposia in other regions, especially in Africa.

The planned symposia in China in 2011 and India in 2012 should be used to deepen the conceptual clarification of ERT; identify and analyse experiences in policies, programmes and projects at national and local levels and with a comparative perspective; and contribute to informed policy dialogue and appropriate capacity building.

New collaborative research programmes should be designed to examine a wide range of EFT issues and policies, including a number of well-chosen case studies of experiences—particularly, but not exclusively, in India and China—that throw light on critical ERT issues and lessons.

An interdisciplinary consultative group should be set up, which can offer guidance for the research agenda, representing education as well as broader development concerns, such as macro-economic policies, environment, regional planning, ICT and agriculture, with a mix of people from government, academia and concerned international organisations (e.g., UNESCO and FAO).

An international post-graduate academic programme on Education and Rural Transformation should be designed. The IIE at Stockholm University may take the lead and implement this programme in collaboration with other partner institutions.

Consideration should be given to publishing a journal on ERT to disseminate research findings and creating a forum for academic discourse. There is also value in developing a special issue on ERT in one or more of the international education journals. Similar special issues should be considered for national journals in China and India.
Understanding these complex developments since 1991 is critical to the study of education around the world in the new millennium. The landscape changed most obviously in the former socialist countries and aligned nations, the impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union was felt in nations of Southeast/Central Europe and the former Soviet Union and in educational systems around the world. While the educational studies hold, the availability and use of international achievement studies around the world has exploded. The most widely adopted studies, PISA and TIMSS, are now administered regularly and include participating countries from every region around the world. These international studies now include cross-national studies of multiple subject areas, teachers and teaching, and a developing focus on higher education. This information has been used to make decisions about resource distribution both within and across national educational systems, but some of the most productive uses of TIMSS and PISA data by policymakers have been to create agendas for innovation and equity in national educational systems. The chapters in this volume will: discuss the uses of international achievement study results as a tool for national progress as well as an obstacle, provide recommendations for ways that international achievement data can be used in real-world policymaking situations, and also discuss what the future of international achievement studies holds.

In the early 1960s, Mexico and South Korea were agrarian societies and both equally undeveloped. The development strategies used by each country resulted in dramatically different results. This book compares and contrasts these countries and answers the wider question of why some Third World nations have developed economically and educationally faster than others. For more information, click here.

Although universal schooling has been adopted as a goal by international organizations, bilateral aid agencies, national governments, and non-profit organizations, little sustained international attention has been devoted to the purposes or goals of universal education. What is universal primary and secondary education intended to accomplish? This book, which grew out of a project of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, offers views from Asia, Africa, Europe, North America and South America on the purposes of universal education while considering diverse cultures, religions, and professions. It is the first book in which renowned authors from around the world have proposed, considered, and debated goals of basic and secondary education, engaging in a constructive dialogue on one of the most pressing issues facing education today. Visit this link for more information.

Emerald Press announces three new publications:

This volume pursues two central objectives. On the one hand, it is necessary to sharpen our analytical tools in order to better appreciate the term governance in the educational field. To this end the five different paradigmatic approaches on governance as well as different topics and sectors shall be confronted/contrasted and related to each other. In the course of this process, the particularly critical educational issue of the relation between academic analyses of governance and the so called governmentality studies will be discussed. On the other hand, the so far marginally studied issue of change in the ‘educational science order’ will be addressed. The transformations mentioned affect the nucleus of the pedagogical understanding of education. The promise of a greater adequacy to the needs and interests of those addressed by education, because more flexible, more user-oriented, more precise control of effects presents a challenge to educational science and pedagogy. This marks the interface of ‘governance’ and ‘performance’ on a systems or organization level (Soguel/Jaccard, 2008; Simons, 2007) with the individual as the subject of education.

Since the IEA’s first international studies on mathematics and science achievement in the late 1960s, the availability and use of international achievement studies around the world has exploded. The most widely adopted studies, PISA and TIMSS, are now administered regularly and include participating countries from every region around the world. These international studies now include cross-national studies of multiple subject areas, teachers and teaching, and a developing focus on higher education. This information has been used to make decisions about resource distribution both within and across national educational systems, but some of the most productive uses of TIMSS and PISA data by policymakers have been to create agendas for innovation and equity in national educational systems. The chapters in this volume will: discuss the uses of international achievement study results as a tool for national progress as well as an obstacle, provide recommendations for ways that international achievement data can be used in real-world policymaking situations, and also discuss what the future of international achievement studies holds.

The 20th anniversary of the collapse of the Soviet Union is a time to reflect and call attention to the educational transformations in post-socialist nations of Southeast/Central Europe and the former Soviet Union and in educational systems around the world. While the educational landscape changed most obviously in the former socialist countries and aligned nations, the impact of the collapse of the Soviet Union was felt in nations worldwide. This volume will provide a comparative account of the meanings and processes of post-socialist transformations in education by exploring recent theories, concepts, and debates on post-socialism and globalization in national, regional, and international contexts. Of particular interest is a critical examination of post-socialist transformations and the evolution of educational change globally since 1991. Understanding these complex developments since 1991 is critical to the study of education around the world in the new millennium.
Lessons from a Ten-Year Funder Collaborative. A Case Study of the Partnership for Higher Education in Africa

by Susan Parker

This case study offers lessons from this unique ten-year philanthropic collaborative of seven foundations. The lessons should be of particular interest to funders interested or involved in similar collaboratives. Over the course of the collaborative, participants from foundations with different cultures, leadership styles, and missions came together to find ways that their work together could enhance their individual foundation grant-making and their collective impact in Africa. During the decade of work, the collaborative experienced some notable successes, struggled with challenges, and made corrections along the way. The report describes the work of the Partnership, its structure, its accomplishments, and its challenges, concluding with advice for others considering starting a similar collaborative. To read Lessons from a Ten-Year Funder Collaborative, visit this link.
Comparative and International Education at Albany: Building on a long tradition

(Founder’s note: Given the transition of the CIES Secretariat to the University at Albany, the following institutional description is meant to provide readers with some background about the Secretariat’s new home and the expertise available to support the Society in the coming years.)

UAlbany’s Educational Administration and Policy Studies (EAPS) Department has deep roots in comparative and international education. For the past 30 years it has been involved in furthering CIE scholarship, training international graduate students, providing capacity building and technical assistance and conducting analytical work to support policy development in many countries.

A shared thread in the Department’s dossier of international projects has been the strengthening of decision-making at all levels of national education systems, partly through the development and use of timely, high quality and relevant knowledge. From the mid-1980s through the 1990s, EAPS faculty led or contributed to education and human resource sector assessments in: the Maldives (for UNDP); Mongolia (the Asian Development Bank); Pakistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan (UNICEF); the Russian Federation (OECD); and Liberia, Yemen, Haiti, Indonesia, Malawi and Ghana (USAID). Attention to improved decision-making capacities can be seen, for example, in work undertaken by EAPS faculty in Ghana (for USAID), which sought to develop appropriate management information systems and the capacities to use such systems. At the request of the National Research Council and the National Academy of Sciences, EAPS Professors A. Cresswell and D. Windham authored substantial contributions to Worldwide Education Statistics: Enhancing UNESCO’s Role, providing a basis for the full-scale review and re-design of UNESCO’s Division of Statistics (now UNESCO’s Institute for Statistics).

In addition, UAlbany and EAPS have shouldered responsibilities within substantial USAID projects carried out in other countries—for example, Improving the Efficiency of Educational Systems, which concluded in the early 1990s. Concurrently, EAPS faculty assumed major analytical and training responsibilities in USAID’s Somali Management Training and Development Project.

Activities and faculty recruitment since the mid-1990s have further strengthened the department’s international engagement, contribution and expertise in CIE. Professors Benavot, Kinser, Lane, Levy, Meyer, Theroux, Valverde, Vergari, and Wagner continue complementary lines of research, evaluation and assistance activities throughout the world. (For more information about EAPS faculty, click here)

Wagner and Benavot have held positions in key international agencies—respectively, in OECD’s Directorate for Education, Labor and Social Affairs (14 years) and in UNESCO’s EFA Global Monitoring Report team (4 years). Levy co-authored the IADB’s first ever Strategy Paper on higher education and has written major parts on higher education reports for UNESCO and, repeatedly, the World Bank. Valverde worked at the US Research Center for the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and continues his involvement with the program to Promote Educational Reform in Latin America and the Caribbean (PREAL). Valverde currently serves as a Fulbright Senior Specialist and also directs the Educational Evaluation Research Consortium (EERC), a partnership of universities in the Dominican Republic with the UAlbany, with funding from USAID. Lane, a Fulbright New Century Scholar, is studying the evolution and effect on developing economies of international branch campuses in the Middle East and Southeast Asia (see page 9). He is also working with the Dubai School of Government on a study of quality assurance in the United Arab Emirates. Theroux has recently joined the research and evaluation team of Australia’s Stronger Smarter Learning Communities initiative, a landmark national project, which seeks to transform schools through the building of leadership capacity and thereby sustain and improve student outcomes.

In 2002, the EAPS Department established the Comparative and International Education Policy Program (CIEPP). This program sought to enhance the relationship between public policy, educational institutions, and educational effectiveness in an international context by carrying out policy oriented research and by training researchers and practitioners. On the research side, CIEPP scholars examined two themes: shifting public/private dynamics and issues of quality and accountability. Under the first theme, a separate, though complementary project, known as the Program for Research on Private Higher Education (PROPHE), was established by Levy (see below). With the support of the Ford Foundation, CIEPP and PROPHE hosted international conferences and symposia, supported doctoral research, and generated a bevy of scholarly publications. Under the second theme, Valverde helped developed capacities for the monitoring and evaluation of educational opportunities and learning, especially in the Dominican Republic. Since 2009 Benavot has coordinated a large-scale cross-national project examining the intended curriculum in primary school mathematics and reading in developing countries, funded by UNESCO’s Institute for Statistics.

In the coming months, CIEPP will evolve into the Institute for Global Education Policy Studies (IGEPS). The core goal of the new Institute is to further enhance the “internationalization” of educational research, teaching and service in the UAlbany’s School of Education. In practice this means: contributing to scholarship and applied work in CIE; augmenting MS studies with international-oriented course offerings and field experiences; attracting foreign and international-oriented doctoral students and visiting scholars; initiating a series of public presentations by prominent scholars and policy makers on CIE issues; and developing intensive short courses in CIE for delivery worldwide. IGEPS will will become the organizational umbrella for on-going CIE activities in the areas of basic and higher education, curriculum and textbook analysis, and learning assessment and monitoring.

Program for Research on Private Higher Education

PROPHE was created in 2000 with support from a Ford Foundation grant. PROPHE seeks to build knowledge about private higher education around the world. It focuses on discovery, dissemination, and analysis. PROPHE neither represents nor promotes private higher education. Its main mission is scholarship, which, in turn, should inform public discussion and policymaking.

Private higher education now accounts for nearly a third (31%) of global enrollment. PROPHE remains the leading global network devoted to the study of this phenomenon. It has 27 researchers from 23 countries, as well as 5 PhD affiliates at Albany. The research network is directed by SUNY Distinguished Professor Daniel Levy. Among PROPHE’s major research topics are: growth, inter-sectoral private-public distinctiveness, intra-sectoral private variation, finance, regulation, quality, for-profit dimensions and public policy. On such subjects PROPHE has been active in producing edited books, dissertations, working papers, journal articles and chapters, international agency policy papers, and databases. For further information, visit this link.
Cross-Border Education Research Team (C-BERT)

C-BERT is a group of faculty and graduate students interested in the emergence and development of educational hubs and multi-national educational institutions. In recent decades, the number of higher education institutions exporting their educational programs across geopolitical borders, as well as nations seeking to develop educational hubs comprised of such cross-border education providers, have increased. C-BERT studies this phenomenon from organizational, sociological, economic, and political perspectives. As distinct from strictly virtual or online education, C-BERT concentrates on instances of physical cross-border teaching and research activities. These broad interests inform more specific inquiries into regulation, accountability, quality assurance, institutional legitimacy, patterns of growth, and institutional failures, among other topics. C-BERT does not promote or represent any institutions, sectors, or national systems engaged in cross-border higher education. Rather, the mission is to advance understanding of these issues through the discovery, analysis, and dissemination of knowledge. In turn, this research aims to inform institutional development as well as public policy and discussion.

C-BERT is housed in the EAPS Department at U Albany and led by faculty members Kevin Kinser and Jason Lane. In addition the team includes six full-time EAPS graduate students: David Phillips, Christine Farrugia, Tom Enderlein, Linda Tsevi, Jill Cromptie-Borgos, and Dan Knox. This core group of researchers engages with an extended network of higher education researchers from across the world.

For more information, visit [www.globalhigher.org](http://www.globalhigher.org).

INTRODUCING THE CIES SECRETARIAT GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Treisy Romero

Treisy is a first year doctoral student in the EAPS Department at UAlbany. She holds a B.A. in Mathematics Education from the University of Colima in Mexico, and she recently obtained her M.S. degree in Educational Administration from the University at Albany on a Fulbright Scholarship. As an international student, her comparative education interests focus on mathematics learning and the intended mathematics curriculum in primary and secondary education, as well as the area of intercultural education and opportunities for indigenous populations in Mexico. Prior to enrolling at the University at Albany, Treisy taught in secondary and higher education and worked in academic, accreditation, and administrative affairs in her alma mater.

Tom Enderlein

Tom is also a PhD student in the EAPS Department at UAlbany. He received his undergraduate degree from Franklin & Marshall College where he majored in Philosophy. Tom has two Master’s degrees: an M.A. in Philosophy and an M.S. in Organizational Leadership in Higher Education. Prior to entering the EAPS program, Tom was a staff assistant to the Dean of Students at Shippensburg University, and completed two analyses for the Office of the Provost on policy issues relating to graduate students. His current research interests include evaluating educational programs at the graduate and professional levels and examining the influences that Federal financial aid programs have on student enrollment in undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. Tom serves as the Webmaster for the CIES website.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Current Issues in Comparative Education: Special issue on ‘Evaluation, Assessment, and Testing’

For its Spring 2011 issue (Volume 13, Issue 2), the editors of Current Issues in Comparative Education (CICE) are soliciting submissions on evaluation and assessment in schooling. Evaluation, assessment, and testing have been an important, not to say, controversial, part of education for as long as educators have attempted to find out if their students have learned what they intended to teach them. Beyond their everyday, situational use in verbal question-and-answer sessions within the course of a class exercise, most attention has been concentrated on the efficacy of the more formal, usually written form of state or national testing used as a benchmark within individual school systems. Further, the growth of internationally comparative tests such as TIMMS and PISA have been fueled by an increasingly globalized world in education, one in which teachers, systems, and countries borrow and attempt to learn from each other in the hope of finding better ways to determine if students have actually learned.

CICE is interested to find out the state of evaluation, assessment, and testing around the world.

Possible topics might include the various uses of evaluation, assessment, and/or testing in student populations; testing for teacher effectiveness; use in ‘high stakes’ environments which could include high stakes for students, teachers, or administrators; or global analyses of testing. Other topics might include analyses of cross-national comparisons or the ‘portability’ of scores from one system to another. The growth in international schools over the last twenty years may have produced research on the different perspectives held by national/public schools and international/private institutions. Is testing utilized or valued differently in different contexts and what are the results of these different perspectives? Are there different applications of evaluation, assessment, and testing in developed nations as compared to the practices in developing nations? What forms do these practices take when instituted by foreign educational development as a result of global initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) or Education for All (EFA)?

CICE cautions authors of strictly reportorial or single-purpose research, such as the analysis of test results; this call is more suited for research that examines the nature and uses of evaluation, assessment, and testing rather than the results of evaluations, assessment, and tests. Ideal contributions will address the topic of evaluation, assessment, and testing, but the editors are pleased to accept any article or manuscript of interest covering topics in the areas of comparative education, international education, and educational development. Submissions will be considered for inclusion in the Spring 2011 issue, or for future issues.

The deadline for submissions is March 1, 2011. For more information, visit [www.tc.edu/cice](http://www.tc.edu/cice)
Critical Thinking in Chicago Public Schools: A Participatory Video Research Project

By Kyung-hwa Yang, PhD Candidate, Faculty of Education, McGill University

Last summer, I carried out a participatory video research project with four adults in Chicago. In this project, the participants and I defined a research question together and sought answers through video making. Our research endeavors gave birth to a nine-minute long documentary video.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=FDCNjM5ku0U

This project was inspired by my experience of teaching a video production course ("Video-Telling Workshop") that I have offered to graduates of the Odyssey Project free of charge since 2008. The Odyssey Project, in partnership with the Bard College Clemente Course, provides economically and educationally disadvantaged adults in the Chicago area with a free eight-month college course in the humanities. The video production course is independent from the Odyssey Project, yet regarded as an opportunity for the adult participants to further their education and engage in important social issues—racism, education, and democracy—through video making.

This year, while offering the same quality video production course, I moved a step further. During a five-week period, participants gained a hands-on experience of video production while exploring general topics of documentary film, and then gradually focused on the development of a research project. We chose the research topic by discussing the most pressing community issues from each one’s perspective. Initially, the central research question was defined as ‘what children learn from school’. But, as the research progressed, the question became more focused. The central research question finally became whether our children learn critical thinking skills at school.

This participatory video research project was a small but important first step. I entrusted a camera to the research participants to record and investigate what they were concerned about and the data turned out to be much more vivid and informative than what I could have done within the same period of time by myself. This is a beauty of participatory video research. As a participant wrote, the video also made the research alive by showing individual interviewees’ frustration and hopes through their facial expressions.

International Program in Comparative Education, Beijing Normal University, China

(in English, starting Autumn 2011)

The MA program in Comparative Education for international students aims to train talented individuals from all over the world to develop a deep understanding of educational theories and acquire a wide knowledge of fundamental trends in educational reform and development. The program aims to address the demands of the international labor market by training individuals who have highly developed communication and educational management skills, and who plan to work in international organizations, governmental authorities, NGOs and related agencies.

The Chinese Government is providing a two-year scholarship for excellent candidates (all costs covered - tuition fees and living costs) for this program. All applications for the Chinese Government Scholarship for this MA Program should reach the Office of the International Students & Scholars Affairs by 1 March 2011. Applications submitted after this date will not be considered.

www.bnulksh.com/english/index.htm

For further information on comparative education, go to: www.compe.cn or contact:
LIU Baocun, Professor and Director of the International and Comparative Education Research Institute
Email: liubaocun@bnu.edu.cn

New video on quality education

www.idpfoundation.org

IDP is a foundation whose goal is to develop and support innovative programs devoted to improving the quality of life for people and organizations in need particularly as it relates to poverty alleviation.

Their largest initiative is called the IDP Rising Program, which seeks to improve the provision of quality education in both urban and rural areas of Ghana through the combination of micro-finance loans and capacity building services.

More information about this initiative can be seen in the following videos:
• vimeo.com/14685365

Doctoral Research Scholarship for Policy Research, the Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation

www.alqasimifoundation.com

The Sheikh Saud bin Saqr Al Qasimi Foundation is now accepting applications for its Doctoral Research Scholarship. The Scholarship encourages scholars from a wide range of disciplines and professional fields to undertake research towards informing policy making in the United Arab Emirates. The Scholarship is open to Ph.D. students from all nationalities studying at an accredited university in the UAE or abroad. It will financially support doctoral candidates in the research phase of their dissertation. Two awards will be granted for applied research projects conducted in the UAE. The Scholarship covers all student expenses, including return airfares from the country of origin, accommodation in the UAE for the duration of research and a stipend to cover cost of living and assistance with the research.