

JEMS

JOURNAL *of* EDUCATION IN MUSLIM SOCIETIES

VOLUME I | ISSUE I | FALL 2019

Journal of Education in Muslim Societies

Volume 1, Number 1 · Fall 2019

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Individuals: \$60.00 (print), \$55.00 (electronic), \$65.00 (print & electronic)

Institutions: \$125.00 (print), \$100.00 (electronic), \$145.00 (print & electronic)

Foreign postage: \$10.50 (surface), \$18.00 (airmail)

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Fall 2019
Volume 1, Number 1

CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Cynthia Miller-Idriss and Shariq Siddiqui	
Reconceptualizing Education Transformation in Muslim Societies: The Human Development Approach	3
Ilham Nasser, Cynthia Miller-Idriss and Ahmed Alwani	
Defining <i>Du'ā'</i>: A Study of Contested Meanings in Immigrant Muslim Schools in the New York City Area	26
Jeffrey Guhin	
Muslim Education in Democratic South Africa: Convergence or Divergence of Religion and Citizenship?	44
Nuraan Davids	
Book Reviews	
<i>Islamic Education in the United States and the Evolution of Muslim Nonprofit Institutions</i>	60
Uzma Mirza	
<i>Policy Patrons: Philanthropy, Education Reform, and the Politics of Influence</i>	63
Sher Afgan Tareen	
<i>What Is a Madrasa?</i>	66
Sabith Khan	
<i>Have a Little Faith: Religion, Democracy, and the American Public School</i>	69
Ayşenur Sönmez Kara	
Report	
<i>Symposium on Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society at Indiana University</i>	72
Saulat Pervez	

Introduction

Welcome to the first issue of the *Journal of Education in Muslim Societies (JEMS)*, which is being published as part of the International Institute of Islamic Thought's new Advancing Education in Muslim Societies (AEMS) initiative in partnership with Indiana University Press.

JEMS aims to contribute original scholarly research to debates, practices, policies, and reforms affecting education in Muslim societies in an attempt to link the academic and theoretical domains with policy and practice. By casting light on the state of education and educational reform in these societies, we seek to interrogate their core problems, needs, reform objectives, approaches and perspectives, cross-cutting trends, innovations, opportunities, and other education-related challenges.

Some clarification of terms is important. First, we reject the notion that the world is divided into Muslim and non-Muslim societies. Thus, the journal examines education in any society in which Muslims are present. In Muslim-majority societies, for example, our examination may focus on nationwide systems (secular as well as religious), while in Muslim-minority societies, we may study the educational activity of the indigenous Muslim populations.

Second, our definition of education is broad and inclusive. It includes, but is not limited to, religious education, PreK-12, higher education, parenting, non-formal education, youth development, and adult learning over the course of one's life. Within formal educational systems, we seek scholarly contributions related to education policy, curriculum, pedagogy, governance and leadership, and assessment and evaluation. Outside of formal educational systems, we aim to publish original research on early childhood development and parenting, non-formal and alternative education, after-school programs and summer camps, and continuing education programs.

JEMS also encourages scholarship in the areas of educational equity; the context of education; the role of philanthropy in education; and the relevant philosophical, epistemological, and theoretical underpinnings. We seek articles by researchers from across disciplines (for example, history, political science, religious studies, sociology, public affairs, nonprofit management, business, and philanthropy) and from policymakers and practitioners throughout the world working in this emerging field.

This first issue focuses on the role of what we call "third space reform" in education. Most existing approaches to global educational reform frame education in utilitarian and transactional terms, viewing it as a means to strengthen democracy (the first space) or as an engine for a nation's economic development (the second space). These are not unworthy goals, of course. However, the AEMS initiative starts from the premise that the purpose of education is both utilitarian and transformative. In this framework, education is not only a transaction through

which degree attainment leads to a life of accomplishments, but also a lifelong process through which individuals experience meaning and fulfillment.

Responding to a need for highlighting socio-emotional learning and holistic learner development, AEMS represents a potential “third space” in global educational reform efforts—one that blends and expands the civic education and human capital approaches toward overall student and human well-being. This is a key philosophical difference with existing approaches to education reform. Given its strong research and evidence base, AEMS will ensure that all children have access to education for a meaningful life—namely, one that offers psychological and emotional stability; social and relational fulfillment; and purposeful and impactful economic, community, and political engagement.

This first issue consists of a report of the Symposium on Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society held at Indiana University in Indianapolis during October 2018, which analyzed issues related to education in Muslim societies, three peer-reviewed research articles, and four book reviews.

In the flagship article for this premiere issue, Ilham Nasser, Cynthia Miller-Idriss, and Ahmed Alwani present the conceptual research framework underpinning AEMS, an empirical initiative that seeks to contribute evidence-based knowledge on the state of education and, more specifically, the well-being of students in an authentic and context-sensitive manner. While prior educational research and interventions have emphasized education for employment or citizen development, the authors argue for a broader and more holistic approach to young people’s cognitive, emotional, and behavioral well-being.

Jeffrey Guhin uses ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with students and teachers in two Sunni high schools in the greater New York City area to examine how Muslim Americans understand and practice prayer, specifically salah (ritualized daily prayer) and *du’ā’* (supplication). The author provides two possible hypotheses for these differences, the first one related to the American religious landscape and the second one to those broader problems across the Ummah (the global Muslim community) related to ease of language use.

Nuraan Davids examines Muslim-based schools and education in South Africa, the promulgation of which she explores during and after apartheid. This article focuses on how they conceive of themselves in relation to a democracy and in cultivating democratic citizenship education.

We invite you to submit research articles, commentaries, research notes, and book reviews to future issues of *JEMS*. It is our hope that this first issue represents the inauguration of an important conversation, one that uses empirical research to advance Muslim societies through education.

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Reconceptualizing Education Transformation in Muslim Societies: The Human Development Approach

Ilham Nasser, Cynthia Miller-Idriss, and Ahmed Alwani

This article presents a conceptual framework for an empirical research initiative that aims to contribute evidence-based knowledge on the state of education and, more specifically, on students in a manner that is authentic and sensitive to Muslim societies. While prior educational research and interventions have emphasized education for employment or citizen development, the authors argue for a broader and more developmental approach to young people's cognitive, emotional, and behavioral well-being, consistent with the tenets of Islam. This conceptual framework was used to launch empirical research during 2018 in 16 geographical areas, where data analysis is underway to assess four key constructs among high

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school and university students: empathy, forgiveness, community mindedness, and moral reasoning. This article advocates for a new approach to studying education in predominantly Muslim societies. Ultimately, the research will produce policy recommendations and curriculum adaptations intended to advance education in Muslim societies. The uniqueness of this article stems from its emphasis on the human development approach as a pathway for a transformation that is grounded in localized cultural, religious, and social contexts.

Keywords: Human development, Education reform, Transformative education, Muslim societies, Wellbeing, Values-based education

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The idea of promoting education through acquiring knowledge, morals, and values, as well as teaching by personal example, was encouraged by the early teachers of Islam (Halstead, 2004). When the public education system was introduced in Western countries in the 19th century—mainly in France and England, and later through colonial expansion (Wagner, 2018)—one-on-one as well as community education was already part of the fabric of life in Muslim societies. Those societies continue to consider the transmission of knowledge through schooling of central importance.

However, many issues and challenges face educational systems in Muslim societies, with youths being disproportionately affected. For example, the lack of socio-economic opportunities has produced a “brain drain” as educated and talented young people permanently immigrate to the West. Meanwhile, conflicts in Syria, Afghanistan, and elsewhere have sent millions of youths fleeing as refugees. Those who stay face limited economic prospects. For example, the World Bank (2018) reports that the Middle East suffers from some of the highest youth unemployment rates of any region in the world. Amid the ongoing political instability, persistent violence, and entrenched conflicts, many voices in Muslim societies say that education is central to systemic change.

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Many Muslim countries have been the recipients of interventions and funding from Western governments and intergovernmental bodies, international foundations, non-governmental organizations, and non-profits. For example, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan receive large amounts of aid from the U.S. government to reform their education systems but have shown no overall improvement in education attainment (Colclough, King, & McGrath, 2010). The picture is bleak on dropout rates, achievement on international tests, and gender gaps (World Bank, 2018). Farah (2017), for example, concludes that specific investments aimed at increasing enrollment in countries like Iraq, Egypt, and Lebanon did

have a positive impact on attendance, but did not actually increase the quality of education. In other cases, local communities have resisted international organizations' investment in educational activities, such as those that promote civic education in Muslim societies (Kapoor, 2014), especially when such initiatives do not consider local religious and cultural traditions and beliefs (Hargreaves, Earl, Shawn, & Manning, 2001; Sahlberg, Hasek, & Rodriguez, 2016). In general, empirical research on educational reform in predominantly Muslim societies is lacking, and the few existing studies do not provide an in-depth look at the local and global factors at play in reform.

In sum, externally driven investments show mixed results. On the one hand they tend to overlook education's broader purposes and importance for the holistic development of human beings (Epstein & Yuthas, 2013), and on the other hand they promote reform movements that are neither authentic nor organic (Kapoor, 2014). This issue has been recognized through renewed critiques of the globalized approach to education as an "ideological package" of reform ideas (Carnoy & Rhoten, 2002; Adamson, Astrand, & Darling-Hammond, 2016). This includes, for example, the so-called Global Education Reform Movement (GERM) of privatization, standardized testing, accountability, and school choice. GERM's rationale is based on economic investments in the private and corporate sectors of education, and the resulting reforms are typically driven by top-down policies and imports from developed countries (Adamson et al., 2016). For example, Chile imported the neoliberal (free market) model of education developed in the United States to improve education through competition and school choice. Such scenarios, however, have often been criticized for how school choice disproportionately benefits wealthier communities, as opposed to those living in poverty. In Muslim societies, school choice has led to a flourishing private educational market and tutoring industry in places like Egypt (El-Bilawi & Nasser, 2017). In these cases, governments may give up on viewing public education as part of their responsibility toward their citizens (<https://www.abidjanprinciples.org>).

Part of the challenge is that current data on educational attainment, policies, and expenditures throughout the Muslim world gathered by the World Bank, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and similar organizations only tell part of the story about the varied educational experiences in K-12 schooling and higher education. For example, we lack empirical information from many Muslim societies about children's schooling experiences, particularly as they relate to developing the whole person. While this latter point is true for many societies, our focus on predominantly Muslim societies leads us to note the gaps in understanding the experiences of Muslim learners. For instance, we are aware that teachers in the Middle East report favoring democratic practices in the classroom, yet we know little about whether and how their views on democratic teaching translate into a practice that is both authentic and organic to the local context—an important concern, given that children in the same study testified to the harsh strategies used in the family and in schools (Faour, 2011).

Reforming education systems is a long-term process that, ideally, requires a comprehensive plan involving multiple stakeholders coming together to impact policies, curricula, and teaching practices. With full awareness of the enormous tasks that a fully democratic and thorough reform agenda entails, we attempt to offer an empirical research framework that is goal-oriented and complex and, at the same time, has potential in Muslim contexts. This requires grounding in theories and perspectives specific to Muslim contexts such as the idea of *tawhīd* (Islamic monotheism), which is central to Muslim societies, and ways it relates to existing models of reform. This article considers how data-driven and evidence-based recommendations and policies may contribute to comprehensive reform efforts implemented by governments and education systems in Muslim societies.

We note the critical importance of not overemphasizing the salience of boundaries like East-West, secular-religious, or global North-global South on epistemological and methodological understandings. We acknowledge that such boundaries are often fluid and contradictory, particularly because of globalization and the impact of multigenerational immigrant communities and perspectives within society. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that external reform efforts aimed at the Muslim world have often been rooted in concepts and measures designed for societies characterized by secular, individualistic, and consumerist ideals. When these measures and constructs are implemented in societies influenced more strongly by religious, collectivist, and community ideals, a mismatch often occurs (Davies, 2015). Typically, educational reforms driven by international development donors have focused heavily on developing individual and collective human capital, framing education as an investment in national and regional GDP or as a means for economic development. In many instances, this approach has not served the needs of local populations in any meaningful fashion (Marcia, 2012; Dhillon et al., 2009).

We elaborate here on the neglected area of educational research in Muslim societies and argue that such research efforts in Muslim societies have been plagued by poor grounding in local and cultural norms as well as religious values. Such grounding, we suggest, would increase both research validity and reliability and could even encourage local stakeholders to “buy in” (Abu-Nimer & Nasser, 2017).

An extensive review of the literature revealed a scarcity of research on the “whole person” approach and, more specifically, on the socio-emotional aspects of education as a necessary step for educational change on both the individual and systemic levels in Muslim societies. Despite its importance, this area of research is lagging in Muslim societies. For example, Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, and Schellinger (2011) conducted a meta-analysis of 213 school-based programs in socio-emotional education (SEE)—mostly in Western contexts. Their results suggest that SEE aspects “not only improve achievement by an average of 11 percentile points, but also increase prosocial behaviors (such as kindness, sharing, and empathy), improve student attitudes toward school, and reduce depression and stress among students” (p. 405). The authors argue that SEL (socio-emotional learning) appears to promote many key skills, including

self-awareness and self-management, as well as relationship skills. Another meta-analysis conducted by Taylor, Oberle, Durlak, and Weissberg (2017) confirms this. In this article, we introduce a conceptual framework that focuses on these aspects in a way that is research-based and stems from within the global Muslim societies' realities and needs.

The empirical research approach at the heart of the Advancing Education in Muslim Societies (AEMS) initiative will ultimately produce recommendations for new strategies in pedagogy, curriculum, leadership, assessment, and policy based on engaging the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects of education. In the long term, AEMS will contribute to education reform efforts in Muslim contexts and educational thinking. The research results will contribute to the idea that schools can equip young people with tools to respond better to the pressures resulting from ongoing rapid global changes and promote required new skill sets, like accessing information and problem solving (Cefi, Bartolo, Cavioni, & Downes, 2018).

Youths who are searching for meaning and roots need strategies to interpret the messages they encounter in everyday life, from religious rulings (fatwas) and speeches by religious preachers who present narrow interpretations of Qur'anic messages to the contradictory discourses provided by media outlets. An in-depth articulation and understanding of Islamic beliefs may also help young people critically engage in reconciling conflicting ideas and articulating their convictions with understanding (Abu-Nimer, Khoury, & Welty, 2007). According to Abu-Nimer et al., (2007), some Muslim participants in interfaith dialogue groups have a hard time explaining their faith. Thus, engaging religious leaders and educators in these dialogues is important (Sahin, 2013).

Religious education teachers may use alternative skills to shift from focusing solely on rote memorization of Qur'anic verses in Islamic instructions to interpreting Islam's theoretical, theological, and epistemological underpinnings in ways that foster complex thinking and deeper levels of understanding of Qur'anic concepts as they relate to modern life (Sahin, 2013). This does not necessarily mean that rote memorization is not a legitimate way to learn, but that it can, when used as the only method of learning, produce learners who lack the skills to think independently and engage in problem solving and decision making—skills that are deemed necessary for the 21st century (Jahan, 2016). For example, multiple sources of information exist and are available through social media, and the ability to sift through the information critically is more important than the ability to memorize.

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The empirical research agenda launched by the AEMS research team addresses what skills and mindsets are needed to help improve the educational experiences in Muslim societies. There are many studies with accumulated knowledge and programs on education for employment and citizenship, but hardly any research

on the socio-emotional and spiritual aspects in Muslim societies. We situate our research agenda in what we call the “third space,” as opposed to the first (education for employment) and second (education for citizenship) spaces. This choice of focus is based on our contention that education is something more than just learning knowledge and skills and that acquiring a more meaningful existence in the socio-emotional, moral-religious, and cognitive and behavioral aspects of well-being is a goal in itself. Such a holistic approach is both an attainable goal and a worthwhile investment in the individual and the society at large. The “third space” denotes an education for well-being, an approach that views acquiring values and skills (for example, empathy and forgiveness) as integral parts of learning on the same level of academic achievements as mathematics and sciences.

This approach aligns well with the “learning to be” dimension identified by the U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report on education and learning (Faure et al., 1972; DeLors et al., 1996). It is one of the least researched pillars of education out of the four mentioned in the UNESCO report on life-long learning: learning to know, to do (competencies), to live with others, and to be (for example, memory, self-knowledge, reasoning power, individual judgement, and sense of personal responsibility). Scholarship on “learning to be” identifies a broad range of social and emotional values and skills that are equally important to academic competencies (for example, literacy, numeracy, and science) and civic engagement skills (for example, communication, problem solving, and critical reasoning) for ensuring the well-being and healthy development of individuals and societies.

In fact, previous research suggests high correlations between skills such as SEE and academic achievement (Halbert & Kaser, 2015). The Aspen Institute report (2019), based on a survey that examined SEE/SEL, suggested that students from high schools that are strong in SEE “report a more positive social climate and learning environment, doing better academically, and being better prepared for life than those in weak SEL schools” (p. 3). However, the lack of existing research on SEE in Muslim societies means that the exact mechanisms at work across these domains are undertheorized.

The proposed design of this empirical research allows us to examine SEE’s role in assuring well-being and healthy development for individuals and communities. We suspect—but need empirical evidence to assert—that formal educational systems in the Muslim world have neglected these domains when implementing curriculum reform plans that have focused on those academic skills deemed necessary for improving overall national and regional economic growth and democratic development. These areas—what we call the “first” and “second” spaces in education reform movements—are critical but insufficient for ensuring individual and social well-being. We theorize that a more comprehensive reform movement, one that considers all types of learning and performance, will yield better results than an exclusive focus on achievement scores on international tests, as reflected by investments in the OECD-conducted Program for International Student Assessment.

The research agenda proposed here was conceived of during months of in-depth literature reviews as well as deliberations and debates among researchers from various disciplines based in the AEMS initiative. Feedback from Islamic studies and Muslim scholars globally was also incorporated. AEMS seeks to organize future educational research and reform initiatives in the Muslim world around both utilitarian and quality-of-life goals—namely, educating young people so that they can achieve an accomplished and meaningful life, understanding educational equity as being broader than inputs (student enrollments) and outputs (student graduation rates), and understanding the importance of the quality of curricular and pedagogical content. In other words, the current narrow focus on developing employment skills will be expanded to incorporate a holistic growth trajectory that emphasizes cultivating young people’s moral and ethical development and their sense of the broader social good to strengthen social capital and community. All of this, however, requires the creation of new authentic research concepts, constructs, measures, and eventual interventions designed to reflect a holistic, meaningful approach to education.

Theoretical Framework : A Human Development Approach

Our theoretical framework is situated in the field of human development. Its selected constructs are important for SEE as well as the high value placed on spiritual and moral growth within many Muslim communities and societies. The empirical research we describe here, the “Mapping the Terrain” study (described later), promotes a research agenda intended to contribute new knowledge on Muslim youths. To realize the initiative’s goal, we draw on and refine existing human development theories, so they can be applied in predominantly Muslim societies and thereby create a more culturally relevant developmental trajectory. We then empirically explore correlates that contribute to the overall well-being of Muslim learners and their immediate communities, such as teachers, parents, and administrators.

Philosophers and thinkers from distinct ages and civilizations have suggested that education both can and should enable the whole human being to achieve her/his highest potential in all domains of life—that it should teach character and well-being (Bresler, Cooper, & Palmer, 2001). We define well-being as “having effective social and emotional functioning, positive affect, and the perceived ability to self-regulate and feel a sense of fulfillment. Its goal is to pursue virtue, meaning and purpose, through doing good and making a positive difference in one’s life.” (AEMS research team, 2018) Broadly speaking, well-being (as the long-term outcome) encompasses health, faith, and the socio-emotional and psychological aspects of the person’s development. On the collective and individual levels, it is an important part of “learning to be.” The purpose of this “Mapping the Terrain” study is to establish a baseline that will inform the areas of pedagogy, policy, and curriculum so that this goal will be achieved. Our focus is on the socio-emotional aspects of well-being, within a human development trajectory, as

opposed to the physical and mental health domains, which are beyond the scope of this paper and initiative.

The constructs included in the study provide a partial list of socio-emotional aspects like empathy, cognitive aspects such as problem solving, and many other factors that are relevant to Muslim societies (Tawil & Cougoureux, 2013). This does not mean that academic performance and achievement are not important, but that our approach adds weight to the emotional, cognitive, and spiritual well-being aspects of human development as a way of drawing focus toward a more holistic approach to education. The first wave of the “Mapping the Terrain” study examines the conditions and status of SEE in 16 Muslim societies¹ not only to provide baseline knowledge, but also to formulate evidence-based recommendations and address gaps in empirical knowledge on Muslim youths’ well-being. Our focus is on four constructs—empathy, forgiveness, moral reasoning, and community mindedness—that are both universal and foundational to Islamic values. They were selected because of their relevance to critical areas of learning, for each one is seen as key to realizing the overall goal of individual and community well-being.

Developmental Trajectory

We chose the developmental approach because it provides the most fluid framework for growth and change and focuses on the “richness of human lives rather than on the richness of economies” (Jahan, 2016, p. 2). In the case of AEMS, it also presents education as a positive influence in the dynamic process of growth that has the potential to move the person in cognitive and socio-emotional domains of development at different rates. And, at the same time, this ongoing growth in each area affects growth in other areas. For example, developing cognitive capabilities is key to developing both social skills and academic ones, such as literacy. Adopting this approach suggests the possibility of reversing the “damage” done in fragile conditions (Shonkoff, 2000) and moves the conversation away from the deficit model toward an asset-based one.

Individual growth does not happen in a vacuum, for it involves a process that relies heavily upon the human capacity to move backward and forward at various stages of life and is influenced by life conditions and circumstances. Unlike many classical human development theorists such as Kohlberg (1984), Gilligan (1993), Maslow (1943, 1954), and Kegan (1982), who assert a linear progression from the basic stages of existence to the higher ones through maturation, the model chosen proposes a spiral movement toward higher states. In the predominant human development theories, such as those about moral development, the person progresses to a stage such as the one that Kohlberg identified as “postconventional morality”—where and when the person sees order as a contract between people and a way to protect individual rights (Kohlberg, 1984). Another example is Kohlberg’s higher stage, called “universal ethical principles,” an ideal stage that is reached where and when people adhere to a few abstract, universal principles such as equality and respect for human dignity.

Kegan (1982), on the other hand, presents a stage-like progression of human development based on Piaget's theory of cognitive development (Piaget & Inhelder, 1969), where the person moves to the highest stage of psychological maturity of the mind. In the classical theories of Maslow (1943, 1954), Kohlberg, and Kegan, the highest stages are very hard to achieve and therefore primarily aspirational. Gilligan's stages, on the other hand, strive for a level she calls the "morality of nonviolence," a heightened understanding of choice between one's own needs and care for others. She appropriately calls this approach the "ethics of care," a theory developed in response to Kohlberg's theory of moral development (Gilligan, 1993). All the above-mentioned theories contend that the person cannot reach the highest stages even though the theorists deem them important and critical for moral development and growth.

We chose Beck and Cowan's (2006) Spiral Dynamics model of intrapersonal development as our framework to represent the human developmental trajectory because of its dynamic nature and how it illustrates the changing developmental pathways involved in the various states of consciousness. In this model, individual growth is determined early in life by age and, later, by life circumstances. We use "states" instead of "stages" because the former represents temporary conditions, whereas the latter are developmentally permanent conditions. Stage theories begin in infancy and some claim universality, whereas the Spiral Dynamic model is flexible and contextual in its emphasis on life conditions (Wilber, 2007). Beck and Cowan (2006) attribute this particular model to Grave's work, based on over 30 years of observing how people behave and think in different ways about virtually everything in life. According to them: "Spirals are alive, magical, powerful, and multidimensional" (p. 26). In addition, they reflect thought in a way that is open-ended, continuous, and dynamic.

The model's spiral nature illustrates the complex processes, as well as turns and twists, that are part of individuals' development and evolving thought and reasoning processes. And while the spiral itself is a straight line—suggesting some patterns or even universals in how thought processes evolve—it explains variations in our thinking, intelligences, and worldviews.

Beck and Cowan's model proposes eight states of consciousness in which supporters of reform (whether groups or individuals) promote growth from the "instinctive" to the "worldly" (as shown in Table 1, below). We have adapted this model so that it can represent three distinct but flexible and fluid levels and clusters, with three states in each—including the addition of a ninth state, namely, an integrated and universal state of consciousness that we see as essential for understanding ways of thinking and reasoning in Muslim societies. For devout Muslims, God's oneness (*tawhīd*) is the developmental model's highest state of mind. It is worth noting that there are variations of this concept, ranging from a narrow view of the Creator's mighty power to a broader and a more holistic view of God. Muslims therefore use it not only to describe God as the Creator, but also as the universal power (Aslan, 2011) enabling humans and creatures to live in harmony with self, others, and their surroundings (Al Faruqi, 2000). In the case

of predominantly Muslim societies, state and religion are intertwined to such a degree that schooling, for example, includes Islamic studies as a distinct subject or as an integrated part of the school curriculum and learning. In other words, spiritual and religious thinking is critical to understanding many local communities and what they deem important to a meaningful life. We argue, therefore, that educational reformers who want to develop culturally sensitive and competent curricula, pedagogy, and educational policies must consider this additional stage of development as part of the aspired trajectory for Muslim societies.

This ninth state of *tawhīd* may be viewed as parallel to the worldly/holistic state described in previous models, as one that applies to other faiths and views about the existence or non-existence of one God. Although the worldly is a state of universal ethical principles proposed through research conducted by Kohlberg and others on moral development, it is achievable through an expansion and a deeper understanding of *tawhīd* by investing in the person's spiritual growth and understanding. In our approach, the *tawhīd* state may be the ultimate for devout Muslims. And yet it is not exclusive to them, for it holds relevance for individuals belonging to other religions and convictions. This model is aligned with Wilber's (2007) articulation that moral development tends to move from "me" (egocentric) to "us" (ethnocentric) to "all of us" (worldly)—a good example of the unfolding waves of consciousness (p. 34). Our model goes a step further by emphasizing the "beyond us" state as a higher goal in the developmental trajectory.

The above-mentioned developmental model guides the analysis of AEMS's empirical research findings and will be adapted and revised as we interpret the results of our studies. This approach will allow us to continue to add meaning to the theoretical framework as well as to the interpretation of our education-reform research agenda. For example, our initiative is ultimately interested in discovering what kinds of pedagogical and policy interventions will help education systems promote growth trajectories for young people and address those factors that are particularly salient in Muslim societies. The goal is also to find ways to disrupt the trajectory from transmission to transformation in a positive way to ensure meaningful educational experiences and life outcomes for young people. Here, transformation means empowering people to be active participants in improving their lives. It is about being active in the change process, like Freire's idea that education "liberates, enlightens, empowers and emancipates the human individual" (Hussien, 2007, p. 85)

Table 1 provides a brief description of the Spiral Dynamics model's states of consciousness based on Beck and Cowan's (2006) articulation of the model, with our proposed ninth level of *tawhīd*.

Among the few recent large-scale empirical studies examining the Spiral Dynamic model, Stambolovic's (2002) analysis conducted in Serbia/Yugoslavia suggests that each level of psychosocial existence develops in response to those life conditions that are formative for cultures and/or countries. Stambolovic asserts, "Cultures/countries are formed around a specific centre of gravity (determined by a specific level of existence) that determines boundaries of optimal behavior,

Table 1. The adapted human development states of consciousness model²

Instinctive: Natural instincts and reflexes direct existence
Animistic: Live according to traditions and rituals of group/clan
Egocentric: Asserting self for dominance, impulsive and immediate
Absolutistic: Obedience as higher authority and rules direct search for truth
Multiplistic: Act pragmatically and calculate to get desired results
Relativistic: Empathy to feel and desire to respond
Systemic: Interconnections and layered causes
Holistic/Global: Experiential learning, transpersonal living
<i>Tawhid</i> : High consciousness of human interconnectedness with a larger universe and a larger force. Focuses on God’s oneness as well as humanity’s oneness with the environment and each other.

thinking and even perception. To understand the processes in a certain community it is necessary to discover the centre of gravity” (p. 60). Based on this understanding, we suggest that in many (but not all) Muslim societies, where state and religion are more intertwined than many Western researchers acknowledge, many communities’ ways of thinking will regard spiritual and religious thinking as core to their children’s development. These understandings must be acknowledged as part of educational research in these contexts.

A Transformative Model

To enhance people’s abilities to gain access to all levels of development described in the Spiral Dynamics model, AEMS’s research framework utilizes a comprehensive approach to change as well as a process that allows for transformation. In this case, the Head-Heart-Hands model is appealing because it involves all aspects and levels (Bloom, Masia, & Krathwohl, 1964; Orr, 1992; Sipos, Battisti, & Grimm, 2008) needed for change (see Figure 1, below). In this model, the “Head” (knowledge, perceptions, thoughts, and metacognition), “Heart” (relational knowledge of emotional and social values and insights), and “Hands” (referring to deep engagement in doing and active use of concepts) all work together and simultaneously (Sipos, et al., 2008). This “3Hs” approach suggests that any transformation should take into consideration the whole person.

This transformative model aligns well with Islamic teachings, where connections among one’s head, heart, and hands are discussed in the writings of scholars of Islamic education (for example, Alkilany, 1997), especially in the areas of cognition, intuition, and their relationship with action. “Head” corresponds to the Qur’anic concept of *‘aql* (head or intellect), which is seen as the repository of cognition, belief, reflections, and perceptions. “Heart” links with the Qur’anic concept of *fu’ad* (inner heart), which is responsible for emotions (Agustiar, 2015). Finally, “hands” relate to the Qur’anic concept of *‘amal*, a translation of conscious

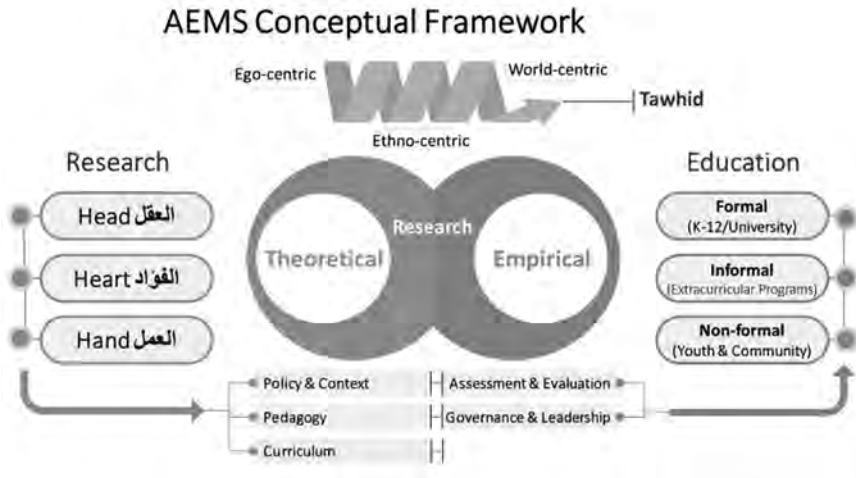


Figure 1. AEMS framework

action combined with intentionality (*niyyah*). As such, the first wave of AEMS research represents a comprehensive study to map the education terrain focusing on the whole person and, more specifically, the person's social and spiritual aspects as presented both in the psychological literature as well as grounding in Islamic concepts and teachings.

Combining the Spiral Dynamic developmental model with the 3Hs model provides a complex mechanism for transformation, one that responds to the “learning to be” and is situated in the “third space.” Both are critical for the well-being of the individual regardless of whether they are directly related to economic or academic gains. Figure 1 above represents the interactions among the 3Hs, as each one is needed to make the proposed educational interventions transformative.

MoDeS oF InTer ven Tion To ADvAnce eDuc ATion

Overall, it is anticipated that investigating beliefs and attitudes, along with analyzing policies and practices, about the identified constructs will generate new knowledge that will inform the next steps in pedagogy, curriculum, leadership, policy, and assessment. We have identified these five key areas as modes of intervention for educational reform. We will use our empirical-based findings to develop educational interventions in each of these key areas in tandem with our partners overseas representing the various local and state authorities, including the ministries of education and local school authorities. Education (in the above model) is defined in its broadest sense, meaning that it is not limited to K-12 schooling and higher education, but it also can be emphasized in several contexts such as formal and non-formal (private schools and religious schools) as well as informal (such as extracurricular enrichment activities and education programs).

The five designated areas, listed below, have been highlighted in multiple studies and reports as key avenues for reform (World Bank, 2018). Reform in one of them is related to the others, for comprehensive reform requires coordinated interventions in all five areas of impact. For example, system assessments or evaluation, monitoring, and learning assessments cannot be made without affecting (or simultaneously working to improve) educational policies and curricula. Similarly, pedagogical practices affect educational attainments and student learning outcomes. In fact, pedagogy plays a vital role in curriculum decisions and implementation. We plan to use AEMS's accumulated empirical-based knowledge and research findings to undertake knowledge dissemination and educational interventions in each area, as follows:

1. *Educational policy*: This area, which involves decision-making processes at the highest levels of educational systems, impacts educational systems that set the bar for standards, guiding principles, teacher qualifications and accreditation, along with curriculum, among others. Reform on this level will ensure a “trickle-down” effect into other areas and levels of education. AEMS's “Mapping the Terrain” study and others will inform policy by making recommendations and sharing the results with the relevant decision makers, stakeholders, and larger audiences.
2. *Curriculum*: Reform efforts in this area involve deciding what, how, and why students learn. Thus, such efforts should take into consideration the need for an organic process of creating curriculum guidelines and materials that are both authentic and reflect the context of students in K-12 and higher education settings in Muslim societies. Incorporating materials that address life skills pertaining to living in harmony with self and others is another goal of AEMS's research agenda (Muskin, 2015).
3. *Pedagogy*: AEMS argues that there is power in teaching and investing in educators in a way that is learner-centered and addresses the needs and learning styles of all students, regardless of age. Preparing teachers to respond to the academic and the SEE needs of students (in K-12 and higher education) is integral to its overall vision. Another vehicle of transformation—namely, that of data-driven interventions in teacher training and practices—will be inspired by our empirical research.
4. *Leadership and administration*: Transforming educational systems begins with the leaders in the field who guide teachers, parents, and students. They also constitute the link between policy makers and schools as well as higher education institutions. Addressing their roles and needs, along with creating collaborative initiatives inspired by field-derived research and evidence, will promote the reform movement in education.
5. *Assessment and evaluation*: Many countries struggle with the design and implementation of assessment tools that not only measure academic attainment, but also measure socio-emotional gains in students (Johnson, 2017). AEMS will seek to develop authentic measures based on students' actual performance and evaluations of functionality, along with the educational systems' effectiveness, while keeping in mind the local contexts. Therefore, the process of educational transformation will be both informed and evidence-based.

The five areas described above have similar weights in the reform efforts; however, the focus may vary based on each community's needs as well as the degree of

access the research team is given. This will be determined with local partners and the expressed needs of the various ministries, schools, and/or universities with which we are collaborating. As such, AEMS's dynamic and non-imposing research agenda can make a unique contribution to Muslim societies' education systems by (1) collaborating with formal and non-formal education institutions and research entities; (2) engaging religious institutions, scholars, and decision makers in the different localities; and (3) partnering with local researchers with the intent to build capacity, strengthen the research platform, and improve the quality of empirical studies.

AEMS'S eMPlr Ic Al STuDieS

The AEMS team started its data collection efforts in 2018 in 16 Muslim societies (see Appendix 1) to establish a "Mapping the Terrain" baseline. The research agenda includes annual data collection to deepen our understanding of the constructs and values identified so we can build on the findings successively. Data collection is ongoing, and data analysis began in the spring of 2019. In the first wave, covering 25,000 participants, we narrowed down the constructs and selected four based on their relevance to well-being and their grounding in Islamic values: empathy, forgiveness, moral reasoning, and community mindedness. Those are closely related to the developmental states of consciousness we identified (see Table 1, above) and are hypothesized to help individuals move from egocentric and individual living/thinking into more ethnocentric ways of thinking. These would eventually be followed by the worldly state of mind (in the Spiral Dynamic model) and the *tawhīd* state of consciousness that was added.

Although we do not see the states of consciousness as fully fixed or bounded, they are progressive in the sense that there are earlier and later states; the earlier states are purely instinctive and tribal, whereas the *tawhīd* (the highest) state is universal and indicates interconnectedness. The four constructs are rooted in Islamic values and teachings, as there are numerous prophetic examples of empathy, forgiveness, moral reasoning, and community mindedness. One of the most emblematic instances is Prophet Muhammad's forgiveness and amnesty issued to the people of Makkah, his birthplace, after he and his followers, who had been driven out, marched back into it. He forgave his enemies, some of whom had murdered members of his family, close friends, and companions (Lings, 1983). Many other examples in Islamic teachings ground our research in authentic and historic contexts.

Current research confirms the viability of these constructs and their derivatives in the Arab and Islamic contexts. For example, research on forgiveness in the Middle East suggests that it be integrated into the curriculum and teacher training programs (Abu-Nimer & Nasser, 2013). Likewise, research among Muslim Indonesian students shows that Islamic beliefs lead to higher levels of moral reasoning within that population; Islamic beliefs are positively correlated with orthodox beliefs, prayer, and understanding of justice and equality (Chang-Ho, Yodi, & Soo, 2009). Evidence from Bangladesh suggests that happiness among Muslims is strongly related to belonging and connectedness (Devine, Hinks & Naveed, 2017).

The “Mapping the Terrain” research agenda aspires to provide an evidence-based, international study on four constructs that would not only improve our understanding at the conceptual level, but also—and most importantly—point to how these constructs may be integrated into religious and general education in Muslim societies. Ultimately, we also aim to show how these areas of socio-emotional growth correlate with academic learning and civic engagement in the “first” and “second” spaces of educational reform. The study is therefore a platform for deeper investigations and recommendations for advancing and maximizing educational experiences in Muslim societies.

“Mapping the Terrain” constructs

Based on the review of previous studies and our interpretations of their relevance to Muslim societies, we launched the “Mapping the Terrain” study in July 2018. The following represents our definitions of the constructs based on the review of previous literature:

Empathy is the ability and willingness to care, feel, and take the perspective of others

Empathy has been mostly studied in the developmental psychology field. For example, scholars such as Davis (1994) emphasize both its cognitive and affective perspectives. Many cognitive theorists argue that empathy is grounded in social understanding, whereas moral and philosophical theorists suggest that it refers to an individual’s sympathetic response to others’ suffering (Zahavi & Overgaard, 2012) and his/her deliberate effort to understand, communicate, take, and act based upon others’ perspectives (Gair, 2011; Hojat, 2007).

Forgiveness is the ability and willingness to let go of the hard feelings and the need to take revenge against someone who has wronged an individual or committed a perceived injustice against that individual or others

Forgiveness is a broad construct and a subjective concept that is perceived differently by individuals from different cultures or contexts. Enright and Gassin (1992) define it as the “willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, negative judgment, and indifferent behavior toward one who unjustly hurt us, while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion, generosity, and even love towards him or her” (p. 102). Nasser, Abu-Nimer, and Mahmoud (2014) suggest that forgiveness is a personal decision that originates in an intrinsic motivation to let go. Forgiveness education promotes the understanding of different perspectives and reduces stereotypes (Abu-Nimer, 2001).

Moral reasoning is the ability and willingness to make determinations about right and wrong and act accordingly on those

Moral reasoning is the ability to determine wrong and right and to make ethical decisions based on that understanding when facing an ethical dilemma (Rest, 1984). Classical theorists suggest that individuals develop the highest level of moral reasoning when they make decisions based on ethical principles without considering their own interests and/or benefits (Wells & Schminke, 2001). Research in the field

of moral reasoning and its relationship with other constructs is sparse in Muslim societies (Teymoori, Heydari, & Nasiri, 2014). Professional ethics programs and trainings can promote moral reasoning by enhancing individuals' knowledge of how to behave ethically when facing an ethical dilemma (Jones, 2009).

Community mindedness is seeing the self as interconnected to and acting for the benefit of an inclusive whole

Each community has its unique needs and characteristics. To promote community mindedness, therefore, one must formulate a framework that considers different perspectives and ideas in order to enhance collaborative thinking and positive interaction among community members. Such a framework must be developed by community leaders and scholars who are willing to utilize critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as to be open-minded and collaborate with the community's various groups. Service in community agencies and organizations is one way of introducing youths to their community and allowing them to understand its needs. This promotes community mindedness and results in youth engagement. Consequently, this type of service can advance their sense of belonging to a greater community (McIntosh, Metz, & Youniss, 2005).

When taken together, these interrelated constructs represent an approach to the person as an individual who is part of a collective whole. Furthermore, the literature review suggests that a sense of belonging, self-efficacy, and religiosity are possible predictors of a person's ability to empathize or forgive, and so on, and may play important roles in mediating the correlations among the four constructs. We defined the moderators as follows:

Religiosity is the degree of influence one's faith has on his/her values, behaviors, and everyday life

According to Huber and Huber (2012), religiosity consists of several dimensions, such as public practice, private practice, religious experience, ideology, and intellect. Taken as a whole, they can be considered as representative of the totality of religious values and how they are shaped and practiced in peoples' lives. As Teymoori, Heydari, and Nasiri (2014) state, "Religion is a social institution that dramatically influences individuals' behaviors and daily actions as well as their social and political orientations" (p. 93).

Teymoori, Heydari, and Nasiri (2014) argue that individuals seek religion when they are experiencing any kind of stress or hardship and that it can protect them from such mental health issues as depression and anxiety. According to this perspective, religion fulfills the human need for security—one of the basic needs of humans and a foundation for self-actualization (Maslow, 1943, 1954).

Self-efficacy is the individual's belief in his/her ability to organize and execute certain behaviors that are necessary to complete a given task successfully

In social cognitive theory, Bandura (1986) suggests that self-efficacy is a key construct that positively and strongly correlates with one's cognitive and

behavioral engagement in a certain task. Bandura (1977, 1986, 1986b) defines self-efficacy as a person's belief in his/her ability to organize and execute certain behaviors that are necessary to succeed in a given task. It affects how people think and feel as well as influences their decision to initiate an action and their types of activity and level of motivation, along with the amount of effort and time they are willing to invest in completing it. Many studies support Bandura's claim that one's belief in his/her ability to be successful in a task plays a more important role in success than the capability itself. Self-efficacy is malleable and influenced by four main sources: past performance accomplishment, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological/psychological states (Bandura, 1977).

Sense of belonging is the feeling of being included, accepted, cared for, and supported

This context-related concept is influenced by environmental and situational variables. For example, in an academic institution this sense is defined as a student's perception of being supported, accepted, respected, and included in that institution (Goodenow, 1993). It is also strongly predicted by social support, which has been found to be positively correlated with coping mechanisms as well as physical and socio-emotional well-being. Social support has different sources with financial or mental dimensions. In terms of community social capital, it is the feeling or experience of having others who love and care for you, to whom you can turn for help in times of need. Social support and community social capital are multi-dimensional and positively and significantly correlated with individuals' mental health and students' academic achievement (Rothon, Goodwin, & Stansfeld, 2011).

Based on our review of previous studies, especially earlier meta-analyses conducted on some of the constructs investigated (Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009), we hypothesized certain correlations between the constructs. The Structural Equation Model (Figure 2, below) outlines those expected correlations and proposes pathways and links to interpret the design and the results of our first wave of "Mapping the Terrain," which remains ongoing at the time of this writing. As this is a hypothesized model, we obviously do not have all of the evidence needed to support it in the design stage; however, the study's results will inform and suggest alternative directions and links among the constructs.

We mathematically calculated a composite and cumulative score of the above constructs to situate our research participants on the developmental trajectory described earlier. This hypothetical score was tested using simulated data sets that showed promise when used on real data (Cheema, 2018). Thus, we will be able to assess each participant's standing related to the developmental states described in Table 1 by assessing the total score of his/her attitude toward the constructs selected. Their total score on the survey's subscales (the total number of survey items is 146) will allow us to situate participants along the developmental trajectory. A maximum score would put an individual at the model's higher states, whereas a lower score would lower the developmental state. Although this hypothesis has yet to be proven, our initial mathematical calculations suggest

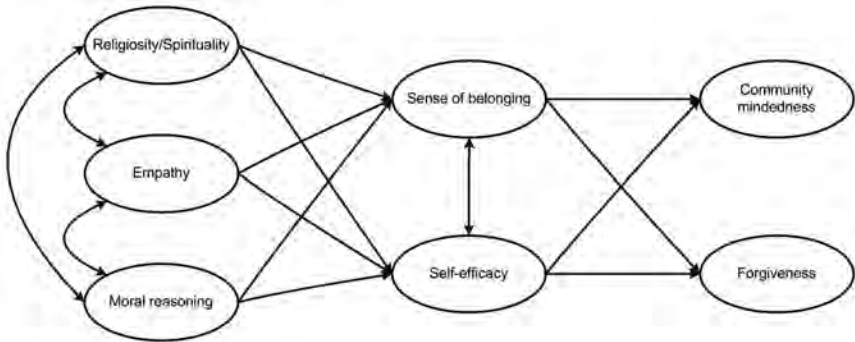


Figure 2. The Structural Equation Model

enough promise to allow the derivation of valid and meaningful interpretations of the results. This step is important for further instrument and construct refinement for the next research waves.

Future waves will continue to investigate constructs that are central to the overall well-being of students in Muslim countries and focus on correlates of the various states of the developmental trajectory described earlier. In addition to repeating some of the subscales (depending on which ones are the most telling in Wave 1 and on relevance to values such as empathy and forgiveness), concepts such as self-regulation and meaning making are important to empathy, forgiveness, and moral reasoning and are just as critical to higher states of consciousness. Meaning making is instrumental in research on happiness and emotional well-being (Fossas, 2018). As we move forward with the annual study, we will adjust, and add/eliminate constructs based on the empirical research results and the desired outcomes.

concl uDIng THoug HTS

Education reform is not a panacea to every problem. It cannot solve all the difficulties Muslim societies are encountering, and it will work only if it is developed in tandem with reforms at the levels of policy and governance. Moreover, education's goals, content, strategies, and purposes are constantly and rigorously being debated and contested. The question of why students go to school, what they learn there, whether and how they can continue to post-secondary education, as well as how any or all of that education is needed for successful engagement as citizens, are highly politicized questions. As we have suggested here, education for employment and global citizenship is at the forefront of global collaboration initiatives. However, we argue that current education reform efforts are insufficient, for the billions of dollars already spent have shown mixed and unsatisfactory results on the status of education in various countries. In Muslim societies, the

challenge is even greater because of the lack of political and economic stability in some and the absence of resources in others.

This article provides the conceptual framework for a research agenda that will be empirically tested and closely examined as the data from “Mapping the Terrain” is collected in the envisaged waves over the coming years. It is the first effort to develop a locally grounded empirical approach to proposing educational reform policies and interventions. By developing theoretical frameworks, research instruments, constructs, and measures that reflect and include the person’s religious and spiritual aspects, as they are constructed by contemporary Muslim societies, AEMS hopes to achieve greater local buy-in and engagement for more meaningful outcomes.

Note

1. See a list of Muslim societies in Appendix A.
2. A similar illustration can be found at cruxcatalyst.com/2013/09/26/spirla-dynamics-a-way-to-understanding-human-nature.

Appendix A

Muslim societies participating in Mapping the Terrain - Wave I

Bangladesh	Indonesia
Bosnia	Malaysia
Hong Kong	Mauritius
Kenya	Palestine
Azerbaijan	Sudan
Kurdistan- Iraq	Tanzania
Kyrgyzstan	Tatarstan
India	Uganda

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Defining *Du‘ā*: A Study of Contested Meanings in Immigrant Muslim Schools in the New York City Area

Jeffrey Guhin

This article uses ethnographic fieldwork and interviews with students and teachers in two Sunni Muslim high schools in the New York City area to examine how Muslim Americans understand and practice prayer, specifically salah (ritualized daily prayer) and du‘ā (supplication). The author shows how the former is viewed as a central and largely unchangeable element of Muslim daily life, while the latter is much more mutable and thus engenders disagreement about the degree to which it should be considered “formalized.” Two possible hypotheses are posited for these differences: (a) the American religious landscape and (b) broader issues across the Ummah (the global Muslim community), such as the ease of the language to be used.

Key Words: Muslim Americans, adolescents, prayer, spirituality, ritual

Introduction¹

In her monograph on Muslim prayer, Marion Katz (2013) describes how, from the 13th to the 19th centuries, Christian Europeans who traveled in Muslim countries were fascinated and impressed by how often Muslims prayed. Prayer is usually a central and constitutive part of Muslim identity, both for those studying Muslims and for Muslims themselves.

In my ethnographic research conducted in Muslim high schools in the New York City area, I found prayer to be a practice that “anchor[s] constitutive rules”

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(Swidler, 2001, p. 90) by “[playing] a crucial role as repeated ritual confirmations that something is indeed what it is” (Swidler, 2001, 98). That “something” is not only the existence of Allah,² but also the entire community and way of approaching the world that Allah has revealed and that the community carries forward through time. Prayer anchors the self and the community to each other and in time and space. This spatial and temporal anchoring is especially salient in the five daily prayers (*salah*), which are set at specific times and directed toward a specific location on Earth. A key element of Sunni Islam is that such prayer happens without any intermediary. *Salah*, along with other forms of prayer to be discussed later, often occurs in collective settings. But even if collective *salah* is considered superior to individual *salah*, it is certainly not required.

To be clear, while *salah* is a central part of what Asad (2009) would call the Sunni Muslim tradition, there is nothing *sociologically* essential about any element of “Muslimness.” As Asad describes in his criticism of Geertzian ethnography (Asad, 1993; Varisco, 2005), Islam is a living tradition constituted by key texts and practices, but one that also remains deeply heterogeneous and often mutually contradictory. Indeed, as I will argue, the American Muslim communities I describe herein are marked not so much by a set list of practices, but rather by ongoing arguments about the practices as they are lived in heterogeneous and contested ways (Asad, 2009, p. 23).

In this paper, I describe my findings of how *salah* and *du'ā'* have different roles within these communities and, more important, how the physicality and centrality of the former has led it to change far less than the latter between an older immigrant generation and a younger cohort of American-born Muslims.

Prayer is increasingly a field of study within the social sciences in two senses. First, social scientists have examined its intercessory power, such as prayer’s ability to affect medical improvements or “do something” in the world (Baesler, 2012; Bender, 2008; Cerulo & Barra, 2008; Wuthnow, 2008a; Wuthnow, 2008b). A smaller group of studies has examined its centrality to individual projects of self-cultivation (Bowen, 1989; Mahmood, 2005; Sharp, 2013; Winchester, 2008). This less explored area of research—focusing on prayer as a dimension of self-cultivation—stresses the importance of ritual prayer in particular as a means by which one may constitute and develop a certain kind of self, a self that is transformed into a virtuous believer. An important element of that second way of studying prayer is the belief that the virtuous self is developed in relationship with God. In this modality, prayer is envisioned as a relational act through which the bond between supplicant and God is given greater emotional intensity and strength.

In other words, prayer is the vehicle through which believers seek a particular kind of relationship with God. As such, the structure and actual language of their prayers reveal a great deal about how they understand that relationship. This issue was especially salient in my fieldwork. For example, I found that the students and teachers contested their meaning, function, and form, especially *du'ā'* (prayers of supplication), with certain students insisting that its form can be a more casual conversation with Allah, asking for whatever one might need. Beyond striving

to adhere to the norms structuring ritual prayer, many of the Muslim American teenagers in my field sites placed heavy emphasis on a personalized, individual relationship with Allah. This perhaps is a manifestation of an American focus on unmediated, democratic immediacy in religious experience. The key distinction here, therefore, is less the experience of immediate connection and more the changing nature of language and ritual form in making that connection.

Also, as I will describe in the conclusion, an empirical question remains: Is the *cause* of this heterogeneity a kind of religious American isomorphism common among recent immigrants (Yang & Ebaugh, 2001; Cadge & Ecklund, 2007), or a process found across the Ummah that makes certain ritual forms more flexible to emphasize the even more common need for a felt immediacy in ritual communication with God?

Finally, I acknowledge that I am developing my argument through fieldwork in two schools composed almost entirely of either immigrant Muslims or their children. Their experience of “American Islam” (Bilici, 2012; GhaneaBassiri, 2010; Grewal, 2013) is therefore quite distinct from the African-American Muslim experience, which is another important Muslim constituency in the New York City area. While much important work has been done on this latter group’s religious lives and identities (Curtis, 2012; Abdullah, 2010; Jackson, 2005; Kha-beer, 2016; Karim, 2008), spirituality in the “Blackamerican” Muslim tradition remains critically understudied (though see Aslan, 2017). This project is therefore part of a broader series of studies (Curtis, 2017; Howe, 2016) that look at Muslims’ spiritual practices primarily as things in themselves, rather than as prisms through which to understand other questions, especially those related to gender, politics, and identity.

In the following sections, I will briefly describe my methods, the role of salah and *du‘ā* in the communities studied, the debates within as to what *du‘ā* means, and its relationship to “just talking to God.” I close by reflecting on the potential American causes of these differences in terms of the meaning of *du‘ā* and describing how Muslim communities in other countries face similar distinctions in practice.

Methodology

I conducted ethnographic fieldwork (January 2011–July 2012) in two Sunni Muslim and two Evangelical Protestant religious high schools in the New York City area. During the calendar year of 2011, I spent about two days a week each at Al Amal School³ and then, during the spring semester of 2012, about two days a week at Al Haqq Academy. By the time my fieldwork was completed, I had visited Al Amal around 50 times and Al Haqq around 25 times. The duration of these on-site visits ranged from three to 12 hours at the school, with an average of around five hours. Interviews were generally digitally recorded, although a few teachers (and no students) were uncomfortable with that. While talking with those who did not want to be taped, I simply typed notes. Nearly

all of the interviews took place in the schools themselves; a few took place in a neutral location chosen with the interviewee. I conducted formal, recorded interviews with four students at Al Amal and 27 students at Al Haqq. The names of the schools and the individuals within them have been changed to ensure their privacy.

the centrality of Salah

For non-Muslim Americans⁴ influenced by Evangelical Christianity, the word “prayer” tends to mean, “just talking to God” (Luhmann, 2012). Among American Catholics, however, it might mean specific recitations, such as the “Our Father” or “Hail Mary” (Aumann, 1985). For American Muslims, the term is often more complex. Most of my Muslim respondents used “prayer” to refer specifically to salah; however, they also sometimes used it to refer to *du'ā'* and dhikr.⁵ To “make dhikr” means to remember (or mention) God, a practice often characterized as saying simple words or exclamations of praise throughout the day. Dhikr can also be enacted by spending a certain amount of time ritually repeating important phrases, such as “*Lā ilāha illā Allāh*,” “*Subhān Allāh*,” or “*al-ḥamdu lillāh*,”⁶ sometimes using prayer beads to focus the mind. There are various guides on how to make dhikr that American Muslims can access online.

To “make *du'ā'*” generally means to recite a memorized prayer as a form of supplication in a certain set of circumstances, of which there are hundreds if not thousands. Lists of *du'ā'* are easily available online. While it is often considered important to supplicate in accord with the Prophet’s example (Sunnah), Muslims in various Islamic cultures will replace such utterances with their own improvised prayers, as described below.

In virtually all Muslim communities—and certainly the two I studied—salah is the most important and emphasized type of these three forms of prayer. However, these distinctions get complex, for there is a moment during the salah in which Muslims make their own *du'ā'* and usually in their own words. Nonetheless, at least in the schools I studied, when people said “make *du'ā'*” to each other, they usually referred to those types of prayers that are separate from salah.

Salah, a physical process repeated five times daily, is the second of Islam’s five pillars, preceded only by the *shahādah* (the Muslim profession of belief in Allah and Prophet Muhammad). It can be done either individually or communally—although men are required to attend Friday’s communal service (and in the schools where I did fieldwork, women’s attendance was encouraged, even if there are schools of Islamic thought that discourage women’s attendance). Salah entails a series of opening rituals and then kneeling, standing, prostrating, and reciting, which, in one iteration, are called a *rak'ah*. The number of required *rak'ahs*⁷ varies slightly depending upon the salah being performed at that particular time. During the salah, Muslims recite Qur’anic passages and have time to make their own intentions.

One of the main reasons for observing salah is simply that doing so is required. As many hadith attest (and as I continually heard throughout my field-work), Muslims' lives will be judged first by their prayer, and increased prayers will yield increased rewards in the afterlife. This is also the case with *du'ā'* and dhikr. The Muslim parents and students I encountered and interviewed have been learning how to "make salah" since they were children, and thus it had become second nature for the high school students. This emphasis on salah extended to the Islamic studies classes in both schools, where it came up regularly, in some ways simply because it is complicated. For example, there are certain rules about when and what to do, how to make up missed prayers, how to clean oneself beforehand (*wuḍū'*), and how to supplement one's prayers by additional devotions (Sunnah)⁸. Yet is also true that it is challenging to observe it regularly and on time. Muslims in this research generally acknowledged that salah was difficult, both because of its time commitments and because of the necessity for concentration (*khushū'*).

It is worthwhile to reflect briefly on *khushū'* here, for its importance reveals the importance of a felt immediacy and relationship to Allah as co-extensive with, and constituted and enabled by, the prayer's ritual forms (Powers, 2004). A speaker at a special day dedicated to salah at Al Haqq told students that *khushū'* is "talking to God." Shaykh Yusuf, the school's primary Islamic studies teacher, regularly told them about its importance and of having "a personal relationship with Allah."

In one of these discussions about *khushū'*, a female student in Shaykh Yusuf's class at Al Haqq said that "when I have the *khushū'*, I feel spiritually [that] everything is coming together. But when I'm not [feeling it,] I feel like what's the point?" Another girl mentioned a famous hadith about Imam 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, who had requested that an arrow be pulled out of his leg while he prayed. His *khushū'* was so strong that he felt no pain. The shaykh repeated the story, and the girls were shocked. "How do you do that?" one asked. Another complained, "The smallest thing can distract me when I'm praying—it's bad but I'm just being honest." The teacher nodded. "Thank you for your honesty." After an extended conversation, the teacher said:

Yes, this is very important... Anytime you approach your salah, ask yourself this question, [for] the moment you lose sight of this question, you lose *khushū'*: what is the point of salah—why am I praying? If you're able to successfully answer this question, you'll be able to pray successfully.

If focusing is difficult in salah, students generally found it easier within the context of *du'ā'*, especially given the ways they understood *du'ā'* to operate. Many of my high school participants related that when making *du'ā'*, they were able to focus far more on their individual, extemporaneous requests—"just talking to Allah"—than they were while making salah.

the ritual, relationship, and contented shape of *Du'ā'*

One poster at Al Haqq said simply: “Never underestimate the power of duah.”⁹ In my interviews with students at this school, many of them told me about the importance of *du'ā'*. What stood out in such conversations was that a large minority of them defined it as “just talking to God,” whereas the adults I interviewed at the schools did not.

As commonly understood, *du'ā'* is different from dhikr, and both are quite different from salah. As Shaykh Yusuf informed me:

Dhikr are words that the prophets taught—part of the Sunnah, the hadith. These are words that remind the one who says them of Allah (SWT): when they wake up in the morning, when they eat, after they finish eating, when they go to bed, when they come out of the bathroom, when it rains, when they see the lightning.

Du'ā' is subtly different:

The *du'ā'* is a central aspect of a Muslim's life, asking of Allah, for whatever, in whatever situation you are in, whatever they need from Allah (SWT). There are specific things to be learned here in terms of these words of Allah, how to follow these words of Allah, making these specific prayers. There are different kinds of prayers that cover almost everything.

It is noteworthy that his description of *du'ā'* emphasizes specific, as opposed to improvised, words of Allah because doing so creates a personal relationship with Allah. Indeed, it was quite important to him that his students' prayer lives did not become rote or mechanized, but that they continued to be felt as personal and immediate. There might be an American prejudice against memorized words, as if they are somehow less functional in creating a relationship than improvised words. However, Shaykh Yusuf would strenuously disagree. This insistence that form leads to a free, immediate, and personal relationship echoes Mahmood's (2005) work on conservative Muslim women's prayer in Egypt.

I heard various definitions of both *du'ā'* and dhikr, which were sometimes used interchangeably. But in the communities I studied, dhikr (lit. remembrance) was often understood as acknowledging God and *du'ā'* (lit. calling out) as an act of supplication. Both draw the content of their prayers from the Qur'an, the Hadith, previous prophets, the Companions, and even specific scholars.¹⁰

When I asked Yaqub, an Al Haqq Islamic studies teacher, about *du'ā'* being “just talking to God,” he told me, “If I said [to the students] make *du'ā'*, they would understand. But if I said talk to God, they wouldn't know what I was talking about.” I would say that was certainly true of most of the students I interviewed. However, some of them took the emotional effect of the “personal relationship with God” they had learned in reference to focus and *khushū'* during salah and shifted it to a certain verbal extemporaneousness. When I talked to Shaykh Yusuf about this, he was very clear that what they were doing was good, although it was not *du'ā'*.

To be clear, *du'ā'* in its specific meaning refers to “calling out” to God, so that one can imagine a Muslim talking to God more conversationally at first and then calling out to God for assistance in a more formalized way. Indeed, there are prophetic *du'ā'* with just that pattern.¹¹ Yet what is important for my purposes here is that many students' understandings of *du'ā'* differed from that of their teacher. Shaykh Yusuf often talked to them about the importance of *du'ā'* and dhikr. On one beautiful day near the end of my semester at Al Haqq, he took a group of senior boys outside, where we all sat in a circle on the grass. He then asked them to share their favorite dhikr. One muttered something in Arabic, and a few of the boys smirked. The shaykh started laughing. “I'm sorry,” he said, “but I have to laugh.” “That's the one for the bathroom, dude,” another boy remarked. The first boy blushed and said he had the actual wording, but that it was in his wallet. This example highlights the practical reality that it can be a lack of Arabic knowledge, as much as a different theology, that compels some young American Muslims to “just talk” to God.

Interestingly, among both teachers and students I found many more references to *du'ā'* than to dhikr. While I would occasionally see both groups with dhikr “prayer beads” at both schools, they were relatively rare. I also heard teachers giving students examples of *du'ā'* or encouraging them to “make *du'ā'*” at least a dozen times. Only once did I notice a teacher giving a student a dhikr to recite. (To provide context, they were told to make their five salahs each day, including the one that occurred during the school day.) Of course, any exact counting of interactions within an ethnographic project is always a bit haphazard, as it is extremely difficult to do so in any standardized way. But while I was in the schools, it was striking how *du'ā'* was emphasized far more often than dhikr and how salah was emphasized most of all.

I mentioned this discrepancy in my notes to some of my respondents at Al Haqq. One of them, a student, said that it sounded about right since, as she stated, dhikr is more private. However, another Islamic studies teacher there, Leila, said in an e-mail that she:

would not say that Al Haqq emphasizes *du'ā'* more than dhikr. I believe both are equally stressed; the importance of dhikr and the power of *du'ā'*. In fact before every prayer time, we ask the students to make dhikr instead of making so much noise talking. And routinely after every prayer, we make dhikr first followed by *du'ā'*. So definitely in my opinion, the two concepts (*du'ā'* & dhikr) are on the same playing field...

Leila's e-mail described something I had not noticed, namely, the fairly intense focus on dhikr. But in hindsight, this might have been because it was something harder for me to notice, both as a non-Muslim and as an ethnographer.

Du'ā' as “Just talking to god”

Why might Al Haqq's students have a different perspective on *du'ā'* than Shaykh Yusuf? Perhaps because salah's form is far more physical (and therefore

translatable and transcendent) and more immutable, as so many of the hadith outline a specific way of performing it exactly as Muhammad himself did. Additionally, the schools emphasized the centrality of *kbushū'* as a way to allow students who might not understand Arabic to still feel a connection to God while following the prayer's ritualistic form as laid down by Muhammad.

Finally, because salah is often performed communally, there is a sense of collective effervescence (Durkheim, 2008) that hinges on the shared enactment of a ritual that transcends a particular time and place and unites the one praying to a trans-historical community of Muslims. The combination of physicality practiced through muscle memory and the opportunity to use *kbushū'* to concentrate on one's relationship with God makes salah a deeply personal experience, even if it is, for many of the Muslim American teenagers in this research, done in a foreign and sometimes unintelligible language using Allah's words. (The same, by the way, might be said for any collective worship, such as Hindu chants, Protestant hymns, or the Catholic Mass).

The students at Al Haqq watched an online video in class about the importance of their relationship to Allah and heard repeatedly about prayer's centrality to strengthen that relationship. The most important part in this regard is salah. However, these videos and instructions also frequently mentioned *du'ā'*, and students were regularly told at both schools about the importance of "making *du'ā'*." Yet this focus on this relationship, as well as the students' general lack of fluency in Arabic, led them to treat their *du'ā'* in a more immediate manner, namely, just calling out their needs to God in their own language and words. While some of the students I interviewed at Al Haqq agreed with Shaykh Yusuf that *du'ā'* had to be made in the standard Arabic preset phrases, the vast majority said that they could be spontaneous conversations in English.

The difference in language, however, might be key to explaining why *du'ā'* might feel distant. Studies of Muslim communities in other parts of the world have also identified the challenge of saying prayers in Qur'anic Arabic, as I will elaborate upon in the final section. As a 12th-grade boy told me, "You can say it [*du'ā'*] in Latin, Arabic, English, in any way as long as your intention's there." When I asked another senior if she prayed in English, she responded that "you can connect to Allah in however way—He knows all the languages." While very few students I interviewed said they thought of *du'ā'* as *conversational* in the way that many scholars describe Evangelical prayer (Luhmann, 2012), some did think of it in these terms, and just about all of them insisted that they could just ask God for help in their own language and that doing so was just as effective.

While conversing with a senior boy at Al Haqq, he told me that part of the problem stems from just not knowing: "I don't know all these *du'ā'*s like the shaykh does," but he said this did not really matter because "God knows all tongues." Instead, this student simply insisted that a Muslim should "say what you wanna say then . . . finish off by praising . . . It's a Sunnah—but in the end, it comes down to you what you wanna tell God."

What is remarkable here is his contrast to what I know he could tell me about salah, for which there are clearly prescribed actions, and what he might have been able to tell me about *du'ā'*; for example, there is one for entering a room and before giving a speech. The fact that he felt entirely comfortable telling me that *du'ā'* is “what you wanna tell God” itself indicates an important difference both in its *content* and *form*, at least in contrast to the more circumscribed form described by Shaykh Yusuf.

To be clear, that same student later told me about a “list of *du'ā'* [that he reads] before a test,” and so he is not opposed to the pre-established *du'ā'*s his teacher prefers. Similarly, a younger teacher at Al Haqq once asked me to keep her and the school community in my “*du'ā'*.” The fact that she felt comfortable describing my prayers as a Christian as “*du'ā'*” further implies an expansive understanding of its use and structure.

This emphasis on making *du'ā'* in any language comes amidst pressure from an older generation—especially among Arab immigrants—to see Arabic as the true language of conversation with Allah. Their point is not entirely parochial: Because the Qur'an itself is in Arabic, there is a tremendous focus on Arabic in Islam and an insistence that the salah be conducted in Arabic as much as possible. However, there is debate among Muslim scholars about what non-Arabic speakers should say and do while in salah (Katz, 2013). When I asked a senior girl whether it would be better to make *du'ā'* in Arabic or English, she told me:

God understands all languages. I think some people in the school really, I mean when we were in elementary school, people would say that ‘oh no, if you don’t know Arabic, on the Day of Judgment you won’t understand anything and you’ll go to hell.’ But I don’t think that’s right.

Another senior girl assured me that “you can do it in any language. It’s preferred in Arabic, but you can do it in English.”

Again, language appears to be a central part of this distinction between instructors and students at Al Haqq, with having a greater capacity in Arabic making certain forms of prayer more immediately available. A sophomore boy told me:

I think [*du'ā'*] is better in Arabic. Like if you guys are Christians or anything and they pray or something. They’ll do it in Latin if they’re very serious about it. Jewish people will do it in Hebrew if they’re really serious about it. Like, you know, if someone dies and you do a prayer in Hebrew. My friends went to a funeral and they did it there. So I think it has to do with language of origin for the religion.”

Whether or not the boy is right about Jewish and Christian prayer, he is insistent that Arabic has a priority not only in salah but also in *du'ā'*.

I found this prioritization to be the case among instructors, who regularly taught their students *du'ā'*s to memorize. However, this was far less the case for the students. For example, Al Haqq had a special day dedicated to salah, at which the entire school community gathered to listen to guest speakers and attend workshops

on their prayer life. Between speakers, Shaykh Yusuf quizzed students on specific *du'ā'*s that the Prophet would call out at various moments in his life. Many of them had no idea what to say, and while those who raised their hands with the correct answer were praised, their knowledge seemed more like an impressive addition to a meaningful spiritual life rather than something important in and of itself. While it was clear that Shaykh Yusuf and the other adults were proud of certain students who recited this or that *du'ā'* in Arabic, it was also the case that they were gathered on a day to celebrate salah and not *du'ā'*. It might well be the latter's supplemental role to the former that made the contestations of *du'ā'* I have been describing possible, with some students being more comfortable describing it as talking to God.

As I mentioned above, during his interview Shaykh Yusuf made clear that “just talking to God” is a fine thing to do, but it is not really *du'ā'*. In some sense, he is obviously right, for *du'ā'* literally means to call out to Allah. Thus, it is the calling out portion of the prayer, not the conversation part. However, there are various examples of the Prophet talking to God before or after calling out for aid, something with which Shaykh Yusuf would surely have no problem. So part of this story is about how *du'ā'* changes its meaning and sensibility in a context in which its original Arabic meaning is often forgotten or unknown.

The students I interviewed were quite diverse in their framing of the appropriate language for *du'ā'*. Some of them stated that it should be made in English because it is actually more effective that way. One senior girl insisted that the “impact” of prayers in Arabic is less if one does not understand them: “I just feel like because I don't necessarily understand it completely, it doesn't have that same, it wouldn't have that same impact as if it just came from my heart.” For a junior boy, the prayer's effectiveness is driven less by its language than by its intention and its “heart,” an intensity that can only be heightened by understanding what one is saying. He told me, “I believe that what you understand the most would be the most effective because if you're saying *du'ā'* that you learned from Shaykh [Yusuf], but don't know what it means, it's useless.” He went on to describe how “it's pointless” if “you're blurting out words with no heart” because “Islam believes there is always a need for the inner self... I think that you shouldn't prioritize one over the other.” Ideally, most Muslims insist that ritual is precisely the means one uses to expose his/her inner self to Allah, whether via Sufi forms of recitation or the physical movements of salah.

While there are many reasons why this teenager might be making this claim, it is striking how much it parallels longstanding American Protestant critiques of ritual as distinct from a meaningful connection to God, as opposed to the more symbiotic understanding of ritual and relationships often described in Muslim theology. But to be clear, Muslim theology is quite diverse and there is a long tradition of suspicion of ritualism (Anjum, 2006; Powers, 2004). As such, it hard to differentiate whether these diverse understandings are the results of enduring debates within the Muslim intellectual tradition, of an Americanized suspicion of forms, or of some combination of the two.

So far, I have been describing the expansiveness and openness found in the language of prayer. This expansiveness can also extend into a discussion about form. I asked a senior girl about salah, and she told me:

I feel like salah itself, it doesn't need to be the physical practice... it's supposed to be... your closest moment to God and I don't think you actually need to be physically praying in that sense to actually build that connection and get that kind of enlightenment.

Note here how she extends the relational focus on salah she is learning in school beyond the confines of the five prayers themselves, and yet she still calls the experience salah. What she is saying is, in some sense, uncontroversial, as even the most formalistic Muslim scholar of spirituality would enthusiastically agree that the prayerful relationship to Allah transcends the five daily prayers. And yet her argument is unique in its insistence that the salah itself can be understood differently.

This expansiveness extends into *du'ā'*. She told me, "I think like to talk to God you don't need a specific language or even like to recite anything." A sophomore boy insisted that such spontaneous conversations are actually superior to memorized prayers, "because when you're sitting there and you're just talking to God, you know that there's nobody else in the room and you know that God ultimately has total control of everything." "Just talking," in his opinion, makes a Muslim "more spiritually connected." A junior girl made it simple. When I asked her to distinguish between salah and *du'ā'*, she told me, "Well salah, there's rules for it. *Du'ā'*, there's no rules. You just—kind of just say anything you want." This expansiveness contrasts with Shaykh Yusuf's more circumscribed understanding of *du'ā'*, even if he would be open to his students saying "anything they want" to God in prayer. This distinction reveals an important diversity regarding spiritual practice in the communities I studied—a diversity that reflects longstanding differences in how Muslims consider their prayer (Katz, 2013).

At least in the communities I studied, this expansiveness about form only extends to a certain point. For these young American Muslims, *du'ā'* might well be just talking to God in its original sense of calling out, asking God for help in a language that they understand and in supplications they utter on the spot. Yet it is not quite "just talking to God about anything." *Du'ā'* had this role for the Muslim students I interviewed, but only to a certain point. A junior girl told me, "I guess the point [of *du'ā'*] is relative to the person, but the point to me is to feel closer to God, to feel more spiritually comfortable." Yet to feel "spiritually comfortable" does not necessarily mean that one can discuss everything. *Du'ā'*, she told me, is "not chatting with God about my day," but a chance to ask for help, saying to God "Look, this is what's going on and I need help." She distinguishes such calls from "casual conversation." While she says *du'ā'* could take that form for "other people," it does not do so for her.

I found this distinction to be the case almost universally. Many students told me that they made *du'ā'* in any language using whatever words came to mind, but very few told me they thought of *du'ā'* itself as just chatting with God or that they

even could have a totally open, casual conversation with God, as described by many American Evangelicals.

the American Religious Landscape, Muslim Heterogeneity, and Debates about *Du'ā'*

It is hard to identify the causes of the disagreements about *du'ā'*'s meaning and form that I identified during my fieldwork. I will outline two here: (a) a hypothesis of American anti-formalism and (b) a hypothesis of longstanding Muslim heterogeneity. Of course, it seems plausible that the best answer might be some combination of the two.

hypothesis one: American anti-formalism

American religion has traditionally been described as radically democratic, spontaneous, and relational, all the way back to Tocqueville's famous study of American democracy (2002).¹² Similarly, in Will Herberg's (1960) classic study of American religion, *Protestant Catholic Jew*, he writes, "Religion in America has tended toward a marked disparagement of 'forms,' whether theological or liturgical. Even the highly liturgical and theological churches have felt the effects of this spirit to the degree that they have become thoroughly acculturated" (p. 83). If form is less essential to religions in the United States, and if *du'ā'* is less wedded to a specific form than *salah*, it is at least plausible that some of what I describe here is the result of this anti-formalism.

To provide a parallel case, scholars of American Catholicism have described how this egalitarian and immediate sensibility has made Catholicism in the United States far less authoritarian and ritualistic than the more traditional European church. Indeed, Vatican II's insistence that Catholicism and democracy can coexist was inspired by an American Jesuit, John Courtney Murray (Murray, 2005; Noonan, 1993, p. 674). A similar process can be seen in American Sunni Islam. Of course, Sunni Islam is already more radically democratic than Catholicism, inasmuch as the *shaykh* is not the mediator of sacraments. In other words, Muslims are their own priests in the Protestant sense of the term.

It is also important to clarify that while the Roman Catholic tradition and most Muslim traditions tend to emphasize certain pre-established rituals, the relationship to authority within those rituals is distinct. Catholic rituals and religious forms require specific individuals who hold sacramental power over their lives, whereas Muslims have a similar commitment to certain rituals and religious forms, but with a far more democratic sense of access to God. Moreover, Islam's rules were established more by a tradition of key texts than a set of religious leaders.¹³ Despite these differences, a common focus on certain ritual forms might make a comparison to changes in Catholic spirituality, piety, and religious identity instructive. Especially since Vatican II, American Catholics have felt increasingly comfortable with a less hierarchical and traditional understanding of their faith (D'Antonio, Davidson, Hoge, & Gautier, 2007).

This distinction can be seen in recent work on adolescent spirituality, especially in Christian Smith's work. The 15 Muslim students studied by Smith and his colleagues were, like the vast majority of teens in their study, remarkably inarticulate. The researchers quote a 16-year-old Muslim describing his religion: "Nothing really, like, just hard work. My parents really believe in hard work, so it's one thing. Like, concern for other people, things like that, like just don't be an [expletive], you know" (Smith & Denton, 2005, p. 132). For most of the teenagers they studied, Smith and his colleagues found that American spirituality was marked by a "moralistic therapeutic deism," a sort of generic belief in a God who functions as a cosmic butler and therapist, whose only demand is that people be nice.¹⁴ They found similar results with Catholics, of whom Smith and Denton (2005) were surprised to learn that "Catholic teens as a whole show up as fairly weak" in comparison "both to official Catholic norms of faithfulness and to other types of Christian teens in the United States... on most measures of religious faith, belief, experience, and practice" (p. 216).

However, Catholics have criticized their findings for judging Catholic spirituality by an Evangelical standard, arguing that Catholics are not socialized to be as articulate as Evangelicals are about the inner workings of their faith lives. Unlike Evangelicals, who are often religiously socialized to practice "sharing their faith" and articulating how and why they believe what they do, Catholics are not necessarily encouraged to believe in religious exclusion in the manner of other Christians (Beaudoin, 2008). These criticisms highlight important potential explanations of Catholic and Evangelical verbalizations of their faiths, but they also ignore the degree to which Catholics—as Smith points out—are often just as likely as Evangelicals to reject the more rigid strictures of their own faith commitments.

Perhaps part of the explanation for the Catholics' casual attitude in Smith's research lies within the same mechanisms that explain why some of the Muslim teens I met were less concerned with saying *du'ā'* in the ways that their teachers suggest. First, the American religious landscape encourages a kind of individualism and sense of self-sufficiency that is in marked tension with an insistence that the prayer's methods and content must be copied exactly from religious authorities or authoritative texts. Second, it is arguably because Muslims and Catholics have something utterly separate from the "just talking to God" attitudes that characterizes the dominant American Protestant spirituality (respectively, the *salah* and the sacraments, especially the Eucharist), that these different ways of characterizing *du'ā'* do not create any significant controversy.

hypothesis two: a linguistic challenge across the ummah

The above hypothesis compares the experience of those immigrant American Muslim communities with whom I worked with the experience of immigrant Catholics, positing that a change documented in American Catholic religious practice—that of gradually de-emphasizing formal requirements as a result of American Protestant anti-formalism—might be recapitulated in the communities

I observed. Here I suggest a second hypothesis to explain the heterogeneity I witnessed: that of language difference. These two causal processes are by no means mutually exclusive: either, or neither, or both, might accurately provide the causal explanation that I am unable to provide here. Indeed, as some of the work I am going to show demonstrates, the United States is not the only place where Muslim practice has fused with local custom (Bowen, 1989) even if, in some cases, such heterodox customs were imported “as part of Muslim civilization, even if they perhaps did not belong to the core of the Muslim religion” (van Bruinessen, 1999, p. 161).

Here, I cite the example of Indonesian Muslims. Islam in that country is an interesting case in that, unlike the experience of immigrant Muslims in the United States, it is quite old—indeed, it is older than any form of American Islam, which dates back no earlier than American colonization (GhaneaBassiri, 2010). Not much English-language work is available on the specific practice of *du'ā'* in Indonesia. Indeed, as Möller (2005) argues, Islamic practice is in general woefully understudied in comparison to that country's beliefs and politics. However, more general work on prayer and Islamic religious practice emphasizes—as I find in my own work—the prioritization of Arabic over local languages in Muslim contexts, not only for *salah*, for which there is more global consensus that Arabic is required (Bowen, 1989; Simon, 2009; Katz, 2013), but also for other forms of Muslim spiritual practice as well (Lukens-Bull, 2001; Weix, 1998).

This does not mean that Arabic is the only language allowed, but simply that it is prioritized. For example, Möller (2005) describes how some Javanese Muslims make *tarāwīḥ* prayers (special prayers prayed during the holy month of Ramadan) in Javanese if they cannot do so in Arabic, and that the imam he observed invited “the congregation to state the intent for the next day's fast, first in Arabic and then in Javanese” (p. 49). This specific request shows, along with Weix's study of local languages in Islamic prayer groups, how the necessities of understanding in a local language exists in an uneasy tension with the prioritization of Arabic. Indeed, the issue of local languages versus Arabic has itself become a topic of political contestation (Hasan, 2009, p. 233). As such, the tension I describe about the use of Arabic in prayer is clearly not only an American story.

conclusion

In my research, I observed that the older generation of Muslim Americans tended to insist on *du'ā'* as a set of formalized Arabic sentences or phrases to be used when calling out for God's help. The younger Muslim students and teachers with whom I worked tended to think of *du'ā'* less formalistically; it was simply asking God for help, and in whatever words or language the situation required. It remains an empirical question as to whether this contention holds across generations outside of the schools I studied, both within and outside the United States. I have suggested two potential hypotheses for these differences. However, given

the constraints of space within this article and my own data, I cannot do much more here other than to postulate them. First, I suggest that one reason might be the American religious landscape itself, which tends to eschew form and focus on a believer's relationship with God. My second suggested hypothesis is that one reason for this difference might simply be a question of language capacity and that Muslims around the world tend to pray—especially when making *du'ā'*—in the language in which they are most comfortable.

Relatedly, in a study of Sufi Islam in Britain, Werbner (2007) describes how “the language of sermons and even supplicatory prayer in the Pakistani mosques, whatever their tendency, is Urdu rather than Arabic” (p. 199). This is a fascinating distinction, as it reveals a separation both from the language of the host country and the Qur'an: Instead, the language chosen, presumably, is the language in which the Muslims in question are most adroit. Perhaps the data revealed here tells a similar story, and a very old one—namely, that of Muslims seeking an intimate connection with God.

Notes

1. I am extremely grateful to Christine Sheikh for initially encouraging this project. I also thank Cynthia Miller-Idriss, Shariq Siddiqui, Steve Warner, and two anonymous reviewers for their extremely helpful comments. Most importantly, this research would not have been possible without the warmth and hospitality of the Muslim schools in which the research was conducted.
2. To be clear, I write as a methodological atheist, meaning that I do not posit God (or Allah) or the supernatural as a possible explanation or element of what I study. However, how people talk about God or understand God's work in the world is obviously important in any study of religion. Rather than write “what people say or believe” about God every time, when God is mentioned, I simply say God. Also, while the majority of Muslims with whom I worked said “Allah,” many also used “God.”
3. The names of the schools and the individuals within them are pseudonyms. I am extremely grateful to all of the teachers and students for their generosity and hospitality.
4. My use of the word “American” refers to those in the United States, though I recognize the word can also refer to all the countries in two continents.
5. The English word “prayer” is imperfect in the Muslim context, both because it is loaded with Christian baggage and because there simply is no one word that matches it within Islam. Other scholars have studied Muslim prayer and made different categorizations. For an old but still classic introduction to Muslim spirituality, see Padwick (1996). For a more recent and excellent overview, see Katz (2013).
6. “There is nothing worthy of worship except God,” “Transcendent is God,” and “All praise and gratitude belongs to God,” respectively.
7. To follow the pattern of many of the American Muslims with whom I worked, I use English plurals here for the Arabic words throughout. The Arabic plural of *rak'ah* is *rak'at* and the Arabic plural of *du'ā'* is *ad'iyah*.
8. The word Sunnah—or Sunna—is a broader term denoting the corpus of Prophet Muhammad's behaviors, sayings, and examples, all of which are encompassed in a compendium of hadith. The word can also refer to those actions and sayings of his Companions. It is a Sunnah to say additional

prayers before and/or after the required (*farḍ*) ritual prayers. Muslims often refer to these additional prayers as Sunnah prayers.

9. Like many Arabic words, the spelling of *du'ā'* in English varies.

10. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this passage's wording.

11. I am grateful to an anonymous reviewer for this distinction.

12. For more on how Tocqueville viewed American religion as “republican ... [submitting] the acceptance of truths regarding the other world to private judgment just as politics abandoned all temporal interests to the common sense of the masses,” see Graebner (1976, p. 263). For more on American religion's individualist strains, see Ahlstrom's (updated) classic history (2004).

13. However, the debate about those who interpret those texts—and the relative binding power of those interpretations—remains an ongoing and complex series of conversations (Zaman, 2010).

14. For a similar discussion of American spirituality, see Ammerman's description of “Golden Rule Christians” in *Sacred Stories, Spiritual Tribes* (2013).

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Muslim Education in Democratic South Africa: Convergence or Divergence of Religion and Citizenship?

Nuraan Davids

South Africa's transition to democracy signaled many new beginnings to different people and communities. For the Muslim community, democracy beckoned toward an untraversed path of identity and expression—one unshielded by the seclusion unintentionally provided through apartheid. The changes, while not immediately obvious, were nevertheless profound, no more so than within a new realm of desegregated schools. The extensive migratory patterns of learners to previously “off-limits” schools soon revealed another pattern of exit: The more public schools diversified, the greater the increase in the number of faith-based schools. Although small in relation to the total number of independent schools, the percentage of Muslim schools was significantly higher than the proportion of Muslims in the South African population. In “mapping the terrain” of Muslim education in post-apartheid South Africa, the interest of this article lies, firstly, in understanding the underlying motivation for this proliferation of Muslim schools and, secondly, how the prevalence of faith-based schools might enhance South Africa's democracy.

Keywords: South Africa, Muslim-based schools, citizenship, identity, democracy

Introduction

The phenomenon of Muslim-based schools in South Africa served the agendas of Muslim communities, and certainly the state, during apartheid. On the one hand, all such faith-based schools served apartheid's segregationist agenda, and on the other hand, their prevalence satisfied each

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faith-based community's religious and communal needs. These schools provided employment for Muslim teachers, who then propagated Muslim values in an otherwise Christian-dominated public schooling system and thereby preserved a Muslim way of life.

Clearly, the existence of Muslim-based schools was justified on the grounds of preserving Islamic identities and practices, which were systemically excluded from apartheid's segregationist and supremacist forms of citizenship. What is not apparent, however, is how these schools conceive of themselves in a democratic society—one that affords them equal rights of citizenship. With South Africa's transition from apartheid to democracy, what roles do Muslim-based schools play in relation to cultivating democratic forms of citizenship, and what is their potential contribution to a democratic South Africa? How do Muslim-based schools conceive of their roles and functions in preparing their learners for a diverse and pluralist society, as is the case in South Africa? What conceptions of citizenship are cultivated through the ethos and pedagogical practices of these schools, and do these practices contribute to or diverge from the cultivation of democracy?

This paper commences by providing a brief overview of how Muslim-based schools and education took shape in a geographical space that, prior to 1658, contained no Muslims. Thereafter, our attention turns to establishing these schools both during and after apartheid. Specific focus is placed on how they conceive of themselves regarding democracy and cultivating democratic citizenship education.

Muslims at the Cape: a Brief Glance

Historical accounts reveal that the region's first Muslims, the *Mardykers* from Amboya (in the Indonesian archipelago), originally settled in the Cape in 1658. These Malays, brought over as property of the Dutch East India Company officials, were part of an involuntary migration of enslaved people and political prisoners that lasted until 1834 (Mohamed, 2002). While their ancestry is linked to the enslaved people imported from South and Southeast Asia during the 17th century, most of the "Indian" community members are descendants of trader immigrants who arrived from the Indian subcontinent in the 1860s (Vahed, 2006). Despite their common Islamic faith, the distinction between these two groups remains largely intact in South Africa's contemporary Muslim societies, not least because of the former apartheid government's racial and ethnic classifications.

During apartheid, the terms "Coloured" and "Coloured Malay" (for Muslims) were coined and applied to South Africa's indigenous people (for example, the San, the Khoi, and many other African groupings) and slaves, specifically those from East Africa, Malaysia, and southeastern India, as well as Europeans of mixed heritage. In this sense, "Coloured" marked a racial category, "Malay" served as a religious marker that indicated a Muslim, and "Indian" was reserved for the two categories of indentured laborers: those from the Subcontinent and, later on, those "free Indians" who came as traders from India and Mauritius.

In terms of religious observances at the Cape, the Dutch Reformed Church was the only official and permissible religious institution. In fact, the region's Muslims were prohibited from practicing Islam. Among the slaves from Indonesia were Shaykh Yusuf, who was exiled to the Cape in 1694, and Abdullah Kadi Abdus Salaam (aka Tuan Guru [Mister Teacher]), a prince from Tidore who, upon his arrival, was imprisoned on Robben Island for 13 years—a punishment commonly reserved for scholars or agitators who publicly disagreed with the ruling power. He had memorized the Qur'an, and one of his first major achievements was to transcribe it from memory for the Muslims' benefit. According to Lubbe (1986, p. 27), his book on Islamic jurisprudence, known as *Fiqka Kitaab* [sic] and completed in 1781, became the main reference source for the Cape's Muslim community. After being released in 1798, he established the first mosque and madrasa, the Auwal Masjid, in Dorp Street, Cape Town. His own actions, and those of his fellow Muslims, took the form of community advocacy as a way to resist their particular political and socio-economic contexts.

Records of higher Islamic learning—that is, sites that served as precursors to the Islamic seminaries and community colleges—are commonly linked to Shaykh Abu Bakr Effendi, a Turkish scholar who came to the Cape in 1860 at the request of the British colonizers (Mohamed, 2002, p. 30). Effendi is best known for establishing a school of higher Islamic theology and for his *Bayān al-Dīn* (*The Elucidation of Religion*), an Arabic-Afrikaans text. Hoel (2016, p. 36) explains that unlike Tuan Guru's mosque-based madrasas, which primarily focused on Qur'anic recitation, Effendi's school offered more scholarly and sophisticated approaches to Islamic theology, jurisprudence, and history. In Hoel's (2016) opinion, the two strands of madrasa education—children's Qur'anic literacy and higher Islamic seminaries—can be said to be the forerunners of the country's madrasas.¹

In sum, any account of Muslim education in South Africa has to be cognizant of the madrasa's fundamental role in propagating Islam and Muslim identities, as well as a response to the prevailing political contexts. Muslims arrived as slaves and political prisoners, designations that would long define and control their daily existence. They were not considered citizens, but as slaves or servants brought to advance the interests first of the Dutch and then of the British colonizers. Certainly, the type of education promulgated was geared toward preserving their community and its specific way of life, rather than finding accommodation within the existing dominant ethos.

Muslim Education in Apartheid South Africa

If colonization is understood as the trampling of indigenous people, then in the case of South Africa apartheid picked up the shackles left behind by the Dutch and the British. The apartheid system created 19 separate education departments. While the Malay Muslims, who were (and are) categorized as "Coloured," fell within the jurisdiction of the Coloured Affairs Department, Indian Muslim children were attended to by the Indian Affairs Department.²

All public schools were required to adhere to a policy of Christian National Education (CNE), which was based on an Afrikaner form of Calvinistic principles that not only ensured the marriage of state and church, but also ensured that Christian values permeated every aspect of education in public schools. In educational terms, the CNE program taught in state-funded schools began as an Afrikaner church-designed countermeasure against British influence, one meant to serve as the core of the school curriculum in those schools funded independently of the state that they sponsored (Nthontho, 2017). Religious intolerance and discrimination, says Amin (2005, pp. 238-239), thrived under apartheid and “Coloured” students increasingly struggled with the different value frameworks and religious ideologies taught within the home and the school, respectively.

Vahed (2006, p. 2) explains that residential clustering, as prescribed by the racially based Group Areas Act, made it easy for Muslims to establish mosques and madrasas, as well as to safely practice their religious beliefs. At a time when neither public state schools nor Christian mission schools accommodated or acknowledged Muslim students’ religious beliefs and practices, Dr. Abdullah Abdurrahman established the first state-aided Muslim school in Cape Town, commonly referred to as the Moslem Mission School. Established in 1913, the school was known as the Rahmaniyyeh Institute. While the madrasa operated as a supplementary school after school hours, the Rahmaniyyeh and similar Muslim schools focused on infusing “secular” schooling with basic Islamic teachings. By 1956, says Tayob (2011a, p. 42), about 15 state-subsidized mission schools had been established throughout Cape Town.

In the context of the state-supported dominant Christian ethos, the primary motivation for establishing the Moslem Mission Schools was to preserve Muslim identity and practices. As stated previously, Muslim schools were free to employ their own teachers and design a curriculum that met their community’s religious needs. They were in a position to cultivate a separate form of citizenship, one that saw them exist parallel to the state’s segregationist policies while also ensuring the survival of their way of life. Their establishment was followed by the introduction of Arabic for the first time, in the Kwazulu Natal and Gauteng regions under the Indian Affairs Department of Education, in 1975. In turn, the founding of the Habibia Girls College in 1985 was inspired by global trends in the Islamization of Knowledge movement. Currently, South Africa has approximately 40 such private schools, known as Islamia Colleges (Mohamed, 2002).

At the height of the struggle in the 1980s, a particular type of private Muslim schooling began to emerge—one that was more culturally specific and, to a certain extent, isolationist. According to Tayob (2011a, pp. 42-43), these attributes still characterize Muslim schools in post-apartheid South Africa. During apartheid’s declining years, the number of Muslim schools increased to 68 primary and high schools, loosely organized under the umbrella of the Muslim Schools Association. Mohamed (2002) reports that by 1993, Arabic was being offered in 8,921 state primary schools and 1,124 secondary schools. Amidst this proliferation of Muslim schools, madrasas continue to fulfill a supplementary function during the after-school afternoons or during the weekends.

Muslim Education in post-apartheid South Africa

While apartheid delineated two types of Muslim identities—Malay and Indian Muslims—the post-apartheid census, says Omar (2004), revealed that Islam had grown significantly among the various Black African communities and comprised up to 12% of South Africa's Muslims. Haron (2003, p. 112) writes that this growth can be attributed to township youth's embracing Islam as well as the growing number of refugees from Malawi, Somalia, Senegal, Nigeria, Tanzania, Burundi, Rwanda, and other countries. In turn, Vawda (2017, p. 38) notes that in addition to the influx of both documented and undocumented Muslim migrants from African countries, a new wave of Muslim migrants has been arriving from other parts of the world, namely, various Middle Eastern and Asian countries (for example, Bangladesh, India, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Pakistan). At the time of this writing, Muslims constituted 1.5% of the country's total population.

The ideological and institutional replacement of apartheid with democracy signaled the emergence of a renewed encounter and discourse between Muslim communities and the state. The racist ideology, separation, and isolation imposed through apartheid meant that Muslims were somewhat detached from what it meant to be a South African citizen and could thus attend exclusively to their own identities and practices. Generally, Muslims were (and are) classified under the racial categories of "Coloureds," "Indians," and "Blacks." Since the apartheid state did not recognize them as equal citizens, they would not necessarily have considered themselves South African citizens. The introduction of democracy implied a new consideration of citizenship, one that, as Jeppie (2001, p. 82) describes, forced Muslims to think of themselves in terms of multiple or layered identities, with the label "Muslim" being just one of those identities.

Along with democracy came unprecedented notions of freedom and rights, which took fruition in one of the world's most liberal constitutions. Certain freedoms, such as abortion, gambling, and the recognition of same-sex marriage, created deep-seated conflicts for Muslims (as well as other religious groups), as they continued to struggle to reconcile their own religious beliefs with liberal democracy. It is no surprise, therefore, to find that inasmuch as South Africa's new democracy enjoys fervent support among some Muslims, others consider its constitution to be fundamentally at odds with Islamic norms. The majority of Muslims regard the constitution as a human construction, whereas Muslim Personal Law is divine in origin and intent, which implies that its provisions should not be subjected to compromise and historical conditioning (Tayob, 2011b, p. 21). As such, post-apartheid South Africa marked the beginning of a new struggle for many Muslims, some of whom chose to turn inward and separate themselves from the newly dominant political discourse (Omar, 2004). In fact, the Islamic Unity Convention (IUC) discouraged Muslims from participating in the country's first democratic election in 1994.

Among the far-reaching political reforms, replacing the CNE with an outcomes-based education (OBE) was viewed as not only a means to eradicate

apartheid education from schools, but also a philosophical vehicle through which to restore the identity and self-esteem of historically maligned and excluded students. In addition to ensuring a common curriculum in all state schools, the new curriculum highlighted a common citizenship brought about through active participation in promoting a democratic, equitable, and just society (DoE, 1995).

Theoretically, according to Mattes and Denmark (2012, p. 3), the objective of the new OBE curriculum was to both change South African pedagogy and begin to address and remedy the newly democratic country's political culture. Key to changing this was the desegregation of schools, which would ensure that all students would have access to all schools, regardless of race or culture. From the outset, of course, it was clear that despite the claims propagated in the South Africa Schools Act, no. 84 of 1996 (DoE, 1996), schools would soon employ other methods—such as exorbitant school fees, language, and feeder zones—to replace racial exclusion. Hence, Black schools continue to serve Black students almost exclusively, former Coloured schools serve mainly Coloured students, former white schools serve a mix of Black students and a majority of white students, and Indian schools continue to serve mostly Indian students, along with a mixture of Coloured and Black students (Fiske & Ladd, 2006, pp. 101-102).

Apparently, the desegregation of public schools has a causal link with the proliferation of private and faith-based schools. The surging growth of independent schools, states Du Toit (2004, p. 3), is due to a perception that public schools, due to inadequate resources and high teacher-student ratios, cannot provide quality education. Under apartheid, the existence of Muslim schools was justified on the grounds that the education on offer in public schools was informed by a Christian ethos and ignored all other faiths and beliefs. As pointed out previously, the apartheid state subsidized Muslim and other faith-based schools because doing so fed into its ideology of separation and division. Ironically, although articulated as a democratic right, the current proliferation of Muslim schools stems from a similar reasoning: The state cannot be trusted with the education of Muslim children.

Tayob (2011a, p. 43) reports that statistics collected at the end of 2006 show that although the number of independent Muslim schools (74) formed only a small percentage of the total number of independent schools (5.74%), it was significantly higher than the proportion of Muslims in the population as a whole (2%). It is difficult to provide an exact number of current Muslim-based schools, since not all of the schools are formally registered. Taking into account statistics from the Muslim Schools Association, as well as other provincial directories, a conservative estimate would be 96 schools. Mohamed (2002) also highlights the increasing number of Egyptian "Al-Azhar schools," funded primarily by Al-Azhar University in Cairo, and the Turkish Star Colleges shaped by the philosophy of Fethullah Gülen.

Unlike the CNE's propagated Christian worldview, the post-apartheid SA Schools Act (DoE, 1996) deems schools religion-free zones. In this regard, public schools are obliged to provide religion education in a way that shows a "profound appreciation of spirituality, but does not focus on any particular religion and does

not aim to provide religious instruction” (DoE, 2003, p. 459). In line with a new reconciliatory tone, the National Policy on Religion and Education (DoE, 2003) is premised on promoting religious diversity by exposing students to the nation’s diversity of religious traditions. To achieve this initiative, the policy posits that the relationship between religion and education “must flow directly from the constitutional values of citizenship, human rights, equality, freedom from discrimination, and freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, and opinion” (DoE, 2003, p. 5). In this regard, schools (and all public institutions) should “teach about religion and religions in ways that reflect a profound appreciation of the spiritual, non-material aspects of life, but which are different from the religious education, religious instruction, or religious nurture provided by the home, family, and religious community” (DoE, 2003, p. 5). This signals a strong break with the past, in which state and religion were viewed as inter-connected.

Scholars like Dangor (2005, p. 520) argue that establishing Muslim schools is warranted on the basis that the curricula of secular schools cannot be expected to bridge the requirements of religious curricula because they differ in respect of origin, worldview, objectives, methodology, and epistemology. Following Dangor (2005), Tayob (2011a, p. 42) holds that the surge in the number of Muslim schools is a mere continuation of a long process through which Muslim communities attempt to provide Islamic and secular education to their members. Others, like Hoel (2016, p. 33), describe this increase as both a visible expression of the democratic freedoms granted to religious populations and a response to the neoliberal shift taking place within public education.

In this regard, Fataar (2005) opines that Muslim schools after 1994 “provide an apt spotlight for understanding the varied ways in which Muslims in particular localities have been negotiating the post-apartheid democratic environment” (p. 25). He contends that they are an expression of a confluence of global and local Islamization and other discourses that have been playing out within changing discursive and material circumstances. On the one hand, says Tayob (2011a, p. 5), Islamization within the South African context was part of a greater trend toward decentralizing schooling. On the other hand, it emerged from a vision of integrating Islam and secular subjects.

The curriculum, however, is not the only concern. Despite the prohibition of any form of discrimination or exclusion on the basis of race, culture, ethnicity, language, or sexuality, as constituted in the South African Schools Act (DoE, 1996), Muslim girls in particular still face discrimination and victimization if they wear hijab at school (Davids, 2014). Although less prevalent, boys cannot have facial hair (in accordance with the Sunnah), wear a fez, and, at a number of schools, are prevented from leaving early on Friday to attend the congregational prayers.

Vahed and Jeppie (2005, p. 271) contend that the attitude of many parents toward education, particularly in the provinces of KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng, has changed as part of a gender counter-revolution, and that some parents no longer consider it desirable for girls to receive a secular education beyond a certain age, if at all. In turn, as Hoel (2016) reports, “the *‘ulama’*, who notably positioned

themselves as custodians of Islamic knowledge and ‘truth’, warned Muslims against the atheism and moral corruption (of girls and women in particular) that would ensue from the new curricula introduced in state schools and universities” (p. 37).

As Vahed (2006) explains, in addition to a renewed fervor in religious piety, which often included an affiliation with a particular shaykh or imam, the notion of “truth” has become synonymous with the ‘*ulamā*’. The ‘*ulamā*’, continues Hoel (2016), were supported by Muslim parents who felt that secular educational institutions were embarking upon a campaign of “gender equality,” leading Muslim girls to doubt the “Islamic viewpoint” (p. 38). Of course, it is worth noting that the viewpoint being alluded to here implies a particular interpretation that is seemingly at odds with a perspective that gender equality is, in fact, propagated in the Qur’an. In turn, an increasing number of Muslim women began wearing the hijab, with a number also opting to wear the *niqāb* (face veil)—as if signaling a physical withdrawal from the new space in which they found themselves (Davids, 2013).

Given the constitutional space to practice their religion unhindered, Vawda (2017) asserts, many Muslims in South Africa began to focus on “values of piety and morality, rather than continue to engage in the larger public debates about recognition of cultural differences and the relevance of Islam in times of continued inequality, nation building, reconciliation, reconstruction and development” (p. 34). He writes the focus on intrinsic normative-driven standards of expected behavior derived from religion, rather than public engagement, represents a shift toward a particular normality of inward-looking Islam.

Thus far, I have provided a particular interpretation of the emergence and establishment of Muslim schools and education—first during colonialism, then during apartheid, and, more recently, during democracy. Underscoring both the historical and contemporary overviews are clear indications of the heterogeneity of Muslim identities in relation to geographical origin as well as the continuing distinction among “Malay,” “Indian,” and African (“Black”) Muslims. However, it is important to note that despite of a post-apartheid climate in which Muslim communities can both reconfigure and resituate themselves as a more homogenous community, they have chosen to remain within the respective apartheid-era frames. In other words, although the political and socio-economic conditions for the existence of Muslim schools are different within a democratic society, the outcome is the same: separate schools for different students (Davids, 2014).

The reasons for this are complex. For example, “Black” parents cannot afford the school fees and the Muslim schools’ community-specific character has the unintended consequence of excluding certain learners (Fataar, 2005). Upon closer examination, it becomes evident that, depending upon its location, the school has either a “Malay”-dominant or “Indian”-dominant Muslim student body. As a result, says Tayob (2011a, p. 44), the perception is that Muslim schools propagate and preserve the racial identities of apartheid-era South Africa.

In sum, it would be a fair assessment that inasmuch as Muslims in general celebrated the end of apartheid, not all of them have welcomed particular

implications of democracy. This tension is perhaps most evident in the proliferation of Muslim-based schools. The next section focuses on understanding their worth and potential contribution, if any, to South Africa's democracy.

religion and citizenship: convergence or divergence?

With the shifting socio-political landscapes of most liberal democracies, renewed questions are being asked about both the purpose and legitimacy of faith-based schools. Opinions seem to be in two very distinct camps. Proponents contend that such schools serve as an expression of human and religious rights and are therefore a necessary and desired feature of diverse and pluralistic societies (see McLaughlin, 1992; Halstead, 1995; Grace, 2012). This view is supported by Tayob, Niehaus, and Weisse (2011, p. 7), who maintain that Muslim-based education may empower Muslim minorities to better grapple with the challenges of secular discursive formations as well as engage in processes of nation-building and articulations of citizenship. The counterargument contends that schools should be religion-free so that children might assert their own autonomy in relation to their religious identities (East & Hammond, 2006; Berkeley & Vij, 2008). Marples (2005, p. 139), for instance, contends that although opinions differ over whether children in faith-based schools are more likely to be indoctrinated than their peers elsewhere, the dangers are sufficiently great to cast doubt on whether such schools should be allowed to operate.

Muslim-based schools in contemporary South Africa justify their existence on the basis of three key points: (1) The state neither can nor wants to be responsible for providing a religious education; (2) the schools' agenda and focus involve positive community involvement and, as such, contribute to the public good of society; and (3) the schools are a manifestation of diverse and pluralist societies, which serves to enhance the democracy. In addition, Tayob (n.d.) reports that it became clear from interviews with principals of Muslim-based schools that they were "providing quality schooling for those who have fears, real or perceived, about the problem of schooling in late and post-apartheid times. Moral alarm and deeply entrenched racial attitudes had a great deal to do with the proliferation of Islamic schools after 1990" (pp. 15-16).

I concur that all faith-based schools have legitimacy in a democracy. All people, as Hannah Arendt (1968) reminds us, have "the right to have rights" (p. 177), which quite resoundingly includes the right to "belong to some kind of community." In the case of certain Muslims in South Africa, this is made apparent in their right to attend to their children's religious needs and thereby maintain a community of belonging. The concern, therefore, is not so much contesting the right, but what happens during and after the exercise of that right. Much, states McLaughlin (1992), "depends on how the institutions actually operate, and what their effects actually are on students and the broader community" (p. 115). In the case of democratic South Africa, given that Muslim schools have retained the same racial and cultural exclusivity enforced by apartheid, their students stand to

encounter only those who share the same religious beliefs. This is not to say that there is no diversity within religious beliefs, but it certainly does imply degrees of a shared ideology that are neither diffused nor extended by any diverse racial and cultural interpretations beyond that which is already familiar.

In terms of “how the institutions actually operate” (McLaughlin, 1992, p. 115), I am firstly interested in *who*—since what happens in the *how* is largely determined by and through *who*. Muslim teachers, who historically could not find employment in Christian Mission Schools, found posts in the Moslem Mission Schools. Fataar (2003, pp. 1-2) reports that many teachers employed in post-apartheid Muslim schools are recently qualified teacher education graduates who cannot find jobs in the shrunken public-school teacher employment market. Although it might be uncommon, it is not improbable for faith-based schools to employ teachers with different faiths or philosophies. The chances of encountering such teachers at Muslim schools, however, are incongruous at the least, which implies that students only interact with other students as well as with teachers with whom they share a common faith.

The argument at this point is not that such students are less tolerant than their public-school peers. Research, in fact, suggests otherwise (see Troyna & Hatcher, 1992; Short, 2002). What I am contending is that teacher identities are resources within themselves and that diverse identities broaden and deepen both the pedagogical and the social projects. The greater the diversity, the broader the perspectives for both students and teachers. Again, this is not to say that teachers from similar faiths are consistent in their ways of being, thinking, and acting. However, when students only encounter those who look and believe as they do, there is a greater chance of a narrower perspective. This problem is compounded by the reality that children spend most of their time at school and that formative friendships are most likely to be established therein. Generally, these school-based friendships extend into the social realm as well. The likelihood, therefore, of establishing friendships with students from diverse races, cultures, and religions is marginal, if one considers that most historically classified “Coloured” and “Indian” communities remain in the same racially designated areas.

What becomes abundantly clear is that students at Muslim schools only encounter one kind of teacher and student (in terms of race and religion), which means that the only available avenue for engaging with diverse ways of thinking and being—a necessary condition for peaceful co-existence in liberal democracies—is via the curriculum. This returns us to McLaughlin’s (1992) point that much “depends on how the institutions actually operate and what their effects actually are on students and the broader community” (p. 115). Muslim schools, which are formally registered with and subsidized by the country’s National Department of Basic Education, are required to implement the national curriculum: the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statements (CAPS). In addition to teaching its prescribed core subjects, the Muslim schools’ curricula generally also include the Qur’an, Arabic, and Islamic studies. In most instances, their vision statements reflect a strong emphasis on character building and regard for others

(for example, see Islamia College's website: www.islamiacollege.co.za; Oracle Academy High School: www.oracle-academy.co.za).

One of the principles espoused by CAPS (DBE, 2013, pp. 4-5) is social transformation, which is defined as ensuring that the educational imbalances of the past are redressed, as well as that equal educational opportunities are provided for all sections of the population. Others are human rights, inclusivity, environmental and social justice; infusing the principles and practices of social and environmental justice and human rights as defined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa; and valuing indigenous knowledge systems, defined as acknowledging South Africa's rich history and heritage as important contributors to nurturing the values contained in the constitution.

Research confirms that most public-school teachers either have no awareness of these principles or simply omit them from their teaching. This means that very little, if any, attention is being given to inculcating and promoting the types of qualities values necessary for cultivating democratic citizenship (Moloi, 2007; Ngcobo & Tikly, 2008; Waghid, 2009). It is highly unlikely that the case with teachers at Muslim schools would be any different. Tayob (n.d.), who maintains that Muslim-based schools clearly operate within a particular cultural ethos that is influenced largely by race and class, argues that this ethos needs closer attention—and specifically the Islamization of education, which the Association of Muslim Schools promotes “as the distinguishing mark that set them apart from earlier Muslim schools that maintained bifurcation.” In this regard, he continues, Islam had its own method and approach to culture and civilization, and thus also to education—“A comprehensive Islamic vision was supposed to justify these schools, which should then be translated in each subject and curriculum” (p. 16)

To date, Muslim-based schools generally teach the national CAPS' curriculum and supplement this with what is traditionally understood as “Islamic subjects.” Waghid (2018) confirms that regardless of the context, whether colonialist or apartheid, the type of teaching and learning in both Muslim-based schools and madrasas is primarily memorization and rote learning—a “compliant transmission education” (p. 108). Thus, scant attention is afforded to critical thinking and consciousness, for teaching and learning are largely constructed along dichotomous lines. In other words, the teacher is the only authority and the student is the passive recipient.

The question, therefore, that warrants attention is not whether Muslim schools ought to exist in a democracy, which in and of itself reveals a deficient understanding of what democracy embodies and implies, but how they can contribute to and enhance South Africa's democratic project. I acknowledge that because they are Muslim-based, these schools are necessarily expected to adopt an Islamic ethos. The challenge is how to ensure that these Islamic-infused identities and ways of being are compatible with what it means to be a citizen in a liberal democracy. In any case, Muslim- and all other faith-based schools must be held to the same standards as public schools. Although they use two distinctive schooling frameworks and ideologies—one religious and the other not (as is the case in

South Africa)—both exist within and because of democracy. Thus, both types of schools have roles to play in cultivating and ensuring a type of citizenship that recognizes and respects that democracy. In other words, faith-based schools have as much responsibility and as much to offer as public schools when it comes to creating spaces where diversity and pluralist ways of being and acting are not only recognized, but also respected, in the interest of peaceful co-existence.

While teaching is a factor in shaping productive and responsible citizens, Biesta (2010, p. 10) states that more attention needs to be paid to how citizenship is actually learned in and through the processes and practices that make up the everyday lives of young people. Thus, he is not concerned only with what learners are subjected to through citizenship education, but how they are socialized into the idea of what it means to be a citizen. Therefore, while a Muslim teacher at a Muslim school would need to teach the values, rights, and responsibilities associated with citizenship, more importantly he or she would need to embody them in order to socialize students into the practices of engagement, deliberation, and dissent.

In many respects, the burden of responsibility placed on all faith-based schools is heavier than the one placed on public schools, for the latter's diversity of students provide ready enactments of pluralism and difference. As this is not the case at Muslim-based schools, the recognition and respect of difference required for the healthy functioning of democracy is not immediately evident. To this end, they are obliged to teach and show their students that the faith-lens through which they see the world is just one perspective. More importantly, they are responsible for imparting understandings of citizenship that take into account its multi-faceted and layered constructions and influences because notions of citizenship are not simply shaped through a religious identity and function. Citizenship has to serve a public good.

Inasmuch as one can trace a clear trajectory between Muslim-based schools established during and after apartheid, the political and socio-economic contexts are entirely different. As Tayob (n.d., p. 19) explains, the first Muslim-based schools were often established in the face of great odds and in an attempt to avoid the Christian hegemony of existing schools. Similarly, Indian parents built schools for the department so their children could have access to secular education. In both cases, he continues, the schools represented the parents' desire to be integrated into the society and the economy.

But in democratic South Africa, Tayob (n.d.) contends that Muslim parents are deliberately choosing Muslim-based schools in order to withdraw from the society on cultural grounds and that although Muslim students were trained to be part of the capitalist economy and even of the political society, "they viewed the confluence of cultures and the challenges of identity that it represented, with great alarm. The schools represented a distancing of the Muslims from the broader society in cultural aspects" (p. 19). This distancing has particular implications not only for whether the students at these schools are being equipped for dealing with those who are different from them, but also for how they conceive of themselves in a pluralist society.

Muslim-based schools cannot simply carry on as if the milieu in which they exist has not changed. The state's systemic exclusionary practices are no longer at play, and unless these schools consider their roles as being centrally located in the advancement of the society in which they find themselves, they are only placing themselves and their students at risk. Students at all schools have to be socialized into what it means to think and act democratically. Gutmann (1987), for instance, contends that schools have a fundamental role to play in perpetuating democratic practice in society. Similarly, Pashby (2008) maintains that schools are particularly important for "reinstating confidence in democracy ... [and] to enable young people from differing backgrounds to live together" (p. 19). What is needed, therefore, is a self-reflective shift and reinterpretation of how Muslim-based schools conceive of themselves and what role they see themselves fulfilling in practice.

The historical establishment and development of Islam in South Africa confirms that democratic South Africa is an abode of Islam (*dār al-islām*). The right to establish Muslim schools has to be accompanied by a responsibility to that democracy. To this end, their students have to be socialized into a *fiqh al-muwāṭanah* (a jurisprudence of citizenship), which is necessary for active citizenry and peaceful co-existence with all others. The principles of this type of *fiqh*, which are the same as those for democratic citizenship, include justice or just action, participation, mutual consultation, respect, responsibility, and accountability. As Biesta (2010, p. 2) notes, citizenship education requires the promotion of political agency and adjustment to the existing order.

In conclusion, Muslim schools in South Africa have a crucial role to play in nurturing citizens who are mindful of discrimination and exclusion, who take pride in pluralist ways of being, and who see themselves as both participants in and contributors to the country's democracy and the advancement of peaceful co-existence. Islam's very existence in South Africa provides credence to the argument that conceptions and practices of citizenship can adopt varied configurations—that is, citizenship can originate from different understandings, and evolve into the unexpected. In many deep-seated ways, these Muslims have yet to come into their own as citizens who have a sense of belonging. As society deepens into its own democracy, Muslims have a choice to either insert themselves into the central narrative or to retreat to the periphery.

At this point, Muslim-based schools have a tremendous opportunity to sketch a discourse and legacy that makes the reconcilability between Islam and democracy entirely visible. One of the first steps to be taken in this regard is for these schools to shift away from a dominant position of isolation and fear to one of openness. They have to be characterized by open practices of deliberation, whereby both teachers and learners come together in mutual curiosity and respect so that they might benefit each other, their communities, and, hence, the broader society. In other words, a school has to be "sensitive to the potential callings of the wider world" (Barnett, 2013, p. 154).

Given that Muslims in South Africa are well aware of apartheid's dehumanizing and marginalizing effects, the ethos and practices of their schools cannot

be built on the same imperatives of fear, isolation, and otherness. Moreover, the Qur'an and Sunnah provide both social and pedagogical access to what it means to act with justice—which is at the heart of an Islamic philosophy of democracy. It is up to these schools to embark on the three intertwined epistemologies of socialization (*tarbiyyah*), critical engagement (*ta'lim*), and just action (*ta'dib*).

“Critical engagement,” Waghid (2011) explains, refers to both teaching and seeking knowledge, processes that involves sharing meanings and deliberating on the basis that something new might originate. In this regard, spaces and opportunities for discussion and debate become a necessary feature of teaching and learning. According to Wan Daud (2009), “just action” centers on the social dimension of human behavior, namely, acting with moral conduct in all spheres of life and social and personal relationships. In turn, Waghid (2011) defines “socialization” as a process of socializing people into an inherited body of knowledge—producing people who can think and act in accordance with knowledge as it is both transmitted and constructed vis-à-vis legitimate sources of knowledge. “Critical engagement” is associated with thinking and reflecting upon knowledge and practices as well as doing things in community so that knowledge has bearing on the interests of society. All three of these epistemologies consider the individual and the acquisition of knowledge as being in relation to society. Education, therefore, has to serve a public good of advancing the interest of all. Muslim-based schools have the potential to either deepen the community's alienation or provide the bridge between Muslim identity and South African citizenship.

Notes

1. There are two types of Muslim schools in South Africa: those that combine secular and Islamic education, and madrasas, which teach supplementary classes in various Islamic subjects. Muslim students generally attend madrasa during the afternoons, after school hours, or during weekends. Those who attend Muslim schools generally do not attend a madrasa. This apartheid-era practice continues today.
2. Apartheid South Africa created four racial and hierarchical racial categories: White, Indian, Coloured, and Black. This institutionalized racialism manifested itself in segregated residential clustering and schooling, as well as in a fundamental undermining of human dignity.

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Book Reviews

Islamic Education in the United States and the Evolution of Muslim Nonprofit Institutions

SABITH KHAN AND SHARIQ SIDDIQUI, 2017

Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., 2017. 168 pages.

This work is a scholarly contribution to the study of Islamic education and philanthropic benevolence in giving, through an empirical evaluation of the United States' most diverse religious sector: Muslim American communities. It sheds light on this small yet young subset of Islamic education within this sector, namely, the richly diverse and dynamic activities of these communities' philanthropic landscape as well as the influential and at times controversial history of the nonprofit landscape in Muslim communities, specifically in relation to the subset of Islamic education and pedagogy. Through the notion of discursive traditions, this study sheds light on the importance of context, diversity, and reasoning in those Muslim traditions that affect Muslim philanthropic institutions in the U.S. Such a refreshing approach should be welcomed.

Khan and Siddiqui believe that an impartial and critical examination of Muslim philanthropy, one that employs empirical methods, will be instrumental in explaining and clearing up the confusions, misperceptions, and stereotypes about Muslim schools, Islamic education, and the resulting public support and funding.

In their study, the authors review three main problems that, in their opinion, have shaped the perception of Muslim communities in mainstream society: (1) a lack of an empirical methodology in the academic study of these communities; (2) the viewing of Islamic philanthropy through the lens of "national security," which either supports or counters global militant campaigns and groups; and (3) the accountability to which these communities are held for not only the mistakes of this sector, but also for the U.S. public's perception of Muslims in this country.

Their approach is to distance scholarship from incorrect assumptions about Muslim communities, by using an empirical methodology to address the scope of private philanthropy. Through an examination of the roles of public funding (namely voucher programs or grants), other forms of government support, and interviews with school board members and principals, the authors provide an in-depth review of how those schools shape and manage an Islamic identity in their communities. They were surprised by their findings.

Khan and Siddiqui shed light on the fact that Islamic education is growing and evolving into an independent entity with a force of its own that is

unique to the Muslim landscape. Generally, Islamic schools in America have been controversial for their growth, which has been affected by the public's perception of Islam, Muslims, and Muslim institutions. However, this study emphasizes the Brookings Institution's findings that the public's perception has become more positive, which is seen by the increase in size and number of mosques or Islamic centers (p.125). This positive result is also shown by Dr. Ihsan Bagby's survey of the growth of mosques in America regardless of public perception. Bagby's study indicates that with the Muslim community's growth, there is a parallel and associated rise of Islamic education, both formal and informal. However, Khan-Siddiqui's study primarily focuses on formal Islamic educational institutions—schools, daycare centers and mosques or Islamic centers.

This book is laid out in seven chapters. Chapter 1, a historical overview of Islam and Muslims in the United States, places the existence of diverse Muslims in the nonprofit sector, from the formation of the Federation of Islamic Associations of the United States and Canada (FIA) leading to the formation of the Islamic Society of North America (ISNA) and the Muslim Students Association, which were continuations of FIA's work. In addition, this chapter emphasizes that the founders of ISNA were historically Sunni African-American Muslims, activists, and cultural pluralists who harnessed the role of religious practice with the congregational, spiritual, and social life of Muslims balanced with the mainstream nonprofit tools used in American society.

Chapter 2 studies how Islamic philanthropy can be understood as a “discursive tradition” that continues to evolve under the influence of various factors in public society, U.S. philanthropy, international relations, ethics, race, internal diversity, community building, and “crisis.” This chapter posits that Muslim philanthropy emerges from “crisis” modes, addressing itself as a “discursive tradition” (p.12). Talal Asad defines this according to the Foucauldian approach, reinforced with the critical perspective of James Gee (p.18). Asad defines discursive tradition as “a tradition of Muslim discourses that address itself based on notions of past and future, in relation to a specific Islamic practice in the present” (pp.18, 19). This crisis mode provides a theoretical framework by giving a context to Islamic philanthropy seen through the lens of a crisis situation, when the Muslim community responds to both internal and external challenges; and where Muslim American groups seek to legitimize and shape their work, gain supplicants, and form their Muslim identity.

The Black American Muslims and mainstream Sunni Muslims are the two paradigmatic cases for analyzing the relevant discourses. This study seeks to understand the role of reason and tradition within these discourses in the context of a changing discursive tradition and show that American philanthropic discourses during crisis situations can shed light on how Muslim Americans exist and practice amidst the changing landscape of the discourse's context. The assumption

here is that there is a constant evolution of Islam's discourse and praxis, as opposed to an "essentialist" understanding of Islam or Muslim societies. Ultimately, this study shows how American Islam is evolving and the effect of discourses within and outside the community shaping that evolution.

Chapter 3 lays the foundation for the significance of nonprofit institutions and philanthropy in comprehending both the Muslim American identity and one's religious identity. This study, which analyzes the history of Muslims from colonial times to the present, asks why Islam in the United States failed to survive beyond the first generation and how nonprofit institutions help sustain the Muslim American identity and religious values. Thus, the focus is on philanthropic building as a method of "sustaining identity" through the study of Islamophobia, existing research on Muslim Americans, Muslim American nonprofits and philanthropy, and the growth of Islamic schools.

Chapter 4 argues that one's identity as a Muslim American has been an evolution that has attracted the limelight in a post-9/11 world. The authors show that identity is critical to understanding how philanthropy occurs in the United States as a process, based on Stuart Hall's notion. Hence, they contend that the Muslim identity is a work in process and present six forces that are shaping the development of a Muslim American identity.

Chapter 5 is a databased presentation of the results of a national survey of full-time Islamic schools and their governing practices during times of crisis, such as 9/11 or the recession of 2008. It examines the changing nature of philanthropy and the specific factors affecting the governance practice of Islamic schools, and then investigates how schools navigate identity and performance to search for legitimacy during such times.

Chapter 6 studies Islamic schools as "interlocutors" of tradition or "signposts" of Islam's future in this country. Using data from 20 interviews conducted with principals and board members of such schools in the United States, the authors focus on organizational identity and community support to understand their growth and uniqueness. Utilizing the Grounded Theory approach enables them to theorize how these schools can be introspective, how their role in relation to mainstream society can be understood, and what strategies these schools can espouse in order to endure.

Chapter 7 looks at the prospects for future growth and development by drawing upon the book's preceding chapters. It sheds light on the real issues, which are Muslim identity and the legitimacy of their institutions in America (p.14):

Muslim institutions ... are not purely "religious" institutions that are pursuing an ideological agenda, nor are they purely "nonprofits" that are serving people. They blend both the traditions of being "American" institutions in that they embrace both the legal and cultural elements of serving people as well as being rooted in the stories, narratives and myths of what it means to be a "Muslim" in today's America, where many Muslims feel their identity is under threat (pp.134, 135).

However, a future study is needed to further address the diversity of Muslim communities and their nonprofit institutions. Some suggestions for a future study are presented below:

- Focus on the Islamic discursive traditions existing within religiously diverse Muslim communities, i.e. Sunni, Shia, Ahmadiyya and others.
- Examine the influence of cultural diversity among religiously diverse communities.
- Address informal Islamic schools among different religious and cultural groups and how they shape Islamic education and identity.
- Analyze whether most Islamic schools are accredited. Do Islamically educated parents, in turn, send their children to Islamic schools?

Khan and Siddiqui provide a compelling approach and invaluable resource that sheds light on the intersection of philanthropy, religion, and the nonprofit sector in the United States. This study builds on, and yet is critical of, previous works and contributes to the scholarly discourse on both philanthropy and the Islamic philanthropic tradition. It is a scholarly gift to the philanthropic world of pedagogy and to those who are interested in understanding this community's historical, educational, religious, and philanthropic tradition.

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doi: 10.2979/jems.1.1.05



Policy Patrons: Philanthropy, Education Reform, and the Politics of Influence

MEGAN E. TOMPKINS-STANGE

Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, 2016. 216 pages.

How do private foundations redress social problems in the United States? Unlike various other democracies around the world where the state looks after its subjects, the United States offers room for private organizations to play an active role in redressing social problems that impact the larger public. The genesis of such private organizations dates back to the Catholic charities that funded parish schools during the late 19th and early 20th century. Initially, private foundations that eclipsed these charities were run by social scientists. However, since the early 1990s, a new cohort of private foundations have emerged—one established by billionaires who wish to implement managerial practices of corporate work settings in the operation of K-12 schools. Their increased influence on K-12 education

has raised mixed reactions. Some offer glowing profiles of the benefactors while others raise concerns over the future of U.S. democracy with a small number of elites having influence over federal policies that affect the everyday lives of a large number of adolescents, parents, and teachers.

In *Policy Patrons: Philanthropy, Education Reform, and the Politics of Influence*, Megan E. Tompkins-Stange nuances sensational narratives which cast U.S. democracy as under assault from elites who impose their ideas about how schools should operate onto the polity. She argues that the managerial practices of foundations, not necessarily the ideology of the patrons who establish them, determine how private funds impact public policy. Her method of analysis is comparative, with ethnographic data on two sets of newcomers and well-established foundations: Bill Gates and Eli Broad on one hand and Will Keith Kellogg and Henry and Edsel Ford on the other. Gates and Broad draw on the managerial skills taught at business schools, an approach known as venture philanthropy that gained popularity during the 1990s. They identify schools that are in need of improvement and fund those schools to implement a plan prepared beforehand. Kellogg and Ford exemplify a scientific approach to philanthropy, investing in research conducted by professors and graduate students as well as think tanks. Venture philanthropies seek to influence public policy on education through highlighting the money they generate from their pilot projects. Scientific philanthropies on the other hand assume that the ideal policy always addresses insights gained through slowly accumulating knowledge over a longer time period.

Tompkins-Stange examines the difference between venture philanthropy and scientific philanthropy by focusing on the ways in which the four private foundations manage grantees, select partners, frame problems and evaluate results. Gates and Broad conceive their grantees like a contractor. They formulate the desired outcome and manage the grantees tediously to ensure the grantees meet the expectations. Not all grantees complained about feeling micromanaged with one thanking Gates and Broad program officers for doing the home work and due diligence as opposed to giving the money without listing the specific tasks expected from the grantees. Informants who worked for the two foundations also defended their hesitancy against ceding control to grantees as a practice of professionalism that reduces the risk of being liable for lower quality initiatives. Kellogg and Ford on the other hand credit some of the best policies to local programs that the grantees devised without any intervention. A Kellogg staff member described such policies as arising organically with the private foundation facilitating a local community to build its political will and gain access to elected officials. Venture philanthropies build partnerships with elites in political circles; scientific philanthropies recruit local community organizations who have a better understanding of the grantees. Schools more so than any other institution serve as a battlefield for these two contesting models of philanthropy.

To reform K-12 schools, Ford and Kellogg prefer formulating policy targets while remaining true to their legacy of facilitating civic engagement. Juggling between these two goals works when tasked with addressing the concerns of

minorities in school systems while convincing well-established educational actors such as teacher unions that it serves them to build alliance with minorities as well when otherwise they would prefer to maintain the status quo. In one such scenario, Ford Foundation funded research and facilitated debate among members of the community yet also targeted a policy and partnered with teacher unions since they may use the collective bargaining agreement to effect a dramatic and sustainable change.

Nevertheless, Kellogg and Ford differ fundamentally from Gates and Broad on how they conceptualize problems afflicting K-12 education. Like engineers, Gates and Broad identify a single factor that they seek to resolve through a technical intervention. By funding that technique, they expect a return on their investment. Kellogg and Ford, however, frame K-12 education as a multifaceted issue. They prefer building social relationships and a stronger community over changing policies. The debate over the efficacy of charter schools encapsulates the contestation between venture and scientific philanthropies on how to improve adolescent education.

Charter schools set themselves apart from public schools by introducing managerial practices that have helped corporations succeed. For instance, they develop a common curriculum and require students to take standardized tests so that the quality of education could be quantified and the evaluations could yield data on the distinctive markers of charter schools. With quantifiable results available for all to see, the onus returns on the federal government to spend more out of the large share of its budget on supporting such schools. The federal budget for education equals to a large return on the investment made by the private foundation. Teachers are incentivized to fulfill their responsibilities in a school system modeled after a corporation. When students perform better on standardized tests, teachers receive bonuses on top of the salary. They however also risk feeling devalued as workers tasked with producing more passing grades on standardized tests as opposed to serving as stewards of a community that helps adolescents acquire the necessary intellectual and emotional growth to resist internalizing the racism that surrounds them. By transforming schools into corporations, private philanthropies risk perpetuating racial inequity in urban areas. Charter schools have been funded by private foundations to serve as an alternative to decaying urban public schools. Greater accountability of the learning process inside a school however does not challenge the racial segregation of urban areas that led to the weakening of public schools in the first place. Nevertheless, funded by the partnership between private foundations and city mayors, charter schools represent an alternative to public schools, something new at a time period when the federal government seeks to divest the task of tackling social problems, especially K-12 education, onto private agencies.

Charter schools encapsulate the ambivalence over the role of philanthropies in a democracy. Private foundations offer an alternative method for minorities to raise their voice than the electoral system and have played a key role ushering civil rights reforms during the sixties. That said, a form of education reform that

manifests itself in quantifiable data may not necessarily include learning activities that allow for the formation of a community, which raises the following contradiction: reforms to schooling systems that are located in impoverished neighborhoods are made possible by those who occupy the upper echelons of America's economy. Tompkins-Stange shares ample ethnographic data to suggest that these contradictions are not merely philosophical but rather shape the contours of U.S. democracy. However, her insights on the evolution of education reform during the 20th century raise the following question: How has the religious influence on education reform altered in the contemporary period which differs so markedly from late 19th and early 20th centuries, a time when Catholic migrants relied so heavily on charities funded by the church to look after the schooling of their children? Future studies could build on her work by examining how minority groups such as American Muslims navigate the contemporary educational landscape marked by the professionalization of social welfare. Such studies would give insight into how privately operated religious schools have not declined in the absence of charities and to the contrary increased in numbers, with women drawing on the managerial practices that transform K-12 schools into a corporation to exercise religious authority that they may otherwise lack within legally classified religious institutions.

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doi: 10.2979/jems.1.1.06



What Is a Madrasa?

EBRAHIM MOOSA

Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015. 304 pages.

Western intellectuals often ask, "What went wrong?" when trying to unravel or demystify the Muslim world. When asking this question, many of them also seek to take their own understandings of Islam, Muslim practices, and cultural milieu and contrast them with the post-Enlightenment West. They also adopt this approach when explaining the growth of democracy in the West and its ongoing deficit among Muslim-majority countries.

This is the starting point of Moosa's analysis of the madrasa. However, the locus of this detailed and personal study goes beyond this simplistic question. He points out that it is a monastery-like Muslim seminary that dots the educational landscape

of South Asia, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Thailand, and Iran. This is not an all-male institution, for “Young adult males study in the South Asian institutions but there is a growth in segregated madrassas dedicated to the education of females” (p. 2). Gender segregation is the norm in South Asia but not necessarily in Southeast Asia, where young men and women may be studying in the same classroom.

Moosa starts the book by describing his own experience of entering his alma mater, Darul Uloom, located in Deoband, northern India, where a clean-shaven man inquired if he was looking for terrorists. The fact that a right-wing government led by Hindu nationalists is in power in Uttar Pradesh—the state in which Darul Uloom is located—makes this question even more accusatory, given that these nationalists’ worldview paints Muslims as the eternal “other,” even if they have lived in India for centuries. The memories of Partition and the ongoing religious divide that exists in the minds of these people make such questions very dangerous.

The book is divided into four parts. Part I, “Lived Experience,” deals with the students’ daily practices and routines. The author’s detailed exposition includes a closer examination of such practices as *wuḍūʿ*, the ritual washing of one’s hands and feet that must be performed before saying the salah (prayers). Here, he points to the *niyyah* (intention) of every act as key: “Lurking behind the apparent simplicity of the ritual of washing before prayers is the profundity of Islam’s ethical and moral philosophy, which is centered on the concept of intention” (p. 36). Moosa goes on to explain that intentions are the crux that determine if an action is rewarded for its piety or not.

Some of this portion seems to have been written for a non-Muslim audience, as it details how the salah is performed and other basic matters. The routine of a madrasa with classes is similar to that of any school or college, Moosa informs us. The rhythms of the day as well as of the year follow the Islamic calendar for prayers, celebration of festivals, and other events.

Part II, “History and Contexts,” describes how the modern madrasa came to be and how it has evolved. This portion deals with the struggles that institutions such as Darul Uloom have gone through to incorporate “secular” social sciences into their religious-based curriculum. The author points out that such efforts have been, for the most part, “stillborn.” Subjecting Muslim religious thought to newer modes of query, such as critical thinking through the lens of theology, sociology, and philology, has not occurred. However, he seems to suggest, such an incorporation is absolutely necessary to help graduates find meaningful and fulfilling careers outside the confines of a mosque.

Part III, “Politics of Knowledge,” deals with the dynamics of learning and teaching, intertwined with the idea of faith and belief and with the tensions that manifest themselves when studying the hadith literature (the prophetic traditions). While some scholars in India and elsewhere seek to reinterpret these traditions to suit the modern world, others are uniquely traditionalist in a conservative sense, meaning that they seek to avoid modernist interpretations. He describes the processes of arriving at interpretations of hadith and fiqh (Islamic law) and why

those interpretations often differ among the various *madhāhib* (jurisprudential schools).

Part IV, “Madrasas in Global Context,” analyzes how these institutions have come to be seen by policy makers and those in the position to create discourses about them. Moosa points to the “vocabularies of difference,” (p. 209) as when Americans and Europeans use “madrasa” along with other terms such as “Islamic fundamentalism.” In terms of removing minarets or other aspects of Muslim culture from mainstream Europe, this anti-Muslim bias has gone mainstream. “All madrasas have suffered from this whiplash at the hands of media campaigns fomented by a diverse range of actors,” (p. 209) Moosa contends. He calls for greater nuance and a more impartial examination of these institutions, which have been vilified for decades.

Not many people know that the oldest Muslim institutions of learning were madrasas. During my own 2014 visit to the mosque and learning complex of Qarawiyin in Fes, Morocco, I witnessed this century-old institution in action. As the faithful prayed, dozens of young men recited the Qur’an melodiously and in unison. The placed reverberated with the ancient sounds of Qur’anic recitation while staying in touch with the modern. Scholars of education have pointed out that this is one of the oldest models of what we can consider a “university.” The role of madrasas in educating millions of young people and providing them with a direction in life is often ignored.

Moosa states that a “barrage of Islam hating media assaults systematically violated and dehumanized me, and millions of other fellow believers, in a reckless, prolonged campaign of guilt by association that has, amazingly, not run its course” (p. 7). This book represents a scholarly and sensitive response to that. As such, it is a must-read book for anyone who is curious about the madrasa as an institution. It offers a close and deep look at this important institution that has survived for centuries and continues to provide education. “Learning, teaching and moral training are and always have been at the core of Islamic Life,” Moosa claims (p. 9), and this book reveals how these activities take place.

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Have a Little Faith: Religion, Democracy, and the American Public School

BENJAMIN JUSTICE AND COLIN MACLEOD

Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2016. 180 pages.

Have a Little Faith examines the controversial relationship between religion and democracy in U.S. public schools by surveying two centuries of the country's public education from historical and philosophical perspectives. The book provides a rich content that covers topics from the Founding Fathers' ideas of democracy to the American Revolution and its effects on education, as well as religion's role in education today. Benjamin Justice is a professor of history and education at Rutgers University, and Colin Macleod is a professor of philosophy and law at the University of Victoria (Canada). Therefore, this book presents an interdisciplinary work that calls for a "substantive conception of democratic public education" (p. 21), by which the authors imply that the mission and curriculum of schools should support religious diversity.

In that regard, Justice and Macleod take a normative stance and argue that "public schooling can and should be a site for fostering mutual understanding between different faith perspectives, and for the creation of a public with shared values of reasonable compromise and reasoned discourse" (p. 2). In particular, they suggest that Americans need to reconsider the place of religion and democracy in public schools. Although they do not reject the separation of church and state, they do believe that since people learn to become involved citizens through public education, people also can learn differences in faith (including those who have no faith) through a public schooling that supports no sectarian perspective.

The book's focal point is the necessity of inclusive and tolerant public school settings in which all students can learn about different faiths together and with mutual respect. The authors do not claim that they present a straightforward solution for such a complex relationship of religion and education; however, they do defend a democratic educational path that includes non-sectarian religious faith and a public education system that is not a product of "undemocratic majoritarianism" (p. 42).

Their presentation of the history of U.S. public education provides a rich background for readers who have little prior knowledge of it. In their six-chapter book, Justice and Macleod examine public education during four historical periods: the early Republic, the mid-to-late 19th century, the 20th century through the 1950s, and from the 1960s until the present.

The first chapter examines religion and education from a democratic perspective with a philosophical methodology. They invite readers to observe religion's role from a "democratic conception of education in which legitimacy involving mutual justification is taken seriously" (p. 41). They further believe that this democratic consideration is developed with public reason. For example, they argue that the three facets of public reason are significant in the debate of religion in public

schools: regarding other citizens as “free and equal persons,” appreciating diversity, and a non-sectarian approach (pp. 28-29). This, the authors think, will enable citizens to focus on the shared interests that can form an inclusive democracy.

In the second chapter, they look at religion and education in the early-Republic era by examining the Founding Fathers’ thoughts about religion, which shaped the country’s political landscape, making it one in which the idea of separate public and private spheres in education became dominant. Although at that time religion was believed to belong to the private sphere, religious ideas were considered to provide public cohesion, especially at the local level, where certain government policies, such as providing land to churches, demonstrated clear expressions of religiosity.

The chapter presents the diverse ideas of leaders from John Adams and Benjamin Rush to James Madison and Thomas Jefferson on religion and education. However, it emphasizes that the Founding Fathers shared a common concern for an educated public and that they established the tenets of federal and state constitutions that ensured the protection of religious minorities. This was deemed necessary for a diverse civil society, although diversity in religion and politics only appeared during later periods.

The third chapter surveys the advance of common schools during the second half of the 19th century. It provides interesting cases from common schools, which can be seen as the forerunners of public schools and as instrumental in shaping religion’s role in education today. The authors stress that common school education included non-sectarian religious culture and acknowledged the authority of God. However, they state, this structure caused problems for minorities who followed a different belief system.

For example, in 1838, a Pennsylvania state law required that the Bible be used as a reader by public school teachers. Some Catholics protested this decision on the grounds that it required their children to read a “Protestant Bible in public” (p. 69). Justice and Macleod’s examination of the common school processes comprehensively indicates the “precarious” scope of religion in public education (p. 74). The authors recognize the problem of “the unwillingness of a powerful majority to acknowledge the reasonable objections of a religious minority to the imposition of a majority view of religion” (p. 70).

In this chapter, they also clearly show the evolving trends in 19th-century public schooling due to such factors as demographic changes after the arrival of Irish Catholic immigrants during the 1840s and 1850s, the effects of the Civil War, and the resulting new forms of religious and national identity expression. Although Christian practices remained visible to some extent, the religious tone was changing in public schools, and tendencies toward a more secular-oriented education were on the rise.

The fourth chapter covers the relationship between public education and religion in the 20th century through the 1950s. New developments in science, the rise of diversity and individual rights, and modernization engendered more disputes regarding this relationship. Justice and Macleod argue that since the meaning of

being “American” as well as the beliefs of Americans changed both over time and as the country continued its journey toward a more complex democracy, concepts of public schooling also changed.

The fifth chapter details the developments from the 1960s until today. Justice and Macleod point out the significant changes in mainstream society during this period, such as the Civil Rights revolution, the reactions to public education in favor of privatization and local schooling, and the Supreme Court’s increasing authority on educational disagreements. The authors examine and combine a good number of cases and link them to the specific period effectively, as they do throughout the book.

The sixth and final chapter analyzes three important sites of observation in today’s education: “student self-expression, inclusion and charters schools and vouchers” (p. 119). Supporting the significant role of public reason as a practice to reach legitimate decisions in public education, this chapter reflects on various methods through which this legitimacy can be achieved. The authors reframe recent areas of disagreements. For example, in the case defined as “incivility in the classroom” (p. 128), they argue that the idea of free expression cannot tolerate hateful messages denouncing a faith or its supporters in schools and maintain that “civil discourse and the psychological safety of all students must prevail” (p. 129).

The authors also refer to new communities that are on the rise, especially “non-Judeo-Christian Americans such as Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and others” (p. 102) in the last two chapters. The need for pluralistic public education is more evident today, and they support an education that provides students with the environment and skill sets they need to discuss their differences (faith or disbelief) with mutual respect.

Overall, Justice and Macleod present an impressive examination of the nearly 250-year-long history of religion in public education in 180 pages. They evaluate how religion’s role has evolved and been transformed during this period with many striking examples and by asking meaningful questions. By starting from a theory of democracy and moving into interesting points on the multifaceted and controversial topic of public education and religion, *Have a Little Faith* contributes to the literature by providing concise and salient ideas as well as opening up areas for future research on U.S. public education in relation to religious beliefs.

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Report

Symposium on Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society at Indiana University

The Muslim Philanthropy Initiative at the Lilly Family School of Philanthropy recently organized a symposium titled, “Muslim Philanthropy and Civil Society.” This event, which was held on Oct. 2-3, 2018, in Indianapolis, was convened in partnership with the Lake Institute on Faith and Giving, the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), and the Center on Muslim Philanthropy.

During the symposium’s dedicated education track, a number of scholars from the United States and other countries presented their research. Ilham Nasser (IIIT) and Cynthia Miller-Idriss (American University) shared IIIT’s Advancing Education in Muslim Societies (AEMS) initiative and its first wave of “Mapping the Terrain,” which surveys socio-emotional constructs in Muslim-majority societies. They explained that AEMS is an empirical study that continues IIIT’s larger mission and vision of education reform, which had previously focused more on higher education and publication of textbooks.

Mapping the Terrain investigates values such as empathy, forgiveness, community mindedness, and moral reasoning, as well as sense of belonging among youth (15-17 years old), teachers, parents, administrators, and university students (first and second year). Its theoretical framework is grounded in the Head-Heart-Hands (“3Hs”) model and the human development approach, which emphasizes the whole person and education as a transformative experience rather than just a utilitarian one.

Sara Konrath (Indiana University), Shariq Siddiqui (Indiana University), and Saulat Pervez (IIIT) argued that approaching education reform in Muslim societies through an empathic lens and rooting it in traditional ideas of Muslim philanthropy will make it indigenous, as opposed to foreign, and thus may yield better outcomes. Konrath spoke in detail about empathy and its importance in education as it relates to both students and teachers. Siddiqui focused on the intentionality aspect of philanthropy in Islam, which includes the pre-cognitive/ cognitive stage of decision-making. Pervez gave an overview of the intersectionality of Islamic education and Muslim philanthropy from historic to current times.

Arshad Ali (George Washington University) presented his ethnographic study, “Examining the Purposes and Premises of American Higher Education for Muslim Undergraduate Students.” He stated that his goal was to understand how students conceptualize the purposes and functions of their education. To this end, he interviewed 24 students over a nine-month period in higher education institutions in Southern California. In speaking with first- and second-generation

American Muslim students, Ali focused on how they are challenging and reshaping dominant notions of education to highlight their small acts of defiance and rupture; this aligns with James C. Scott's "infrapolitics of everyday life," Ali stated.

Nuraan Davids (Stellenbosch University, South Africa) described the rise of faith-based education among Muslims in democratic South Africa (see her full article in this issue). Even as desegregated schools were becoming the norm, the number of independent schools continued to increase. Davids traces the trajectory of Islamic education in the country in an attempt to understand both the motivation behind these schools' proliferation and how the prevalence of such schools promoting faith-based identities enhances the South African democratic project.

Khadija Abdul-Samad (University of Ghana) assessed the use of digital technology for fundraising among non-profit Muslim educational organizations in an increasingly competitive context of the developing world. She utilized a mixed-methods approach that involved in-depth interviews with members of three educational Muslim non-profit organizations in the capital city of Accra while conducting an online survey of Ghanaians. Her findings suggest that these organizations' leaders are not reaching tech-savvy donors due to their own lack of proficiency in digital technology. She recommended online fundraising as a way to overcome donor fatigue and stated that it has the potential to sustain many projects.

Rasheed Adeleke (Adeyemi College of Education) examined the impact of several welfare organizations' support of Muslim education in Nigeria in a class-based context. In the process, he strove to show another perspective of the widely held notion that the majority of Muslim Nigerians opt for Western education, which he considers an incomplete picture.

Jeffrey Guhin (UCLA) shared findings from the ethnographic research he conducted in two Sunni Muslim high schools in the New York City area. After explaining the distinctions between *salah* as formalized prayer and *du'ā'* (supplication) as something mutable, he related that his study had revealed the influences of a more individualistic and a less formalistic spirituality, also a feature of the larger American religious landscape, on young Muslims. He posited that this may be one reason why they are eschewing the practice of their elders, who see *du'ā'* as more scripted in terms of set Arabic sentences or phrases. The student interviewees preferred to supplicate in English about their needs, fears, and wants. His full article appears in this issue.

Supriya Bailly (George Mason University) shifted the lens of global education from students to teachers in her "Teachers Building 'Planetary Villages': Considering the Possibilities in Majority-Muslim Countries." During her investigation of how Muslim educators help their students navigate a globalized world, she drew from interviews, focus group discussions, and surveys conducted with teachers from 15 Muslim-majority countries who participated in a global teacher exchange program. Among her findings was their commitment to both a national and an

international understanding of culture, an underscoring of hegemony in what is sometimes considered “global,” and of fostering common ground with their students. Her full article will appear in the next issue of *JEMS*.

Ilham Nasser (IIIT) gave a second presentation in the education track’s final panel. Focusing on forgiveness in the Arab world, she explored teachers’ reasoning for this construct by surveying the forgiveness attitudes of 590 teachers in Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, and Jordan, along with conducting 89 interviews on pedagogy and methods to teach forgiveness in K-12 classrooms. She found that the interviewees’ willingness to forgive depended on such things as the intentionality or unintentionality of the act, religious beliefs, and the extent of the harm done. Teachers emphasized historical religious figures – such as prophets and the Prophet Muhammad’s Companions—as well as social and family figures like community elders, parents, friends, and siblings, as models of forgiveness.

All in all, this diverse symposium presented an opportunity for conversations beyond philanthropy by highlighting the importance and multifaceted nature of education as we strive for a more altruistic world.

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doi: 10.2979/jems.1.1.09



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