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50 Years of Comparative and International Education: Looking Back and Envisioning Forward

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Since our last issue in June, a lot has happened over the summer in our personal lives, careers, families, communities, and indeed in the world around us. Despite our lives being at times hectic and challenging we should always try to take the time to celebrate life's joyful moments and mark important events. One such event is the 50th anniversary of our very own society, the Comparative International Education Society of Canada (CIESC). To recognize this important milestone we are proud to present this Special Issue of *Comparative and International Education / Éducation comparée et internationale*. We hope the papers in the issue will bring back cherished memories for some of you, and inspire others to find ways they can make a difference through our scholarship, research and field work in comparative, international and development education.

We begin with the Presidential Address that was delivered by Kumari Beck at the CIESC conference in May 2017. In her address, Beck discusses international education by looking both at historical and contemporary examples in order to distill some lessons to inform the future of internationalization. She begins with a historical overview of the ancient Buddhist Monastery Nālanda Mahavihara in India, considered by some historians to be an early example of international education, and which was used as the model for the new Nālanda International University. Beck then introduces some narratives by faculty and international students drawing from her current study of internationalization at a Canadian university. She concludes that the Nālanda International University constitutes an example of discourses that are constructed to promote different agendas, whereby international education can be seen as an endless gift of knowledge or a gift that can potentially cause harm, like a Trojan horse.

Next, we have combined into one piece the individual contributions that were presented by some of the CIESC past presidents during a panel of the 2017 CIESC conference entitled "Looking Back, Visioning Forward: The Promise of Comparative and International Education". This piece clearly shows us the many contributions CIESC Presidents, as well as other members, have made to our society over the past 50 years. The panelists were invited to weigh in on lessons learned, trends, and possibilities for comparative and international education in Canada. Vandra Masemann begins with a historical overview of the early years of CIESC from 1967 until recent times. She then puts forth her thoughts about the future of the Society, her major concerns being communication and recording the passage of time, or lack thereof. Deo Poonwassie's brief contribution enables us to relive some important historical moments of CIESC. Poonwassie also emphasizes the need to continue some former practices such as ensuring that CIESC should be once more the official representative of the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) with the Canadian Commission for UNESCO. Peter Fan reflects on his involvement in CIESC and its US counterpart, the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) when there was growing concern about globalization. Looking at current times, Fan observes some consequences of globalization that were not predicted, such as growing gaps between the rich and the poor, and increasing ethnic nationalism. Suzanne Majhanovich talks about her active engagement with the CIESC, how comparative education has changed through the years, and finally about some of the challenges faced by the Society such as bringing in new members and

forging closer ties with our francophone colleagues in Quebec. Cecille DePass, in collaboration with Sonia Aujla-Bhullar, enlightens us with an inspirational dialogue intertwined with poetry to present her distinct perspective on CIESC, where the Society is seen as a garden that teaches us things that we are capable of doing, such as promoting concerns for all the children in the world and other vulnerable people. Allan Pitman draws our attention on two main ideas; first, that CIESC members reflect Canada's diversity, and second, that the breadth of interests within our Society reflects a vital aspects of research, namely about Indigenous youth in Canada. Nombuso Dlamini begins her contribution by sharing some memories of the late Helen Harper who introduced her to CIESC and was her 'academic guide'. Dlamini then reminisces about her tenure as CIESC president and her efforts to do some things differently such as inviting three of her graduate students to deliver her presidential keynote. Last but not least, Marianne Larsen closes the past-Presidents' reflections by sharing with us what are the sources of strength and inspiration in her life. Larsen then shifts the focus to the challenging world we live in and questions the role of comparative and international education in this global context of struggles, inequality, exclusion and violence. Larsen concludes that we must continue to do our work and research in the field of comparative and international education to enable change and bring hope for the future.

In our call for submissions for this Special Issue, we asked authors to consider a set of questions relating to 4 sub-themes: History and Historical Perspectives; Comparative Contributions; Equity and Inclusion; and Challenges and Opportunities. The three articles that follow are peer reviewed manuscripts by Drinkwater et al., Masemann and Plum that have each engaged thoughtfully and critically with the sub-themes and guiding questions for our special issue. The paper by Drinkwater, Bahry, Beauregard, Gligorova and Wong is an examination of the 50-year relationship between CIESC, the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto, and the Comparative International and Development Education Centre (CIDEC), within OISE, to identify their contribution to the field at institutional, national and international levels. Their article begins with a historical synopsis of the formative years of comparative education at the Ontario College of Education of the University of Toronto in 1954 with Andrew Skinner and other scholars, followed by the founding of OISE in 1965 and the creation of CIESC in 1967. Next Drinkwater et al. illustrate the valuable international networks and partnerships that were established between these organizations and other such as the CIES and the impact of globalization, internationalism and technology. The authors draw some lessons for the future of comparative and international education, in particular, the importance of institutional memory, advocacy, collaboration and partnership.

Masemann's article provides a first-hand account of her experience on the Steering Group of the Education for All (EFA) Conference between 1989 and 1990, leading up to Jomtien. She begins with a brief overview of the EFA initiative and its goal to provide a vision for effective learning for all and specifically to achieve consensus regarding providing primary education, adult education and literacy across countries. Next the paper provides summaries of several meetings of the Steering Group held in Canada, France, and the United States and concluded with the EFA conference in Thailand. The documents that were produced through this process were however still reflective of the original neo-liberal economic approach to improving basic education and there was little opportunity to challenging these underlying assumptions.

Both Drinkwater et al and Masemann's articles demonstrate the importance of having an historical perspective of our field and society, and how understanding our history can help to better inform the work that we do as comparative and international education scholars. Both address issues of equity and inclusion, and the implications of whose voices are heard in our society, higher education institutions and global organizations.

Finally, Pluim's paper presents key findings from a study concerning youth perspectives on citizenship and on their participation in citizenship education programs by Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) in Haiti. The research was conducted in Haiti between 2010 and 2013 and draws from observations of youth participating in three NGO programs. In the discussion, Pluim considers citizenship education from an equity perspective in the context of Haiti as a fragile state, where there are weak political, societal and economic structures. He also examines how participatory citizenship is difficult to implement in Haiti due to the power structure of French speakers versus Creole speakers. Finally Pluim highlights the tensions between the NGO's approach to citizenship education through economic democracy and the reality of the deep systemic and economic problems in Haiti. The article concludes that while these citizenship education programmes addressed some key issues, they undervalued the role of the context of the society where these youth are living. Pluim's work has implications for the future of comparative and international education research in illustrating the connections between the local and global, the primacy of equity and inclusion, and role of comparative methodologies in citizenship education research. Indeed, we would argue that all of the above pieces have implications for the future of our field and society.

Grazia Scoppio & Marianne Larsen
Guest Editors

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