Welcome to the winter edition of the quarterly newsletter of the Comparative, International and Development Education Centre. CIDEC brings together (around a series of projects and events) a dynamic group of students and faculty interested in comparative and international research. We hope to highlight our activities - and our accomplishments - and keep you up to date on future events.

Please e-mail us your news, events, honours or publications at cide@oise.utoronto.ca

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- Interviewed by Danielle Hyles-

How did you come to join the OISE/CIDEC family?

The main reason I was for joining CIDE was because of Professor Joe Farrell who was offering a course in international development. I enrolled in that course— and after that it's history. When I joined OISE in September 1990, he was one of the few professors who were offering courses in International Development. My research work had an international scope, hence, the attraction to the Center.

What are your research interests?

I have a very broad spectrum in term of research interests – however, they all translate to indigenous knowledge or more poignantly – the question of knowledge production and dissemination. What I concentrate on in particular is how rural women have contributed to knowledge production and ask questions such as “why is that knowledge absent from academia?” This is what drove me in the first place to carry out my research for my Ph.D work. I was trying to look at the various gaps that are there and to ask myself – how can I bring out the voices of these women who are so dear to me from the rural areas?

In your career navigation, what challenges and triumphs have you experienced?

Maybe I can start by narrating my triumphs and especially my mentorship story. For instance, I would like to mention Professor George Dei, who gave me lots of encouragement. When I told him I was interested in going back to Kenya to carry out research on indigenous knowledge and especially the role of rural women in this area, he said to “go for it.” While in Kenya, I did not hesitate to contact him in relation to any challenges or problems that I encountered. In terms of challenges, well, in the early 1990s, there was very little work being done in terms of rural women and indigenous food production, which was my entry point to women’s space of knowledge production and dissemination. I was able to find very few articles written in this area.

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Introducing Njoki Nathani Wane
Cont’d From Page 1

However, an examination of this area now, oh, there is quite a bit of writing – not so much in terms of rural African women, but indigenous knowledge in general. I would still stress that more scholars should go out there and find out what the rural women have to offer in different areas... However, I must emphasize that, anyone interested in looking at African women and indigenous knowledge—it might not be as challenging as it was for me when I started in on this process. I have published four articles in this area.

What guidance can you provide to assist students as they engage in international research?

I think they should start from where they are, asking themselves how do they see it within themselves and how does the work they want to do speak to them; not necessarily in terms of scholarship—but in terms of personal transformation—because when you do it in terms of that personal standpoint, what it means is that your work will not be just for a one time engagement only. I started this work in 1990, I am still working in this area, it's so exciting—it doesn't die, once you identify what connects you to the larger society, or what speaks to you—then you can run with it because out of that, you can contribute your scholarship to different communities in different ways.

In Kenya:

What was the nature of your research work in Kenya? What were your significant findings?

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When I completed my dissertation in 1996, I had made a commitment to myself that someday in future, I would explore the use of indigenous healing from an African perspective. The one year study leave or sabbatical gave me that opportunity to do my research. I interviewed 30 herbalists and then 30 lay people all living in Kenya. I was interested in knowing how lay people make use of herbal medicine – for instance, how they treat common colds, snake bites, diarrhoea, indigestion etc; while for the herbal doctors, I wanted to know how they treated such diseases as arthritis, HIV/AIDS, Diabetes, different forms of cancer etc. In addition, I wanted to find out from both group, what herbs could be taken to energize oneself, for cleansing or detoxification, so on and so forth. From the herbal doctors, I asked them to narrate or describe some of their healing methods: to explain some of the medicinal plants that they use – of course I knew they would not give me the specific methods of how it was done, that would have revealed their secrets and hence undermine their livelihood. However, I was quick to mention to these doctors, that my interest was for personal reasons and also for my academic career. I also emphasized to them the importance of documenting some of their practices, because if anything happened to them, that knowledge would go with them.

My findings were numerous, I will however, give you three: first, what was interesting was the complementary nature between indigenous healing and contemporary medical practices. The second was the fact that some

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“China’s Move to Mass Higher Education: Implications for Civil Society and Global Cultural Dialogue.”

In Spring 2006, Ruth Hayhoe received a three-year (2006-2009) SSHRC Standard Research Grant to study China’s rapid move to mass higher education over the last decade. The project will include research on national and local level policy processes, and a series of case studies of 9 public and 3 private universities. The project will also include a survey of three classes of students in each of the twelve case study institutions, to understand their perspectives on mass higher education, civil society and cultural identity, across public and private institutions, different disciplinary areas and different geographic locations. The project has three goals: to place China’s transition to mass higher education in comparative sociological perspective; to develop “portraits” of these 21st century Chinese universities, depicting their distinctive characteristics and their roots in classical Chinese scholarly traditions; and to better understand the implications of mass higher education for the growth of civil society and for China’s future cultural contributions to the global university community.

Ruth will be working with a large research team, including (as co-Investigators) former CIDE Ph.D student Professor Qiang Zha (York University) and Jing Lin (University of Maryland); as well as postdoctoral fellows Jun Li (Ph.D Maryland) and Cristina Pinna (from University of Cagliari, Italy) and OISE-UT graduate students Marina Ma, Ji’an Liu, Yuxin Tu. Two visiting professors from China are advisors to the project, Guangli Zhou (Huazhong University of Science and Technology), and Mingdong Huang (Wuhan University).

All of the project staff will be affiliated with CIDEC. Please join us in welcoming them to the comparative education community at OISE-UT!

Shiva Sadeghi  Ph.D.
Visiting Scholar

I have been awarded SSHRC postdoctoral fellowship (2006-2008), which I am currently holding at the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning at OISE/UT. My research project explores the first and second generation immigrant youth's perceptions of democratic values and citizenship within Canada’s political discourse of multiculturalism. The primary objective of my study is to add a new dimension to the scholarship on the development of cultural identity through integration of multiracial perspectives and citizenship discourse. In March 2006, I attended the 50th Conference of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) in Hawaii, and presented a paper entitled, “Envisioning Education for Social Change: Perils and Promises of Gender Equity in the Islamic Republic of Iran.” As a new addition to the centre, I look forward to making contributions to diverse scholarly activities at CIDEC.

Grace Khwaya Puja  Ph.D.
Visiting Scholar

I graduated from OISE/UOT in 2001. The title of my doctoral thesis was “Moving against the grain: the expectations and experiences of Tanzanian female undergraduates. After graduation I went back to teach Sociology of Education and History of Education at the University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. I am on a six-month Sabbatical and currently writing articles on barriers to women's participation in higher education in Tanzania and other countries. My writing is located within an anti-colonial African-centered feminist perspective. I plan research on gender-based violence and HIV/AIDS among women teachers in Tanzania.

Jazira Asanova  Ph.D.
Visiting Scholar

My current research is on the education sector policy of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), a regional multilateral bank in the Asia-Pacific region. The multilateral development banks are powerful forces in the international community, and the best known of these - the World Bank - has been studied extensively, while regional development banks are little understood, despite their importance.
as resource providers in their respective regions. The goal of the research is to examine the broad purpose and form of the Asian Development Bank; the scope of its work in the education sector; and its education sector policy approved in 2002, including aspects of the policy that relate to education and those dimensions that illustrate the Bank’s approach to development cooperation. This research offers insights on ADB’s dimensions of power, nature of effect on educational systems, processes, means, and scope of influence on national, subnational, and local levels of education in the bank’s borrowing countries. In order to get a better understanding of ADB’s policies in education, I intend to interview ADB staff at the bank’s headquarters in Manila, Philippines, probing into the internal dynamics and dilemmas, as experienced by the ADB staff in the area of education, in the context of the bank’s reform agenda adopted in 2004.

Alumni Notes

Faizal Karmali M.A.
CIDE Alumnus

It has been a rather intense and exciting three years since completing my MA at OISE/UT. I have carried my CIDE toolkit everywhere and have had to reach into it regularly. I am hoping that this little “Alumni note” will help motivate current students who may be bogged down by research papers, thesis reviews or just the woes that can come with life as a grad student. . . . there is light at the end of the tunnel and it is warm and invigorating.

Since graduating...

During and since my time at OISE/UT from ’00–’03, I had the opportunity to live and work in several diverse settings. The opportunities I have had the good fortune to explore have taken me from Toronto to Bangladesh and back, then onto to Afghanistan and Paris and most recently here, to Uganda. It is from Kampala, Uganda that I now write this brief update.

After graduating in early 2003 and working on Knowledge Management Strategy for an NGO in Canada for some months, I decided
to satiate my hunger for some more hands-on learning and joined FOCUS Humanitarian Assistance, an affiliate of the Aga Khan Development Network. The opportunity with FOCUS took me to Afghanistan where we worked as implementing partners for UNHCR’s repatriation efforts for Afghan refugees. FOCUS ran a comprehensive repatriation program that included food and supply distribution, vocational and other training programmes, the building of shelters and several basic infrastructure initiatives that contributed to rebuilding villages and towns which had suffered to unimaginable degrees over decades of conflict. Interactions with school children and teachers were always the most inspiring, though conversations with warlords were educational as well! The experience reminded me that so little of the story is ever told on the soundbites we call “news”. Afghanistan is a warm, caring and fascinating country that is well on its way to learning from its history.

From Afghanistan, I was invited to work at the Secretariat of his Highness the Aga Khan in France as a Research Analyst. There I worked as part of team that supports the engagement of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) with governments, international organisations and other elements of civil society worldwide. For me, the invitation to provide research and writing support at this level was a testament to the skills that were honed at OISE. I still recall the day I was handed the text “How to read a Book” and was unsure whether or not to be offend! Though I am still uncertain I could get through some of my CIDE reading today, I look back and realise that most if not all of my exhausting CIDE research papers sharpened my skills in one way or another. Much credit goes to CIDE and affiliated faculty for mentoring and taking the time provide meaningful feedback amidst their incredible research endeavours.

I have now been with the AKDN for 3 years and my appreciation and immense respect for AKDN endeavours has only grown. The AKDN is a group of development agencies working in economic, social and cultural development, primarily in Asia and Africa, and is now one of the largest private development organisations in the world. It is dedicated to improving living conditions and opportunities for the poor, without regard to their faith, origin or gender. The AKDN is active in over 30 countries and, in my personal opinion, is setting examples to learn from by pushing the boundaries of knowledge and thinking in development. OISE and the University of Toronto have engaged with agencies of the AKDN in various capacities over the years including through collaborative research projects with the Aga Khan University and the hosting of Seminar Series by the Aga Khan Foundation. I encourage students and faculty to continue building this relationship as both OISE/UT and the AKDN have much to learn from one another.

Most recently, I have been posted as the Liaison Officer in the Office of the Resident Representative for the AKDN in Uganda. Working closely with the Resident Representative, I am actively involved in much of the engagement with government, the donor community and other development and civil society partners in Uganda. The AKDN has been active in various forms in eastern Africa for over a century and the agencies of the Network continue to grow and evolve with the changing dynamic that is this fascinating place. After several experiences in Central and South Asia, it is invigorating to be immersed in an entirely new context, one that requires exploring new approaches to similar challenges while at the same time addressing new challenges with tried and tested approaches learned elsewhere – into the CIDE toolkit I reach again!

Since leaving OISE/UT, I have stayed abreast of CIDE through the ever-informative listserv. Many times, I have wished I could attend a Monday group or pop into the Munk Centre for some of the wonderful sessions that continue to take place there. Though I am not directly involved in the education sector in my current work, the perspective I gained from my peers and the CIDE faculty has been an invaluable and indispensable tool.

As I look forward, I am confident that my CIDE toolkit will continue to serve me well. But what is most wonderful to me as I reflect is that this small story of engaging with new countries and contexts is not so uncommon among CIDE
students, faculty and alumni. I am certain that all of you reading this alumni note have fascinating stories to tell and I hope to read them in upcoming issues of the newsletter. I continue to treasure my time at OISE and hold the CIDE program in high esteem. As a CIDE Alumnus, I welcome prospective and current OISE/UT students as well as faculty and alumni to stay in touch. I know that I will always have much to learn from you and am always willing to share. From sunny Uganda,

Louise Gormley, Ph.D.
CIDE Alumna

Reflections on my Ph.D. journey

I still remember the first day of my first class in the CIDE Ph.D. program. It was a blistery cold winter day in January of 2001, and I needed to commute by GoTrain from Mississauga into Toronto. While on the train, I started to write something in my notebook, but my pen ran out of ink. So at Union Station, I bought a new pen and headed to my OISE/UT course, Methodologies for Comparing Educational Systems, taught by Dr. Vandra Masemann – she was replacing Dr. David Wilson who was on sabbatical in Germany. In class, that newly purchased pen, to my surprise, also ran out of ink. So I borrowed a nifty Made-in-Japan combined pen/pencil from the student sitting beside me, Penny Kinnear. But as I was using it, first the pen side of this writing instrument ran out of ink and so I clicked over to its pencil side, but soon that ran out of lead. Later that evening, when I was home, and jotting down a telephone message, the pen that I grabbed off my desk ran out of ink! I started to wonder if the heavens were trying to tell me something about my decision to pursue a doctoral degree. If so, I still don’t know what the message was, but I certainly spent the next five years writing and writing and writing!

Doing the CIDE/CTL Ph.D. degree turned out to be the best educational decision of my life. I have never felt so ideologically comfortable and interpersonally welcome in an academic program. The faculty and the students in the CIDE field think differently from most people I know, and I mean that as a compliment. Intellectuals, almost by definition, question the status quo but CIDE scholars take this a step further. While always placing value on academic rigour and scholarly excellence, we CIDE folks somehow find a way to think even more “outside-the-box” – our international worlds are broader, wider, and never boring.

When I look back on my academic journey, I see an exciting period of self-development, during which time I met some incredibly interesting people. I took five more courses than was required, simply because I knew I was privileged to have the opportunity to learn at Canada's top educational research institution. In addition to my CIDE courses, I took a number of research methods courses because I wanted to have a solid familiarity with both qualitative and quantitative methodologies of conducting social science research. Throughout the five years, in addition to the insights I gathered in conversations with professors, my fellow CIDE and OISE classmates were a crucial source of academic and emotional support. Exchanging information, thoughts and experiences with them was (and continues to be) very fruitful.

I spent 2003 and 2004 collecting data in Mexico – an exciting and sometimes challenging sojourn of fieldwork. My thesis was entitled A Case Study of Issues of Success in Four Public Primary Schools in a Low-Income Region of Northern Mexico and it explored understandings of educational success amidst conditions of poverty. The majority of my correspondence
with my very supportive thesis advisor, Dr. Phil Nagy, was through email, since he had retired and was living in either Ottawa or Pakistan, and I was living in either Mississauga or Mexico. This arrangement worked out perfectly fine and is yet another attestation of the flexibility that the Internet has given the academic world.

When I first started the program, graduation seemed such a nebulous aspiration, and occasionally I despaired that I might not be successful. In addition, I had heard that the drop-out rate of doctoral students across Canadian universities is close to 80%. During the thesis-writing stage, there were some exciting days when I progressed forward at lightning speed, but there were also some “low” days when my writing felt mired in quicksand. Reflecting back, I cannot stress often enough how important it is to not give up, but to remember that, step-by-step, little-by-little, eventually, one can and will attain the goal of a finished thesis.

As my thesis defense date approached, I grew nervous but my thesis defense (and the subsequent celebration party at the Farrell residence) turned out to be a wonderfully rewarding experience. What an honour to have an in-depth discussion and analysis of my research with six professors who had closely read my thesis and who had thought deeply and critically on it – that is, Dr. Fernando Reimers of Harvard University (External Examiner), Dr. Phil Nagy (Thesis Supervisor), Dr. Joseph Farrell (Voting Thesis Committee), Dr. Daniel Schugurensky (Voting Thesis Committee), Dr. Sarfaroz Niyozov (Voting Thesis Committee), and Dr. John Myles (Exam Chair). The day of my thesis defense – in addition to the two days that my children, Joseph (aged 13) and Benjamin (aged 8), were born – will be forever etched in my memory as one of the most significant days of my life.

Completing a CIDE graduate degree is a huge personal and professional achievement and I applaud those of you who are embarking upon or trekking along that road. The critical thinking and research skills that you will acquire can be applied to many areas of life, and you will have the courage to jump into new fields and transfer these valuable learnings to whatever paths you choose to follow.
X-ray results or blood tests and use that to treat diseases such as arthritis or other non-curable diseases because they can’t cure arthritis. In addition, they always advise their patients to continue taking the medications from their family doctors while at the same time taking the medicinal herbs; then withdraw gradually from the contemporary medicine. Because they say—the body has to be regulated, we don’t want to shock your body, hence the need for gradual withdrawal. After some months, they ask these patients to go for tests to establish whether they were on the road to recovery or not. In most cases, according to these herbal doctors, they would show signs of improvement and recovery. So they don’t want to do it; behind the bush or something like that; they want it to be very clear that they’re actually contributing to the medical profession in Kenya.

It is important to note that, I interviewed some very prominent herbal doctors in Kenya who are currently teaching at two public universities in Kenya. One of these doctors does not have a Ph.D; however, his level of knowledge has not gone unnoticed. These herbal doctors are currently working on regulating how traditional or herbal medicine is actually given out in terms of dosage, or storage, that, finding ways to standardize how these medicines are dispensed — how it’s given out. So, it is work that I initiated and it is work I’d like to go and complete. I hope it won’t be another 10 years before I can carry out this research in a more comprehensive manner. My hope is to interview some contemporary doctors and some herbalists and ask them questions regarding how they treat certain diseases and the effects of that and how they see themselves complementing each other and then documenting that. During this research, I found different ways of keeping health, eating balanced diet and maintaining a high energy outlook. Yes, I came back energized and I learnt that there are different formulas for weight loss, different soaps and oils to use—their products are all medicinal from the plants. I would like to acknowledge OISE/UT small SSHRC grant for giving me the initial money to carry out the literature review for this project and the Catholic University of Eastern Africa where I was a visiting scholar during my sabbatical period, for giving me the grant to carry out field research. I am grateful to the Kenya government for the expedited ethical review approval.

What made this experience memorable for you?
I was looking at indigenous healing in Kenya—and this was a project that I suggested. It’s connecting with my roots. I think for once I became real in that of I did not hesitate. For instance, if I had stomach ache, I did not hesitate to go to a herbal doctor because this is what my mother used herbs to treat us while growing up in Kenya. There was a “disconnect” for me after I left Kenya; hence, going back and doing this work was like reconnecting with my roots. If nothing else—it’s the most transformative thing that has happened to me—going back to my roots and connecting and being proud of connecting with those roots.

In terms of giving back to the community – did you initiate any new efforts in Kenya?
Yes, I did. I started Embu Orphans Project or Acacia Children’s Project. The project has about 40 children who are being given various forms of support such as school fees, food, clothing, shoes etc. This was a way of giving back – like I had been out of the country close to 20 years and many women would ask me, what have you given to the community that supported you while you were going to school? So, it was more of a challenge from the women who believed in giving back than my own initiative - hence the reason why myself and some friends of mine from Canada (Ed Sullivan, Eimear O’Neil, David, Inez, Amadou, Yvette, Tony, Errol, Houston, Barbara and Rose) started the project – it is really good because it gives me something to think about other than the academics. Currently, I am in the process of collecting donations to meet the needs of these children in the new year – so if you know of anyone willing to support me in this project, I would really appreciate. I see this project as part of international work that CIDE does.
Workshop and Seminar Series — Winter Term 2007

Room 7-105, CIDE “Smart Room”
All sessions are 11:30-1:00 pm unless otherwise noted

Monday January 15th
Asif Niazi (United Nations Food Program)

Monday January 29th
Vandra Masemann (Faculty CTL)
“Preparing for conference presentations: CIES or CIESC: Everything you always wanted to know about attending and presenting at conferences” All students are welcome.

Monday February 12th
Suzanne Cherry (MA Candidate CTL)
“Civil Society participation and education policy processes: a study in Mali, West Africa”

Monday March 5th
Meggan Madden (MA Candidate TPS)

Danielle Hyles (Ed.D. Candidate SESE)
“Social Difference and Education Promotion in Canada and Ghana”

Monday March 19th
Safaroz Noyozov (Faculty CTL)
“Meeting educational aspirations of Muslim students in Canada: An OISE new initiative”

Monday April 2nd
Natalie Poulson (MA Candidate CTL)
“Contextualizing minority language education within the development process in Bangladesh: Opportunities and challenges”

Joanne Johnston (MA Candidate CTL)
“Poverty, language and experience”

Monday April 16th
Valentyna Kushnarenko (PhD Candidate TPS) “International Collaboration for Higher Education: A Paradigm for Understanding the Canadian-Ukraine Joint University Partnerships”