



# Introduction: Difference: Its Expansion and Consequences

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**Abstract** It is fitting that this volume, *Learning from Difference*, is characterized itself by great internal diversity. The nine national case studies that comprise the bulk of the content are as diverse as could be imagined, drawn from all parts of the world: Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas and Australasia. Altogether, these studies discuss diverse and complex national histories of the construction of differences and multicultural education in national educational systems. These histories reflect longstanding and contemporary immigration as well as responses to the demands and needs of Indigenous populations and take place in post-colonial and non-colonial settings. Configurations of identity fusing race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, and class are highlighted to pinpoint the myriad ways often elaborate and combative identities negotiate social space and institutional life in the container of the increasingly porous nation state.

**Keywords** Multicultural education • Globalism • Immigration • Diversity • Systemic change

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