

EDUCATION INTEGRATION CHALLENGES



THE CASE OF
AUSTRALIAN MUSLIMS

EDITED BY DR A. W. ATA

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This book provides a valuable opportunity to analyse the issues challenging both Australian Muslims and the wider community. Not only does it explore what it means to be a Muslim in contemporary Australia, but it also presents the thoughts, practices and discourses of social change in Australia.

**Hass Dellal, Director
Australian Multicultural Commission**

Australia displays an outstanding record, says Dr Ata, in displaying tolerance and in accommodating an incredibly diverse population. While the cultural and historical differences between Christian and Muslim communities in

our society are too great to make a complete reconciliation easily achieved, given the alternatives, a creative dialogue must continue.

Especially since the events of September 2011, many Australians have become concerned about what goes on behind the walls of the Muslim community. These concerns, often driven by fear and lack of knowledge, can be addressed through education.

The essays collected in this book look behind those walls and explore the issues challenging both Muslim Australians and the mainstream society today.

The broad and diverse perspectives covered in this project are important and topical, and have not been gathered before in published form. They are written by contributors who are members of Muslim community and outsiders, lay and religious, academic and non-professional; Australian and beyond. This in many ways widens the frame of reference, effectiveness of argumentation and style of criticism.

The analysis and understanding of what it means to be a Muslim in a growing multicultural, multi-religious, technological contemporary Australia present a difficult and sensitive task. This collection provides a stepping stone on that journey.

The Author

DR ABE W. ATA graduated in psychology at the American University and was nominated as a delegate to the United Nations' World Youth Assembly in New York. He completed his doctorate at Melbourne University in 1980 and has since taught in several Australian, American, Jordanian, West Bank and Danish universities. He was an Honorary Fellow at the Australian Catholic University (2000-2010) and is currently an Honorary Fellow at Deakin University. His cross-cultural training background, multidisciplinary approach and sensitivity in conducting and interpreting a wide range of research projects are demonstrated in his publication of 15 books. These include *Bereavement and Health in Australia* (1996); *Christian and Muslim Inter-marriage in Australia* (2005), *Us and Them: Christian-Muslim Relations and Social Harmony in Australia* (2009) and *Catholics and Catholicism in Australia: Challenges and Achievements* (2012). He has also written 102 journal articles of which 17 are published in the *Encyclopedia of Australian People* (2000), *Encyclopedia of Melbourne* (2005), and *Encyclopedia of Religions* (2009).

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