

FROM CLASSROOM TO SOCIETY
Social Studies, Primary Education, And Educational Sciences

Editor

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cihan KARA

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FOREWORD

Education has always served as one of the principal mechanisms through which societies make sense of themselves—reproducing inherited values while simultaneously opening space for their contestation and renewal. This dual character of education, at once conservative and transformative, lies at the heart of the present volume. *From Classroom to Society: Social Studies, Primary Education, and Educational Sciences*, an edited collection bringing together voices from Social Studies Education, Primary Education, and the broader field of Educational Sciences, emerges from the conviction that classrooms cannot be understood in isolation from the societies that produce them, nor can societies be understood without attending to the classrooms in which their future citizens are formed.

The chapters gathered here resist the temptation of a single normative model. Instead, they offer a constellation of theoretical, empirical, and pedagogical perspectives that speak to one another across disciplinary lines, even as each retains its own distinct voice and method. The volume opens with my own chapter, *From Classroom to Society: Reframing Social Studies Education*, which interrogates the ideology of neutrality that has long shaped social studies instruction, arguing that classroom practice is inescapably political and that the field's deepest purpose lies in cultivating citizens capable of critical, ethical engagement with the social world.

This opening provocation is taken up and extended throughout the volume in different registers. Among the most striking contributions is the chapter on the ethical and moral dimensions of primary education, in which Professor Kerem Coşkun—who introduced the concept of moral identity to the Turkish academic context and whose work on measuring the moral development of children aged seven to eleven we have had the privilege of undertaking together—traces the intellectual genealogy of social cognition, individualization, and socialization from Darwin through Dawkins, and from Steven Pinker to Max Bennett. In doing so, the chapter performs something akin to a conceptual archaeology, excavating the evolutionary and cognitive-scientific foundations beneath ideas that educators often take for granted, and offering a genuinely inspiring account of how moral reasoning takes shape in the developing child. A related chapter on children's social understanding and development turns to theory of theory, simulation theory, and modular

accounts of what was once called "theory of mind" to examine how children come to perceive others accurately—and to be accurately perceived in turn—tracing the influence of parent-child and peer relationships, technology, culture, heredity, and school climate on this capacity from early childhood onward. Other chapters situate language and culture at the center of socialization, as in the chapter examining Karacaoğlu's poetry as a site where individual voice and collective value intersect, or in the chapters that explore how school culture and institutional context shape the lived experience of education from within.

A second cluster of chapters addresses the urgent intersection of education and sustainability. The chapter on the Forest School approach makes the case that nature-based pedagogy is not a peripheral enrichment activity but a holistic educational philosophy in its own right—one that extends learning beyond classroom walls, repositions children as active participants rather than passive recipients of knowledge, and cultivates self-confidence, creativity, problem-solving, and a durable sense of belonging to the natural world through child-centered, experiential, and play-based practice. Read alongside contributions on the role of social studies in climate change education and on social studies education for sustainable development, this chapter reinforces a broader argument running through the volume: that environmental literacy and ecological belonging are not peripheral to civic formation but constitutive of it, and that learning to live responsibly with others cannot be separated from learning to live responsibly with the planet.

The volume also takes seriously the structural and professional conditions under which education unfolds. Chapters on curriculum design in social studies, on active citizenship education in primary schools, on citizenship education in theory and practice, and on inclusion, diversity, and social justice examine how civic learning, equity, and belonging are built into the architecture of schooling itself. Complementing these, the chapter on heutagogy in teacher education reframes heutagogy not as an abrupt model shift displacing pedagogy or andragogy, but as a gradual learning design for cultivating professional agency, capability, and reflective decision-making—one that expands prospective teachers' responsibility along the pedagogy-andragogy-heutagogy continuum, reorients teacher preparation toward capability rather than mere competency, and centers double-loop learning and reflective practice through a proposed four-stage model moving from

preparation to guided self-determination, reflective practice, and, finally, the transition to professional agency. Read alongside the chapter on teacher identity and professional judgment, this contribution turns the analytical lens toward educators themselves—reminding us that the capacity of schools to cultivate engaged citizens depends, in no small part, on the autonomy, recognition, and professional agency extended to those who teach. The volume closes with a chapter that situates the deprofessionalization of teaching within the context of neoliberal educational reform, managerial control, and performance-based accountability. Drawing on Andy Hargreaves, Eliot Freidson, and Stephen J. Ball, this final contribution traces how centralized curricula, standardized testing, administrative surveillance, and competitive performance mechanisms have eroded teachers' professional autonomy and collegiality, charting the historical shift—through Hargreaves' "four ages of professionalism"—toward a post-professional era marked by burnout, the loss of professional identity, weakened solidarity, and the commodification of education, while also pointing toward counter-movements that might reconstruct teaching as a collective, democratic, and socially transformative practice. It is a fitting close to the volume: a sobering reminder that the transformative potential of education discussed throughout this collection cannot be realized without first safeguarding the professional autonomy and collegiality that make such transformation possible.

Read together, these chapters resist any reduction of education to mere instruction. They invite us instead to see education as a formative social process—one that begins in the classroom but does not end there, extending outward into the civic, ethical, and ecological fabric of collective life. It is our hope that this volume will be of value not only to researchers and students of Social Studies, Primary Education, and Educational Sciences, but to all those who recognize, as the contributors to this volume do, that what happens in classrooms shapes, in ways both subtle and profound, what becomes possible in society.

This volume would not have been possible without the dedication and scholarly contributions of all the colleagues who entrusted their work to this collection. We are deeply grateful to each of them for the rigor, originality, and care they brought to their respective chapters, and for their patience throughout the editorial process. We also wish to extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Ferit Resuloğulları and, through him, to all the dedicated staff of Vizetek

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Editor

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