



## The Palgrave handbook of history and social studies education

**Christopher W. Berg and Theodore M. Christou**

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**Book Reviewer: Emine Demirci<sup>1</sup>**

### Review

The book titled "The Palgrave Handbook of History and Social Studies Education," edited by Christopher W. Berg and Theodore M. Christou, consists of 6 parts and 24 chapters. It includes chapters on the studies of the authors, from various countries of the World, in the field of history and social studies education. Particularly, the chapters on history education include the history education curricula, methods, and approaches of the countries such as the United States, South Africa, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Zimbabwe, Malta, Sweden, Australia, Switzerland, Canada, Flemish Region of Belgium, Ireland, Scotland, Southern Cyprus, Finland, New Zealand, and Germany. Furthermore, the book discusses the differences between theory and practice in history education from past to present. Readers can have the opportunity to learn the history and social studies education from different perspectives since the authors of the chapters are academicians and teachers working in different countries.

The first part consists of a chapter with the heading "Introduction." This chapter titled "History Education in Theory, Practice and the Space in Between" written by Theodore M. Christou and Christopher W. Berg, addresses the issues of history education in theory and practice, the scope and content of the book, the features, and structure of the book, best practices in history education, changing orientations in history

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education, the place, and importance of history in the education curriculum and the reasons for the book to have an international understanding of history.

The second part with the title "History Teaching and Learning in International Perspective," consists of six chapters. In this section, history teaching and learning are discussed from international perspectives. For example, the second chapter titled "Social Studies Teachers' Perspectives on the Differences Between Disciplinary History and School History" written by Kaya Yilmaz evaluated the perspectives of social studies teachers serving in different public schools in the United States about the differences between disciplinary history and school history.

Rob Siebörger, in the third chapter titled "But They Can't Do That!" Practical Approaches to Engage South African Primary School Pupils in Historical Learning' addresses the issues of practical approaches that enable primary school students to participate in historical learning, family history, features of history textbooks in the 1980s and 1990s in South Africa, games and simulations in history courses, illustrated stories in history courses, the benefits of approaches used in history teaching, and the role of the teacher in designing history education activities.

The fourth chapter, titled "Re-imagining History Teaching by Challenging National Narratives," was written by Cécile Sabatier Bullock and Shawn Michael Bullock. The authors include examples of national narratives in history teaching, the purpose of history teaching, institutional expectations, and pedagogical concerns. Carla van Boxtel, Jannet van Drie, and Gerhard Stoel prepared the fifth chapter, titled "Improving Teachers' Proficiency in Teaching Historical Thinking." In this chapter, the authors provide information on how teachers can improve their proficiency in teaching historical thinking to students, Dutch approaches to historical thinking, the Dutch history curriculum, teachers' efforts to enhance historical thinking in the Netherlands, and basic approaches that can be used to support theoretical knowledge in history teaching with applications. In the sixth chapter, the study titled "The Development and Progress of the 'Source Method' as a History Teaching Method: Practical Classroom Examples from Malta" written by Yosanne Vella presents practical examples of the source method, which is a history teaching method, the beginning of the source method, and teaching history with sources in Maltese history classes. In the seventh chapter of the book titled "Form or Substance? Weighing Critical Skills Against Identity Narratives in History Education," the author Sirkka Ahonen touches on critical skills in history education, educators' defence to increase the role of history in the school curriculum, historical approaches, and deficits, identity narratives in history, the promises and risks of teaching historical consciousness.

The third part of the book, titled "Teacher Education," consists of five chapters. The author of the eighth chapter titled "Between Historical Consciousness and Historical Thinking: Swedish History Teacher Education in the 2000s" is Karl Gunnar Hammarlund. Hammarlund discusses history teacher education in Sweden in the 2000s, new demands in history departments, Swedish discourse on history didactics, and history didactics in higher education syllabi. The ninth chapter written by Christian Mathis and Robert Parkes is titled "Historical Thinking, Epistemic Cognition, and History Teacher Education." In this section, Mathis and Parkes touch on historical thinking, epistemic cognition, history teacher education, and the implications of competency-based school curricula on history teacher education, the need for epistemic cognition and historical consciousness, and the development of epistemic thinking in history teacher education. Chapter ten, titled "More than a Methods Course: Teaching Preservice Teachers to Think Historically," was written by Lindsay Gibson and Carla L. Peck. In this chapter, Peck gives information about teaching preservice teachers to think historically, the theoretical framework of historical thinking, a literature review on history teacher education, and preservice teachers' beliefs about history and history teaching. The eleventh chapter of the book consists of the research titled "The History Education Network: An Experiment in Knowledge Mobilization" by Penney Clark and Ruth Sandwell. In this chapter, Clark and Sandwell introduced the History Education Network project created in Canada.

In this context, they also explained the issues of the individuals involved in the project, the purpose of the project, how the project emerged and developed, the infrastructure of the project, how it was governed, the executive board and its members, the duties of the graduate students involved in the project, the project's website, history education in Ottawa, the communication networks of the project, how the research was conducted, the information about how the project was disseminated, the book series of the project, symposia, panels, conferences and how the research translated into practice. In the final chapter of the second part, Nathan Moyo wrote titled "What History Should Schools teach in a Postcolonial Context? Reimagining Secondary School History Curriculum for Democratic Practice in Zimbabwe". In the twelfth chapter, Moyo examined the topics such as secondary school history curriculum design in Zimbabwe, the characteristics of Zimbabwe Postcolonial State, history curriculum and theoretical knowledge about the Postcolonial Nation-State, the development of history curriculum in Zimbabwe from 1968 to the present, a search for a new curriculum for history courses, approaches of history teaching, and inclusive and democratic history teaching.

The fourth part of the book, titled "National Curriculum, Reforms and Reassessments", has six chapters: the national curriculum, reforms, and reassessments. The thirteenth chapter with the title "Québec's History of Quebec and Canada Ministerial Examination: A Tool to Promote Historical Thinking or a Hurdle to Hinder Its Inclusion?" was prepared by Catherine Duquette. In the chapter, Duquette provides information on the history of Quebec, the history curricula of Quebec and Canadian, the evaluation of historical learning, historical thinking in Quebec, the HQC curriculum, and how to assess historical thinking. In the fourteenth chapter, Karel Van Nieuwenhuys wrote the research titled "From Knowing the National Past to Doing History: History (Teacher) Education in Flanders Since 1918." The author mentioned the topics such as the history teacher education in the Flemish Region since 1918, secondary school history education in the Flemish Region between 1918 and 2018, the patriotism and civic disciplinary aims, and historical thinking in secondary school history education and academic history teacher education. The author of the fifteenth chapter of the book is David Limond. In his research entitled "Do chum glóire Dé agus onóra na hÉireann: Revising History in Ireland," he wrote about Irish history and educational reforms between 1830 and 2000. In the sixteenth chapter, which Joseph Smith did write titled "The Scottish Context: Making History in an 'Understated Nation,'" the author focused on the changes in history education before 1993, between 1993 and 2008, and from 2008 to the present. Stavroula Philippou wrote the seventeenth chapter of the book entitled "Tracing Disciplinarity in the History Classroom: The Cases of Two Elementary School Teachers Amid Curriculum Change in the Republic of Cyprus". In this chapter, Philippou discusses history education and curriculum changes in Southern Cyprus comparatively within the context of the story of two teachers from different disciplines. Jukka Rantala and Najat Ouakrim-Soivio prepared the last chapter of the fourth part. In the eighteenth chapter's research titled "Why Does Changing the Orientation of History Teaching Take So Long? A Case Study from Finland," the authors examined the situations that block innovations in history teaching in Finland, the development of the new curriculum in the discipline of history, the perspectives on the change of teacher attitudes in history teaching and the future of history education in Finland.

The fifth part of the book titled "Difficult History, Future Directions and Possibilities in History Education" includes five chapters under the sub-titles of the difficulties of history education, the future of history education, and its possibilities. Mark Sheehan wrote chapter nineteen, with his article titled "Historical Thinking, 'Difficult Histories,' and Māori Perspectives of the Past," which examines historical thinking, history education in New Zealand, history curriculum, historical thinking, the purpose and content of history. The twentieth chapter of the book consists of the article titled "Reasonable Interpretations or Emotional Identification? Using Video Testimony in History Lessons" written by Katalin Eszter Morgan. In this chapter, Morgan examined the traditions of cognition and emotion in history lessons within the scope of German history education, the history curriculum in German schools, the background of education in Germany, the school environment, and the effects of history lessons taught with video-interviews in Germany on students, and then shared the results with the readers. The chapter twenty-first is entitled "To What Purpose? The Ends and Means of History Education in the Modern World," by Jason

Endacott, Matt Dingler, and Joe O'Brien. In this section, the authors examined the topics of purposes and means of history education in the modern world, basic trends in history teaching, and reasons for learning history, history as collective memory, disciplinary history, socio-cultural history, and postmodern/critical history, progress in citizenship and history education, citizenship, history of informed citizenship, historical thinking, and the future of history education. Dave Powell with his article titled prepared the twenty-second chapter of the book "The History You Don't Know, and the History You Do: The Promise of Signature Pedagogies in History Education." In this chapter, Powell touches on the gap between content and pedagogy in raising history teachers, the place of signature pedagogy in teacher education, traditional teacher education, what signature pedagogy is, and signature pedagogies in history education. The last part of the fifth part of the book is the article called "Dynamic Literacies and Democracy: A Framework for Historical Literacy" by Melanie Innes. The author, in the twenty-third chapter, examines the issues of historical literacy, history curriculum in Australia, national histories in the 21st century, citizenship in the 21st century, historical consciousness and citizenship, sociocultural approaches to history, and literacy in the democratic age.

The sixth part of the book consists of the conclusion part. As in the first part, the book's editors, Christopher W. Berg and Theodore M. Christou wrote this one. In the conclusion part titled "Conclusion: History Education, Nexus," the authors examined John Dewey's historical perspective, the basic needs for a commitment to an analytically conceived, thoughtful, research-based history education according to Peter Stearns, Peter Seixas, and Sam Wineburg, the purposes of the book's chapters, and what topics are covered in it.

## **Conclusion**

The book that I have reviewed is mainly about history education, although it includes the topics of history and social studies education. The main or sub-titles of most parts and chapters include the topics of historical thinking, and historical thinking skills and teaching, which are important parts of history education. Researchers in different countries wrote chapters. They discussed various topics such as history curricula, history teaching, approaches to history teaching, historical thinking, new methods in history courses, and history teacher education. The articles in the chapters mostly examined history education at the levels of primary school to teacher education and the views about what should be taught in history and how it should be taught. This situation is very useful for the readers to familiarize many sides of the curriculum, methods, and practices of different countries in history education, to make connections for historical understanding and knowledge transfer, and to build an understanding of historical thinking. Furthermore, since the chapters of the book give both theoretical and practical information, it can be inspiring for classroom implementations. In addition, the book combines the innovations in history teaching and can be considered as a handbook that should be read and benefited by both teachers (history and social studies) and field experts.

## **Statement of Researchers**

**Researchers contribution rate statement:** None

**Conflict statement:** None

**Support and thanks:** None

## **Author biographies**

**First Author,**

**Emine Demirci**, currently works at Department of Social Studies Education, Aksaray University. She has several paper and presentations regarding social studies and history education.