The Role of Pedagogy in Shaping the Socio-Political Reality of Society

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Edited by

Leon Miller

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Section Three: Pedagogy and Social Development (with an emphasis on the Role of Indigenous Knowledge in Social Development)

PREFACE

The oppressed gain freedom, justice, and greater self-determination by relying on developing their capabilities and cultivating their humanity. Pedagogy is involved because gaining the desired outcome (i.e., the liberation of individuals and society) requires the cultivation of the humanity of both the oppressed and the oppressor (Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed 2005).

A major concern of social, ethical, political, and philosophical inquiry since the beginning of civilization has been structuring social systems that promote human and social development and improve the quality of social life. Social theorists and political philosophers have come to agree that integrating strategies for promoting human development with strategies prescribed by political philosophy for social development is essential for accomplishing the goal that social action aims to achieve. The goal of organized social activity, in short, is described by classical political philosophy as "the good life". But in more detail, a description of "the good life" includes social order, cohesion, solidarity, justice, social harmony, prosperity, and sustainable peace. Consequently, social theorists and political philosophers from the major centers of civilization assert that accomplishing the goal that social action aims to achieve requires the cultivation of individual members of society. This means that there is an inextricable link between the philosophy of education and political philosophy. In this respect, education is viewed as playing a role in shaping the socio-political reality of society because it is an institution established to improve the quality of life for both individuals and society. Therefore, the classical social theorists and political philosophers of the major centers of civilization did not subordinate education to politics. However, the significance of the connection between the two is often under-analyzed, at best, or completely overlooked, at worst. Yet, when you think about it, improving the quality of social life begins with improving the quality of the characters of the members of society; thus, cultivating qualities of good citizenship is an essential aspect of educational training. Which makes educational philosophy the foundation of the study of the social, economic, religious, and political disciplines that shape social life.

Social theorists and political philosophers assert that the cultivation of the individual is the basis of social development because it establishes the conditions for a well-integrated and well-functioning society. The philosophical significance of the relationship between education and public life is due to the fact that, on the one hand, individuals are trained by society's educational systems to make a valued contribution to society. However, on the other hand, establishing the best possible social system is fundamentally conditioned by the education of the individuals who participate in creating social reality. Education in a broader and more holistic sense is the process of enhancing the quality of individual participation in society, which results in increasing the quality of social life. Linking the philosophy of education with political philosophy takes learning out of the confines of the institution and makes it a part of the process of creating desired social ends (i.e., it contributes to establishing a learning society, to a humanistic approach to social marketing, and to strategies for linking good governance with human, social, and sustainable development). In addition, linking educational and political philosophy creates a holistic value-based approach to human development, increases individual and social well-being, and contributes to achieving sustainable peace. Therefore, this book explains the connection between pedagogy and endeavors at human, social, and sustainable development.

This book explains how the principles and values prescribed by social theorists, political philosophers, and ethicists can be expressed as factors for establishing the shared values and common goals of social stakeholders. The shared conviction is to improve the quality of life of each member of society as a means of increasing social capital and public value. This includes explaining why pedagogy is essential for maximizing the benefits the members of society enjoy in their relationships with each other and with the environment. Indeed, this involves educating the overall public, civil leaders, and public authorities in the factors that improve public-private relationships, improve the goods and services offered to the public, increase the effectiveness and efficiency of governance, increase social entrepreneurial activity, and increase the resources available to society.

This approach to social formation bridges the gap between public authorities and the general public by training both in processes and activities that establish value-creating networks that increase social goods. It is a state-of-the-art approach to social formation that endeavors to remedy the social problems resulting from pedagogy merely being treated

as instrumental to political and economic purposes, i.e., as a means of training individuals how to find their place in a social reality increasingly dominated by powerful social and economic agents trying to maximize utility, which actually does not contribute to human, social, and sustainable development but, conversely, has put humanity on a path that is not sustainable. Therefore, the principles discussed in this book are relevant to many geographical, socio-cultural, economic, and political contexts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The idea of compiling an edited book that explains the role of pedagogy in shaping the socio-political reality of society began with having the opportunity to represent Tallinn University of Technology for the European Union's Asian-Pacific Project. I was assigned to the South Asian aspect of the project. My first South Asian engagements were with several institutions of higher education in Northeast India that were interested in what was at the time a new state-of-the-art approach to improving the social and economic conditions of society as well as promoting sustainability—the co-creation of value concept. Northeast India happens to be one of the most conflict-prone zones in South Asia; thus, it was important that the project also included a strategy for achieving sustainable peace. Thanks to the support, guidance, and interests of Doctor Glen Christo of Lutheran Christian University (who was at that time the rector of the college), the late Doctor S. R. Lyndem (who was at that time the rector of Union Christian College), assistant professor Banshaikupar L. Mawlong of the Political Science Department of Union Christian College, and Doctor Charles Reuben of the Department of Political Science at Synod College, I was successful in establishing cooperation and collaboration, playing a role in several publications, and ultimately acquiring funding for research in the Shillong region (in the state of Meghalaya of Northeast India). However, what is equally significant was the opportunity to learn about the particular issues and concerns of Khasi culture, learn more about their worldview, and struggle for a greater sense of self-determination.

This was followed by an invitation from assistant professor Dr. Chakali Bramhayya (with the agreement of Professor Gaan Narottam, who was at the time the head of the Department of Political Science and Human Rights), to participate in a conference and to offer workshops at Indira Gandhi National Tribal University. Thanks to Doctor Bramhayya's invitation, I had the opportunity to learn about the tribal cultures of the Amarkantak region of Madhya Pradesh, India. However, more importantly, during this visit, the department hosted a cultural event that featured Bodo cultural arts. The Bodo people are the largest ethnolinguistic group in the Assam state of Northeast India. A small group

of students from the cultural program at the university offered me the opportunity to gain firsthand experience of Bodo culture by visiting what is referred to as the Bodoland region of Assam. Therefore, special acknowledgement goes out to Mr. Sui Sui Boro, Mr. Swmaoshar Brahma (who is now an assistant professor of Political Science at Gossaigaon B.Ed. College in Assam), and Mr. Manek Narzary who arranged a visit to Bodoland. This included the opportunity to offer a peace research workshop at Bodoland University in Kokrajhar, Assam, and to spend time in the Raimona village in the Gossaigaon region of Bodoland, which provided me with a firsthand experience with Bodo culture. The Raimona village visit was amazing in many ways: e.g., there is a sense of pristine humanity, nature lovers would appreciate the beauty of the Brahmaputra valley, and it happens to be the last human habitat in that part of India. After the village, there is a frontier wilderness until the Bhutan border. So, one of the highlights of my days in the village was being able to enjoy the view of the mountains in Bhutan.

However, this book is also the outgrowth of a larger project affiliated with The Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers and the activities of its Asian Working Group. The project was organized by the Regional Peace Network. The Regional Peace Network is an affiliate of the Asian Working Group of the Network of Religious and Traditional Peacemakers that has a special focus on the role of peace education in promoting greater self-determination and improving the relationship between the government and the people in the regions where the project operates. The international board members of the Regional Peace Network played a special role in guiding the initial stages of the project and advising me on how to move forward.

Thus, the original idea for the book grew out of my firsthand experience with both Khasi and Bodo cultures, their struggle for human rights, and their interest in pursuing a peaceful approach to greater self-determination. Of course, a struggle for greater self-determination can often mean a conflicting relationship with governmental authorities. Therefore, in cooperation with Assistant Professor Manek Narzary (who is now working as a colleague and co-researcher), we attempted to establish a model of conflict reduction and peacebuilding that is based on an approach to pedagogy that empowers individuals and social groups to live in accordance with what they value and achieve what they aspire to do and/or be. We decided that a viable first step would be offering an international webinar in which international scholars could critique the idea and address

the relevancy of the concept for their particular social context. Fortunately, there was interest from Taiwan, Vietnam, India, Russia, Cambodia, and the USA.

Therefore, special acknowledgements go out to Assistant Professor Manek Narzary, who was the organizer of the webinar. However, Assistant Professor Narzary organized the webinar under the leadership of Dr. (Fr.) Abhilash VJ, SDB, Ph.D. (the principal of Don Bosco college), and with the support of the webinar coordinating committee of the college. Assistant Professor Narzary is, as well, a contributor (co-author) to one of the articles in this edited book. Finally, I should acknowledge the excellent contribution of Assistant Professor Nobin Narzary as the moderator of the webinar and the role of members of the college webinar coordinating committee in chairing the parallel sessions of the webinar: Dr. Anuradha Goswami, Assistant Professor Jelly Basumatary, and Assistant Professor Nobin Narzary from the English Department, Assistant Professor Bhumiraj Mushahary from the Department of Political Science, as well as IT experts Jugami Bargoyary and Basil Koikara.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Doctor Leon Miller (the editor) is an instructor of Ethics, Comparative Religion, Intercultural Communications, and Intercultural Relations. He has written many peer reviewed articles on the relationship between values, happiness, and success. He is an award winning author with a publication award from Emerald Publishing. He has also written a number of articles for wellness magazines on holistic well-being, self-cultivation, personal growth, and the integral experience. He is the founder and coordinator of "A Value-based Approach to Sustainability Planning" and "The Regional Peace Network". He is a research fellow affiliated with several European and International Peace Research and Peace Education Associations.

Doctor Saphimosha Blah is an assistant professor of philosophy at Saint Mary's College in Shillong, India. She has a special interest in environmental ethics, indigenous philosophy, the philosophy of religion, and culture.

Dr. Indrani Choudhury is Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy at Saint Mary's College in Shillong, India. She received her PhD from the Department of Philosophy at North-Eastern Hill University, Shillong, in 2001. Her research articles have been published in a number of academic journals and edited volumes on gender issues, environmental ethics, and social and political philosophy. Her areas of interest range from post-modern ethics to contemporary social and political issues, existential and ecological concerns for self-preservation, and conflict resolution.

Audrey Cohan, Ed.D., is Senior Dean for Research, Scholarship, and Graduate Studies and Professor of Education at Molloy University. She co-authored *John Dewey: America's Peace-Minded Educator* with Dr. Charles F. Howlett and focuses on John Dewey in her writing and teaching.

Professor Oleg A. Donskikh is the Head of the Department of Philosophy and Humanities at Novosibirsk State University of Economics and Management and Professor of the Department of Philosophy at

Novosibirsk State Technical University. His sphere of interests includes the history of philosophy, the origin of language, social philosophy, and the philosophy of education. He is the founder and editor-in-chief of the scientific journal "Ideas and Ideals." He has published a number of books on philosophy, e.g., Essays on the History and Philosophy of Science and Witnesses of Infinity (Metaphysics in Poetry); The Formation of Russian National Philosophy; Will for Dignity, Ancient Philosophy (Mythology in the Mirror of Reflection); To the Origin of Language; The Origin of Language as a Philosophical Problem; and Evolutionary Environments Homo Sapiens: an Endangered Species? In addition, his publications include contributing chapters to a number of edited books and publishing a number of peer-reviewed articles.

Dr. Amita Gupta is an esteemed assistant professor at the Center for Comparative Religion and Civilizations at the Central University of Jammu, specializing in Himalayan cultural heritage and comparative religion and civilizations. Her association with Lovely Professional University from 2020–2023 has seen her play significant roles in events like the Y20 Model Summit on Peacebuilding and Reconciliation: Ushering in an Era of No War and the Partition Horrors Remembrance Day seminar. As an academic who believes in being engaging, Dr. Gupta has introduced workshops on experimental archaeology and often lectures on diverse subjects, from archaeological investigation to civilization and peace studies. Beyond the classroom, she has made significant contributions to NGOs like the History Enthusiasts and the Asiatic Society for Social Sciences and Research. Her editorial roles and research at the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, underscore her international academic stature. Furthermore, collaborations with global entities like UCLA, the SAARC Cultural Center, Keil University, the University of Teheran, and the British Museum highlight her expansive network. Notably, Dr. Gupta has been recognized with the Namrata Joshi Gold Medal in 2015, the Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship in 2016–2017, and Foreign Travel Grants in 2016 and 2017. These accolades and grants have facilitated her academic ventures across Europe and Asia."

Dr. Dinh Hong Hai is an Associate Professor at the National University in Hanoi, Vietnam, where he serves as the Head of the Cultural Anthropology division within the Department of Anthropology. In 2019, he was appointed as an executive committee member of the International Association for Semiotic Studies and the Deputy General Secretary of the Asian Semiotics International Association. Additionally, he has been a

scientific committee member of the division of culture, art, journalism, and media of the Vietnamese National Foundation for Science and Technology (NAFOSTED) since 2022. Dr. Hai has published over 30 books and 100 articles on related topics in both Vietnamese and English. He earned his MA at the Institute of Cultural Studies, Vietnamese Academy of Social Sciences (VASS) in 2001 and his M.Phil. from the University of Delhi, India, in 2006. From 2008 to 2010, he studied at Harvard University and defended his Ph.D. dissertation at the Graduate School of Social Sciences, VASS, in 2011.

Monalisa Hazarika holds an MA in Conflict Management and Development from Banaras Hindu University, India. She is one of the #Leaders4Tomorrow and #Leaders2Future under the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) #Youth4Disarmament Initiative and is currently working as a Project Assistant at SCRAP Weapons. Last year, Monalisa was invited to the UN headquarters in New York to present her project "ACROSS THE CHICKEN NECK", a product of her lived experiences in one of the politically volatile and highly militarized zones of South Asia, at the First Committee Side Event held on October 2022. She is interested in the nexus between the illicit trafficking of small arms and narco-insurgency in South and Southeast Asia, Additive Manufacturing, Dual-Use and Export Control. She is a 2023-24 Emerging Expert of the Forum on the Arms Trade, part of the Emerging Voices Network of the British American Security Information Council (BASIC), and a 2023 SIPRI Armament and Disarmament Summer School graduate.

Charles Howlett is Professor of Education Emeritus at Molloy University, the lead editor of the Oxford Handbook of Peace History (2023), and the author, co-author, and editor of numerous works in peace history and peace education spanning some 40 years. He is the recipient of the Peace History Society's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Professor Kwang-Kuo Hwang (1945–2023) obtained his PhD in social psychology from the University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii. Professor Hwang has retired from National Taiwan University. He was awarded the title of National Chair Professor by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of China. Professor Hwang has endeavored to promote the indigenization movement in psychology and the social sciences in Chinese society since the early 1980s. He had published more than 160 articles on related issues in both Chinese and English, in addition to eight books, including Foundations of Chinese Psychology: Confucian Social Relations

(English), Inner Sageliness and Outer Kingliness: The Accomplishment and Unfolding of Confucianism (Chinese), and A Scientific Interpretation of Song-Ming Neo-Confucianism (Chinese). He was past president of the Asian Association of Indigenous and Cultural Psychology (2010–2014) and the Asian Association of Social Psychology (2003–2005) and was the principal investigator of the research project "In Search of Excellence for Indigenous Psychology," sponsored by the Ministry of Education, Republic of China (2000–2008).

Prof. Manoj Kumar Mishra is the Coordinator of the Malaviya Centre for Peace Research, Faculty of Social Sciences, BHU. He holds a consistent first-class university record with an M.A., M.Phil., and Ph.D. from the School of International Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. His Ph.D. was on ethnic minorities in Central Asia. Currently, Prof. Mishra is concentrating on issues of human security, peace research, environmental security, and environmental conflict. He was awarded the International Fellowships for the Linnaeus Palme International Exchange Program, Sweden, and the Visiting Faculty at Karlstad University, Sweden, in 2022. He was awarded the UPSAM fellowship at the United Nations Mandated University for Peace, Costa Rica, in 2008–09, where he developed two exhaustive curriculums on peace, conflict, security, and development, one on environmental security and peacebuilding. He obtained an International Diploma in Peace Research from the University of Oslo, Norway, in 2012, which was granted by the Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO). He has published books and over a dozen research papers in Scopus journals, peer-reviewed journals, and UGC CARE list journals.

Assistant Professor Manek Narzary was formerly an instructor of political science at Don Bosco College in the Chirang district of Assam, India. He played a significant role in organizing the activities that made the publication of this book possible. He was promoted to a new position with the Political Science Department at Zamduar College in Saraibil, Assam.

Doctor Ho Ngoc Son is currently an Associate Professor in Climate Change and Indigenous Knowledge at the Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry, Vietnam. He obtained a master's degree (2004) and a PhD in global environmental change (2013) from the Australian National University. He has published many peer-reviewed articles on indigenous knowledge and climate change adaptation of ethnic minority

people in Vietnam. In addition to research and teaching for university students, Dr. Son worked as a Deputy Director of the Institute of Forestry and Sustainable Development at the Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry, where he led many research and development projects. All these projects aim at promoting equality, rights, voices, and empowerment for ethnic minority women in remote areas of Vietnam. His work is to ensure that vulnerable people are empowered to achieve their fullest potential and lead their lives in an equal, inclusive, and progressive society.

Dr. Ha Minh Tuan is the Director of the Hi-tech Agriculture and Forestry R&D Center (HACEN), Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry, Vietnam. He holds a PhD degree in Agricultural Systems Management from the University of Adelaide, Australia. He has had extensive experience in research and on-the-ground management in a large number of areas, including in community development and resilience, gender studies, sustainable agriculture, agribusiness, agricultural systems research, livelihood development, transformative learning, participatory action research, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation. Dr. Ha has been working as a practicing scientist in both academic and development fields for a large number of international organizations and NGOs in Vietnam and overseas. He is a recipient of a number of competitive research grants, receiving two international and three national awards for his innovative research methodologies and impacts. Dr. Ha has so far published more than 80 refereed journal and conference papers and a large number of consultancy reports.

Hongyu Wang is Professor of Curriculum Studies at Oklahoma State University, USA. Her work focuses on curriculum theory, nonviolence education, and East/West inquiry. Her published books include The Call from the Stranger on a Journey Home: Curriculum in a Third Space (2004), Cross-cultural Studies in Curriculum (co-edited with Claudia Eppert, 2008), Nonviolence and Education (2014), Contemporary Daoism, Organic Relationality, Curriculum of Integrative Creativity (2021).

INTRODUCTION

DOCTOR LEON MILLER

Knowledge of the highest good is our aim (i.e., knowledge of the master science). So, then, the course of study we are referring to has to do with the connection between the good for a single person and the good for society; thus, the course of study is nothing less than political knowledge (Aristotle 2004, 4).

The foundational principles of social and political philosophy stress that knowledge generation and dissemination play an important role in shaping the social, economic, and political conditions of society. Consequently, the principles establish a theoretical link between pedagogical and political philosophy. Applying these principles to human and social development is believed to be a means of elevating the human experience. Therefore, social theorists and political philosophers agree that the principles prescribe a strategy for achieving the highest good possible by means of organized social activity. The achievement of this good is the goal that human social action aims to achieve. In other words, "All political action has, in itself, a directedness towards knowledge of the good: of the good life, or of the good society. For the good society is the complete political good" (Strauss 1957, 343). Thus, the standard for political action is goodness, justice, well-being, and peace. This good is an ethical good, which implies that this moral or ethical good should motivate our actions, our relationships with others, market transactions, and the goal society aims to achieve. It is by applying this standard to social action that we achieve the happiness and well-being of the members of society (Odia Bhagavata, 1996, 21, 29, 35-37, & 69; Cicero 2004, 38-43 & 83-86; Aristotle 1998, 192-193; Confucius, 2005, l2).

An analysis of the fundamental principles of classical social theory, political philosophy, political economy, and ethics reveals that classical social theorists and philosophers envisioned human and social development in terms of the flourishing and prosperity of individuals and society, a just society, and sustainable peace. They envisioned that the refinement of humanity, in terms of the individual members of society

developing virtuous character traits, would go hand in hand with civic virtue. In other words, they envisioned that the primary aim of the processes and activities for managing society would be the human development of the individual members of society, which in turn would contribute to social, economic, and sustainable development, a better public life, and consequently to a better socio-political order. The various theorists agreed that cultivating individuals so that they experience goodness and cooperate with each other to create a space in which they can enjoy personal and societal security is the whole aim of social life. Therefore, pedagogy is not only the means of providing knowledge and training individuals in particular skills, but it also plays a role in achieving a higher quality of social life. Thus, there is an inextricable link between education and politics, as was stressed by the social, ethical, and political philosopher Aristotle and is quoted in the epigram above.

The world's perennial philosophical and wisdom traditions also emphasize the connection between educational philosophy, political philosophy, individual freedom, and social justice. This was indeed evident in the political philosophy that shaped the development of the major centers of civilization. The ideas are based on principles that produce free citizens whose freedom includes not only social and political freedom but also the ability to experience happiness, good fortune, and higher levels of physical and mental development. This was especially evident in perspectives on self-knowledge, developing a virtuous character, and the prospect of enlightenment, all of which are drawn from a wealth of perennial wisdom. Such wisdom stands out as a unique and ideal example of the endeavor to cultivate individuals not only for the sake of citizenship but for improving the overall human experience. It was the vision of achieving this pedagogical, social, and political aim that drew people together into social solidarity, cohesion, harmony, and stability. The most respected and renown advocates of these principles asserted that, in the broadest sense, realizing the highest good possible requires more than political force. True freedom requires training individuals in how to develop their capabilities, how to exercise their right to life, liberty, and happiness, and how to pursue self-interest in ways that promote the common good (Tagore 1968: 99 & 186).

These principles prompted social development because they established a unified collective aim (i.e., shared values that motivated a willingness to cooperate to achieve a common goal). Although these principles, values, and ethics established fundamental ideals for organizing social activity, the

full realization of these ideals was indeed thwarted by the persistence of social agents who attempted to exercise "power over" rather than as a means of empowerment. Their intention was to exercise authority over society and the control of its resources. Therefore, teaching the ideal of self-determination, the realization of shared goals, and common values becomes an enormous challenge. That is to say that it requires generating and disseminating a type of knowledge that is powerful enough to override the persistence of those who pursue power on their own behalf or on behalf of the powerful elite. Realizing the type of social dynamics prescribed by the principles underlying pedagogical and political philosophy requires integrating the interests of the powerful elite with those of the overall public (Dewey 1988, 225-226; Dewey 2021, 83-88). Therefore, realizing those principles as the basis of social activity requires generating and disseminating a type of knowledge that is powerful enough to override the persistence of relating to merely endeavor using others as a means to achieve instrumental ends.

This book explains various pedagogical and socio-political prescriptions for improving the conditions of society and, as well, the human condition. However, in line with the theme of improving the conditions of society, this book has two additional essential aspects. On the one hand, there is the aim of improving the well-being and life satisfaction of individuals, while, on the other hand, it also aims to increase social solidarity, cohesion, order, harmony, prosperity, and peace. In this respect, an overall concern of this book is explaining the factors that enhance the essential interdependence between the members of society and between the individual members and public authorities. The contributors to this book analyze the role that the generation and dissemination of knowledge play in personal growth and development, socialization and public life, personal and political power, and social justice.

In this respect, the book not only explains the connection between educational and political philosophy and the forces shaping the socio-political reality of society but, as well, the connection between developing the full capabilities of the individual members of society and social development. Although the book focuses on training students and social groups in a participatory and collaborative approach to social formation, it also explains the significance of training civil leaders, the general public, and public authorities. Therefore, there are aspects of the book that apply to both formal and informal learning. It is in this respect that the book explains the significance of integrating conceptualizations of personal and

social well-being with those for realizing the goal that human social action aims to achieve. In other words, the book demonstrates a state-of-the-art approach (and an empirical basis) for linking personal well-being and happiness with social interdependence and a well-functioning society. Thus, this book describes a way to implement an approach to pedagogy that is both state-of-the-art and innovative while at the same time being very much in line with the fundamental principles of social theory and political philosophy.

This book emphasizes the significance of linking political philosophy with citizenship education in light of what has become known as the *Creating Public Value* concept in public administration and political theory (Mark Moore 1995). Citizenship education, in this respect, means training individuals and social groups in the connection between their own self-cultivation, the development of their capabilities, participatory governance, and improving the quality of social life. By developing their capabilities, individuals enjoy greater substantive freedoms and have greater opportunities to engage other members of their community in co-creating social life. Thus, developing capabilities promotes human rights, social justice, and self-determination while, at the same time, diminishes conflict and increases social harmony. By explaining the relationship between human development and political activity, we teach individuals and members of a community to become active agents for greater social justice. In this respect, the exercise of rights, achieving justice, and experiencing greater self-determination is a matter of training individuals and social groups in the connection between achieving what is in their best interest, promoting and protecting the collective interests, and increasing the enjoyment and benefits they experience in their relationships with other members of society. However, citizenship education also involves transforming formal and nonformal learning activities into models of ideal social interactions. Thus, what occurs in such interactions models the ideal ethos of pedagogy but, as well, an ideal of social relations and participation in political communities.

The co-creation of value concept, which is becoming increasingly popular, is the basis of the participatory aspect of the model. The co-creation of value concept is also often referred to as the co-creation of social reality concept, participatory governance, collaborative socio-political activities, deliberative civic engagement, and communitarian social order (Miller 2022, xi). This approach is based on teaching individuals and social groups state-of-the-art strategies for transforming the prior development

paradigm into an approach that balances economic development with human, social, and sustainable development. These fundamental principles are relevant for addressing and resolving current human, social, economic, and political challenges because they are based on state-of-the-art strategies for transforming the precariousness of the human condition into a means of achieving social goals. That is to say, it increases the willingness of the multi-level stakeholders to engage in value creation networks in order to achieve their individual goals. Therefore, the development we aim for begins with training individuals and social groups by means of practical lessons on the connection between human, social, and sustainable development. This approach teaches individuals and social groups how to achieve the value goals they aim for, but in ways that are proactive and avoid reactionary responses to social challenges.

This book explains an approach to social and political philosophy that is integrated with pedagogical philosophy as the basis for teaching future leaders of society how to ameliorate the persistent problems faced by many communities, e.g., ethnic, racial, class, gender, religious discrimination, conflict over access to natural resources and their fair distribution, disputes over policies and rights, and environmental and climate challenges. It explains an inter-disciplinary approach to human, social, and sustainable development that increases the effectiveness and efficiency of governance activities, improves the relationship between the government and the overall public, and, equally important, reduces conflict and promotes peacebuilding. The focus is on empowering individuals by engaging them in processes of self-cultivation that will lead to achieving a better quality of life, enhancing their role as citizens, co-creating their social reality, and improving their relationship with their natural surroundings. It should be kept in mind that, although this approach is transformational, it is meant to be applied within a particular community context as a model for social development. That is to say, it establishes a model of how local citizens and public authorities can cooperate to realize the shared goals and common values that reflect their particular social, cultural, economic, political, and sustainability aspirations.

The book emphasizes the role that formal, informal, and alternative learning activities, plus the knowledge generated by means of public-private value-creating networks, play in what is experienced as social reality. Therefore, the book explains why the dynamics that occur as a result of the linkage between these three approaches to education reflect aspects of education that are inherently political in nature (Freire 2005).

Although most of the contributors to this book are scholars engaged in the educational profession, the scope of the contributions also includes practitioners who are deeply engaged in enhancing the relationship between civil society and the government. In this respect, the contributors demonstrate a concern for training individuals and social groups in the types of processes, activities, and interactions that not only reflect a Constructivist approach to pedagogy but, as well, a Constructivist approach to co-creating social reality. Thus, this book is concerned with elevating the life experience of those who participate in formal, informal, and alternative learning programs. However, the focus is on teaching participants the role that the development of their capabilities plays in their having happier, healthier, and more successful lives. Achieving this requires teaching the participants the role they play as citizens in achieving the highest good possible by means of organized social activity.

When teaching individuals and social groups about the relationship between their own self-cultivation, the nature of citizenship, and social justice we are taking part in the endeavors of a long tradition of scholars who attempted to maximize individual and social well-being. Such scholars shared the intention to cultivate the whole person—not only for the purpose of citizenship but to motivate individuals to live in accordance with their deepest convictions (i.e., the freedom to be their authentic selves, to live in accordance with what they have reason to value most, and to achieve their aspirations) and thus experience the most rewarding and fulfilling life possible. It also aims at training individuals and social groups on how to be well-integrated within the fabric of existence. This pedagogical tradition includes some of the greatest thinkers in the world throughout history and some who are most admired today.

The Structure of the Book

The book is divided into three main sections and a conclusion. Section one addresses the role of pedagogy in shaping the socio-political reality of society from a philosophical perspective (Aristotle, Taoism, Sri Aurobindo, and Confucius). Section two also addresses the relationship between pedagogy and social development, but from the perspective of either Critical Pedagogy, a Constructivist perspective on pedagogy (including the relationship between formal learning institutions and informal learning taking place in cooperation with civil bodies), or peace education. The third section addresses the relationship between pedagogy and social development from the perspective of indigenous knowledge.

The conclusion provides a comprehensive summary of the role of knowledge generation and dissemination (i.e., schools of philosophy, ideologies, and systems of knowledge generation and dissemination) in shaping civilization and progressing civilization to the present stage of global social existence.

Section One: Pedagogy and Social Development from the Perspective of Philosophy

Section one begins with Professor Donskikh's article entitled Pedagogy and Social Development from the perspective of Aristotle's philosophy. He describes Aristotle's approach to education and his system of personal growth and development that aims to cultivate individuals who are self-sufficient and responsible human beings. In other words, for Aristotle, education was a system of self-cultivation that resulted in individuals being aware of the interdependent and complementary relationship between themselves and the state. From the point of view of the development of society, Aristotle presupposed that society is organized with the aim of having well-educated citizens, which means that the state establishes a just social system. The system of education should provide the possibility of a step-by-step movement towards proper citizenship based on virtue and reason. The content of education should be designed in such a way that each period of human life from five to twenty-one years has its own end, becoming the foundation for the next one.

Doctor Hongyu Wang's article "Daoist Pedagogy: Attunement, Nonviolent Intervention, and A Virtuous Process" explains the impact of education on social development from a Daoist perspective. The article focuses on the relational aspects of Daoism, which emphasize attunement with nature and others, thus having implications regarding nonviolence and nonviolence education. The article begins with an explanation of a fundamental concept in Daoism (wu wei). Although the concept is usually associated with "going with the flow" or "being in the flow," it also has implications regarding attunement, which raises questions about non-interruption and allowing things to take their own natural course. The author then addresses what this means for classroom management and the teacher's intervention in the student's learning process (especially in the case of teaching nonviolence). However, the ultimate aim of the article is to reflect on what it means to educate and to be educated.

Doctor Indrani Choudhury's article, is entitled The Role of Pedagogy in Peace Initiatives for a Sustainable Future: with Reference to Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy. Her paper emphasizes the role of peace education in conflict reduction and peacebuilding, drawing mainly on insights from Sri Aurobindo's philosophy on how human beings face and negotiate with socio-political realities and how this process, in turn, shapes our ideas of the future of education for children and young adults in a conflict-ridden society. The article explains the idea of peace through education by thinking along three dimensions: (1) its internal dimension (i.e., peace as an outcome of Satya, meaning as an outcome of self-realization), (2) its external dimension (i.e., a common goal based on shared values, which sparks a collective moral consciousness), and (3) reconciliation, which involves tolerance.

Emeritus Professor Kwang-Kuo Hwang and co-author Doctor Leon Miller contribute an article that analyzes Confucian education principles to determine how they provide a means of sustainable social development at the multi-levels of social interaction. The article proposes that Confucius established the Mutual Trust Model (互信模式), based on his Five Constant Virtues (五 常), as a means of teaching principles of ethics, social relations, governance, and, as well, relations between different cultures and nations. Therefore, the article provides a viable approach to theorizing about social development at the multiple levels of social activity.

Section Two: Pedagogy and Social Development from the Perspective of Critical Pedagogy or a Constructivist Perspective on Pedagogy

Emeritus Professor Charles Howlett co-authors an article with Professor Audrey Cohan, which describes pedagogy and social development from the perspective of peace education. The title is John Dewey's Constructivist Approach to Peacebuilding. Dewey is one of the founders of American Pragmatism and, as well, a renown educational and social philosopher, a social and educational reformer, and an academic. His Constructivist ideals are the foundation of his democratic philosophy, which has been expanded to include his beliefs on peace and justice. The article explains the aspects of Dewey's call for social action that are especially relevant for peacemakers. Thus, the article explains new pathways for encouraging positive interaction between individuals and the members of a diverse society, as well as between society and its

environment. This article raises the question of whether it is possible for policymakers to implement what Dewey advocated in terms of democracy, education, human development, and basic human rights? The authors point out that Dewey's ideas for peace education complement the views of many current policymakers who favor peacebuilding efforts for transformative change as opposed to attempts aimed at peacekeeping, which maintain the existing social order intact. The article points out the lessons that peace and justice advocates working in conflict zones—such as South Asia, for instance—can learn from Dewey's peace education theories, and how might they adapt them to their own contexts?

Doctor Hai's article describes the interface between Vietnam and France in education, the science of the humanities, and anthropology. He explains that after almost a thousand years of growth, the scholarly traditions of Vietnamese people, which were heavily influenced by Chinese civilization, began to crumble in the late 19th century. By the early decades of the 20th century, this bookish academia (known as 尋章摘句) had come to an end, with the last royal examination being held in 1919. So why did this thousand-year Confucius education come to an abrupt halt? His article explores the impact of French academia on Indochina for over a century, which fundamentally changed the scientific thinking of Vietnam's intellectual class. This shift led to significant changes in the country's human sciences, including the development of anthropology throughout the 20th century.

Ms. Monalisa Hazarika and her co-author, Prof. Manoj Kumar Mishra, write about the recruitment of child soldiers in struggles for greater self-determination and autonomy in Northeast India. They explain how the children are provided new rebel outfits and then oriented (educated, or perhaps better to say reeducated) to risk their lives for a cause. These impoverished children are lured into warfare by the promise of being able to escape their desperation by fighting for their freedom and dignity, as well as that of their people, and being provided with resources they would otherwise not be able to afford. This article critically analyzes such an approach to training youth on how to earn freedom, self-determination, and dignity. The article then proposes peace education theory as a tool to bring about positive social change in the context of Northeast Indian societies and explores the efficacy of such an intervention, framing recommendations from Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

Doctor Blah writes about the role of justice in avoiding social conflicts at all levels of social interaction. She uses the Northeast of India as an example of a context where the extent of diversity in ethnicity, culture, language, tribal status, religion, historical grievances, economic disparities, political marginalization, land disputes, and response to migrants make it one of the most conflict prone zones in South Asia. The author explains that because of the large tribal population in the region (e.g., Scheduled Tribes), conflicts are often centered on the role of government and government authorities in protecting the rights of the tribal people. One way of summarizing the nature of the conflicts is that they are a demand for justice. The author then goes into detail to explain the nature of justice and its role in establishing sustainable peace. The author then compares one of the most respected theories of justice (Justice as Fairness by John Rawls) to the sense of justice of one of Northeast India's cultural groups, the Khasi culturee. The author concludes by explaining a peace education approach to reducing the conflictual tension between tribal people and the various levels of government. This peace education model is based on a theory of justice that aligns the most cherished values of a tribal community with those of the Indian cultural and religious traditions and those of the theory of justice proposed by John Rawls.

Assistant Professor Manek Narzary, and his co-author Doctor Leon Miller, contribute and article entitled "Education: Society's Cornerstone Institution for Improving the Quality of Social Life". Their chapter describes education and learning as social goods thus involve not only the interests of the students, the teachers, and the school but of the community and entire society. The chapter points out that given the complexities of society (especially when there is a high level of ethic, cultural, and language differences) it is the nature of the relationship and communication between individuals and the overall society that determine the quality of social life. In this respect the chapter emphasizes why a Constructivist approach to teaching, interacting, and communicating promotes relational and interactive dynamics that result in complementary, mutually beneficial, and mutually enhancing agent-structure interactions. The chapter emphasizes that the effectiveness of this approach lies in the fact that it is simultaneously a method of teaching, an approach to personal growth and development, a strategy for social development, is based on a state-of-the-art perspective on social theory and, as well, is based on a communication theory effective for promoting and disseminating constitutive socio-political values and principles.

Section Three: Pedagogy and Social Development
(with an emphasis on the role of indigenous
knowledge in social development)

Doctor Gupta provides the opening article for section three with "Indigenous Knowledge and Social Development in Northeast India". The author defines indigenous knowledge as the collective memory of a cultural group that dates back to the earliest stages of its existence, which explains the best way to manage the challenges of existence. The focus of indigenous knowledge is on how to maintain harmonious coexistence between the members of the community, between the community and the forces it is confronted with in its environment, and, as well, maintaining a harmonious balance between tradition and modernizing. The author then explains that education in this sense is not only of a formal, nonformal, and alternative nature but a living experience occurring between individuals and elders, individuals and designated guides, and individuals and nature (i.e., including the forces shaping the nature of existence). Therefore, education for the tribal cultures of Northeast India is akin to a treasure house of knowledge, wisdom, and intricate cultural narratives, resilient social structures, and insightful systems for human growth and development that have stood the test of time.

Doctor Ho Ngoc Son and Doctor Ha Minh Tuan describe indigenous knowledge as the foundation of a cultural group's identity, cultural heritage, civilization, livelihood, and coping strategies, which the group has relied upon and adhered to for untold centuries. The authors argue that because it has proven to be effective for so many centuries, it is, no doubt, still relevant for dealing with such issues as food insecurity, reducing inequalities, climate change, and other challenges that humanity is trying to resolve through the Sustainable Development Goals. Indigenous knowledge in Vietnam, like in many other contexts where the indigenous population is equated with tribal villagers, is highly relevant to a sense of social development in that indigenous people are a great example of the challenge of blending time-tested traditions with new technologies, efforts to reduce poverty and inequality, improve access to education and healthcare, and promote civic engagement and community participation. Therefore, indigenous knowledge not only continues to be an essential source for insight into how to shape the culture's social, political, and economic future but also a learning source for the greater regional, national, and international society regarding how to live more peacefully, cooperatively, and harmoniously.

Conclusion: Knowledge, Power, and the Shaping of Civilization

The editor summarizes the role of pedagogy in shaping the socio-political reality of society by providing a comprehensive overview of the relationship between knowledge, power, and the shaping of civilization. The article provides an overview of the role of knowledge, schools of thought, and philosophy in shaping the civilizations in the Far East, Mesopotamia, and the West. The article uses India as an example to explain the role of knowledge, philosophy, cultural worldview, and schools of higher learning in shaping a civilizational state. The article concludes by explaining why insight into the role of knowledge in shaping civilization and the civilizational state is important to helping humanity deal with the challenges it faces as a result of civilization advancing to the global stage of social existence.