

four

The Past Was Once Future: Reenactment of Values and Virtues on Historical Grounds in Education

Kåre S. Fuglseth

Abstract

This contribution presents a theory of the relationship between virtues, values, and narratives on a general, theoretical level and discusses consequences for educational theory and practice. Contrary to the common idea that narratives are important for a conceptual understanding and an exemplary education, I argue in support of the theory that values and virtues at the end can only be understood in narrative ways. To strengthen the thesis, I take a phenomenological-based approach, in particular phenomenological theories of time and action. "Narrative" is understood in the broadest possible way, referring to a sequential time or polythetic structure of experience in accordance with the Husserlian life-world phenomenology of subjective time. Only afterward may it be grasped analytically and theorized, expressed in headings and titles, with concepts and notions and thus also typified. In education, it is of particular importance that teachers take a kind of narrative approach to values and virtues, particularly in relation to noncontroversial themes or culturally accepted expressions of values, to help reenact or remodel them to avoid didactic moralism. The claim is that the lifeworld-explanation of reenactment is valuable not only for virtue and value education but also for all teaching subjects.

Keywords

Narrative educational theory; phenomenology; exemplary teaching; value education.

Author

Kåre S. Fuglseth, professor in studies of professional practice, Nord University, Bodø, Norway.

1. Introduction: The Core Question—Understanding Values and Virtues

The question I will try to answer in this contribution is a basic one in education: How do we teach values and virtues?¹ An answer to this question is again based on an idea of what values and virtues are, where and how we can locate them, and how human beings apprehend and learn in general. The main idea that I shall explore is the role of narratives in that connection. I intend to develop an even deeper understanding of both values and virtues from a mere theoretical point of view that may guide our historical studies of the matter. There are insights from phenomenology theory that

¹ I thank Maury Saslaff for correcting and improving the manuscript.

I argue turn out to be of vital interest for the study, and for the understanding of teaching and education generally, features that have not yet been scrutinized and applied to the study of narrative-based educational theory and practice. At the end, I shall point out some consequences for how to teach values in school.

A core question for the research project behind the Nangeroni meeting in Norway was not only to study past sources and their understanding of values and virtues in themselves, but also to elaborate a better grasp of values and virtues in general and, consequently, for a transfer to present procedures in education of values and virtues *today*.² From ancient times to the present, the history of philosophy and literature has been rich in discussions of *virtues* and the educational challenges from which there might be much to learn.³ On the other hand, *values* seems to be more of a modern conceptualization with a close connection to the modern use of “attitudes.” As a deed, *virtue* refers mostly to actions or inaction, while value is—as far as I can see—a word referring to beliefs or the cognitive (doxical) level. *Attitudes* on the other hand refers to beliefs, valuations, and practices. Any study of values must clarify whether values and virtues can be elaborated from inductive procedures and empirical studies alone, or if theoretical contemplation is also required for both interpretation and explanation.⁴ For educational purpose, when we want to teach certain values, such as those in the Norwegian Education Act (see further below), some kind of inductive procedures seem inevitable, since concepts are not instructive in themselves.⁵

My discussion and conclusions are also an example of how phenomenology, a philosophical theory of high abstraction, can provide useful educational insights or guidelines for understanding values. This way of rediscovering former phenomenological insights for educational and other scholarly purposes serves as an example of the relationship between phenomenology and education more generally. Phenomenological theory does not present fixed solutions, but suggestions or hypotheses, which are helpful for discovering and solving problems of the sort we are engaged with.⁶

2 For the connection between this contribution and the overall project that led to the entire volume, see the introduction. This contribution was prepared as a short paper for the Nangeroni Conference in Bodø in May 2022, and has been edited according to the feedback at the conference. For an English translation of non-English titles, see the bibliography below.

3 For a systematic approach to study past lessons today, see the introduction to this volume.

4 For the close relationship between empirical studies and theoretical ones in education, see the early contribution by Günther Buck, *Lernen und Erfahrung: Zum Begriff der didaktischen Induktion*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969), 21, speaking of “der Streit zwischen Empirismus und Apriorismus.”

5 Kunnskapsdepartementet, Ministry of Education and Research, 2023, “Act Relating to Primary and Secondary Education and Training (the Education Act); Chapter 1: Objectives, Scope, and Adapted Education, etc., Section 1-1. ‘The Objectives of Education and Training.’”

6 For a general introduction to Husserlian constitutional phenomenology, see Dan Zahavi, where “constitutional” is seen in opposition to empirical studies although theories can also guide empirical studies and empirical studies may adjust the theories. See Zahavi, *Husserl’s Phenomenology* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003). I have previously published articles with some similar topics; see Kåre Fuglseth, “Beyond and behind Phronesis, Tact, and Discretion: Some Basic Elements of Teachers’ Judgment from a Phenomenological Point of View,” in *Pädagogik, Phänomenologie. Verhältnisbestimmungen und Herausforderungen*, ed. Malte Brinkmann, Marc F. Buck, and Seve-

I will attempt to demonstrate how we may draw the usefulness of this approach for historical virtue studies and virtue- and value-oriented educational theory in particular.

Our attention to values in the entire Nangeroni project is not taken out of the blue, but based on vital societal and educational interests today. The stated general purpose in the modern humanist tradition of comprehensive education may be partially comprehended as planning for personal development toward the manifestations of values and virtues for the next generation, evident in the German expression *Bildung* or formation, and its equivalent in Scandinavian languages.⁷ Although not mentioned directly, the *Bildung* concepts of values and virtues are referred to indirectly in official educational documents and curricula in Europe. For instance, they are clearly seen in the common European qualification framework (EQF), which operates with three different “learning outcomes” that all together come close:

1. Knowledge that is theoretical or factual,
2. Skills, which are both cognitive and practical, and
3. Responsibility and autonomy, which is the ability to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility.⁸

The historical roots in antiquity for these competence-based ways of guiding school practice throughout Europe are perhaps evident. Autonomy and responsibility refer, or at least allude, to the Aristotelian virtue of *φρόνησις* (“to act wisely”), which comes out of practical knowledge, that is, *praxis* (Aristotle, *Eth. nic.* 6.4–7). Direct use of the word *value* is also found in the objectives clause in the Norwegian Education Act, which directly states the following:

Education and training must be based on fundamental values in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, such as respect for human dignity and nature; on intellectual

rin Sales, *Phänomenologische Erziehungswissenschaft* 3 (Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2017), 257–72, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-15743-2_15. In Norwegian, see Fuglseth, “Forteljing eller analyse: Ei sentral fagleg og fagdidaktisk problemstilling?,” in *Konferanserapport fra konferansen: FoU i praksis 2002*, ed. Geir Stavik-Karlsen et al. (Trondheim: Program for lærerutdanning, NTNU, 2003), 115–22. [ET: “Stories or Analyses: A Core Problem in Teaching School Subjects?”]

7 Cf. “bildung, dannelse, danning” (ET: “picturing, formation, forming”). The modern humanist tradition early on developed education theory as “Pädagogik” in German; see, e.g., the explanation in Günther Buck, *Hermeneutik und Bildung: Elemente einer verstehenden Bildungslehre*, *Kritische Information* 100 (Munich: Fink, 1981); and Dietrich Benner, *Allgemeine Pädagogik: Eine systematisch-problemgeschichtliche Einführung in die Grundstruktur pädagogischen Denkens und Handelns*, 8th rev. ed. (Weinheim: Beltz Juventa, 2015). There are few similar English concepts, apart from words such as “formation” and “comprehensive education.” The German word *Bildung* means literally “picturing,” with a possible reference to the use of “image” and “likeness” in Gen 1:26. The idea is presumably that humans must develop in the likeness of the creation God ordained.

8 EQF says: “The learning outcomes are defined in terms of:... Responsibility and autonomy: In the context of the EQF, responsibility and autonomy is described as the ability of the learner to apply knowledge and skills autonomously and with responsibility,” <https://europa.eu/europass/en/description-eight-eqf-levels>.

freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity; and on values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights.⁹

The Education Act clearly states that the conceptual examples given (“respect, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity”) are *values*, but some of them may also be called virtues, for instance, “forgiveness,” since they more directly refer to acts rather than abstract principles.

I think that the example from the Norwegian Education Act demonstrates how easy it is to confuse notions. The distinction between virtues and values is of course not always obvious, since anything may be *given* value, not only for objects such as money or gold but also for activities such as exercising, in addition to virtues or personal properties and deeds. A phenomenon that further tends to blur the understanding of the difference is that values may be defined in both intrinsic and extrinsic ways. As intrinsic, they are values in themselves, such as equality. Values in themselves come as designated notions that are expressed with concepts and abstract nouns (cf. below). As extrinsic, they are things *given* some value, also objects and music.

The example of values cited from the Education Act is not employed inadvertently by lawmakers in parliament. Named particularly, they are also prioritized in schools, although other virtues and values might also be found to be laudable, indicated by the phrase “such as,” in the phrase “such as respect for human dignity, etc.” The general problem for teachers in good faith toward these objectives in schools is *practice*, or their meaning and consequence in and for practice, in addition to the way they are taught and trained. The core question for the ignorant, the new generation, is what these words refer to in their daily life, in practice. This more practical question, for the sake of teaching, can find answers in scholarly discussions about narrative understanding more generally, as will be shown in the next section.

2. Scholarly Debate on Narrative Understanding

The scholarly debate of the understanding of values is a matter for several types of scholarly areas, it includes ethical and theological theories, narrative educational theory and social value education in general, to mention a few.¹⁰ In this contribution, I am interested only in narrative theories that compare narrative approaches with

9 Kunnskapsdepartementet—Ministry of Education and Research, 2023.

10 On narrative ethics, see Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984). Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones, “Introduction: Why Narrative?,” in *Why Narrative? Reading in Narrative Theology*, ed. Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1997), 1–18. For narrative theory and literature, see Adam Z. Newton, *Narrative Ethics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995); Martha Nussbaum, *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life* (Boston: Beacon, 1995). Sigrun Gudmundsdottir, “The Narrative Nature of Pedagogical Content Knowledge,” in *Narrative in Teaching, Learning, and Research*, ed. Hunter McEwan and Kieran Egan (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995), 24–38; Hermann Giesecke, *Wie lernt man Werte? Grundlagen der Sozialerziehung*. (Weinheim: Juventa, 2005).

nonnarrative approaches, a procedure that considerably narrows the research scope. Other noneducational studies on examples of reenacted and remodeled thinking that this contribution would like to explicate will also be restricted. A presentation of the *status questionis* of exemplary teaching and narrative ethics in general must also be limited.¹¹

The importance of narratives for any kind of understanding in ethical education is often proclaimed in scholarly research.¹² However, in this contribution, I argue in opposition to the view that a narrative approach to values and virtues is not just important but can *only* be understood and recognized in narrative ways. *Narrative* is taken in the widest possible sense, building on a core phenomenological theory of essence. Phenomenology is a branch of philosophy where scholars have studied narration in a fundamental way, articulated insights that are allegedly pretheoretical or prototheoretical, that is, insight in what is always presupposed. Naturally, insight on this level is highly abstracted and general.¹³ What is then always presupposed when we use narratives, and what is the connection with moral theories? The phenomenological insights articulate general subjective insights; they are nonobjectivistic in that way and, as such, already in line with the intrinsic subjective perspective that we find in theories of comprehensive education and ideas in the aforementioned *Bildung* tradition. It not only explains what we are dealing with *in nuce*, as will be demonstrated, but also points to or guides us in certain directions that empirical research or educational approaches may follow.

Phenomenological theorizing of narratives is no exception. This narratively based assertion has a series of consequences for educational practice, not only for the learning of values and virtues but also for the everyday teaching of school subjects, as will be demonstrated. However, we must first clarify the relationships of values and virtues on the one side and actions on the other.

11 For the discussion of exemplarism, see Linda Zagzebski, *Exemplarist Moral Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Michel Croce and Silvia M. Vaccarezza, “Educating through Exemplars: Alternative Paths to Virtue,” *Theory and Research in Education* 15 (2017): 5–19, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878517695903>. Jacob Buganza “Ethics, Literature, and Education,” *Ethics and Education* 7 (2012): 125–35, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449642.2012.733595>; Johan Dahlbeck and Morten T. Korsgaard, “Introduction: The Role of the Exemplar in Arendt and Spinoza; Insights for Moral Exemplarism and Moral Education,” *Ethics and Education* 15 (2020): 135–43, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449642.2020.1731173>. This discussion does reflect on the philosophical insights discussed by me in this chapter.

12 See particularly James Phelan, *Living to Tell about It* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005). The aspect of narrative for understanding generally, and for research on ethical and value education, is not always recognized in the philosophy of education or educational research and theory; see Harvey Siegel, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Education*, Oxford Handbooks (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), which barely mentions the phenomenon.

13 There are empirical approaches in educational study that use the word *phenomenology* in a looser sense as referring to a study of immediate experiences; see Louis Cohen, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison, eds., *Research Methods in Education*, 8th ed. (London, Routledge, 2018), 300–301.

3. Values, Virtues, and Actions

One way to distinguish values from virtues is to say that values in themselves are expressed with short expressions as abstract nouns, in opposition to what is a given value, which in fact can be anything in the world, for example, objects. Thus, we need to clarify the nature of abstract notions (precepts) and their concepts. Abstract notions denoting values such as “love” or “hatred” refer to *aspects* of actions, that is, a part that is abstracted from the whole and synthesized into mind and language. *Aspects* refer to independent parts of the whole, moments in opposition to pieces. A well-known example to explain these notions is the different parts of an object like a tree. Branches and leaves are independent parts, while structure, form, and color are dependent parts, they cannot be removed whole from where they belong.¹⁴ When this insight is transferred to the discussion of values and virtues, it means that not only is an entire episode necessary to detect an in-practice example of that virtue or value but also that they are expressed as independent parts. Where is the love manifested in an action, where can one actually observe love? Whenever we want to point out exactly where love comes to expression in one way or the other, one must see the entire action in a sum and in context. This also holds good in natural science for “structure,” “color” or “speed,” which cannot be separated from objects that have structure, color, or speed. Language has the effect that we treat these abstracts as concretes, moments as components and dependent parts as independent ones, as Robert Sokolowski argues.¹⁵

We may compare universals and particulars related to concretes and abstracts in this way:

	Universalia	Particularia
Concretum	1	2
Abstractum	3	4

Examples of the categories are:

1. Horses in general,
2. My horse, “Black Beauty,”
3. Values (e.g., equality), and
4. Acts representing the value in question as interpreted in the situation and its context, from which number 3 is abstracted.

14 Robert Sokolowski, “The Logic of Parts and Wholes in Husserl’s Investigations,” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 28 (1968): 537–53, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2105690>. Cf. Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), 17–41. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2105690>.

15 Sokolowski, “Logic of Parts,” 537–53.

The fourth category is truly the challenging category since the notion only refers to an aspect, the abstracted aspect of an action, an independent part of the whole to which it belongs and the completed act. This brings us to a discussion of the relationship between abstract values and action generally and whether an action, an episode, or an example can be expressed other than by giving examples of actions, that is, a presentation with a basic temporal structure, in other words—a narrative. The answer is clearly no, as will be demonstrated below.

4. Narratives and Theory of Time

In the following, I shall demonstrate more closely how we can connect a narrative understanding to a study of values through theories of subjective time.

Narrative analysis is no longer something that is *only* used and can be found in studies of history and interpretations of objectified expressions such as film, images, and text interpretations; rather, it is part of the collective repertoire of humanities and social science methods and theories. Narrative analysis is part of many fields and disciplines.¹⁶ However, in one way or the other, the basic understanding of narratives generally is similar or the same. The ultimate basis of narratives in phenomenological literature is to be found in a study consciousness, in the intentionality—to use a phenomenological word for it. In fact, the subjective time theory demonstrates that there is a close connection between our grasp of abstract notions of values, the analysis of subjective time, and the perception of the narrative. To explain temporality, Edmund Husserl explored subjective and natural attitudes toward time. Consciousness includes the perception of the situation, now with a “glance” backward (called *retention*) and a “glance” forward (called *protention*), simultaneously. The phenomena can only be separated analytically in a reflective mode. What was recently perceived but is now part of the past is held in retention. What is going to be perceived is anticipated in protention. In their theorizing of the social lifeworld and subjective time, Alfred Schütz and Thomas Luckmann explained Husserl’s theory by saying that “every actual lived experience necessarily carries a horizon of the past and a horizon of the future.”¹⁷

16 The importance of narrative is central in several disciplines and scholarly approaches, including literary studies, educational theory, and historical research; see D. Jean Clandinin and F. Michael Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000). Marianne Horsdal, *Telling Lives: Exploring Dimensions of Narratives* (London: Routledge, 2012); Hunter McEwan and Kieran Egan, eds, *Narrative in Teaching, Learning, and Research: Critical Issues in Curriculum* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1995); Donald Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*, SUNY Series in Philosophy of the Social Sciences (New York: State University of New York Press, 1988); D. Francois Tolmie, *Narratology and Biblical Narratives: A Practical Guide* (San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1999); Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: The Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987).

17 Schütz and Luckmann, *The Structures of the Life-World, Vol. 1*, trans. Richard M. Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973), 52.

This theory is of essential importance for an understanding of narratives generally. Although Husserl did not thematize narratives in connection with analysis based on primary qualities or natural attitudes or lifeworld analysis, it is not difficult to understand that the narrative feature of human existence is a natural part of lifeworld thinking. Consequently, another of Husserl's students, Wilhelm Schapp, first pointed out the connection between the lifeworld-based philosophy of time on the one side and narrative forms of understanding with its verbal presentation on the other.¹⁸ It has been followed up further by other scholars, especially by Paul Ricœur, who also concluded that time can only be understood as subjectively experienced and narratively.¹⁹ The Weberian interpretive sociological tradition that came from Schütz has not been so concerned with the theme of narration, perhaps because the narrative philosophy and research after Husserl have been a rather one-sided study of texts and verbal language in isolation from more direct social actions. The textual approach did not fit well with their kind of practice-oriented social studies. Nevertheless, in their main treatise on the structures of the lifeworld, the social philosophers Schütz and Luckmann highlighted these aspects of lived experience and the time structure of action in general. Their elaborations of the inner time structures are also of particular interest for the discussion of values generally and in education in particular.²⁰

5. Monothetic and Polythetic Grasps of Time and the Question of Perceived Anonymity

My point is that there is a connection between the meaning of values, virtues, and narratives that needs to be explored. My claim is basically also that values can only be understood as aspects of an action and that we need to experience the whole action to understand the concept. The action becomes the example, an episode, which is verbally presented as a *narrative*. A narrative that explains a value, such as equality, must refer to an action performed, such as the boy in Plato's dialogue *Meno* understands the Pythagorean theorem (Plato, *Meno* 81–84). Our understanding of values is always based on this type of experience. We find a similar discussion on the relationship between metaphors and allegory as put forward by Giorgio Agamben, stating

18 Schapp, *In Geschichten verstrickt: Zum Sein von Mensch und Dinge*, 3rd ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1985); Schapp, *Die Philosophie den Geschichten* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1981).

19 Ricœur, *The Symbolism of Evil: Religious Perspectives*, trans. Emerson Buchanan, Religious Perspectives 17 (New York: Harper & Row, 1967); Ricœur, *Temps et récit*, 3 vols. (Paris: Seuil, 1991).

20 The presentation of Schütz's grand oeuvre was completed and edited by Thomas Luckmann in two volumes. See Schütz and Luckmann, *Strukturen der Lebenswelt*, UTB 2412 (Konstanz: UVK, 2003). For an English version, see Schütz and Luckmann, *Structures of the Life-World, Vol. 1*; Schütz and Luckmann, *The Structures of the Life-World, Vol. 2*, trans. Richard M. Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1989). See also the presentation by Luckmann, which is a presentation of basic ideas for educational purposes in a textbook. Luckmann, *Theorie des sozialen Handelns*, Sammlung Göschen 2108 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992).

that examples are as follows: “more akin to allegory than metaphor the paradigm is a singular case that is isolated from its context only insofar as, by exhibiting its own singularity, it makes intelligible a new ensemble, whose homogeneity it itself constitutes.”²¹

This claim may be further grounded in the phenomenological theory of Schütz and Luckmann. Schütz and Luckmann, building on Husserlian insights, brought in another aspect of our understanding of actions connected to temporality that is important for social studies in general, a move to theorize Weberian sociology based on the meaning of actions. They pointed to the fact that past and future actions are stored in consciousness or “the store of knowledge” as types of actions, for example, when you have learned to drive a car, you can not only manage your own car, but basically all cars; you have also gained a typical ability. In phenomenological theorizing, this structuration is explained as belonging to two different modes: one that follows each step of the action and the other that generalizes or synthesizes it. Thus, Husserl argued that there are two different modes of subjective time or inner duration (*la durée*) that explain how the sense of past experiences and the planning of actions in the future can be grasped, both polythetically and monothetically.²²

Polythetically is the step-by-step understanding: it means that experience originally “becomes . . . constituted step by step in inner duration” and forms what is called a many-rayed synthesis. Temporal objects, such as music themes and poems, cannot be grasped otherwise: we must reproduce them “from the beginning to the end” (to use the English expression by Schütz and Luckmann).²³ However, we may also possess “the essential law-conforming possibility of transforming the many-rayed object of awareness [polythetically grasped] into one that is simply one-rayed, of ‘rendering objective’ in the specific sense and in a *monothetic* act what is synthetically constituted in the many-rayed object,” as Husserl himself expressed it.²⁴ Monothetic is the generalizing or synthesizing activity of consciousness. With other objects, we can proceed in the same way, but to understand it, we must *first* grasp it polythetically, step by step as it was unfolded for you. When we hold the polythetically structured experiences in a single grasp, it is a monothetic one.

In their exposition of inferences from the Husserlian approach to time consciousness in the lifeworld perspective relevant for social and human sciences, Schütz and

21 See Agamben, *The Signature of All Things: On Method* (New York: Zone Books, 2009), 18: “That is to say, to give an example is a complex act which suppose that the term functioning as a paradigm is deactivated from its normal use, not in order to be moved into another context but, on the contrary, to present the canon—the rule—of that use, which cannot be shown in any other way.”

22 See, e.g., Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*, ed. H. D. Lewis (London: Allen & Unwin; New York: Humanities Press, 1976); For theories on time consciousness, see Husserl, *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Bewusstseins: Mit den Texten aus der Erstaussgabe und dem Nachlass* (Hamburg: Meiner, 2013), esp. §§118–119, pp. 335–37; cf. also his other studies on time consciousness. The idea of polythetic versus monothetic grasps has important predecessors, such as Kant and Bergson; cf. Michael Barber, *The Participating Citizen: A Biography of Alfred Schutz*, SUNY Series in Philosophy of the Social Sciences (New York: State University of New York Press, 2004), 46–47.

23 Schütz and Luckmann, *Structures of the Life-World*, 1:54.

24 Husserl, *Ideas*, 336 (emphasis original).

Luckmann pointed to the importance of the distinction “for a description of the constitution of the stock of knowledge and its transmission by society, as well as for the analysis of the understanding of the acts of fellow-men.”²⁵ In his monograph on the meaningful construction of the social world from 1932, Schütz used the distinction to explain how we understand other persons: We are “tuning in” to them.²⁶ This resembles the explanation of understanding in what Hans-Georg Gadamer called “a fusion of horizon” taking place.²⁷ As Schütz argues, we understand the meaning of an action by a fellow person through *typical* expressions.²⁸ We cannot enter into the inner life polythetically of another person, but we may come to recognize the type from our own experience, which in the end emerges polythetically. What is fused is therefore the type. Interestingly, the Schützian theory explained this core feature of any understanding of the Other and other objects well before Gadamer presented his theory of hermeneutics in 1960.

This distinction is also fundamental for theories of narrative representation and abstract nouns. Schapp distinguished between monothetic and polythetic temporal grasps to describe the difference between narratives and nonnarrative expressions. Practicing as a lawyer, he observed that stories were central for the construction of people’s identity in court. The story stands for the person, people are in fact entangled in stories, they are “in Geschichten verstrickt.”²⁹ He named experiences that are not presented, as stories in monothetic grasps are to be headings or titles: (“Überschriften”): “All diesen Ausdrücken können wir nur näherkommen, wenn wir sie als Überschrift über Geschichten fassen.”³⁰ Narrative-based interpretations, as expressed in titles or headings of narrative (e.g., “the courageous soldier”), synthesize the story. It is a monothetically expressed grasp of the polythetically lived experience. Monothetic grasps are the initial face of any abstract theoretical thematizing and explanation, including logic and natural sciences in all STEM-subjects.³¹ Without this possibility for synthesis, communication would take much more time. If there were only stories that could express experiences, if we only had the ability to express experiences narratively or polythetically, the only thing we could do would be to tell

25 Schütz and Luckmann, *Structures of the Life-World*, 1:53.

26 He presents the metaphor several places, first in the article, Schütz, “Making Music Together,” in *Studies in Social Theory*, ed. Arvid Brodersen, Collected Papers 2, *Phaenomenologica* 15 (The Haag: Nijhoff, 1964).

27 Gadamer, *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, Taschenbuchausgabe 1999, *Gesammelte Werke* 1 (Tübingen: Mohr [Siebeck], 1990), 270–312.

28 Alfred Schütz, *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt: Eine Einleitung in die verstehende Soziologie* (Vienna: Springer, 1932). English translation, Schütz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, trans. George Walsh and Frederick Lehnert, introduction by George Walsh, Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967).

29 “Entangled in stories” (my translation), see the title in Schapp, *Die Philosophie den Geschichten*, 282–88. See the English translation of Paul Ricœur, *Time and Narrative 1–3*, trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 74–80.

30 Schapp, *Die Philosophie den Geschichten*, 288: “All these expressions may only be revealed if we understand as headings to stories” (my translation).

31 STEM is an acronym for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

stories, and we could point to the category we think the example denotes.³² Headings or titles and narratives are always connected in this basic way, but the heading is a *function* of the narrative, as they are asymmetric in this way.

This asymmetric interconnection can be brought into our studies of value in education. Named values like the one in the Norwegian Education Act are headings of a narrative, representing a *type* of action. Typicality is therefore an aspect of action that should be further analyzed.

6. Typification of Lived Experience

Schütz and Luckmann proposed that every planned action in fact is what they called “typified.” To say that not only other subjects in principle but also that every future planned action can only be *typically* grasped, means to say that they as types are relatively empty, not completely empty, but not determined extensively either.³³ They point out that since actions can only be projected according to their kind; without certainty as to the outcome of the individual case, planned actions are in principle *anonymous* in this sense.³⁴ This is important for the study of teachers’ preparation for their classroom practices and for teacher educators to understand: When we plan teaching sessions, for instance, the planned steps are planned as typical ones, and we never truly know how we and the students acted in the situation until after the lesson. The more experience we have in similar situations, the more accurate our types help us in advance.

To see planned actions and situations in “typified anonymity” is probably the only way to describe our relations to plans of actions, both individually and collectively. This is an indispensable condition: We plan from known categories of action, the horizon of our preunderstanding. They are examples to us, leading to abstract, unknown and, therefore in principle, anonymous actions. From our experiences, we individually and collectively build up a system of relevance in our stock of knowledge that is originally typified, and we act and plan based on these typified actions or schemes. At the same time, plans or the possibility of making plans for future generations rest on the Husserlian idealities of “first things first,” “I can always do it again,” “and so forth,” and “other things being equal” (*ceteris paribus*). Curriculum objectives such as when we plan for students or children to “learn values,” such as equality, are basically a formal aim without a specific substance. We can ourselves only know what this value is (*equality*), its substance, only from past and present examples and counterexamples. However, how it will unfold in the future is unknown, except for its typical features. The imagined action, as acts of equality, tolerance, or

32 See also Kåre S. Fuglseth, “No Location: The Problem of Indirect Encounters with Religion in Secular Schools,” in *Location, Space and Place in Religious Education*, ed. Martin Rothgangel et al., Religious Diversity and Education in Europe 34. (Münster: Waxmann, 2017), 151–60.

33 Schütz and Luckmann, *Structures of the Life-World*, 2:14; Luckmann, *Theorie des sozialen Handelns*, 50–51.

34 Schütz and Luckmann, *Structures of the Life-World*, 2:24.

democracy for the students, the next generation, is imagined *modo futuri exacti* (“I will have”) according to its type, as finished acts. Similarly, when we study the past to understand former actions, we use conditional modes, that is, *modo conditionalis*, the future of the past, according to Schütz and Luckmann in *Structures of the Life-World*.³⁵

These insights on temporality concerning monothetic, polythetic, and typified experiences have significance for developing a theory of education, since typified actions are essential for any planning, not only material ones but also formal ones: Learning to learn or learning to be creative is formal learning that always leans on the learning of *something* (material or substantial learning). They also have consequences for educational planning; our understanding of the past and present determines how we see and plan.

7. Other Examples of Typified Grasps in Education

Without any previous knowledge of the individual formation of values, it is not only difficult but also impossible to understand its meaning and further consequences without working with it in a polythetically grasped way for the “ignorant,” that is, those who are new to the world. Additionally, every formal or operative competency must be learned in a polythetically based way, as must the “learner agency” (see the OECD plan below). Transformed to teaching practices, the polythetic grasp naturally leads to inductive strategies of learning and teaching, in which the original genesis of the stated value is not just reconstructed in conceptual reductions.³⁶ Inductive teaching strategies may move from narratives to headings, that is, from polythetic-transformed procedures to monothetic procedures, in hermeneutic circles.

As argued above, this insight is important not only for the teaching of religions, life philosophies, and value education, but also for every school subject. Music education and other arts and creative subjects are naturally based on polythetic synthesis and cannot be performed monothetically, whereas natural science and mathematics education face the challenge of a development from solving problems with already fixed answers (such as photosynthesis or the function of *pi*) to real problems, with answers that not even the teacher possesses.³⁷ From formal knowledge (mathematics, logic), we see examples that, although abstracted from the lifeworld, are also based on the polythetic logic of subjective time.

Studying ancient times may be fascinating but is more interesting when we see its relevance for our dealing with contemporary issues. However, in regard to the place of history lessons in schools, the question is slightly different because we are educated for the unknown future. We have no other options than to use our own

35 Schütz and Luckmann, *Structures of the Life-World*, 15.

36 For the idea of educational reduction, see Martin Lehner, *Didaktische Reduktion*, UTB 3715 (Bern: Haupt, 2012), 13.

37 Schütz, particularly in *Making Music Together*, uses the idea of music as a paradigm for the constitution of meaning in social life generally; cf. Barber, *Participating Citizen*, 112.

experience from the far and near past when we plan for the next generation. Thus, the question is not whether we can learn from the past but *how* we can learn.³⁸

In plans for education and the desire for an education that prepares the next generation for an unknown future, the OECD report from 2018 claims that “It is appropriate that curricula should continue to evolve, perhaps in radical ways.”³⁹ “Radical” seems to refer to formal matters, such as the need for “learner agency: Navigating through a complex and uncertain world.”⁴⁰ This collides with a long tradition in *Bildung*, with comprehensive pedagogy indicating that education cannot be formal only: One must learn to learn, or learn to act and think (cf. agency) by learning *something*. There is no way that we can avoid the question of matter and of choice of educational subject matters in our plans for education and practice as teachers.

In practice, school education must be based on a core knowledge of *categorical* character, perhaps even classical knowledge, since we cannot teach every subject matter encyclopedically. Finding essential types of subject matter through key examples is paramount for the art of teaching.

8. The Importance of Reenactment

The positive effects of giving examples to help students or other people understand is a well-known theory in education.⁴¹ I have argued above not only for the claim that narratives are the only way to understand values when they are articulated as abstract concepts in language, but in addition, I have added to the clarification of the matter, that is, the understanding of values, by presenting a theory that explains the effects of narratives on understanding abstract matters such as values. Against this background there are several ways a teacher may materialize this narrative insight, but there is one in particular: reenactment.

Reenactment was believed by the English history philosopher Robin Collingwood to be the essential approach and a historian’s most important one. While meeting the historical figures one is studying one must regard them with an imagination of re-

38 See my own contribution in Kåre S. Fuglseth “Between Past and Future in Religious Education: The Categorical Answer,” in *Religious Education on the Move: Challenging the Unknown Future of Religious Education*, ed. Ina Ter Avest et al., Religious Diversity and Education in Europe 41 (Münster: Waxmann, 2020), 207.

39 “In the face of an increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous world, education can make the difference as to whether people embrace the challenges they are confronted with, or whether they are defeated by them. In addition, and in an era characterized by a new explosion of scientific knowledge, and a growing array of complex societal problems, it is appropriate that curricula should continue to evolve, perhaps in radical ways.” See OECD report, *The Future of Education and Skills, Education 2030* (OECD, 2018).

40 OECD, *Future of Education and Skills*, 4.

41 The German educational scholar, Wolfgang Klafki, is among the many who has pointed out this insight for teaching in his theory of categorical formation. See Klafki, *Das pädagogische Problem des Elementaren und die Theorie der kategorialen Bildung*, 2nd ed. (Weinheim: Beltz, 1964).

modeling or re-creating.⁴² Consequences for historical studies from this insight were also articulated by the Norwegian philosopher Audun Øfsti, pointing out that “the past was once future,” and all people have open horizons in their choice of action.⁴³

This kind of historical perspective in many ways summarizes my discussions above and points to methods of teaching values. To put it phenomenologically: I take the *reenactment structure* to represent a kind of reestablishment of the polythetically typified relevance structure of core values.⁴⁴ *Reenactment* is in principle polythetically structured.

We can transfer this principle to exploration generally as a way of inductively working in school, but always as a kind of reenactment. The inductive methods are particularly important for understanding values and structures that are already *well* established, as those in the Norwegian Education Act, highly esteemed in a liberal society and regarded as values and structures that we deem worthy of bringing over to the next generation. The new generation must always meet well-established values through reenactment to become meaningful and further operative for newcomers worldwide.

A kind of inductive, reenactment seems to be important for avoiding plain moralism and shallow knowledge without understanding the basic values at play for the newcomers to the world. This is particularly important in regard to choosing the best examples to reenact. It is tempting for teachers to use contemporary social conflicts, acts of terror, and climate crises as examples in teaching of values. However, it seems easier to use examples of a less urgent kind, choosing subjects of teaching derived more from the *past* than from the present.⁴⁵ And here, insights from our entire Nangeroni project may prove *their* value.

Bibliography

- Agamben, Giorgio. *The Signature of All Things: On Method*. New York: Zone Books, 2009.
- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by R. Rackham. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934.
- Arendt, Hannah. “The Crisis in Education.” Pages 171–93 in *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*. Middlesex: Penguin, 2006.
- Barber, Michael D. *The Participating Citizen: A Biography of Alfred Schutz*. SUNY Series in Philosophy of the Social Sciences. New York: State University of New York Press, 2004. <https://doi.org/10.1353/book4831>.

42 See Collingwood, *The Idea of History*, rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), first published in 1946.

43 Øfsti “Historien var engang fremtid: Et vitenskapsteoretisk notat,” *Norsk Filosofisk Tidsskrift* 28 (1993): 221–45 (ET: The History Was Once Future); cf. the title of this contribution.

44 For the theory of relevance, see Alfred Schütz, *Das Problem der Relevanz* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971). The text also has an English version, see Schütz, *Reflections on the Problem of Relevance*, ed. Richard Haner (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.)

45 The historical argument basically comes from Hannah Arendt, “The Crisis in Education,” in *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought* (Middlesex: Penguin, 2006), 171–93.

- Benner, Dietrich. *Allgemeine Pädagogik: Eine systematisch-problemgeschichtliche Einführung in die Grundstruktur pädagogischen Denkens und Handelns*. 8th rev. ed. Weinheim: Beltz Juventa, 2015.
- Buck, Günther. *Hermeneutik und Bildung: Elemente einer verstehenden Bildungslehre*. Kritische Information 100. Munich: Fink, 1981.
- . *Lernen und Erfahrung: Zum Begriff der didaktischen Induktion*. 2nd ed. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1969.
- Buganza, Jacob. “Ethics, Literature, and Education.” *Ethics and Education* 7 (2012): 125–35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449642.2012.733595>.
- Clandinin, D. Jean, and F. Michael Connelly. *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- Cohen, Louis, Lawrence Manion, and Keith Morrison, eds. *Research Methods in Education*. 8th ed. London: Routledge, 2018. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315456539>.
- Collingwood, R. G. *The Idea of History*. Rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Croce, Michel, and Silvia M. Vaccarezza. “Educating through Exemplars: Alternative Paths to Virtue.” *Theory and Research in Education* 15 (2017): 5–19. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1477878517695903>.
- Dahlbeck, Johan, and Morten Timmerman Korsgaard. “Introduction: The Role of the Exemplar in Arendt and Spinoza; Insights for Moral Exemplarism and Moral Education.” *Ethics and Education* 15 (2020): 135–43. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449642.2020.1731173>.
- EQF, The European Qualification Framework. <https://europa.eu/europass/en/description-eight-efq-levels>.
- Fuglseth, Kåre S. “Between Past and Future in Religious Education: The Categorical Answer.” Pages 209–22 in *Religious Education on the Move: Challenging the Unknown Future of Religious Education*. Edited by Ina Ter Avest, Cok Bakker, Peter Schreiner, Julie Iprgrave, and Silke Leonhard. Religious Diversity and Education in Europe 41. Münster: Waxmann, 2020.
- . “Beyond and behind Phronesis, Tact, and Discretion: Some Basic Elements of Teachers’ Judgment from a Phenomenological Point of View.” Pages 257–72 in *Pädagogik, Phänomenologie: Verhältnisbestimmungen und Herausforderungen*. Edited by Malte Brinkmann, Marc F. Buck, and Severin Sales. Phänomenologische Erziehungswissenschaft 3. Wiesbaden: Springer VS, 2017. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-15743-2_15.
- . “Forteljing eller analyse: Ei sentral fagleg og fagdidaktisk problemstilling?” Pages 115–22 in *Konferanserapport fra konferansen: FoU i praksis 2002*. Edited by Geir Stavik-Karlsen et al. Trondheim: Program for lærerutdanning, NTNU, 2003. [ET: Stories or Analyses: A Core Problem in Teaching School Subjects?]
- . “No Location: The Problem of Indirect Encounters with Religion in Secular Schools.” Pages 151–60 in *Location, Space and Place in Religious Education*. Edited by Martin Rothgangel, Tomas von Brömssen, Hans-Günter Hembrock, and Geir Skeie. Religious Diversity and Education in Europe 34. Münster: Waxmann, 2017.
- Gadamer, Hans-Georg. *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*. Taschenbuchausgabe 1999. Gesammelte Werke 1. Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1990.
- Giesecke, Hermann. *Wie lernt man Werte? Grundlagen der Sozialerziehung*. Weinheim: Juventa, 2005.
- Gudmundsdottir, Sigrun. “The Narrative Nature of Pedagogical Content Knowledge.” Pages 24–38 in *Narrative in Teaching, Learning, and Research*. Edited by Hunter McEwan and Kieran Egan. New York: Teachers College Press, 1995.

- Hauerwas, Stanley, and L. Gregory Jones. "Introduction: Why Narrative?" Pages 1–18 in *Why Narrative? Readings in Narrative Theology*. Edited by Stanley Hauerwas and L. Gregory Jones. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1997.
- Horsdal, Marianne. *Telling Lives: Exploring Dimensions of Narratives*. London: Routledge, 2012. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203805046>.
- Husserl, Edmund. *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*. Edited by H. D. Lewis. London: Allen & Unwin; New York: Humanities Press, 1976.
- . *Zur Phänomenologie des inneren Bewusstseins: Mit den Texten aus der Erstausgabe und dem Nachlass*. Hamburg: Meiner, 2013.
- Klafki, Wolfgang. *Das pädagogische Problem des Elementaren und die Theorie der kategorialen Bildung*. 2nd ed. Weinheim: Beltz, 1964.
- Kunnskapsdepartementet. "Chapter 1. Objectives, Scope, and Adapted Education, etc. Section 1-1. 'The Objectives of Education and Training.'" Ministry of Education and Research Education and Training. Act Relating to Primary and Secondary Education and Training (the Education Act).
- Lehner, Martin. *Didaktische Reduktion*. Uni-Taschenbücher 3715. Bern: Haupt, 2012.
- Luckmann, Thomas. *Theorie des sozialen Handelns*. Sammlung Götschen 2108. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110848922>.
- Macintyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. 2nd ed. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.
- McEwan, Hunter, and Kieran Egan, eds. *Narrative in Teaching, Learning, and Research: Critical Issues in Curriculum*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1995.
- Newton, Adam Zachary. *Narrative Ethics*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995. <https://doi.org/10.4159/9780674041462>.
- Nussbaum, Martha. *Poetic Justice: The Literary Imagination and Public Life*. Boston: Beacon, 1995.
- OECD. *The Future of Education and Skills: Education 2030*. OECD, 2018. https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2018/06/the-future-of-education-and-skills_5424dd26/54ac7020-en.pdf.
- Øfsti, Audun. "Historien var engang fremtid: Et vitenskapsteoretisk notat." *Norsk Filosofisk Tidsskrift* 28 (1993): 221–45. [ET: The History Was Once Future; A Comment on Theory of Science].
- Phelan, James. *Living to Tell about It: A Rhetoric and Ethics of Character Narration*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005.
- Plato. *Laches; Protagoras; Meno; Euthydemus*. Translated by W. R. M. Lamb. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990.
- Polkinghorne, Donald. *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*. SUNY Series in Philosophy of the Social Sciences. New York: State University of New York Press, 1988.
- Ricœur, Paul. *The Symbolism of Evil: Religious Perspectives*. Translated by Emerson Buchanan. Religious Perspectives 17. New York: Harper & Row, 1967.
- . *Temps et récit*. 3 vols. Paris: Seuil, 1991.
- . *Time and Narrative 1–3*. Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Schapp, Wilhelm. *Die Philosophie den Geschichten*. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1981.
- . *In Geschichten verstrickt: Zum Sein von Mensch und Dinge*. 3rd ed. Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1985.
- Schütz, Alfred. *Das Problem der Relevanz*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1971.

- . *Der sinnhafte Aufbau der sozialen Welt: Eine Einleitung in die verstehende Soziologie*. Vienna: Springer, 1932. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-7091-3108-4>.
- . “Making Music Together.” Pages 159–78 in *Studies in Social Theory*. Edited by Arvid Brodersen. Collected Papers 2. *Phaenomenologica* 15. The Haag: Nijhoff, 1964. Repr. from *Social Research*, 18 (1951): 76–97. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-010-1340-6_8.
- . *The Phenomenology of the Social World*. Translated by George Walsh and Frederick Lehnert. Introduction by George Walsh. Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967.
- . *Reflections on the Problem of Relevance*. Edited by Richard Haner. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.
- Schütz, Alfred, and Thomas Luckmann. *Strukturen der Lebenswelt*. Uni-Taschenbücher 2412. Konstanz: UVK, 2003.
- . *The Structures of the Life-World, Vol. 1*. Translated by Richard M. Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt. Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973.
- . *The Structures of the Life-World, Vol. 2*. Translated by Richard M. Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt. Northwestern University Studies in Phenomenology and Existential Philosophy. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1989.
- Siegel, Harvey, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Education*. Oxford Handbooks. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195312881.001.0001>.
- Sokolowski, Robert. *Introduction to Phenomenology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- . “The Logic of Parts and Wholes in Husserl’s Investigations.” *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 28 (1968): 537–53. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2105690>.
- Tolmie, D. Francois. *Narratology and Biblical Narratives: A Practical Guide*. San Francisco: International Scholars Publications, 1999.
- White, Hayden. *The Content of the Form: The Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.
- Zahavi, Dan. *Husserl’s Phenomenology. Cultural Memory in the Present*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003.
- Zagzebski, Linda. *Exemplarist Moral Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190655846.001.0001>.