

Christian Dewald & Vrääh Öhner

## Showing – Becoming Aware – Learning On the Pedagogical Dispositif of the *Kulturfilm*

### Abstract

The contribution presents in a first step those pedagogical and aesthetic concepts that have played an essential role in the development of the Kulturfilm (cultural film) as well as in its differentiation from the educational and instructional film. In a second step, from the perspective of educational science, we will examine which meaning-giving parameters also determine the pedagogical dispositive of (moving) images, which modalities of showing enable experience and learning, and which processes the (learning) subject goes through. In recent years, these questions have increasingly been linked to an examination of the term of attention (Neuendank, 2022). After an introduction to the concept of attention, it will be applied to a reading sketch of the Kulturfilm “Die Wunder des Films” which had selected and newly reassembled previously known educational and Kulturfilm material along a teaching of cinematic recording processes.

### Keywords

Educational film, Kulturfilm, Pedagogical Dispositif, Film History, Educational Science

In 1929, at the height of the European avant-garde film movement, a remarkable encounter took place between the ‘revolutionaries’ and the ‘pedagogues’ of film at the International Werkbund Exhibition *Film and Photo* in Stuttgart.<sup>1</sup> The film programme for the exhibition, which was designed as a comprehensive retrospective of avant-garde filmmaking of the 1920s, was curated by Hans Richter. It showed the ‘advances of the avant-garde’ as well as Soviet feature films and documentaries. Alongside some of the more recent ‘masterpieces’ of film production it also featured a *Kulturfilm* (cultural film), namely Edgar Beyfuss’ *Die Wunder des Films* (*The Wonders of Film*) from 1928.<sup>2</sup>

It was not the first encounter of this kind. Beyfuss had already participated in organising the matinee *Der absolute Film* in Berlin in 1925 and had given an introductory lecture there, as he did at the *FiFo* in Stuttgart.<sup>3</sup> For Malte Hagener Beyfuss is therefore one of the ‘hidden protagonists of the

avant-garde', at least in the German context.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, a figure like Beyfuss, who worked as a dramatic advisor for the cultural film department of *Universum Film AG* (Ufa) and published *Das Kulturfilmbuch* together with Alexander Kossowsky in 1924,<sup>5</sup> could be used to sketch the development of a film culture in which much was still in flux and the demarcation between cinematic genres was not yet clearly defined.

This is also and especially true of the notion of film as a means of education that underlies the *Kulturfilm*. It emerged from the spirit of the cinema reform movement, which saw the *Kulturfilm* as a method of making cinema audiences receptive to good, i.e. educational and culturally valuable film. Its development during the 1920s was decisively influenced by pedagogical and aesthetic concepts whose complex interplay with multimedia performance practices, cinematic modes of presentation, and viewing positions we would like to call the 'pedagogical dispositif' of the *Kulturfilm*, following Frank Kessler and Eef Masson.<sup>6</sup> Like Kessler and Masson, we understand the concept of the pedagogical dispositif as a heuristic tool that allows us to better understand the genesis of the *Kulturfilm*, its initial proximity to the science and educational film, as well as its gradual functional differentiation from these, more narrowly pedagogical forms.

In a first, historiographical step, we would like to present those pedagogical and aesthetic concepts that have played an essential role in the development of the *Kulturfilm* as well as in its differentiation from the educational and instructional film. On the one hand, we are concerned with the concept of vividness, which gains a new quality through the possibilities of film to reproduce things and facts of external reality in a stylised form, and on the other hand with the concept of movement, which lends this stylised form of reproduction a special liveliness. Only with the differentiation between the *Kulturfilm* as a means of adult education and the educational film intended exclusively for school use do the concepts of vividness and movement lose their central position in the pedagogical discourse on the *Kulturfilm*. They are replaced by concepts such as learning, becoming aware and showing, which—with a few exceptions—are no longer reflected in the contemporary discussion.

In a second step, from the perspective of educational science, we will therefore discuss the question of how learning processes can be initiated in the audience of adult education films. Central to this is the concept of attention, as attention is at the beginning of every educational and learning process. It brings us to a threshold where we become an other, writes philosopher Bernhard Waldenfels. Learning begins with paying attention. All at once, something familiar, something we have

relied on without realising it, becomes suspect. Someone or something draws our attention to what we have always seen and understood and for that very reason have not paid attention to. Someone or something unsettles our previously self-evident knowledge, is how educationalist Käthe Mayer-Drawe describes the potential of attention to set learning in motion. However, we are not instructed to integrate new knowledge elements or to exchange knowledge contents. Rather, someone or something enables us to become attentive and, as self-acting learners, to confront our knowledge to date with a new horizon of understanding, thereby modifying possibilities for experience and action.

The potential of attention to set learning processes in motion, as well as its plea for distraction and thus its call to subvert the dominance of the signifier, point to the seemingly contradictory, volatile field of the concept of attention. As we will show in the concluding reading sketch of Edgar Beyfuß' cultural film *Die Wunder des Films*, which compiled and newly assembled educational and *Kulturfilm* material along a doctrine of cinematic recording procedures, the concept of attention offers clues as to which phenomena of perception can come into play when viewing a film with adult educational aspirations.

## Vividness and movement

If there is one concept that has dominated debates about the educational value of *Kulturfilm*, it is the concept of intuition (*Anschauung*). Since the Enlightenment, philosophical aesthetics has distinguished between an empathetic and a comparatively prosaic, one might say: pragmatic concept of intuition. The empathetic concept of intuition promises a depth or height of insight that is not accessible to the other human faculties, but most of all to art: intuition conceived as an event of seeing unspeakable images or as the self-discovery of the ego, which neither the rational concept nor sensual perception can achieve. However, the pragmatic concept of intuition aims, in the words of Waltraud Naumann-Beyer, 'not at elevation, but at translation from another space, another time or another medium'. She continues:

What is translated may come from a more distant side of reality, remote from the observer, or from another language; but it may also be transmitted from another cognitive sphere. The transport can be from the abstract language of the concept or from an inconceivable generality that is to be demonstrated or exemplified.<sup>7</sup>

If the pragmatic notion of the concept of intuition rather suggests translation, demonstration, exemplification, this also means that it is a matter of indicating or showing, and less of a revealing notion of intuition. This has a lot to do with vividness, illustration or the rhetorical notion of vivification (*evidentia*), in which it is a matter of bringing to life for the speaker that which is distant (in time and space). In addition to this closeness to rhetoric, the pragmatic notion of intuition brings another interesting aspect into play, namely that of a heteronomous (as opposed to an autonomous) aesthetics, which allows art to be used for spiritual-sensual pleasures or for the didactic purpose of instruction: for art, it is no longer a matter of pointing to the inscrutable, but of presenting what has already been researched or at least what can be researched. This has nonetheless aesthetic consequences: ‘Where the concept approximated to vividness comes into effect aesthetically [such as in educational film or *Kulturfilm*], craft and rules apply more than the intuition of genius’.<sup>8</sup>

Against this background, the *Kulturfilm*, at least in its formative phase, appears as the flip side of efforts (such as those of the European film avant-garde) that sought to establish film as a new art form. At the centre of the pedagogical dispositif of the *Kulturfilm* was a conviction exemplarily formulated by Felix Lampe, then director of the *Bildstelle des Zentralinstituts für Erziehung und Unterricht* (Film Office of the Central Institute for Education and Instruction) in Berlin: Due to its specific characteristics (first and foremost its moving image, which enables both a dynamic perception of the objects shown in the film and an exercise in ‘synthetic seeing’), film was not only able to reach those parts of the population (such as children and working class people) whose ‘mental stock of ideas is based on syntheses of associated images’ and whose ‘thinking is based on chains of ideas of a sensually representational kind’.<sup>9</sup> It could also become the motor of an independent cultural development that goes beyond the mere imitation of the modes of representation of language and the fine arts, without immediately dissolving into a higher art form.

Lampe’s magic formula for this was the translation of culturally valuable content, ranging ‘from the presentation of scientific truths to material with aesthetic or ethical significance, fantasy-inspiring creative power or edifying effect’,<sup>10</sup> into the mode of representation of film determined by visual movement. For in contrast to the perception of reality or to learning by looking at reality, the translation of reality into the moving image has the advantage of representing a stylised reality that directs concentration to the essential. Lampe argues:

If film culture recognises its task correctly then it will be conducive to the cultivation of such contents that are only brought to consciousness through the film strip, and thus become a bearer of culture in the broadest sense; for across the boundaries between professions, classes of people, nations and states, the moving film strip is purely externally an excellent means of communication and internally the most perfect means of illustrating processes of movement, including those of the soul, which become externally noticeable. For training the observation of movements (...) the moving image strip is the only means of research, teaching and entertainment.<sup>11</sup>

Lampe thus sketches an aesthetic-pedagogical programme that bases its suitability as a means of education on the notion that ‘the moving image conceives its content from the perspective of change, of coming into being and passing away’ and is therefore able to ‘directly illustrate the interplay of forces to which all existing things are exposed’. Unlike the word, which lacks vividness, and unlike the still image, which lacks movement, the moving image, which ‘never stands before our eyes as a whole but only becomes clear in its totality when it has rolled past’, forces a synthesis of sensual perception and abstract thought.<sup>12</sup> Thus, as a culture of synthesis and the ability to combine, ‘film viewing formally exercises the mind already during perception’.<sup>13</sup>

Lampe’s assessment of the educational value of film was shared by the film-minded educators of the time. As late as 1939, Kurt Zierold, the ministerial counsellor responsible for the *Reichsstelle für den Unterrichtsfilm* (RfdU) (Reich Office for Educational Film) in the *Reichsministerium für Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung* (Reich Ministry of Science, Education and Culture), attributed the importance of film for teaching to the characteristics determined by Lampe: ‘If the characteristics of film are *visuality* (*Bildlichkeit*) and movement, then it must give teaching two things above all: vividness and liveliness.’<sup>14</sup>

In practice, however, things looked different. The ‘revolutionaries’ never tired of lamenting the lack of emancipation of the *Kulturfilm* from the educational film, which they attributed to the work of the *Bildstelle*, which Lampe directed until 1931. In 1929, Rudolf Arnheim, for example, described the reviewing activities of the *Bildstelle* in the magazine *Die Weltbühne* like this:

They demand a schematic structure from the educational film, a petty detail that leads to boredom, they begin to condemn where the film lover looks up and is pleased. For this reason, the people of the *Kulturfilm* are forced to produce instructional dullness: first a city panorama is shown, (...) and then the church (with an indication of the year of construction in the intertitle) and then the town hall, but by no means in extravagant detail or shots and by no means in “modern” montage, no, everything nicely in order.<sup>15</sup>

Popular education institutions such as the Vienna Urania, which specialised in showing *Kulturfilme*, on the other hand, stuck to the model of the lantern slide lecture. Feature-length *Kulturfilme* were shown there, as were the shorter films for school screenings, with accompanying lecture, supplementary lantern slides, and music. In addition to the film prints, the Urania also acquired the distribution rights for Austria, not least because it did not want to take over the *Kulturfilme* in the form offered by the film trade, but first had them re-edited by in-house ‘scholars and popular educators’ according to ‘scientific and popular educational principles.’<sup>16</sup>

How deeply this editing affected the structure of the films is difficult to comprehend from the documents available today, since the Urania film archive was destroyed during the Second World War. However, contemporary distribution catalogues of the *Kulturfilme* bearing the *Uraniafilm* trademark show, for example, that one of the most successful Urania films of the 1920s, *Shackletons Südpol-Expedition (South – Sir Ernest Shackleton’s Glorious Epic of the Antarctic, UK 1919)*, had a length of 1,135 metres in the setup with lecture and lantern slides, while it had a length of 1,600 metres without them.<sup>17</sup>

The performance practices of the Vienna Urania prove that the confidence of popular educators and school pedagogues in the educational power of mere film viewing was limited: accompanying explanations and lantern slides inserted into the dynamic flow of the film should ensure that the formal training of the mind while watching a film was led in the right direction. Admittedly, editing cultural films according to pedagogical principles was standard practice in the nontheatrical field during the 1920s, not least because of the lack of ‘real’ educational films adapted to the schools’ curriculum. Yet the mistrust of educators was of a fundamental nature: In the field of *Kulturfilm* and, by implication, of ‘instructional entertainment’,<sup>18</sup> a formal training of the mind in the synthesis of sensual-objective perception and abstract thought demanded by film was perceived as acceptable. But where it came to the actual imparting of knowledge and skills and thus of learning proper, the vividness and liveliness of film should be no more than mere aids in the hands of appointed educators.

The direction in which the discussion about the educational value of film developed after the differentiation of *Kulturfilm* and educational film from 1934 onwards--which was also an institutional one--is something we would like to briefly hint at in this context. In a remarkable essay from 1939 entitled ‘*Anschauung und Denken beim Unterrichtsfilm*’ (Intuition and Thinking in Educational Films), Friedrich Copei<sup>19</sup> effectively challenged the widely shared view that film served

the educational principle of *Anschauung* (intuition). Copei opposed the conviction that film was particularly suitable for creating ‘intuitions of objects, processes and concepts’ for the sole reason that it ‘presents things and processes that would otherwise be inaccessible to teaching and [thus] offers the possibility of developing hitherto unknown concepts from them’.<sup>20</sup> This conviction, according to Copei, fails to recognise the child’s capacity for abstraction: if the child ‘grasps the concepts and meanings directly in the tangible, concrete’, then it follows that ‘only when the gaze is directed and guided by an intellect, by a search for meaning and significance, does real seeing emerge from the reception of optical stimuli. (...) It is only from an intellect, a “thinking” that seeing becomes that active, grasping, formative perception to which we distinctively give the name ‘Anschauung’ [intuition].’<sup>21</sup>

The production of such thinking remained an essential task of film, it could ‘bring order to the confusing abundance of impressions’ in reality and thus help to ‘penetrate this reality cognitively, to grasp its meaning.’<sup>22</sup> This thinking always starts ‘in the concrete, the vividness of one’s own experience and that of the film image,’ as a dynamic process, Copei writes. Each ‘film image, in its vividness (...) conjures up the memory of what was seen and thought earlier’,<sup>23</sup> whereby a learning process is set in motion.

In what follows, we want to examine more closely from an educational science perspective how these learning processes actually are set in motion.

## Learning

Something or someone offers a sight, makes a claim, holds out to us that which we have always seen and understood and for that very reason did not pay attention to. Someone or something draws our attention to that which until then has not been seen clearly enough. In learning, in the opening of a new perspective, above all the shake-up of formerly self-evident knowledge takes place, Käte Meyer-Drawe writes in an analysis of Copei’s texts from a phenomenological perspective.<sup>24</sup> Learning is not a linear process of *integration* of knowledge elements, but ‘a process of *confrontation* between undetermined guiding previous knowledge [unausdrücklich leitendes Vorwissen] and new view, new possibilities of experience and action, i.e. the productivity of the learning process lies in its *negativity: learning is relearning* [Umlernen].’<sup>25</sup> Content is not simply exchanged, nor methods refined or ideas reorganized, but the entire horizon of experience as a field of possible experience is modified.



Learning as relearning—–a way of disenchantment of hasty and inappropriate anticipations, preconceptions, opinions, expectations, which we owe to becoming aware and its preceding disturbances and interruptions. In the confrontation of the learners with a new horizon of understanding, they negate their previous guiding prior knowledge, which is now expressed to them for the first time as a founding horizon. The negativity of the experience thus has a productive sense. Learning in this sense means to unsettle familiar references, a reversal of consciousness, which started with a redirection of the line of sight, with the becoming brittle of the familiar, with becoming aware.

### **Becoming aware (*Aufmerken*)**

Since the 1990s, the concept of attention has gained increasing significance in various branches of the scientific discourse. The following section presents central theses of selected analyses on attention from sociological and phenomenological perspectives, which are intended to illustrate becoming aware, making aware and attention as temporal prerequisites to learning processes.

For his analysis Bernhard Waldenfels gathers the first basic features of a phenomenology of attention and opens with a comparison of leading the mind towards a thing with steering a ship ashore. With this movement towards, a *staying on course* (*Hinhalten*) and *setting the course* (*Hinrichten*), he derives the phenomenon of attention from the Greek *προσέχειν* (*prosechein*). Becoming aware turns out to be ‘an event in which we are involved, but not as the author or lawgiver’,<sup>26</sup> Waldenfels writes. Whether we attend to something intensely or diffusely, like dozing or daydreaming, we arrive at a threshold. Something catches our eye, imposes itself, attracts us, repels us, afflicts us. ‘What emerges beyond the threshold, that is, where I am not and cannot be without becoming an other, turns out to be enticing, frightening, stimulating.’<sup>27</sup> We are involved in it, but not as autonomous subjects: different are the characteristics of attention that must first be aroused. It connects with inevitable *selection*. ‘Attention that we give to one, we withdraw from the other. The “narrowness of consciousness” is not for nothing one of the oldest characteristics of attention.’<sup>28</sup> As a modal quantity, attention does not ‘decide on the that, the what and the who of experience, but on the how’<sup>29</sup> and shows, with *attention apparatuses* that have become commonplace, a close relationship to technology. Furthermore, there is ‘a specific *time* and a specific *space* of becoming aware’.<sup>30</sup> Attention is, according to Waldenfels, lived patience that allows itself to be surprised. As a taste that



we relish in our mouths or a thought that we savour, ‘it experiences constant *delay*’.<sup>31</sup> As an essential component of an ‘ethos of the senses’ that demands mindfulness, ‘selectively distributed and withheld attention’<sup>32</sup> harbours social conflict and describes the attention field as a site of struggle and suffering.

In his system theory-oriented study on the communication of attention, Jochen Kade reconstructs attention as a basic concept in educational science and introduces a series of analyses of social-scientific-philosophical discourses on attention. He conceptualises attention as a ‘state or activity of consciousness’. As a heightened awareness of a focused perceptual domain, attention is a prerequisite of cognitive processes, ‘a basal form of human attention to the world’.<sup>33</sup>

For the current discourse in the social sciences, Kade diagnoses three themes on attention: fixation and concentration, as a question of the binding of perception; selection, ‘as a question of the choice of the focused object from a field of perception’; and finally, the theme of control, as a ‘distinction between self-determined and externally determined attention’.<sup>34</sup> Kade builds his analysis on Jonathan Crary’s<sup>35</sup> study on attention and its loose continuations by Aleida Assmann<sup>36</sup> (with her work on the transformation of memory culture) and Georg Franck<sup>37</sup> (with his market- and marketing-related concept of attention). For the context of this essay, Kade’s comments on Crary’s work alone will be presented.

Through Crary’s cultural-historical study of the development of perception in the context of emerging visual technologies, Kade locates the birth of the modern concept of attention in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He outlines that the forced development of capitalist industrial societies leads to fundamental changes in the field of perception ‘and, relatedly, modern subjectivity’.<sup>38</sup> The new formation of subjectivity is at stake insofar as the ‘fracturing of traditional social determinations of perception (...) creates the space for a redefinition of the field of perception’.<sup>39</sup> This leads to a first climax of the preoccupation with the topic of attention. ‘Scholarly discourse reflects a social struggle marked by institutional strategies of power and individual resistance, in which the determination of what individuals’ attention and perception should be directed toward is at stake’.<sup>40</sup>

While psychology pursues a concept of attention as ‘performance-oriented and controllable subjectivity’,<sup>41</sup> the concept of attention in philosophy is related to criticism of the processes of social appropriation and disciplining. The concentration on tasks demanded by capitalist

production—mechanisation and specialisation of work processes—sees inattention as a serious problem and offers distraction (*Zerstreuung*) as mass spectacle.

Counter to this, ‘philosophy focuses on a concept of attention that is oriented toward individuals’ self-determination over their consciousness and perception’. Here, distraction (inattention) is positively occupied as a ‘form of refusal to the social coercion to concentrate on something specific, thus to the narrowing of perception’.<sup>42</sup> What is emphasised, according to Kade, is the heteronomy of the social determination of perception under the sign of attention demands.

With Hans Blumenberg, further basic determinations of attention can be described. Attention is a kind of makeshift of consciousness that enables one to cope with the abundance of what is simultaneously present in space. However, attention can be disturbed at any time by its counter-phenomenon, distraction (*Ablenkung*)—a disturbance that distracts attention by constituting a new object of attention. Nevertheless, attention, with the capacity of the subject to decide with what intensity the perceptual faculty is employed, constitutes a ‘form of freedom’.<sup>43</sup> Blumenberg describes a second form of freedom, which is connected with pointing, with making aware (*Aufmerksammachen*):

Nothing is taught, nothing is set to learn, nothing is introduced and no one is led, nothing is promised and certainly nothing is augured, neither hope is awakened nor fear is instilled. Instead, this: attention is drawn to that about which it is assumed that it has not been seen clearly enough until then. (...) Nobody can be taught without losing autonomy, everybody can be made aware.<sup>44</sup>

Käte Meyer-Drawe’s reflections, like those of Waldenfels and Blumenberg, aim at a phenomenological analysis of becoming aware<sup>45</sup> and draw similar conclusions. Phenomenological research asks ‘how *something* appears to us *as something* in our experience, thinking, perceiving, acting, or imagining. That which is given to us always shows itself to us in certain respects’.<sup>46</sup> Meyer-Drawe argues that special weight is given to the concept of experience. She refers to Waldenfels, for whom experience consists in ‘*something* appearing *as something* and thus becoming significant, and *something* is strived *in something* and thus becoming desirable’.<sup>47</sup> Experience means a ‘discontinuity in the execution of life, a tearing away from familiarity with oneself as the centre of meaning’.<sup>48</sup> Meyer-Drawe states that phenomenological considerations focus on those structures of experience, such as a redirection of the line of sight and listening (*Aufhorchen*), if they have attention as their theme. Attention is always preceded by something: ‘Something or someone catches the eye, disturbs, interrupts, offers a sight,

makes a claim'.<sup>49</sup> The world of habits suddenly becomes fragile. The merely known, that on which one has so far relied on without recognizing it, all at once becomes suspicious. Something flashes about the given. Attention, according to Meyer-Drawe, means 'a modification of perceiving, acting and understanding, in that it keeps us focused on (...) what we have always already seen and understood and for that very reason do not pay attention to'.<sup>50</sup> Learning begins with a becoming aware, a waking up from the slumber of the familiar.

Malte Brinkmann attempts to contribute to the 'pedagogical definition and exploration of attention as a social and shared practice in pedagogical situations in the classroom'.<sup>51</sup> Like Meyer-Drawe, he assumes that attention is a phenomenon that precedes learning and education. At the same time, he sees attention in pedagogical contexts as a social practice. 'In pedagogical situations, people not only learn from each other, but they learn something from others, and in this they also learn something from each other in front of others.'<sup>52</sup> Brinkmann describes attention--as a social phenomenon and as a pedagogical practice--as interattentionality, as 'shared' or 'common' attention. It is based on two correlating practices: firstly, the individual, learning to becoming aware (*Aufmerksamwerden*), as striking, noticing, and secondly, as making aware (*Aufmerksammachen*), as the (educational) practice of showing.<sup>53</sup> He continues the differentiation of pedagogical pointing aimed at attention referring to Tomasello's ethological research.<sup>54</sup> It is the pre-linguistic capacity for gestural pointing and understanding of what is shown that underlies the human capacity for communication: 'In deictic, indicating pointing, for example, the child does not look at the pointing finger, but turns its gaze in the direction that is indicated. At the same time, it understands that something is being shown to *it itself*'.<sup>55</sup> This means 'that it is understood that something is being shown because *it is being shown to the other solely for the purpose of showing*'.<sup>56</sup> This reflexive intentionality and attentionality of educational situations is according to Tomasello the precondition of human learning and, Brinkmann adds, the precondition of human educating. The precondition for showing is that what is shown shows itself (as a phenomenon). While showing something, something is showing.

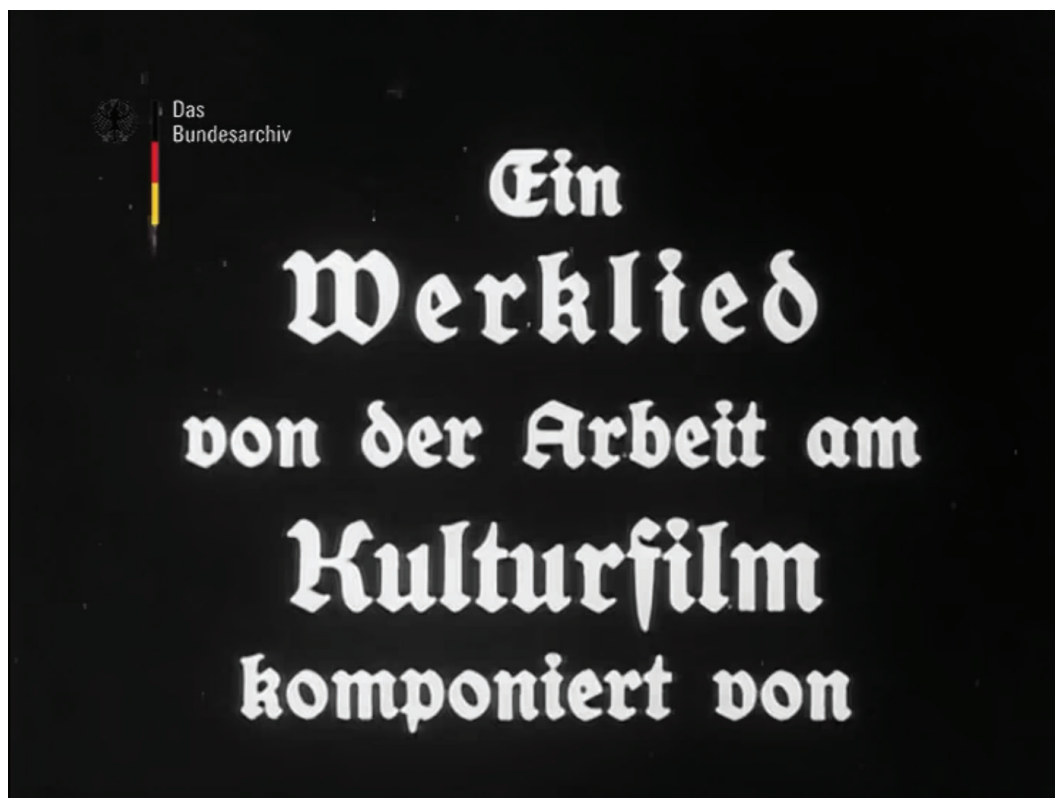
## Showing

Throughout the history of pedagogy, especially the theory of didactics, showing is considered as the actual content of the teaching activity and as a 'pedagogical primordial gesture'.<sup>57</sup> While in the Ancient world and in the (European) Middle Ages the presentation of the way of life (*Lebensform*) determined the goal of presentation/showing, a revision took place with Johann Amos Comenius in the mid-17<sup>th</sup>

century. With Comenius, ‘the idea of a pedagogically adjusted representation of the world arises from the insight into diminishing the representative pedagogical power of the forms of life (...).’<sup>58</sup> The world of pedagogy, a ‘huge montage of images and represented ideas, which are not ‘the thing itself’, but only ‘point’ to things and facts’,<sup>59</sup> takes its beginning as a world of representation, as a world of selection. With Comenius pedagogical modernity begins: the world once again, imaged and explained in pedagogical books and instructions, later on also in lantern slides and films.

### Die Wunder des Films

How does the *Kulturfilm* teach? How does vividness materialise? What are the image functions? What modes of showing are employed? Rhetorics, strategies, and ‘grammars’<sup>60</sup> as techniques of vividness of instructional moving images already constitute a dispositive (micro)cosmos themselves. With an arsenal of practices and techniques, such as alternation of closeups and long shots, reversal of



film clip: *Die Wunder des Films*

temporal sequences, slow motion and time lapse, enlargements, trick shots; with reduction through schemes and models, animated line drawings, diagrams, tables, charts; with arrows, symbol colours, labels as cueing techniques; with staging and re-enactment, emotional identification, attraction, or the grotesque as motivational strategies—the form, style, and content of ‘pedagogical’ films develop a dense web of meaning before they materialise as pedagogical film practice in connection with institutional politics and screening situations and inscribe themselves in the grand meaning-producing order of the ‘pedagogical dispositif’.

In 1928 Edgar Beyfuss composed *Die Wunder des Films*, a ‘work song of the work on Kulturfilm’, dedicated to the ‘unknown cameraman’. He selected already familiar educational films and *Kulturfilme* and compiled them along a teaching of various cinematic recording procedures (*Lehre der Aufnahmeverfahren*). Jeanpaul Goergen writes that apparently two versions existed. One of them is a print without intertitles, which was accompanied by a lecture by Beyfuss. Both the lecture manuscript and the print without intertitles are considered lost. What has survived is the version with intertitles, which Beyfuss called ‘Titelfassung’ (title version).<sup>61</sup>

The basic gesture of the film reflects three basic problems of pedagogical representation. Firstly: what, from the abundance of possible educational material, is *important* to learn? Secondly: how can what is considered important be conveyed with the necessary *vividness*? And thirdly: how can *motivation* be generated to acquire what is represented?<sup>62</sup> With the first question it would be necessary to check what is represented, what is shown. From the perspective of the cameramen, Beyfuss pointed to movement as the essence of film, to the craft of producing effective images, to the apparative grammars of the deception of perception. The mediation runs along an image structure of the dangers and virtues of the profession. For the purpose of vividness, Beyfuss used modes of showing that Klaus Prange, among others, has described in his operative pedagogy.<sup>63</sup> Essentially, these are deictic, representative and directive ways of showing. With deictic showing, something is pointed out with the index finger, as it were: ‘This is how your eye sees the dance! – But the slow motion ... like this!’ [ZT/TC: 00:45:29:00]. With representative showing, something that is not immediately physically present is made present through an image or a concept or a story: ‘And that’s what they call a cultural advance in Berlin!’ [ZT/TC: 00:13:38:00]. Directive showing occurs as a request and addresses the audience directly: ‘Please get your eye used to the otherwise usual black-and-white image again’ [ZT/TC: 01:10:48:00]. Sensational, humorous and— according to Beyfuss— ‘beautiful’ and ‘nice’ images serve as motivation to appropriate what is represented.

*Die Wunder des Films* attracts attention, it makes us aware. The film is a plea to see with different eyes, a plea for distance, for becoming foreign, for breaking one's viewing habits. In the sense of phenomenology, the film images, in their vividness, conjure memories of things seen or thought before. This memory of old ideas, old prejudices, is now confronted with a new vision, new possibilities of experience and action. A process of relearning is set in motion. Moreover, especially in the first part, the film makes offers to subvert its images and explanations. The second part is more rigorous, more instructive, forces attention, 'rather symbolizes the concentration that expects something and thus can hardly be surprised'.<sup>64</sup>

With Jonathan Crary, Jochen Kade has pointed out the contradiction between the (claim of the) educational promise(s) of self-determination of individuals and their perception and the instructional (moving) images that direct attention in a highly artful way: The compulsory learning of concepts, as a necessary quantity of education/cultivation/upbringing; as well as the plea to diversion, to surrender to distraction; to the attractiveness of the offers of the images, to wander around in them; to subvert the dominance of the signifiers instead of submitting to any form of use. In any case, openness is needed, which makes the unsettlement of one's own consciousness possible.

The *Kulturfilm*, especially of the 1920s, together with the meaning-producing order of the pedagogical dispositif, releases interpenetrating worlds of teaching and learning. On the one hand, the world of representation—someone selects something to be taught, points to something. This world is connected with showing, which takes care of what is found to be important is conveyed in necessary vividness and thus in a way that can be grasped by the senses, as well as in a motivating way. In the process of progressive refinement, the world of representation relies on the learning of concepts and methods that enable building up the ability to distinguish, to criticise, to act, to make judgements. On the other hand, the world of attention as the precedented, basic prerequisite of cognitive processes relies on the mobilisation of our experiences, on learning by experience. This world is connected with the shaking of familiar references, our prejudices, opinions, expectations. It relies on what we have always seen and understood and for that very reason didn't pay attention to, it relies on learning by relearning, on the reversal of consciousness.



## Acknowledgements

This research was funded in whole by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) [P 32343-G]. For the purpose of open access, the authors have applied a CC BY public copyright licence to any Author Accepted Manuscript version arising from this submission.

## Notes

1. Jeanpaul Goergen, "Die Avantgarde und das Dokumentarische," in *Geschichte des Dokumentarischen Films in Deutschland, Vol. 2: Weimarer Republik 1918–1933*, ed. Klaus Kreimeier, Antje Ehmann and Jeanpaul Goergen (Stuttgart: Philipp Reclam jr., 2005), 494.
2. Malte Hagener, *Moving Forward, Looking Back. The European Avant-garde and the Invention of Film Culture, 1919–1939* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007), 144.
3. Goergen, "Die Avantgarde und das Dokumentarische," 494.
4. Hagener, *Moving Forward, Looking Back*, 145.
5. Edgar Beyfuss and Alexander Kossowsky, eds., *Das Kulturfilmbuch* (Berlin: Chryselius & Schulz, 1924).
6. Frank Kessler, "The Educational Magic Lantern *Dispositif*," in *A Million Pictures. Magic Lantern Slides in the History of Learning*, eds. Sarah Dellmann and Frank Kessler (New Barnet: John Libbey Publishing, 2020), 181–191; Eef Masson, *Watch and Learn. Rhetorical Devices in Classroom Films after 1940* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).
7. Waltraud Naumann-Beyer, "Anschauung," in *Ästhetische Grundbegriffe, Vol. 1: Absenz-Darstellung*, ed. Karlheinz Barck (Stuttgart, Weimar: J. B. Metzler, 2010), 216.
8. Naumann-Beyer, "Anschauung," 217.
9. Felix Lampe, "Kulturfilm und Filmkultur," in *Das Kulturfilmbuch*, eds. Edgar Beyfuss and Alexander Kossowsky (Berlin: Chryselius & Schulz, 1924), 24.
10. Lampe, "Kulturfilm," 20.
11. Lampe, "Kulturfilm," 22.
12. Lampe, "Kulturfilm," 23.
13. Lampe, "Kulturfilm," 23.
14. Kurt Zierold, *Wesen und Werden des Unterrichtsfilms in Deutschland* (Stuttgart, Berlin: W. Kohlhammer, 1939), 13.



15. Rudolf Arnheim, "Der Film und seine Stiefmutter," *Die Weltbühne* 25/II, no. 38 (1929): 437.
16. Gustav Adolf Witt, *Lichtbild und Lehrfilm in Österreich* (Wien: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1927), 78.
17. Österreichisches Volkshochschularchiv, B-VHS Urania Wien 26/1: Uraniafilme 1927.
18. Zierold, *Wesen und Werden*, 5.
19. Friedrich Copei, born in Lage (North Rhine-Westphalia) in 1902, was a man of school practice with theoretical ambitions. He worked as an elementary school teacher from 1923, and took a leave of absence to study philosophy, education, psychology and economics in Münster. A year later he continued his studies in Berlin. There he came into close contact with Eduard Spranger, with whom he received his doctorate in 1929 with the highly regarded dissertation "Der fruchtbare Moment im Bildungsprozess" (The Fruitful Moment in the Educational Process), which was reprinted nine times until 1969. He then worked as a lecturer in Dortmund and Kiel but was "suspended from office" in 1933 due to his membership in the SPD and was dismissed a short time later without pension rights. He then worked in private school service and at the school in Haustenbeck (NRW). In 1942, he took over the department for elementary school films at the Reich Office for Educational Film (RfdU). In 1945, Copei was drafted as a soldier and did not return. Volker Wehrmann, *Friedrich Copei 1902-1945. Dokumente seiner Forschungen aus Pädagogik, Schule und Landeskunde* (Detmold: Detmold Lippischer Heimatbund, 1982).
20. Friedrich Copei, "Anschauung und Denken beim Unterrichtsfilm," *Film und Bild in Wissenschaft, Erziehung und Volksbildung* 5, no. 8 (1939): 201.
21. Copei, "Anschauung und Denken," 201.
22. Copei, "Anschauung und Denken," 202.
23. Copei, "Anschauung und Denken," 206.
24. Käte Meyer-Drawe, "Der fruchtbare Moment im Bildungsprozess. Zu Copeis phänomenologischem Ansatz pädagogischer Theoriebildung," in *Beschreiben - Verstehen - Handeln. Phänomenologische Forschungen in der Pädagogik*, eds. Helmut Danner and Wilfried Lippitz (München: Gerhard Röttger Verlag, 1984), 96.
25. Käte Meyer-Drawe, "Lernen als Umlernen. Zur Negativität des Lernprozesses [1982]," in *Phänomenologische Erziehungswissenschaft von ihren Anfängen bis heute. Eine Anthologie*, ed. Malte Brinkmann (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2019), 278.
26. Bernhard Waldenfels, "Aufmerksamkeitsschwellen [2002]," in *Kindliche Fremdheit und pädagogische Gerechtigkeit*, ed. Alfred Schäfer (Paderborn: Brill / Ferdinand Schöningh, 2007), 249.
27. Waldenfels, "Aufmerksamkeitsschwellen," 249.
28. Waldenfels, "Aufmerksamkeitsschwellen," 250.

29. Waldenfels, "Aufmerksamkeitsschwellen," 250.
30. Waldenfels, "Aufmerksamkeitsschwellen," 251.
31. Waldenfels, "Aufmerksamkeitsschwellen," 251.
32. Waldenfels, "Aufmerksamkeitsschwellen," 252.
33. Jochen Kade, "Aufmerksamkeitskommunikation. Zu einem erziehungswissenschaftlichen Grundbegriff," in *Öffentliche Erziehung revisited. Erziehung, Politik und Gesellschaft im Diskurs*, eds. Sigrid Karin Amos, Wolfgang Meseth and Matthias Proske (Wiesbaden: VS Verlag f. Sozialwissenschaften / Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, 2011), 78.
34. Kade, "Aufmerksamkeitskommunikation," 79.
35. Jonathan Crary, *Aufmerksamkeit. Wahrnehmung und moderne Kultur*, trans. Heinz Jatho (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002).
36. Aleida Assmann, "Druckerpresse und Internet - von einer Gedächtniskultur zu einer Aufmerksamkeitskultur," in *Archiv und Wirtschaft. Zeitschrift für das Archivwesen der Wirtschaft*, 1 (2003): 5–11.
37. Georg Franck, *Ökonomie der Aufmerksamkeit* (München: Hanser, 1998).
38. Kade, "Aufmerksamkeitskommunikation," 79.
39. Kade, "Aufmerksamkeitskommunikation," 79.
40. Kade, "Aufmerksamkeitskommunikation," 80.
41. Kade, "Aufmerksamkeitskommunikation," 80.
42. Kade, "Aufmerksamkeitskommunikation," 80. In the same way, Siegfried Kracauer interprets the mode of reception of distraction, which mass culture promotes, positively. There is productive power in the "cult of distraction". The mass of the audience experiences itself thematised, exercises itself as a subject. "The access to truth is now in the profane", Kracauer formulated in 1926. The sensory relationship of cinema holds emancipatory potential.; Elisabeth Büttner, "Die Wahrheit im Profanen. Mit Siegfried Kracauer im Kino," in *Kino Arbeit Liebe. Hommage an Elisabeth Büttner*, eds. Christian Dewald, Petra Löffler and Marc Ries (Berlin: Vorwerk 8, 2018), 34.
43. Hans Blumenberg, "Auffallen und Aufmerken," in *Zu den Sachen und zurück. Aus dem Nachlass*, ed. Manfred Sommer (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2002), 183.
44. Blumenberg, "Auffallen," 183.
45. Käte Meyer-Drawe, "Aufmerken - eine phänomenologische Studie," in *Aufmerksamkeit. Geschichte – Theorie – Empirie*, eds. Sabine Reh, Kathrin Berdelmann and Jörg Dinkelaker (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2015), 117.

46. Meyer-Drawe, "Aufmerken," 117.
47. Meyer-Drawe, "Aufmerken," 117.
48. Meyer-Drawe, "Aufmerken," 118.
49. Meyer-Drawe, "Aufmerken," 220.
50. Meyer-Drawe, "Aufmerken," 125.
51. Malte Brinkmann, "Aufmerken und Zeigen. Theoretische und empirische Untersuchungen zur pädagogischen Interattentionalität [2016]," in *Phänomenologische Erziehungswissenschaft von ihren Anfängen bis heute. Eine Anthologie*, ed. Malte Brinkmann (Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, 2019), 543.
52. Brinkmann, "Aufmerken und Zeigen," 545.
53. Brinkmann, "Aufmerken und Zeigen," 545.
54. Michael Tomasello, *Die Ursprünge der menschlichen Kommunikation* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2009).
55. Brinkmann, "Aufmerken und Zeigen," 548.
56. Brinkmann, "Aufmerken und Zeigen," 548.
57. Janine Brade, "Das Zeigen in der Pädagogik. Eine Untersuchung zur Logik des Zeigens als Grundoperation des professionellen pädagogischen Handelns" (PhD diss., University of Chemnitz, 2009), 140.
58. Klaus Mollenhauer, *Vergessene Zusammenhänge. Über Kultur und Erziehung* (Weinheim, München: Juventa Verlag, 2008), 76.
59. Mollenhauer, *Vergessene Zusammenhänge*, 52.
60. See i.e. William D. Winn, "Die Verwendung von Graphiken für Instruktion: Eine präskriptive Grammatik," *Unterrichtswissenschaft. Zeitschrift für Lernforschung* 16, no. 3 (1988): 58–76.
61. Jeanpaul Goergen, "Werklied von der Arbeit am Kulturfilm. Edgar Beyfuss, *Die Wunder des Films* (D 1928)," *Filmblatt* 3, no. 8 (Herbst 1998): 18–21.
62. Mollenhauer, *Vergessene Zusammenhänge*, 67.
63. Klaus Prange, *Die Zeigestruktur der Erziehung. Grundriss der operativen Pädagogik* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2012).
64. Meyer-Drawe, "Aufmerken," 124.

## Biographies

**Vrääth Öhner**, born in 1965, is a film and media theorist and has been working as a Researcher at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Digital History since 2018. In the winter semester 2019/20 he was a

Visiting Professor at the University of Bremen, Germany. From 2011 to 2017 he was a University Assistant (PostDoc) at the Institute of Theater, Film and Media Studies at the University of Vienna. His research interests include the theory, aesthetics and history of (documentary) film and television as well as of media and popular culture.

**Christian Dewald**, film historian, pedagogue. Researcher at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Digital History, Vienna (“Educational Film Practice in Austria”, 2019-2023, FWF; <https://lehrfilmpraktiken.univie.ac.at/> and <https://geschichte.lbg.ac.at/forschungsprojekte/praktiken-des-lehr-und-unterrichtsfilms-in-oesterreich/>). Specialist assistant for clients on the autism spectrum at Austrian federal schools. Last book publication: *Kino Arbeit Liebe. Hommage an Elisabeth Büttner*. Berlin: Vorwerk 8, 2018 (ed. with Petra Löffler, Marc Ries).

**TMG Journal for Media History**

Volume 26 No (1)/2023

**DOI**

<https://dx.doi.org/10.18146/tmg.836>

**PUBLISHER**

Netherlands Institute for Sound & Vision

**COPYRIGHT**

Each article is copyrighted © by its author(s) and is published under license from the author(s). When a paper is accepted for publication, authors will be requested to agree with the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.