

## **‘Beispiel’ as a Medium of ‘Bildung’: Günther Buck’s Interpretation of Kant**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this paper is to clarify the contents of Günther Buck’s ‘Bildung’ theory, with respect to his concept of ‘Beispiel’ and his interpretation of Kant’s theory. In this paper, I present Buck’s ‘Beispiel’ concept as a medium of ‘Bildung’, the German word for education, and I suggest that ‘Beispiel’ is a mediator between the empirical and ideal worlds, between heteronomy and autonomy, and between historicity and universality.

As a 20<sup>th</sup> century German pedagogist and philosopher, Buck was a student of Hans-Georg Gadamer. Early in his studies, Buck passed away, leaving few published works, and his following has been small. Interest in Buck has recently grown in Germany within pedagogy studies; however, the relationship between Buck and Kant has not yet been investigated.

This paper is organised into three sections. In the first section, I clarify the problem between historicity and universality by examining Kant’s focus on the universality of morality and comparing it to Gadamer’s emphasis on historicity. Then, I examine how Buck attempts to resolve this conflict. In the second section, I investigate his concept of experience. While Buck’s theory of experience is influenced by Gadamer, it remains uniquely his own, especially with respect to universality. In the third section, I establish Buck’s ‘Beispiel’ as a medium for education.

In conclusion, Buck attempts to solve specific pedagogical problems by engaging in the challenge of closing the gap between historicity and universality, and thus illuminates the transition from heteronomy to autonomy. In Buck’s ‘Bildung’ theory, historicity and universality are united harmoniously.

### **Key words**

Günther Buck, Gadamer, Kant, Hermeneutics, Bildung

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## Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to elucidate Günther Buck's (1925–1983) 'Bildung' theory in the context of his reception of Kant. I then show how the concept of 'Beispiel' is a mediating device for the universality and historicity of 'Bildung' in Buck's theory of 'Bildung'.

Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002) had the first decisive influence on Buck's theory of 'Bildung'. Gadamer was Buck's mentor and was known as the author of *Wahrheit und Methode*. Buck's theory of 'Bildung' is a continuation of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutic position that 'understanding' is 'the way of being itself' (GW2: 440). In that sense, it is legitimate for Pauls, a current leader of 'Buck Studies', to identify Buck's 'Bildung' theory as 'hermeneutic Bildung'<sup>1</sup>. By relying on Buck's theory of 'Bildung', Pauls essentially re-critiques the position that restricts pedagogical research to the empirical and its spheres, and it attempts to separate the normative aspects from pedagogy as 'non-disciplinary'. Schenk, in her voluminous book, *Praktische Pädagogik als Paradigma* (2017), clearly shares this position<sup>2</sup>, as she relies on Buck's vision of hermeneutical 'Bildung' in an ambitious attempt to establish a 'practical pedagogy' for contemporary pedagogy. The significance of Schenk's study is that it provides a detailed interpretation that reveals the validity of Buck's ideas to contemporary discussions by drawing on his texts, showing their relevance to temporal problems of education, despite Buck's having remained the 'implicitly acknowledged landlord' of 'Bildung' theory<sup>3</sup>.

The current paper generally agrees with this position while interpreting Buck's thought from an alternate perspective. First, I focus on the difference between Buck and Gadamer's relationship, which has traditionally been understood as a continuum. Although he was not a pedagogue himself, Gadamer's thought contains several elements of pedagogical issues, though there were not many previous works on the subject<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> In his book, Pauls, the leader of 'Buck Studies', relies especially on Buck's work *Hermeneutik und Bildung*, and describes his conception of 'action hermeneutics' as a 'hermeneutic theory of Bildung' that takes on Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. cf. Pauls: 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Schenk 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Schenk/Pauls 2014: 9. This collection of essays, edited by Pauls and Schenk, includes contributions from many German pedagogues, and indicates the high level of interest in Buck. The contents range from intrinsic readings of key Buck concepts, such as negativity and hermeneutics, to comparisons with Dewey and discussions of the applicability of Buck's ideas to sociological methodology. However, 'Buck Studies' is still in its infancy, and there is no solid image of Buck. Thus, it is necessary to continue to follow the research trends in this regard.

<sup>4</sup> In Gadamer's thought, too, the concept of 'Bildung' plays a role that cannot be overlooked, as it has an entry in *Wahrheit und Methode*. Ozeki's discussion is more detailed on this point. Grondin also discusses the relationship between Gadamer's thought and education. Both agree on the following points. First, they both see the process of human development as a process of opening one's own perspective, which occurs through 'dialogue' with others.

However, although Buck's thought is a continuation of Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutic, there is a crucial difference between the two. This difference is not a hidden criticism of Buck's Gadamer but rather a 'transformation' such as philosophical hermeneutics inevitably undergo when brought into the field of pedagogy. This transformation is an inevitable element of pedagogy. First, I focus on the differences between the Buck and Gadamer, which have not been emphasised in previous studies. Second, I focus on the relationship between Buck and Kant. To the best of my knowledge, no previous studies have focused on interpretations of Kant. However, in Buck's theory of 'Bildung', Kant's philosophy is so important that it can be considered in tandem with Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics. While Schenk's work is remarkable for its intrinsic analysis of Buck's thought and for raising its contemporary significance, it does not, by the author's own admission, do enough to consider the relationship between Buck and the thinkers who had an important influence on him (Schenk 2017: 19). From these two perspectives, the current paper aims to reveal an ideological linkage on which previous studies have been inadequately focused and, by emphasising the immediate problems of education, to bring the image of 'Buck the Thinker' to light in a different way than previous studies.

Buck's intention is neither to overcome Kant with Gadamer nor to criticise Gadamer in his reliance on Kant. Rather, he attempts to actively incorporate both into the context of 'Bildung' theory. Buck attempts to interpret the historicity of philosophical hermeneutics and the universality beyond the experience of critical philosophy in a consistent, non-contradictory manner. In so doing, the concept of paradigms plays an important role as a medium for both. Buck's concept of paradigms represents the process of the transformation of philosophical hermeneutics and critical philosophy as they meet in the magnetic field of pedagogy. Witnessing this transformation process is a modest attempt of the current study.

In the following section, I briefly describe the path of this study. In the first section, I take a pedagogical perspective to clarify the problems of Kant's critical philosophy and Gadamer's critique of it. As I see it, this problem is related to the 'aporia of autonomy and heteronomy', which is important for pedagogy. Then, I depict Buck's theory of 'Bildung' as an attempt to mediate the conflict between 'universality and historicity' that characterises this conflict between Kant and Gadamer. In the second section, I identify the issues of 'experience' and 'universality' as cornerstones in Buck's theory of 'Bildung'.

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Second, they emphasise the importance of what they call the 'classical' in this process. Third, they both characterise it as 'humanistic'. Ozeki 2002; Grondin 2012.

Buck adopts the concept of experience from Gadamer but modifies it significantly to make it part of his theory of 'Bildung'. For Buck, experience and universality are inextricably linked. The role of mediating this experience and universality is given to the exemplars. Finally, in the third section, I reveal the moral dimension of 'Beispiel'. This is significant because the universality of 'Beispiel' includes a dimension of 'universality' not only in a mere theoretical sense, but also with a moral dimension. This section clarifies the dimensions by focusing primarily on Buck's interpretation of *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. The goal of this paper is to describe the process of ideogenesis in which the historicity of philosophical hermeneutics and the universality of critical philosophy dissolve in Buck and emerge as a bi-directional theory of 'Bildung'.

## 1. The Conflict Between Universality and Historicity

### 1.1 The Moral Law and the Difficulties of Education

In this section, I first discuss the 'paradox of freedom and education' in Kant<sup>5</sup>. Moral law is the prescriptive basis for freedom in Kant. For humans to be free and autonomous, they must be willing to obey moral law:

The autonomy of the will is the only principle of all moral laws and the duty to comply with them. (...) Therefore, the moral law is the very expression of pure reason, the autonomy of freedom. This autonomy of liberty is the only formal condition that brings all ratings in line with the highest practical law. (Kant V: 33)

Universality, according to Kant, is based on moral law. It is the moral law that every subject must willingly and unconditionally obey, and it is precisely in this respect that universality is sought.

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<sup>5</sup> However, in the study of Kant, there is an attempt to understand this aporia in a consistent manner within the framework of Kant. For example, Tanida argues that Kant's educational thought is not fully developed in pedagogy, and that its true value lies in the concept of the 'establishment of character' in his theory of religion. Omori, however, argues that pedagogy has inherent value and focuses mainly on the concept of 'moralisation', but in so doing, he emphasises the difference between religious and educational theories in contrast to the position of Tanida and others. Koch, like Buck, focuses on the concept of 'inheritance' in his interpretation. However, Koch sees 'imitation' and inheritance as disconnected, and autonomy based on custom and freedom as opposed to each other. Hirose has also conducted an interesting study of Kant's 'Natural Geography' in which he seeks the possibility of reconciling the empirical and the ideal and attempts to discover the possibility of overcoming the aporia of autonomy and otherness in 'geography education', based on this. cf. Tanida 1994; Koch 2003; Omori 2013; Hirose 2017.

However, from a pedagogical point of view, moral law is fraught with substantial difficulty. If we follow this scheme, education is an operation to make unfree, trans-disciplinary beings obey moral law, yet it is the greatest paradox that pedagogy encounters in Kant. The question that arises is whether autonomy through education is possible in the first place. In other words, even if it were possible, through education, to achieve autonomy through the actions of others, does it not go beyond the state of transitivity because it is not caused by the self, but by others?

Kant does not believe that the transition is smooth from the empirical realm (heteronomy) to the ideal realm (autonomy). Rather, this transition is characterised as a 'revolution, a leap' (Suzuki 2006: 24).

What makes the transition from trans-regulation to autonomy a 'leapfrogging revolution' is that there is a gap that must be bridged between experience and ideology. If taken to the extreme, this could lead to the negation of education, which is what Kant's position in his critical period seems to be approaching. The transition from transitivity to autonomy is not a gradual process of education, but it is instead a spontaneous renewal of the spirit.

Kant's position is for strict dualistic separation of ideas and phenomena to ensure the purity of morality. The 'aporia of autonomy and heteronomy' can also be understood to be superimposed on it.

Gadamer critiques this separation of Kant's experience and ideas. Hence, although his argument does not directly address education, it contains important pedagogical issues.

## 1.2 Gadamer's Criticism of Kant and his Defence of Convention

Gadamer critiques Kant in terms of the 'historicity' in which his philosophical hermeneutics is grounded. Gadamer establishes 'historicity' as an omnipresent and defining concept of existence. In his article, 'Über die Möglichkeit einer phisosophischen Ethik', he attempts a critique of ethics based on Kant's concept of dualism from the standpoint of this historicity. Here, Gadamer's position suggests the possibility of a transition from heteronomy to autonomy being a gradual process that is distinct from a 'leap' or a 'revolution'.

First, Gadamer characterises Kant's ethics as a 'dialectic of exception' (GW4: 178) regarding obligation and tendency. In other words, in Kant, morality is said to exist in the opposition between 'duty', which is based on moral law—an idea—and tendency, which is rooted in the empirical and sensible and on which duty triumphs.

However, Gadamer considers this to be an 'exception' to the rule. According to

Gadamer, duty and propensity are not necessarily in opposition to each other. Rather, it is Gadamer's position that the two are in conflict in exceptional cases and that the self-imposed obligation of propensity via reason does not necessarily arise.

Gadamer argues against Kant's 'dialectic of exception' by arguing for the ethical importance of 'Sitte' (customary virtues) as mediators between obligation and propensity:

I think there is another avenue worth examining. That is, a moral-philosophical consideration that chooses the usual case of customary compliance rather than the exceptional case of conflict. (GW4: 180)

What Gadamer emphasises here is the rational character that conventions possess. In Kant, conventions are seen as being opposed to reason because they offer an opportunity for heteronomy, but Gadamer sees conventions and reason as harmonious.

The interpretation that Gadamer offers here is a critique of Kant's ethics, which seek to eliminate the empirical element from morality by contrasting Aristotle with Kant<sup>6</sup>. The pedagogical significance of this critique is central to this study. According to Gadamer, to respect duty, one needs to respect convention. It is not a 'leap' or a 'revolution' that occurs here. This therefore allows room for pedagogical intervention.

Addressing the issue of education here does not seem to be out of Gadamer's own interests. In the postscript to the sixth volume of his German translation of *Nicomachean Ethics*, Gadamer writes:

The question that incidentally motivates us from the very beginning is: What is ethical reflection? What is ethical reflection and how can it simultaneously serve education? Aristotle's writings repeatedly return to such questions. (Gadamer 1988: 65)

Gadamer emphasises the relationship between ethics and education, and his criticism of Kant relates to this relationship, in accordance with Aristotle. By following such a scheme, Gadamer attempts to ensure the possibility of morality prior to reflection. This position is consistent with Gadamer's emphasis on the workings of preconceptions in understanding, and it simultaneously suggests the possibility of a transition from heteronomy to autonomy as a gradual process, unlike Kant's position. Although Gadamer does not develop this issue pedagogically, Buck explicitly assumes this position.

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Gutschker 2002: 189–254.

However, even if we disregard the issue of education here, one major question remains: is there a situation in which the universality of morality, as guaranteed by Kant, has been recovered in Gadamer in favour of historicity? In other words, has universality been recovered in historicity, and has it fallen into relativism?

Unfortunately, Gadamer does not provide a clear answer to this question. However, as I see it, Buck attempts to answer it in his theory of 'Bildung'. This theory is a pedagogical answer to Gadamer's unresolved conflict between universality and historicity. From this perspective, the following section serves as a discussion on Buck's theory of 'Bildung'.

## **2. The Structure and Universality of the Concept of Experience in Buck's Theory of 'Bildung'**

In this section, I clarify the inner workings of the concept of experience in Buck's theory of 'Bildung', mainly in relation to universality. The problem discussed above of the conflict between universality and historicity is an important motif in Buck's theory of 'Bildung', and it relates directly to the problem of 'Beispiel', which is the subject of this paper. However, before delving into the issue of 'Beispiel', the purpose of this section is first to clarify the concept of experience, which is a cornerstone of Buck's theory of 'Bildung'. Buck adopted this concept of experience from Gadamer, but he modified it considerably. Here, we can see traces of thought generation in which the philosophical hermeneutics from Gadamer are drawn into pedagogy and reinterpreted through the figure of the 'conflict between universality and historicity'.

Buck concentrates on the concept of experience in his book, *Lernen und Erfahrung*, in which he presents a discursive history of the structure of experience in relation to the concept of learning by referring to various thinkers.

As I examine above, Buck's concept of experience receives its template from Gadamer. More specifically, in *Wahrheit und Methode*, Buck uniquely incorporates into his theory of 'Bildung' the 'hermeneutische Erfahrung' (hermeneutic experience) that Gadamer describes as 'occupying a key place' (GW2: 445) in this major work. Therefore, I will begin my discussion by exploring Gadamer's interpretive experience and how he recasts it.

In Gadamer's concept of experience, the occasion of negativity is the first issue that

is important for the current paper. Relying on Hegel<sup>7</sup>, Gadamer says the following:

When we say that we have had an experience in a subject, what this means is that we have not seen things correctly before and now know better how they are. Thus, the negativity of experience has an inherently productive meaning. Negativity is neither a mere deception to be detected nor a correction in that regard. Rather, it is a more expansive knowledge that will be acquired. (GW1: 359)

Negativity is not only viewed as an opportunity to correct the conventional way of perceiving things, but it is also taken as an opportunity to make possible the acquisition of a wider range of knowledge. Hence, negativity is not the end. Negativity also opens up possibilities for new experiences, as follows:

The truth of experience is always linked to new experience. A person who is said to have experience is not only made so by experience, but is also open to new experience. (GW1: 361)

Negativity and openness are two key elements of Gadamer's interpretive experience. This includes a critique of the teleological view of experience in which there is a pre-existing purpose, and experience arises accordingly. Therefore, although Gadamer relies on Hegel to elaborate his concept of 'interpretive experience', he breaks with Hegel on the last point. He holds that the perfection of experience lies not in closed knowledge but in 'the openness of experience, which is unleashed by experience itself' (GW1: 361).

Buck's concept of experience is essentially an inheritance of Gadamer's interpretive experience. However, 'inheritance' is not merely 'appropriation'. Rather, it is to use the language of hermeneutics, an 'application'. Buck's application of hermeneutic experience to 'Bildung' seems to contain some very important pedagogical implications.

In contrast to Gadamer, who seeks universality in the openness of experience, Buck brings to the fore the opportunity of universality in experience. Buck's concept of experience as 'epagodic' (induction), expressed in the subtitle of the third edition of *Lernen und Erfahrung*, points to universality. However, it does not imply a linear path

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<sup>7</sup> The following is a detailed study by Grondin on Gadamer's relationship with Hegel regarding his concept of experience. According to Grondin, by relying on Hegel, Gadamer picks up the dimension of the historicity of experience and attempts to rescue the concept of experience that has been trivialised into the methods of modern science. cf. Grondin 1982: 51–58.



from the individual to the universal as a methodology in modern science<sup>8</sup>. The hallmark of Buck's concept of experience is the seemingly contradictory situation in which the individual is simultaneously given a universal. That is, Buck does not think of experience as purely discrete, but rather that for it to be possible, the universal must be given in advance, even if in an uncertain form:

Rather, we accept the individual in terms of the universal first. We do so even if, in doing so, we do not perceive the universal as clearly universal, and, on the contrary, we are uncertain about whether it is really universal in the first place<sup>9</sup>. (Buck 1989: 39)

In other words, for Buck, the universal is not only an objective, but it is also an enabling condition for experience; thus, 'to relate to the universal is the essential function of experience' (Buck 1989: 49). However, in Buck, as in Kant's epistemology of categories, the universal does not act only as a condition that makes experience possible; the universal is also dependent on experience (Buck 1989: 45). They are not unilaterally interdependent; rather, they are conditioned by each other.

Thus, experience is not, according to Buck, a process of mastering only the new. After all, every new and unknown thing is already understood in some way. Such a priori experience is recognised in Buck, as he emphasises these seemingly contradictory features of the concept of experience and turns them into the foundational concept of the 'Bildung' theory. First, he points out the double meaning of experience as follows:

The expression 'experience' actually has a double meaning. This means, on the one hand, an individual experiences and, on the other hand, the experience that takes place behind this individual experience. (Buck 1989: 51)

To extend this, experience is both the experience of an unknown object and a new way

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<sup>8</sup> Yet, in this respect, Buck is not so far apart from Gadamer. As aforementioned, Gadamer's concept of experience also resists the trivialisation of scientific method, and he states in the introduction to *Wahrheit und Methode* that 'the concern of this book is to search for the experience of truth beyond the sphere of control of scientific methodology in the omnipresent places where it is encountered' (GW1, S. 1). This is consistent with Schenk's characterisation of the book's concept of experience as 'a non-empirical, natural, every day, pre-disciplinary or extra-disciplinary experience of methodological and (natural) scientific experience' (Schenk 2017: 180).

<sup>9</sup> Buck illustrates this with an example of a linguistic expression used by children. According to Buck, children refer to all men as 'daddy' and all women as 'mommy'. From this, they learn that the words 'dad' and 'mom' do not refer to 'men in general' or 'women in general' but to specific individuals. cf. Buck 1989: 39.

of experiencing a known entity, since ‘every individualised horizon implies a broader and more ambiguous horizon of universality’ (Buck 1989: 64). In other words, experience is not just an encounter with new horizons; it is also the process by which the universality contained therein becomes apparent.

‘Bildung’ can be depicted as a process of experience in which universality is gradually revealed. What is important in this case, as in Gadamer's, is the ‘negativity of experience’. However, Buck emphasises a different point here than Gadamer:

The work of negative experience is that one becomes aware of oneself. What one becomes aware of are the motivations that have guided one in one's previous experiences and of those motivations that have not been questioned. Negative experiences, therefore, have the character of self-experience, which is first and foremost qualitatively open to new experiences. (Buck 1989: 80)

It is on this opportunity of ‘self-experience’ that Buck places stronger emphasis than does Gadamer. The self, the subject of experience, can be inferred to be extremely important to Buck, who took pedagogy as his discipline. Here, Buck follows Gadamer's scheme of thought but simultaneously develops his own ideas in a different realm.

This tendency becomes more apparent when Buck uses this concept of experience as the basis for his discussion of ‘Bildung’, as follows:

Bildung is structured by its own interpretation in two ways. The first is that it acquires and acquires the practice and meaning of action relations by acting on itself, and the second is that it takes the form of an interpretation of practice to make the interpretation premised on it more its own, to make it certain. This makes the actor self-aware in a reflective way and makes him aware of his own practice. (Buck 1981: 14)

A step forward from ‘self-experience’ that is grounded in experience, or what might be called ‘self-reflection’, has occurred in ‘Bildung’. In contrast to Gadamer, who follows the position of subject criticism of Heidegger, Buck again takes the subject-oriented position. This is only because Buck develops his own thought in pedagogy, which takes the subject as an essential category rather than philosophically. In this way, we can see a transformation of thought that is inevitable for pedagogy.

While receiving such opportunities as ‘negativity’ and ‘openness’ from Gadamer, Buck's concept of experience is reinterpreted in terms of the subject's ‘self-experience’.

Furthermore, the concept proceeds to 'self-reflection' when the subject becomes 'Bildung'. Buck's theory of 'Bildung' can be characterised as a constant process of the subject's self-reflection, within the conditions of historicity and towards universality.

The difference between Gadamer and Buck seems to lie in the difference between the background philosophy and pedagogy of interest, rather than in the choice of which of the two is correct. While Gadamer does not necessarily need the category of the subject, the subject is essential to Buck as a pedagogue. In this sense, he differs from Gadamer in his emphasis on 'self-reflection'.

For this self-reflection by experience, the role of 'Beispiel' is to serve as a medium for raising the subject to universality. However, the dimension of universality that 'Beispiel' possesses is not limited to the theoretical dimension but also includes a moral dimension. That is, Beispiel serves to ensure the normality of actions in addition to mediating the universality of experience. In this process, Kant's interpretation plays an important role. In the following section, I will explore Buck's concept of 'Beispiel', which ensures the universality of experience with a moral dimension, in light of his Kantian interpretation.

### 3. Buck's Interpretation of Kant and the Concept of 'Beispiel'

Buck discusses 'Beispiel' in *Lernen und Erfahrung*, in which it functions as a mediator of universals for individual experience and learning<sup>10</sup>. Moreover, the universals that 'Beispiel' mediates, according to Buck, are not theoretically or conceptually exhaustive:

Kant at least acknowledges how important it is that the Beispiel must be understood in terms of its power to convey universals, which cannot be fully explained conceptually. At least Kant acknowledges how important it is that we must be understood from that power which conveys universals and which cannot be fully explained, in that he gives to the example a special significance for aesthetic judgment. (Buck 1989: 133)

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<sup>10</sup> According to Pauls, a model is an 'induktion' that mediates between teaching and learning and makes understanding possible. In relation to this, Imai focuses on the 'convincing introduction' (einführende Verständigung) in Buck's thought and acknowledges the argument questioning the conditions that make learning possible. Although Imai does not directly refer to exemplars here, he states that 'exemplars are convincing introductions' (Buck 1989: 98). cf. Pauls 2010; Imai 2012.

Here, Buck implies the moral dimension of the universality of ‘Beispiel’. He discusses this intensively both in the first edition of *Lernen und Erfahrung* and in Kant’s *Lehre von Exempeln*, written in the same year. As the two would need to be read as complementary, so to speak, Buck sought to clarify the moral significance of exemplars that could not be fully discussed in *Lernen und Erfahrung*.

Buck, like Gadamer, criticises Kant’s philosophy from a position that emphasises historicity. However, Buck takes the pedagogically specific perspective of ‘How can a child, who is not capable of rational reflection, reflect on moral law?’ He states:

Kant’s axiom excludes children from the possibility of being truly moral because they are not capable of reflecting on moral law. This is because children are excluded from the possibility of listening to moral law and reflecting on it in order to abide by it. The axiom of Kant’s axiom excludes children from the possibility of being truly moral. (Buck 1985: 7)

Here, Buck’s discussion of ‘Kant’s axiom’ can be interpreted as a solid dualism of phenomenon-ideology in the critical period. However, Buck, like Gadamer, attempts to admit the possibility of approaching morality from the empirical realm of ‘convention’, which, in Kant’s case, is limited to the realm of transcendental freedom (cf. Buck 1985: 7). As such, the possibility of access to morality is also ensured for children who do not yet have the capacity to reflect. In other words, the possibility of a transition from heteronomy to autonomy—one that is distinct from ‘leaping’—is opened here. By restoring the significance of ‘convention’ from a pedagogical perspective, Buck critiques Kant’s philosophy from the standpoint of emphasising Gadamer’s historicity while attempting to protect the ‘pre-reflective’ realm of morality.

However, if it is to be localised in convention rather than in principle, it will remain in the realm of the sensible and empirical and will not break free from the state of heteronomy. Kant expresses his criticism of this position. ‘Beispiel’ and ‘Exempel’ have long been an important part of education before Kant<sup>11</sup>. However, Kant criticises the moral significance of ‘Beispiel’ in the following passage:

If one were to borrow morality from a paradigm, nothing could be worse for morality than this. This is because every exemplar so presented must be judged

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<sup>11</sup> For more on this, see Buck’s description in *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*. cf. Buck 1971: 818–823.

beforehand to be worthy of a fundamental exemplar, or muster, according to the principle of morality. And the exemplars do not give us the concept of morality in the first place. (Kant IV: 408)

Kant does not reject 'Beispiel' altogether<sup>12</sup>; rather, he makes 'the viability of what the (moral) law commands unquestionable' (Kant IV: 409) and provides the opportunity for one to become aware of the moral law. Although there is a subtle difference, the emphasis in Kant is not on examples, but on awakening oneself to moral law. An example is only a trigger for this problem. This is clearly stated in *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (cf. Kant V: 92).

Buck, however, takes the position of reemphasising the moral and educational significance of 'Beispiel'. It is important to point out here that Buck attempts to do this by relying on the *Kritik der Urteilskraft*. Unlike Gadamer, who relied on Aristotle to criticise Kant, Buck attempts to overcome the problems of Kant's philosophy by interpreting Kant intrinsically, and by focusing on the ethical possibilities in the discussion of aesthetic judgments. In connection with this, Buck reviews 'Beispiel' that was not given positive meaning in the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* and *Grundlegung der Metaphysik der Sitten*. The difference between Kant's and Buck's positions on imitation is of particular importance. Kant dismisses imitation as a cause of heteronomy, while Buck asks whether imitation causes transitivity. Buck states:

To be sure, mere imitation in the sense of copying behaviour is heteronomy, and in the first place, conforming oneself to currently accepted conventions is not free obedience to a grounded norm. But is the behavior of a child imitating a model before he or she knows the principle in any case merely a crude reproduction of that model? (Buck 1967: 180)

In other words, the act of imitating 'Beispiel' lies in the possibility of initiating moral reflection, and it is certainly not a reflective act. In that sense, according to Buck, imitation is not mere copying but 'already contains a stage of free succession' (Buck 1967: 180).

In order to establish that the 'Beispiel' of this imitation is not merely individual and

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<sup>12</sup> Yamaguchi emphasises the significance of 'Beispiel' in Kant's practical philosophy, stating that 'the deepest significance of the example in Kant is that it makes possible the 'comparison of ideas of how things should be'' (Yamaguchi 2005: 34). Guyer, on whom Yamaguchi also relies, states that 'the essential role of example in moral education is to teach that while children are indeed morally free, they must also struggle with human limitations' (Guyer 2012: 133). Both arguments focus on 'Beispiel' but differ from Buck's in that they do not recognise the inherent value of 'Beispiel' itself; rather they emphasise it as a trigger for a child's 'own' moral awakening.

empirical but is linked to the moral and universal, we need to return to the discussion of beauty in the *Kritik der Urteilkraft*. Buck states, referring to Section 59 of the *Kritik der Urteilkraft*, that

What is important for Kant here (...) is the application of the notion of analogy to the relationship between beauty and the moral good, that ‘beauty is a symbol of morality’. (Buck 1989: 118)

In *Kritik der Urteilkraft* (Section 59), beauty is positioned as a symbol of morality. That is, beauty is empirical, even as it contains an orientation toward morality. Moreover, the current study significantly notes that Kant’s statement that ‘hobbies make possible the transition from sensible stimulation to habitual moral concern without a forced leap, so to speak’ (Kant V: 354) suggests the possibility of a transition from experience to ideas without a leap.

For Kant subjective universality is what underpins the universality of beauty. Subjective universality is said to have a basis in subjectivity, as opposed to moral law. However, this simultaneously ‘entails a demand on all others’ (Kant V: 353). Kant introduces this peculiar concept of subjective universality in the *Kritik der Urteilkraft* to ground the universality of beauty, which is different from morality.

However, Buck sees the ethical potential of this subjective universality and explains it concretely through the concept of exemplars, as follows:

To be sure, no empirical exemplar can determine with certainty whether or not an action has been done because of (moral) law. But ‘if it cannot be disproved’, it is ‘fair’ to assume the sincerity of sentiment. (...) ‘Encouragement’ by *Beispiel* is based on trust in the sentiments of others, and the behavior of others again becomes an example. (Buck 1967: 177-178)

‘*Beispiel*’ certainly does not constitute moral law but provides a ‘direction’ to moral law. Thus, ‘*Beispiel*’ and ‘*Exempel*’ are manifestations of this direction, if not of moral law itself, and in that sense they deserve to be called ‘exemplars’. They do not have ‘objective universality’, yet they do have ‘subjective universality’ in the sense that those who receive ‘*Beispiel*’ can approve of them. As shown in the above quotation, the logic used here clearly has more affinity with the *Kritik der Urteilkraft* than with the *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft*, despite the fact that it is concerned with morality. That is, Buck attempts to apply Kant’s concept of subjective universality for aesthetic judgement in the

realm of morality. Certainly, at this point, reflection on moral law has not yet arisen. However, this raises the possibility that it will do so. Buck believes that this would allow him to avoid the 'aporia of autonomy and heteronomy'.

'Beispiel' is equipped with the passage to moral law. That is, 'Beispiel', which is supported by subjective universality, contains both empirical and ideological elements simultaneously. The relationship between 'Beispiel' and moral law can be superimposed on the relationship between 'Idee' and 'ideals' in the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (Section 17), as follows:

Idee essentially mean the concept of reason, and ideals mean individual representations that are suited to ideals. (Kant V: 232)

In contrast to Idee, which is a transcendental rational concept, ideals contain Idee and are at the same time individual representations. That is, the moral law and 'Beispiel' correspond to ideals and ideals, respectively.

From the perspective of a pedagogue such as Buck, an 'ideal' is needed for this ethical realm. Here, then, lies the question of how to awaken a child, an entity not yet knowing the proper use of reason, into realising that direction. The concept of 'Beispiel' was introduced for this purpose. 'Beispiel' is rooted not only in the realm of transcendental freedom but also in the realm of historical experience. For Buck, historical 'Beispiel' is positioned as a mediator of experience and the Idee that allows for the transition from heteronomy to autonomy.

## Conclusion

This paper takes the conflict between universality in Kant and historicity in Gadamer as its starting point, and it explores Buck's attempt to mediate it in his theory of 'Bildung'. It can be concluded that the problem has been brought into pedagogy, and through the deepening of the notion of 'experience' and the reinstatement of the notion of 'example', it has led to the solution of the special pedagogical problem of autonomy and heteronomy aporia.

Although I have focused on Buck in this paper, the 'consistent mediation of historicity and universality' seems to be a challenge for the post-Gadamer generation in

general, not solely for Buck<sup>13</sup>. However, I refrained from investigating this wider perspective in detail due to space limitations. This paper confirms the argument that Buck takes a more historically based approach than does Gadamer, consolidating it as a basic pedagogical theory by emphasising the opportunity of ‘self-experience’ within the concept of ‘experience’. Furthermore, by accepting Kant in his unique way through the concept of ‘Beispiel’, Buck has attempted to avoid the label of ‘historical relativism’, answering the question of normativity and universality, which are essential to the concept of ‘Bildung’.

This paper argues that Buck’s perspective views the transition from heteronomy to autonomy as a ‘gradual process’ rather than as a ‘leap to the point of revolution’. This means that he does not take a strict phenomenon-ideology view of dualism, as Kant does.

However, this does not mean that Buck attempts to take a monolithic view of everything. Gadamer’s overemphasis on historicity—even if unintentional—risks falling into ‘historical relativism’ that recovers all things into it. To be sure, not everything escapes historicity, as Gadamer says. Nevertheless, this does not indicate a kind of nihilist worldview in which there is no universality and no distinction between autonomy and heteronomy. As a pedagogue, Buck must avoid the possibility of nihilism caused by historical relativism, the equivalence of all values. Through the concept of ‘Beispiel’, Buck seeks to mediate both universality and historicity without falling into historical relativism and dualism, forces which could make education impossible.

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<sup>13</sup> One of the leading thinkers is Manfred Riedel. A disciple of Gadamer, like Buck, Riedel’s interpretation of Kant explores the possibilities of Kant’s philosophy of history. Like Buck, he focuses on the arguments in the *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, but his focus is on the argument of teleological judgement. He refers to the distinction between ‘final purpose’ and ‘ultimate purpose’ in Section 83 of the *Kritik der Urteilskraft* and interprets the former as ‘culture’ and the latter as ‘moral law’. Here again, as in Buck, we see the ‘idea of medium’, which emphasises both empirical and ideological elements. cf. Riedel 1978.



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