

**The most important demand  
placed on all education?**

**Professor Stephen Dobson  
Dean of the Faculty of Education**

# 3 stories

- Norway and New Zealand – Old and New
- The most important demand placed on all education
- *Ressentiment* and moral education

What is  
valid  
knowledge  
and the so-  
called turn  
to stories/  
narratives?

Time becomes human time to the extent that it is organized after the manner of a narrative; narrative, in turn, is meaningful to the extent that it portrays the features of temporal existence.

(Ricoeur, 1984: 3)

# Story number one: Old Norway and Old New Zealand

...if the world were flat they would be on opposite edges.

Population 5.2 mill (Norway)  
4.8 mill (New Zealand)

Mountains, snow, wind, forestry, love of milk products, fish, oil-gas some extracted, colonial history, no current wars.



Drying cod - 1000s of year old tradition in Norway

# The New Norway and the New New Zealand and Monumental time

22nd July 2011; Labour Youth League, 77 passed

15th March 2019 Friday Prayer, 51 passed

«It was one Norway before and one after 22nd July», Primeminister Jens Stoltenberg

«He will, when I speak, be nameless»,  
Priminister Jacinda Ardern

# Story number two: The most important demand placed on all education

“The most important demand placed upon all education is that Auschwitz [does] not happen again.” (Adorno, 1966) ([link to my newsroom piece](#))

# Why did Germans follow Hitler?

- The humiliation of the Germans at the end of WWI and the hyper inflation of 1920s
- Economy and politics are hard to change – maybe we can change personalities
- The need for strong replacement fathers with weak heads of the family fathers
- People/parents were educated to be hard, lack empathy and treat others as objects
- Children must be educated to independent thought
- We must continually raise awareness of the conditions that supported such atrocities as Auschwitz

# Åsne Seierstad, an important author in Norway

Narcissistic personality disorder publishing manifestos (74 page and 1500 pages)

Mix of rage and self-pity

(Seierstad, author of 'One of Us. The story of Anders Breivik and the Massacre in Norway')



# The last story - Ressentiment and moral education

From the 'is' to the 'ought' in education - what must be done?



Norwegian kids suddenly best in maths in Nordic countries.

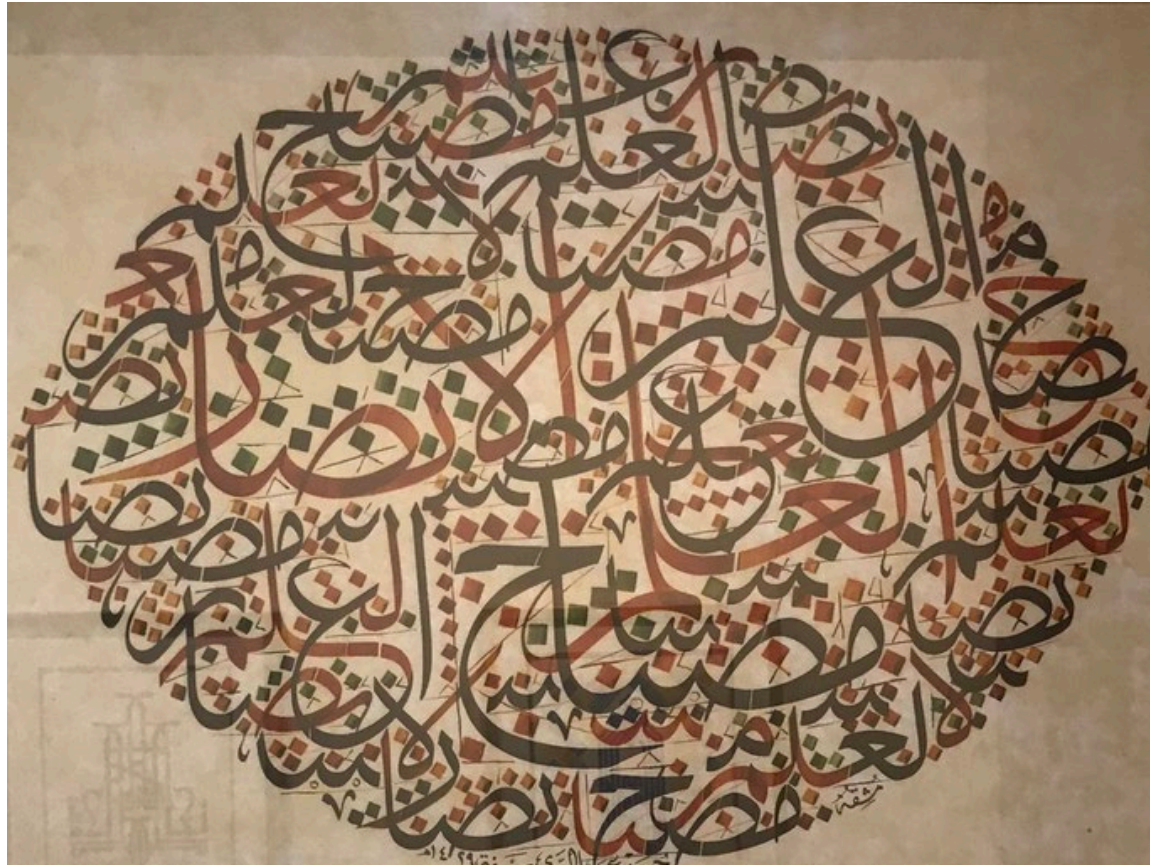
# Perspective 1: تَرْبِيَّة (tarbiya)

Development,  
increase,  
growth, and  
loftiness/noble

(Aristotle: We are  
what we  
repeatedly do)

Calligrapher  
Kalid Al-Jallaf

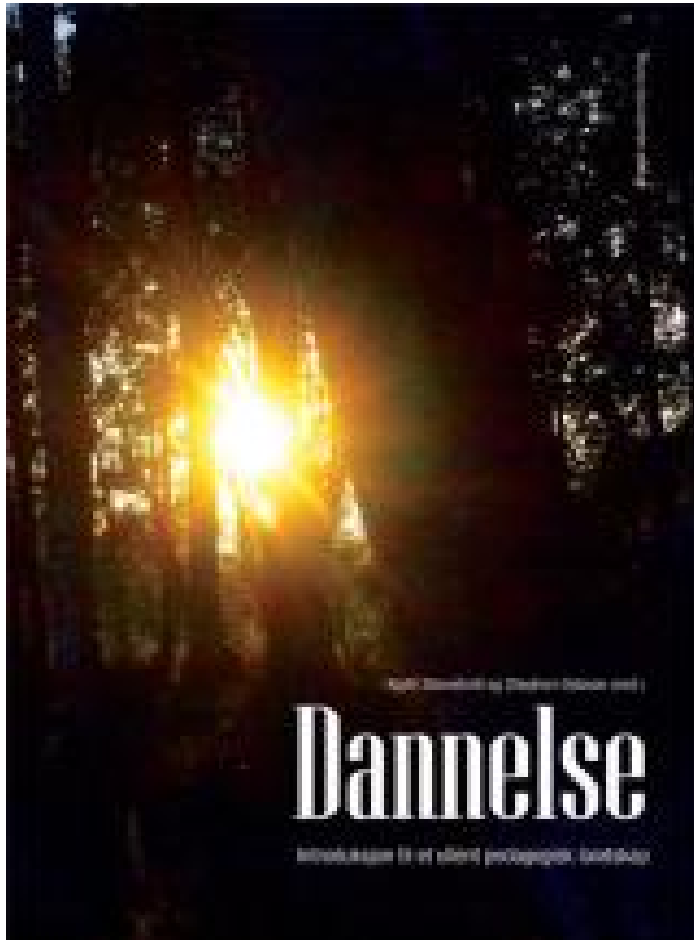




Science is the torch which illuminates the world



# Perspective 2: Lifelong learning and 21st century skills in different cultures – **Nordic countries**



”bildung (self and identity formation) is what remains after we have forgotten everything we have learnt” - Ellen Key

(Steinsholt and Dobson ed., Bildung. Introduction to an opaque educational landscape , 2011 published in Norwegian)

# Perspective 2 (continued): **Māori cultures** soft skills as *tūpuna* (grandparent), *mokopuna* (grandchild)

## **Ocean**

between tūpuna and mokopuna  
on the porch always to be re-painted  
peeling a story silver feathered silence  
strong backed and stubborn  
carried by the whistling spring to Ocean  
our Ocean  
the sail cloth stained red  
red the fish heads thrown back  
to bait the dreams of other childhoods  
of eyes turned down and precious thoughts kept for another day  
of arms moved inward in sleep  
our shelter.

Poem by Dobson

# Pine Southon, my cultural adviser

*Reflections of the past inform the future*

*The sound of karakia being recited as the night embraces me*

*The stillness of the night breeze, whispers of a distant past*

*Stand strong they remind me and*

*Dance like the blade of grass with the wind*

*Reflections of the past inform the future*

*This is how I navigate the future*

*Learn the dance of the distant past*

*So they too can dance with you*

*As you sleep arms moved inward, strong in their embrace*

*Reflections of the past inform the future*

(Karakia – prayer or incantation for spiritual guidance  
protection)

# Perspective 3: Hamlet, *Ressentiment* and moral education

Shakespeare's Hamlet

Two moralities: Good and bad or the good and evil

Spontaneous revenge/reaction or *ressentiment*

The lesson in life: learning how to recognise the moralities and to act accordingly.



What are those moments of silence in Australia, in Islamic cultures, in all cultures?

Those 'learning moments' when adults, parents children are receptive?

When recognising the other as learner and human is crucial and we can master our own *ressentiment*?



# From New Yorker article

Ardern, on the other hand, immediately showed that she had no time for the perpetrator of the mosque shootings. “Many of those who will have been directly affected by this shooting may be migrants to New Zealand; they may even be refugees here,” she said. “They have chosen to make New Zealand their home, and it is their home. They are us. The person who has perpetuated this violence against us is not. They have no place in New Zealand. There is no place in New Zealand for such acts of extreme and unprecedented violence.”

In a later statement, Ardern made her policy of disregard explicit. Speaking to Parliament four days after the attacks, she said, “He sought many things from his act of terror, but one was notoriety. And that is why you will never hear me mention his name. He is a terrorist. He is a criminal. He is an extremist. But he will, when I speak, be nameless. And, to others, I implore you: speak the names of those who were lost, rather than the name of the man who took them. He may have sought notoriety, but we in New Zealand will give him nothing. Not even his name.”