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To cite this article: Gry Espedal (2023) Taking the time: remembering values-based legacy to serve organizational purposes, *Management & Organizational History*, 18:2, 199-222, DOI: [10.1080/17449359.2023.2238678](https://doi.org/10.1080/17449359.2023.2238678)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/17449359.2023.2238678>



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Published online: 03 Aug 2023.



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Taking the time: remembering values-based legacy to serve organizational purposes

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ABSTRACT

How is a values-based legacy worked on in organizations to influence organizational members' practices to bring forward the organizational purpose? Earlier studies have highlighted the process of remembering the organization's motto as a way of recontextualizing the past, as well as the leaders' role in recalling values. In analyzing both pioneers and contemporary leaders of a 150-year-old values-based nonprofit healthcare organization, this study find that the pioneers' ideals, values, purposes, and intentions are remembered in contemporary leaders' work of maintaining and bringing forward the values-based legacy. The work is based on the four micro-processes of openness, anchoring the practice in history, realization of values, and relational practices. The micro-processes are enhanced by mechanisms such as religious and historical inspiration, processes of expectation and interpretation, as well as enacting compassion and quality through relational work. The work of remembering institutional values has established a moral awareness and ethical sensitivity in the organization toward the maintenance of the mission of reaching out to marginalized groups of patients.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 28 September 2021
Accepted 17 July 2023



KEYWORDS

Organizational memory;
organizational history;
legacy; temporality; values
work

Introduction

... the whole idea of Cathinka Guldberg was that she saw people who were suffering. What she saw were not fine ladies with wounds on their legs. No, she saw a need, a misery, illness, poor hygiene – all this. She met people with Christian care and skilled nursing. (Einar, leader, January 7, 2015)

The opening quote, expressed by a leader in the case organization of this study, a faith-based healthcare organization with a history of more than 150 years of values work, indicates an active use of the past (Hatch and Schultz 2017). The mission of the case organization and its pioneers was originally to educate deaconesses to become nurses to take care of marginalized and poor people. The leader's memory of the organization's founder, Cathinka Guldberg (1840–1919), is not only about remembering the emergent practice of healing open wounds. The leader's use of the founder's story brings forward the founder's taken-for-granted but not forgotten aim and purpose (Foroughi and Al-

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Amoudi 2020). As such, the opening excerpt is not only part of a remembering process but a process of using the legacy to maintain the organization's purpose.

Building on recent streams of research on organizational memory (Foroughi et al. 2020; Schultz and Hernes 2013; Wadhvani et al. 2018), and legacy literature (Colquitt et al. 2023; Eury et al. 2018; Fox, Tost, and Wade-Benzoni 2010; Hunter and Rowles 2005) we will here draw attention to how leaders and organizational members actively work on remembering the institutionalized history to make it part of organizational practice (Gehman, Trevino, and Garud 2013; Selznick 1957/1983/1983). According to Suddaby et al. (2023), organizations can be seen as battlegrounds where different perspectives on collective memory clash. The utilization of history by established institutions to strengthen their authority is considered a form of institutional work. Similarly, social movements also engage in contesting history, recognizing that the ability to shape historical narratives is a means to gain power. Both incumbent institutions and challengers acknowledge that the ability to define history holds significant influence. Thus, reactions to an organization's legacy can range from evangelizing the history to reach goals to completely neglecting and erasing it (Colquitt et al. 2023).

In recent years, there has been a notable resurgence in research on organizational memory, focusing on memories as shaped by current and future decision-making (Foroughi et al. 2020). The literature emphasizes the significance of acknowledging the role of the past in organizational dynamics. Various approaches, including functional, interpretive, critical and performative approaches, are used to examine the processes involved in organizational memory (Foroughi et al. 2020). Despite the importance of understanding the components that shape an organizational legacy, there is limited research attention to the work on values, particularly when organizational purposes are in drift. In this study, we aim to explore how values are actively addressed within the organization when remembering the past, in order to influence current organizational practices; thus, we ask: how do organizational leaders engage in values-based legacy to serve contemporary organizational purposes?

Scholars consider the task of establishing a values-based legacy as a crucial responsibility of leaders. It requires leaders to transition from mere administrators to institutional leaders, infusing the organization with values that go beyond the technical requirements of their roles (Selznick 1957/1983/1983, 17). In this sense, values is understood as 'that which is worth having, doing, and being' (Selznick 1992, 60). This includes both personal and organizational values, such as passing down personal beliefs and the ethos of helping people or emphasizing kindness as a legacy from the organization's founders (Hunter and Rowles 2005). In order to sustain an organization's legacy, leaders must strike a balance between operating the organization effectively and embodying a history that is worthy of attention (Selznick 1957/1983/1983).

Studies on values work have shed light on the continuous efforts to improve and promote desirable standards of work within organizations (Gehman, Trevino, and Garud 2013; Vaccaro and Palazzo 2015; Wright, Zammuto, and Liesch 2017). The connection between values work and history appears evident due to the time required to institutionalize what deserves attention. However, there is a scarcity of research that combines the literature on organizational memory and values work to uncover the organizational processes that contribute to the development of a values-based legacy. We are here investigating the dynamics of leaders and how they are using the past to establish

a foundation for maintaining the legacy in present activities. In situations of having to serve contemporary purposes, this means working on historical material in a practical way (Hatch and Schultz 2017). In tracing patterns of an organization related to the performative work on the values-based legacy, this can include processes of rediscovering not only the motto or establishing core values of the organization but also remembering and recontextualizing historical values in everyday activities.

This study investigates how organizational leaders engagement in the values-based legacy of a nonprofit faith-based healthcare organization. The case organization, situated in Norway, has for more than 150 years taken care of the marginalized. The 'marginalized' refers to people living on the edge – those who are sick, poor, illegal inhabitants, drug addicts, and psychiatric patients, as well as employees who might be in challenging situations. Cathinka Guldborg founded the faith-based organization as the first nursing school in Norway, starting the hospital as a place for deaconesses to develop practices as nurses (1868–1919). Because of this, Guldborg is referred to as the country's Florence Nightingale. Presently, engaged as a CEO and serving as president of the faith-based hospital over three periods (2002–2004, 2008–2014, 2014–2018), a contemporary leader of the organization 'turned the page' (Colquitt et al. 2023, 11) and reclaimed the core values of the organization to be compassion and quality, reaching back to the origin and forward to influence the activities of the hospital. The act of bringing forward the history was notified by the chairman: 'We must constantly ... tell the story and put it into our context. She [Guldborg] was a pioneer, and we want to be pioneers' (12 March 2013). However, this history has met challenges in reaching the instrumental business-like demands of cost-effective treatments, lowest-cost providers, and user centricity programs (Maier, Meyer, and Steinbereithner 2016; Reay and Hinings 2009). After the last deaconess retired in 2013, the organization was left asking who should be the marker of the faith-based ideals.

This article finds the values-based legacy of serving contemporary organizational purposes are remembered through four micro-processes of *openness*, *anchoring*, *realizing values*, and *relational practices*. The micro-process of *openness*, seeks to open up for the challenges and the purposes of the organization, in reaching goals of effectivity as well as maintaining the awareness of the organization's main target group being marginalized people. The second micro-process, *anchoring*, finds foundations for the work in both history and organizational values, signaling how to form organizational purposes inspired by historical values. Third, *realizing value*, indicates performative work on specific organizational values to promote standards of work. The fourth micro-process, *relational practice*, suggests that organizational legacy and purposes is to be enacted through compassion and quality by reaching out to marginalized groups of patients. The mechanisms enhancing this remembering process is religious and historical inspiration, processes of expectation and interpretation, as well as enacting compassion and quality through relational work. Critical factors hindering the work might be critical blindness, self-proclaimed dutifulness, and threat of losing time.

This study contributes to the current organizational memory and values work literature by uncovering organizational processes to remember the values-based legacy. The use of the past through the four micro-processes contributes to processes of rediscovering not only the motto or establishing core values of the organization but remembering and recontextualizing historical values and legacy in everyday practice. History is promoted

through temporal processes of organizational memory and enhanced by institutionalized values work. The remembering work are establishing a form of moral awareness and ethical sensitivity against mission drift.

Theorizing the remembering of organizational values

We are here investigating how sociological studies of organizational memory are enriched by the use of the past (Decker, Hassard, and Rowlinson 2021; Foroughi et al. 2020; Wadhvani et al. 2018) to maintain an institutionalized legacy (Colquitt et al. 2023; Hunter and Rowles 2005) that articulate and accomplish right and wrong organizational values work (Gehman, Trevino, and Garud 2013; Kraatz and Moore 2002; Selznick 1957/1983/1983; Vaccaro and Palazzo 2015). In presenting the research gap this study is filling, we divide this chapter into three parts. We review the literature of historicizing the past through organizational memories, how literature recalls legacy through values work, and how the work of remembering values might be part of historicizing institutional values work.

Historicizing the past through organizational memory

The emergent stream of studies on organizational memory provides insight into the activities of remembering the past through organizational activities for future practices. Organizational memory is defined as an inquiry into ways that remembering and forgetting shape and are shaped by organizations and organizing processes (Foroughi et al. 2020). The temporal approach of studies on organizational memory allows us to conceive the organization as always becoming (Hernes, 2014), a place where the past and future are defined and redefined in real events (Hussenot and Missonier 2016). However, the relationship between the 'that' and the 'how' of time still remains to be addressed (Ricoeur 1984, 7). We ontologically speak of time as having a being (that), but we need to know more about how it takes place.

Studies within the organizational memory tradition have identified how history is used in identity construction and change processes (Foroughi et al. 2020; Hatch and Schultz 2017; Ravasi, Rindova, and Stigliani 2019). Micro-processes that historicize organizational memory authentically are investigated (Hatch and Schultz 2017), similar to Selznick's 'ongoing concern' of institutional self-maintenance as accommodating internal interests to adapt to outside forces in order to maintain the organization's mission (Selznick 1957/1983/1983, 21). The historicizing of a Danish brewery reveals five micro-processes of remembering in organizations: rediscovering, recontextualizing, reclaiming, renewing, and re-embedding (Hatch and Schultz 2017). Here, the micro-process of recontextualizing is interestingly highlighted as a process of rediscovering, for instance, mottos, to give a notion of this in relation to the concerns of the organization. Recontextualizing is about tracing patterns of the organization related to work on constructing identity over time. However, the performative process of recontextualizing, of bringing in materials, practices, legacy, and values from the past to influence present understanding and activities, is highlighted less.

Studies have paid attention to materiality, revealing 'the dual nature of the past' as not simply constraining and/or enabling but as actively orienting organizational actions in the

present (Blagoev, Felten, and Kahn 2018). Memory is conceived as a performance producing a shared sense of the past. Reality occurs through the ways we perform and the way language does things in the world. Basque and Langley (2018) highlight how invoking the story of an organization's founder is a historical resource for organizational identity-making. The most frequent type of invocation is the existential invocation of the founder, invoking direct expressions of organizational identity by referring explicitly to the mission and values of the organization. However, for this study, we find the justificatory invocation to be equally as important, calling on the founder's words and ideas to legitimate and influence future organizational actions by showing how they serve the founder's mission and give meaning to current activities.

Recalling legacy through values work

Several studies have drawn interest to the legacy concept in management literature. Legacy can be defined as an enduring meaning connected to the identity of an actor that is intended to have an impact after he or she is gone (Fox, Tost, and Wade-Benzoni 2010). Legacy motives on the part of organizational decision-makers may cause them to engage in actions that benefit future generations (Bang, Koval, and Wade-Benzoni 2017; Fox, Tost, and Wade-Benzoni 2010; Wade-Benzoni, Sondak, and Galinsky 2010). Studies have focused on the 'legator' as the reference person leaving the legacy, while organizations contain 'legatees' - people the legator has left behind (Colquitt et al. 2023). Leaving a legacy to legatees can be done by passing on beliefs or ethics (Hunter and Rowles 2005).

Legacy is often upheld and carried forward through the behaviors exhibited by legatees, which can include actions like evangelizing or maintaining the organization's history. Maintaining the legacy involves legatees safeguarding the contributions of the legator in terms of memory and culture by updating and ensuring their continued relevance. On the other hand, evangelizing occurs when legatees actively promote and acknowledge the legator's contributions in a public manner. However, the durability of the legacy can be undermined when legatees neglect, erase, or remove the legator's contributions. However, one study in the context of building a family legacy explores integrating the legacy within the broader community and intertwining the family legacy with macro-history through founder foreshadowing (Manelli et al. 2023). Legacy identification is also highlighted as influenced by various processes, including reconciled identification, selective identification, and conditional identification (Eury et al. 2018).

Leaders are often expected to serve as legatees or carriers of institutional values (Askeland 2014), but the nature of this responsibility is described as ambiguous, allowing for multiple interpretations of values (Askeland, Espedal, and Sirris 2019). Introducing the concept of performative enactment of values can help foster awareness of values in practice and ethical sensitivity (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2012). This approach extends beyond the conventional practice of institutional leaders employing a backward-looking perspective to remind organizations of their core values (Washington, Boal, and Davis 2008). Instead, it calls for a more practice-driven approach that examines how ideals actively promote the micro-processes involved in working toward the institutionalized values (Gehman 2021, 141).

The studies of values establish a connection between passionately held and expressive values and the actions that require belief in them (Gehman 2021, 13). Values, viewed as

both embodied and shaped by time and practice, can be understood as ‘social facts’ or ‘practical stances’ that offer a coherent framework for comprehending life (Friedland 2017, 12–13). Values work serves as a bridge between practice and institutionalism, linking actions to institutions (Gehman 2021). A study has explored the realms of values work, highlighting sacred stories and practices as significant aspects of remembering the past. Within these realms, two tales have been identified: the parable of the Good Samaritan and the narratives surrounding the legacy left by the organization’s founder (Espedal and Carlsen 2021a). Another study introduces the concept of value inquiry as a form of values work that extends beyond the preservation and enactment of preconceived ideals. Instead, it emphasizes a discovery-oriented and ongoing construction of the concept of the ‘good,’ often initiated by challenging or troublesome situations (Espedal and Carlsen 2021b). Values, in this sense, become constructs through which broader institutional influences meet local provinces in both explicit and implicit meaning-making.

Remembering values as part of historicizing institutional values work

The puzzle this study is investigating is how leaders and organizational members, by leaning on organizational memory processes, engage in values-based legacy to serve contemporary organizational purposes. Figure 1 presents the theoretical ideas to be investigated in this study. By using a theoretical framework of organizational memory and identifying processes of historicizing, we are looking for performative aspects that deepen the processes of remembering the legacy through work on values. We here take into consideration a connection between stories told and the time involved in establishing a recursive relationship between institutions and actions (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006; Linde 2009; Ricoeur 1991). The question is whether the process can be a process of remembering and recalling values to serve contemporary purposes that form and embody what might be accomplished as ‘right and wrong’ organizational values work.

The study investigates how the purposes of the organizational values are upheld through remembrance of activities, and serves as a basis for shaping organizational



Figure 1. Possible connections between theoretical ideas of remembering legacy and values.

practices and purposes. As such, this study broadens the description of how history is promoted through temporal processes of organizational remembering (Foroughi et al. 2020) and how this is enhanced by organizational and institutional values work (Espedal and Carlsen 2021a; Gehman, Trevino, and Garud 2013).

Research context and methods

This research is part of a larger study investigating organizing values work in a faith-based healthcare organization. The case organization is an institution that for 150 years has had a mission of taking care of the marginalized; however, lately, the organization has been challenged by the structuring of the nation's welfare state, as well as healthcare authorities' demands of becoming business-like (Maier, Meyer, and Steinbereithner 2016), establishing a threat of mission drift in the organization (Cappelen and Pedersen 2021).

The author's curiosity to undertake this study was empirically motivated when the practices of the organizational members were studied, revealing how the past is still present in organizational intentions. Having a strong, values-based legacy operating in a challenging context, the case organization was found to be of interest to provide insight to this study on investigating organizational remembering processes and how institutionalized values are enhanced through organizational practices.

The case organization is a nonprofit organization integrated as part of the Norwegian public health service operating within the framework of the Regional Health Authority. The hospital provides medical services for just under 200,000 residents from four districts in the capital of Norway. In addition, psychiatric services are offered to several city boroughs, and the surgical department receives patients for scheduled operations from all parts of the country.

Data collection

To identify how values are contextualized and recontextualized in the organization, data from the origin of the organization, as well as the contemporary organization, are selected. Archival sources of annual reports and textbooks consist of approximately 2,000 pages. The first pioneers and initiators of the case organization established a strong, values-based legacy. The organization's founder, Cathinka Guldberg, originated the organization in 1868 and led the organization for more than 50 years. She wrote few personal memories; however, included as data are primary sources, such as personal letters to the deaconess sisters (from 1907–1919), as well as a biography including personal notes (published in 1940). The 14 formal Christmas letters to the sisters were chosen because of the letters' closeness to Guldberg's intentions and beliefs. Of these, five were written in the period of 1906–1917, and nine were undated (probably from the same period). Guldberg used the letters to enhance the same strategy as the steering committee of the Deaconess Hospital, to recall sisters to be 'Christian women with a vocation from God, who cares for souls in doing poor relief and nursing' (annual report from 1870, in Jahnsen 1919). Additionally, secondary sources are included, such as anniversary books and textbooks interpreting the pioneer's work to promote the organization's mission.

The first textbook of nursing in Norway that presents the values of the nursing profession is included. It was written by Rikke Nissen, Guldberg's deputy (Nissen 1877). The first ethics

book in nursing, written by another female leader of the Deaconess House, is additionally included. Hagemann (1930) endorsed nursing as compassionate Christian work, highlighting that the deaconesses' and nurses' work was to practice mercy and compassionate love in taking care of the sick and the marginalized. The work of the deaconesses is highlighted as bringing forward the Old Church's female diaconate. Biblical women were held as examples by the deaconesses and their leaders (Jahnsen 1913).

The archival sources have been assessed for critical factors such as time and authenticity. In working on the authenticity and the interpretation of history, a former principal of the deaconesses' nursing school and currently the chair of the organization's museum and archives has been a critical reader of this paper. The author of this article is the coauthor of a recent biography of Guldberg written together with the former principal of the nursing school (Espedal and Hovland 2012).

To identify how leaders and organizational members are working on institutionalized values, research interviews and participatory observations with the leaders of the contemporary organization were conducted. The CEO, having operated the faith-based institution over a 16-year period and due to his extensive knowledge of the hospital, was interviewed six times, first on 3 June 2013, and last on 16 November 2015. In addition, seven informants were chosen because of their extensive knowledge of the history of the organization, including one of the last working deaconess, a former CEO, two section leaders, one clinic leader, and two chaplains that has been employed for more than 30 years. The research interviews were conducted between 2014 and 2015. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and was recorded and transcribed (containing 90 pages of transcribed material).

Additionally, a backdrop for this particular study is the information given in the larger study of 65 interviews with people currently working in the organization on all levels; top-level, mid-level, and first level. A semi-structured interview guide, following a four-fold structure, was used for all informants. Open-ended questions were asked regarding activities, challenges, and the organizational values and concerns of the informants. The author asked for narratives on how the informants made a difference to someone at work, close to the mission of the organization. They were also asked about difficult encounters in reaching out to the organization's values, as well as how informants saw values processes and value priorities at work.

Participant observation (Bryman 2016) was conducted with the CEO and the top leaders at a presentation for newly engaged employees (14 September 2012), a leader meeting (30 May 2015), and a seminar for leaders of different faith-based organizations (10 May 2015). In addition observation of the practices of organizational members was done at two medical wards of the hospital (52 hours of participant observation). Throughout the data gathering, it was discovered that stories of Guldberg are still vital a hundred years after her death, surfacing in the research interviews, talked about in the observed sequences, and presented in the annual reports, values letters, and strategic plans of the case organization.

Data analysis

This article adopts an abductive approach (Golden-Biddle 2020; Wadhvani et al. 2018) to data analysis to rediscover new orientations of the organizational history and the past in

use (Foroughi et al. 2020). In order to fully comprehend the history of the case organization and the past in use, the author did an analysis in three steps. First, a coding process of the material was utilized to get an overview of the time-periods of the history and the emergent values. In reading the archival sources, such as the biography of Guldberg, an experimental method (Wadhvani et al. 2018) of yellow sticky notes was used to highlight important characteristics of the pioneer's writings and relevant other citations from the history of the organization. Stories and contextual approaches that were perceived as having a connection to historical remembering were named on the notes, collected, and systematized. The contemporary interviews and observations, as well as Guldberg's letters, were interpretatively coded (Miles and Huberman 1994) using the software program NVivo leaving the author with codes such as time, historicizing, remembering, rediscovery, and recontextualizing, as well as beliefs, values, relational practices, and values such as openness, responsibility, loyalty, compassion, and quality.

Second, to further refine the coded data to get an overview of the different time-periods and the categories of values involved, the author collected interpretations and reflections stemming from the coding process of the first leaders and the contemporary leaders and placed it in Table 1. The coded material was placed after when it was said, who said it, what values were involved and what might the initial process and working objectives be. In the table the material was divided into two periods: the early period from 1868 to 1917 (marked with gray) and the contemporary period from 2013 to 2015 (marked with white). The table gave an initial overview of time, values, actors, objectives, and processes together with extracts from the informants. The table presented in this article is a short version of the whole table.

Third, the author realized the structured data analysis was still huge and not specifically identifying processes of how the organizational leaders engaged in the values-based legacy to serve contemporary organizational purposes, as well as what mechanisms of this work were involved. In order to enhance the comprehensibility of the data and interpretation, relevant excerpts from the coding pertaining to time, values, actors, processes, and working objectives, were organized and clustered in Table 2. Following the approach outlined by Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton (2013), the author chose relevant first-order concepts associated with remembering processes of values-based legacy and mechanisms involved in this work to serve contemporary organizational purposes. Values such as openness, tolerance, faithfulness (identified as connected to work of the pioneers) and openness and loyalty from contemporary leaders was identified as first-order concepts and placed in Table 2. Responsibility was collected from Table 1 while religious inspiration was added as a collection of several codes showing a connection to the purpose of the work (pioneers). As well, engagement, loyalty, respect was collected from Table 1 and historical inspiration added as a collective approach (contemporary leaders). Accountability and critical blindness showed up as what was experienced as a critical factor, meaning an approach possible hindering the work on the purpose and the values-based legacy.

Further values such as compassion and quality were placed in Table 2 as values introduced and enhanced by both groups (pioneers and contemporary leader). A critical factor of this work emerged as self-discipline, and self-proclaimed dutifulness working against the remembering process of the purpose. Care and taking care of the marginalized (pioneers) was emerging as a first-order code in the work in Table 1 and

Table 1. Interpretations and reflections stemming from the first leaders and the contemporary leaders identifying time, values, actors, objectives, and processes. The pioneers are marked with gray and leaders from the contemporary period with white.

Time	Values	Actor	Extract from coding	Processes and working objective(s)
1868	Openness	Cathinka Guldberg	'It was for the poor I went to Germany to study nursing' (Guldberg in Ebbell 1940, 126).	Reaching out to the poor and marginalized
1906–1917	Tolerance	Cathinka Guldberg	'There is a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak.' (Guldberg referring to Ecclesiastes 3:7 in letters to the sisters)	Religious inspiration
1906–1917	Faithfulness	Cathinka Guldberg	'When we see each other's doubts, deficiencies, sins we should take them on as our own and carry them to our Saviour.' (Guldberg in letters to the sisters)	Religious inspiration
2014	Openness	Section leader 1	'History is something you become hooked on when you start at our hospital. You become a sailor in this historical boat of the deaconesses.'	Historical inspiration
2014	Loyalty	CEO	'We have to be open . . . We are in the world and part of the world . . . We should never forget [whom] we are here for. It is our users.'	Historical inspiration
1906	Responsibility	Cathinka Guldberg	'We have to stand wide awake housekeepers on duty, keeping an eye on each other and constantly working to do what Jesus would do.' (Guldberg in letters to the sisters)	Anchoring
1868– 1918	Responsibility	Cathinka Guldberg	'We should always ask: How is our House going to be?' (Guldberg in Ebbell 1940, 93)	Expectation and interpretation
2014	Engagement	One of the last working deaconesses	'Cathinka Guldberg said she did it for "the sake of the poor," or for those who suffer. That's why we're here today, too. There are many poor people in our sector.'	Anchoring
2013	Loyalty	CEO	'Today, in our organization, we express clear expectations of each other inspired by those who have walked in front of us. Actively we take a position on how we want to appear. We're talking about this, expecting loyalty.'	Expectation and interpretation
2014	Respect	Section leader 1	'This is discussed in the recruitment interviews before employees are hired. We don't ask about the Christian faith, but we expect them to live up to the organization's values.'	Expectation and interpretation
2013	Accountability	CEO	'We have to look for critical blindness. We have to discuss our faith-based values critically in relation to our practices . . .' 'St. Francis of Assisi has said: Life is about preaching the gospel at all times, and when necessary, [using] words. This sounds like us. . .'	Critical blindness

(Continued)

Table 1. (Continued).

Time	Values	Actor	Extract from coding	Processes and working objective(s)
1877	Compassion and quality	Rikke Nissen	'They who are united in love can accomplish much in nursing. . . . Our purpose is not to educate deaconesses into half or quarter [doctors], but into whole nurses who can show compassion, courage, silence, cleanliness and obedience.'	Values presented in the first textbook in clinical nursing
2014	Compassion and quality	Section leader 2	'Our core values, quality and compassion are bringing forward our heritage . . . However, we have to think of how we should take care of them when they are not going by themselves?'	Constant interpretation
2014	Self-disciplined	CEO	'We're careful about self-proclaimed dutifulness. It's the worst . . .'	No self-proclaimed dutifulness
1868	Compassion	Cathinka Guldberg	'[Leadership is to have] . . . open eyes and not [act] unfairly. The leader should know each sister personally and not be dominant.' (Guldberg in a letter to the chairman)	Relational practice – leadership
1870	Compassion	Cathinka Guldberg	'Who should help if not us?' (Guldberg in Ebbell 1940, 129)	Relational practice of taking care of the marginalized
2015	Relational	Chaplain 1	'When psychiatric patients are entering the hospital they are very ill. It is anxiety, fear, and confusion. Hope is far away, but we invite them to group discussing "How is it to be here today?" and "What do you think about your situation?"' (Chaplain 1, January 7, 2015)	Relational practice and taking care of the marginalized and existential needs
2015	Concerns	Chaplain 2	'When approaching patients, we have to think through what the next two minutes should be about concerning being a faith-based hospital?' (Chaplain 2, April 21, 2015)	Threat of losing time

included in Table 2. For the contemporary leaders a theme of working on the process of focusing on external needs was additionally discovered and included in Table 2. A critical factor working against the purpose was identified as a threat of loosing time.

From the work on the first-order concepts it was possible to identify second-order themes identifying stages of micro-processes of how the organizational leaders engaged in values-based legacy in serving contemporary organizational purposes, being openness, anchoring, realizing values and relational practice. The specific process of openness was employed by both groups, but while the pioneers found it to be inspired by religious beliefs, the contemporary leaders found the long history of the organization to inspire work on values. While the pioneers used their anchoring to inquire how their 'house' was going to be, the mechanism of the contemporary leaders of enhancing the microprocess of anchoring was to interpret their challenges and establish expectations of organizational members to be loyal to the values of the organization, regardless of religious affiliations. There was also an awareness that not paying attention to history might lead to critical blindness and losing track of important foundations of the organizational work. The second-order theme of realizing

Table 2. The structuring of the data analysis. First-order concepts from the pioneers are marked with gray and contemporary leaders with white. The dark boxes are critical aspects of the work proclaimed by the contemporary leaders.

First-order concepts	Second-order themes	Aggregated dimensions
Openness, tolerance, faithfulness	Openness	Remembering institutional practices
Openness, loyalty		
Responsibility and religious inspiration	Anchoring	
Engagement, loyalty, respect		
Historical inspiration and interpretation		
Accountability and critical blindness	Realizing values	Circulating value discourses
Compassion and quality		
Quality and compassion	Relational practice	
Self-discipline, no self-proclaimed dutifulness		
Care and taking care of the marginalized		
Care and taking care of marginalized and existential needs		
Threat of losing time		

values enhanced compassion and quality as values in both groups. The realization of these values led to a microprocess of relational practice. Both time periods enhanced relational practices such as taking care of the marginalized; the mechanism enhancing the relational practice by the contemporary leaders included a way to work on this by paying attention to existential needs.

The structuring of the micro-processes and the enhancement of the values-based legacy by various mechanisms led to a notion of aggregated dimensions of the contemporary leaders remembering the pioneers' values, both in being open to the needs of others and in anchoring awareness in history. Additionally, the awareness of values led to circulating value discourses. The work on values evolved led to a continuous ethical sensitivity of paying attention to values such as compassion and quality and taking care of the marginalized and needy by reaching out to their existential needs.

Findings: remembering institutional values work

In this section, I will first summarize the findings that describe how the values-based legacy is worked on by organizational members for it to become part of the institutional practice of bringing forward the organizational purpose. The work on remembering the past can be described as a values-based process consisting of four micro-processes: openness, anchoring, realizing values, and relational practice. The different micro-processes are presented in Figures 2(a) and 2(b), which are connected. The four micro processes are led by mechanisms presented in the gray boxes, such as being inspired by religion and history, expectation and interpretation, choosing core values such as compassion and quality, and taking care of the marginalized and their existential needs. There are also critical factors of these processes, being aware of the danger of critical blindness, of promoting the work with self-proclaimed dutifulness, and the threat of losing time (indicated by the arrows in the figure).

Second, I will describe the findings of the two aggregated dimensions of the micro-processes as remembering institutional practices and circulating value discourses and how these dimensions is bringing forward the values-based legacy.

Although 150 years have passed since the origin of the case organization, this study shows the contemporary leaders engage in attention to values to remember the legacy of the first leaders' ideals, values, and intentions, as well as circulating value discourses influencing the organizational practices with ethical sensitivity.

Openness

Through the first micro-process of openness, the leaders attempted to open up (and not forget) the challenges of the organization, as well as the awareness of the history and the organization's main target group of its services. Cathinka Guldberg's work was to establish nursing as a professional practice (Schønberg in Bloch-Hoell 1968) to have tolerance and reach out to marginalized people to alleviate their suffering. She said that 'It was for the poor I went to Germany to study nursing' (Guldberg in Ebbell 1940, 126).

In educating deaconesses, Guldberg proclaimed that the work of the marginalized should be to be faithful to their religious beliefs. The sisters should convey divine vocation and consolation in taking care of patients' bodies and souls (Jahnsen 1913). However, Guldberg knew this work of openness came with a battle for the deaconesses, one of finding inspiration and motivation in their faith. Guldberg wrote comforting letters to the sisters to be led by references from the Bible (Ecclesiastes 3:7), saying, 'There is a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak' (Guldberg, undated). Despite the challenges of the work, she encouraged the sisters to bring their difficulties to the Lord: 'When we see each other's doubts, deficiencies, sins, we should take them on as our own and carry them to our Saviour' (Guldberg in letters to the sisters, undated).

More than a century later, when entering the institution as a new CEO, the top leader recognized the strength of the organization's history; 'We have to be open ... We should never forget [whom] we are here for. It is our users' (4 March 2014). Having said this, the CEO continued Guldberg's work of being loyal to the work of reaching out to the marginalized. The work was emphasized to be find inspiration in history. The CEO highlighted that; 'We are looking for those who do not have service offerings. We always have to discuss who needs us most' (10 March 2015).

While the sisters found inspiration in their Christian beliefs, the contemporary leaders found the device of this work to be open to the organization's history. The CEO proclaimed that the work of the hospital was inspired by both Cathinka Guldberg and Francis of Assisi. Remembering Guldberg, he said, 'I always think [about] what would Cathinka Guldberg have said when making decisions if she saw what happened ... We are inspired by those who have walked in front of us ... ' (3 June 2013). He mentioned Assisi's words; 'Life is about preaching the gospel at all times, and when necessary, [using] words,' indicating the organization's intention was to practice rather than preach the Gospel (3 June 2014). The micro-process of being open was highlighted by other leaders saying they became hooked on the history when entering the organization (Section leader 1, 13 November 2014). One section leader mentioned that they became 'sailors in this historical boat of the deaconesses' when starting to work at the organization.

Anchoring

The second micro-process, anchoring, found inspiration in both history and religion. Anchoring is signaling how organizational members understand their responsibilities and how this work is inspired by historical values such as responsibility, engagement, loyalty, and respect.

Guldberg's proclaimed the deaconesses' responsibility was to anchor their work in the Christian faith and the community of sisters: 'We have to stand wide awake housekeepers on duty, keeping an eye on each other and constantly working to do what Jesus would do' (Guldberg in letters to the sisters, undated). Guldberg was also anchoring the mission of the organization's work in an interpretation processes of asking situated, discovery-oriented questions of the good (Espedal and Carlsen 2023), for instance, 'How is our house going to be?' (Ebbell 1940, 93). She had expectations that they through these questions should reach out to 'the poor, not the rich when holding banquets' (Guldberg referring to the Gospel after Luke [14:21] in letters to the sisters). The anchoring process also had a dimension of being accountable. When the deaconesses were consecrated, they were given necklaces in the form of Christian crosses with personal Bible verses on the back. Guldberg's cross held a clear expectation; 'The greatest among you should be the servants of the other' (Ebbell 1940, 98).

One of the contemporary last working deaconesses found her work to be inspired by the ancestors' work, saying, 'Cathinka Guldberg said she did it for "the sake of the poor," or for those who suffer. That's why we're here today, too. There are many poor people in our sector' (6 June 2014). She also described the work as being difficult. At the beginning of her work as a deaconess, she often wore her cross necklace on the front of her uniform. However, when approaching retirement, she wore the cross in the back. She was afraid of not being accountable to the organization's history on busy days. The contemporary chairman of the board was also engaged in interpreting the history and promoting the Christian symbol for everyday activities, re-emphasizing the cross. On his first round around the hospital as a new chairman, he decided to remove a helicopter light shadowing the cross on the roof of the main building (2001).

The processes of anchoring the history of the organization were followed by mechanisms of expectation and interpretation, indicating work on finding meanings of the historical legacy in organizational practices. For instance, the engagement in making the cross visible made the anchoring of the history come to front. The value of loyalty was highlighted in a presentation for newly engaged employees by the CEO: 'We have clear expectations of each other to be inspired by those who have walked in front of us. We actively take a position on how we want to appear' (9 September 2013). Respect was asked for in recruitment interviews, as one section leader said, 'We don't ask about the Christian faith, but we ask employees to live up to the organization's values' (3 June 2014). A critical factor of this work was highlighted by the CEO, who said that they had to be accountable of the history in organizational practices: 'We have to look for critical blindness. We have to discuss our faith-based values in relation to our practices and purposes' (18 December 2014).

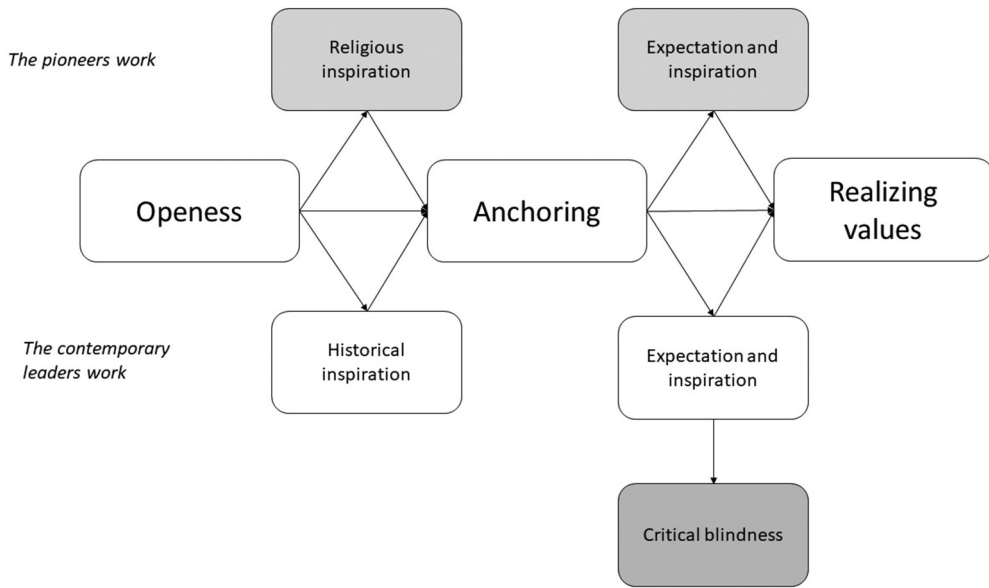


Figure 2a. A model figuring micro-processes recontextualizing the past, presenting the remembering of the institutional values of the pioneers and contemporary leaders of the case organization. The figure is followed by Figure 2(b).

Realizing values

The third micro-process, realizing value, indicated that organizational work was to be inspired by organizational values such as compassion and quality, promoting standards of the work. An explicit reference to the organization's values was to be found in the pioneers' work, enhanced by, for instance, Rikke Nissen, Guldberg's deputy, who described the work of the deaconesses as being inspired by values such as compassion and quality. In the first textbook for nurses, launched in 1877, she wrote, 'They who are united in love can accomplish much in nursing. ...Our purpose is not to educate deaconesses into half or quarter of doctors, but into whole nurses who can show compassion, courage, silence, cleanliness and obedience' (Nissen 1877, p. 20ff).

The contemporary CEO's way to remember the history was to establish two core values – quality and compassion – to bring forward the mission to influence future activities. He built on a former CEO that started the strategic work of incorporating core values into the organization. The new CEO said that choosing compassion was 'like blowing open a door,' connecting it to the life of Jesus and the ancestors (23 January 2014). To further engage employees in history and values, a values letter was established to be given to all newly engaged employees. The letter reintroduced the grand narrative of Cathinka Guldberg to a new time, aiming to encourage organizational practices in line with her story.

One critical factor of the micro-process of realizing values was to be observant of the organizational work as not leading to a kind of self-proclaimed dutifulness. Self-sacrifice was described as Guldberg's driving force (Ebbell 1940, 73), meaning that her interest was not in working for a personal agenda but instead working for the achievements of others. Self-sacrifice was also highlighted by the CEO, however by using other words. The CEO

emphasized they should not promote their work as a form of self-proclaimed dutifulness. It was not part of their way of working to highlight their outstanding or magnificent practices, but they should work on the values of the organization's history in silence by reaching out to people in need (3 June 2013).

Relational practice

Finally, the fourth micro-process on the work of values of compassion and quality was found in relational practice. Relational practice spoke to the way the organization worked as a fabric of relationships that included connections between individuals, members of the organization, partners, and patients. These relationships emerged out of a complex set of processes, many of which were unintended but became clearer when activated in practice. The relational approach of the work in the case organization was first described by the founder in a letter to the chairman on her way to Norway to start working as a leader of the institution. Guldberg argued that the relational dimension of leaders was to have 'open eyes and not [act] unfairly' (2 August).

Guldberg organized her compassionate care by noticing others' pain and being sensitive to their needs (Worline and Dutton 2017). Much of the compassionate work of the pioneers was about reaching out to the marginalized. Cathinka Guldberg was known for stopping by the entrance to talk to the poor sitting under the stairs, asking them how they were doing. Even though they were people without means, they were treated well as patients in the hospital. Guldberg also reached out to the sisters with compassionate care by shaking the hands of each sister after her working day. As such, Guldberg was described as being the institution she operated, legitimizing the values of the institution (Ebbell 1940).

The relational dimension of remembering the founder's history was illuminated when the CEO emphasized the historical mission of the organization; 'It is a desire that the hospital's values should be expressed in the way we meet patients, relatives, and organizational partners' (23 January 2014). The CEO used opportunities (e.g. introduction seminars for the newly employed) to talk about the history of the organization and encourage employees to work on the relational dimensions of this work in their practices.

While the pioneers work was to reach out to the marginalized, sick and poor people, the contemporary leaders included focusing on patients existential needs. A chaplain said they had established groups for patients with psychiatric problems to talk about existential questions: 'When psychiatric patients are entering the hospital, they are very ill. It is anxiety, fear, and confusion. Hope is far away, but we invite them to group discussing "How is it to be here today?" and "What do you think about your situation?"' (7 January 2015). As such, a way of working on this relational work was to emphasize existential hope in relation to the patients' lives.

In relation to the challenges the hospital was facing regarding being effective and business-like, the contemporary leaders were also aware of the threat of losing time and the difficulties in paying attention to history in relation to the multiple tasks of the organization. They emphasized that they had limited time to work on historical values, but they were conscious of the opportunity to use the first two minutes of an encounter to present their values: 'When approaching patients, we have to think through what the next two minutes should be about concerning being a faith-based hospital' (Chaplain 2, 21 April 2015).

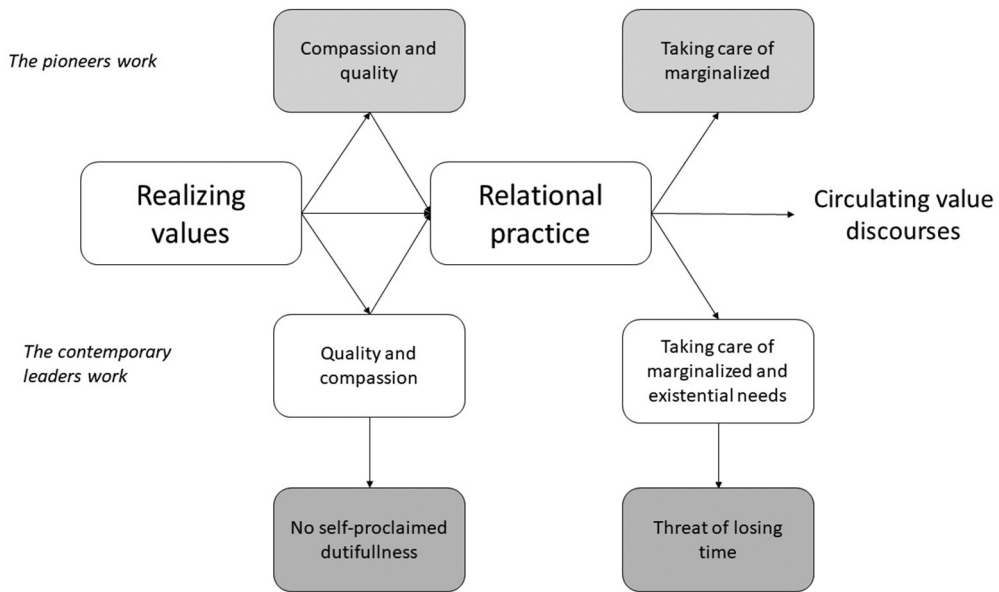


Figure 2b. Extension of the model in Figure 2(a) figuring micro-processes and related processes that remember the institutional values work of the pioneers and contemporary leaders.

Remembering institutional practice

Looking across the different processes from the two time periods of the pioneers and the contemporary leaders, a pattern was observed. The organizational values were brought forward in the microprocesses of openness, anchoring, realizing values, and relational practice, followed by the CEO's saying: 'The values should be remembered in all the things we do' (4 March 2014).

While the first micro-process of openness emphasized that the pioneers were reaching out to alleviate marginalized peoples' suffering inspired by Guldberg's words ('It was for the poor I went to Germany to study nursing'), the contemporary leaders continued Guldberg's work of reaching out to the marginalized by saying they wanted to focus on those who did not have service offerings, vulnerable and marginalized groups. Accordingly, both the pioneers and the contemporary leaders attempted to work for the organizational purpose of reaching out to the marginalized and those who had fallen on the outside.

In anchoring their work in history and in historical values, Guldberg encouraged the sisters to anchor their faith in religion and the community of sisters by standing 'wide awake housekeepers on duty.' This work involved processes of finding ways to interpret their faith in everyday practice looking for ways to work on reaching the greater good. The anchoring process of the contemporary leaders was led by highlighting expectation of employees to remember their history and find ways of interpreting the legacy in everyday practice. This meant being loyal to the history, not asking about people's religious faiths but encouraging people to be influenced by historical values in their work practices. However, not letting this lead to a form of critically blindness.

In relation to realizing values, the pioneers were explicit in their work to be inspired by values such as compassion and quality. Contemporary leaders continued the work on the values, saying that their organizational values were picked from the organization's history. However, in choosing these values and living them in practice, they were aware of the danger of this becoming a self-proclaimed dutifulness.

Through relational practice, the pioneers legitimized the work of the institution. The relational dimension of contemporary leaders was expressed in working on their values in relation to their patients and partners. They said their practices of taking care of the marginalized should be known by their values. Leaders emphasized organizational values by viewing Guldberg as a role model when meeting patients. One ward leader described that they reached out to the marginalized: 'Sometimes it is the same patients who come again and again, often with self-inflicted wounds . . . to provide a bed, giving the possibility for food and nutrition and rest for those patients, makes a large difference . . . some of them have a place to live but no living skills' (ward leader, 12 June 2014).

Summing up, the contemporary leaders' work was interwoven with history. They were imitating the founder's footprint in the organization (Stinchcombe 1965), recontextualizing the organization's history. The historical plot of the organization was promoted in strategic plans, annual reports, and values letters to new employees, as well as in revisualizing Christian symbols. Relational elements, such as inviting newly engaged organizational members to introduction seminars to continue the storytelling, brought forward the notion of the institutional memory (Linde 2009) of taking care of the marginalized.

Circulating value discourses

The founder's enactment and practice were worked into the organizational system by discursive reflections on the practice and establishment of core values in line with Guldberg's intentions. According to the CEO, 'It looks like history has a normative impact on what we do' (23 January 2014). The CEO claimed that history was correcting organizational members' attitudes and behaviors in relation to patients, employees, and stakeholders. Treating patients and employees with compassion and quality led to extended and circulating values discourses on patient worth and the length of the patient stays in the hospital. Enacting compassion can lead to job-related burnout and emotional exhaustion; however, the leaders were searching for ways to reach out to each other, for instance, by buying recreation places for them to relax.

The work was leading to a form of ethical sensitivity, of paying attention to which values should be in use (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2012) and ethical reflection on what was good practice (Espedal and Carlsen 2021b). However, there were also reactions by patients saying that their treatment at the hospital was not what they expected from a faith-based hospital. As such, the values work of contemporary leaders was part of an ongoing reflection on practice, on what it meant to keep the memory of the faith-based hospital alive.

Discussion: remembering values-based legacy through institutional values work

This article has explored the question of how a values-based legacy is worked on to serve organizational purposes. Leaders from two centuries have been analyzed in relation to their

awareness of organizational values in changing and difficult times. Here, the study might not involve a rediscovery of the history by contemporary leaders because the history has always been there; rather, it identifies the processes of continuously working on remembering the organization's history (Hatch and Schultz 2017) to maintain the embedded intentions and legacy of the organizations founders in a time of contextual flux.

The concept of remembering institutional values links studies of organizational memory (Foroughi et al. 2020) and organizational legacy (Colquitt et al. 2023) to values work (Gehman, Trevino, and Garud 2013; Kraatz 2009), presenting the institutional values work of leaders as a remembering process. Below, I divide the aggregated contributions of the study into two parts – a discussion on the remembering process of the institutionalized values and legacy and how this process of recalling values brings forward temporal aspects of moral awareness.

Remembering institutionalized values and legacy

Organizational history is often in danger of being lost in everyday activities. Gaps between leaders from different centuries involve long periods during which the organization is in danger of losing track of its ideals, intentions, and purpose (Foroughi and Al-Amoudi 2020). However, by paying attention to historical roots and working on how the values establish orientation points for the organization's activities, this study shows a process of remembering the legacy to maintain the organizational purpose.

The first period of this study includes a contextualizing phase of vulnerability in relation to the manifestations and establishment of the features of the faith-based healthcare organization, bringing forward an entrepreneurial period of being pioneers in taking care of the sick and marginalized. Later, the contemporary organization is challenged by business-like efforts (Maier, Meyer, and Steinbereithner 2016; Marquis and Tilcsik 2013) and regulatory government demands. Despite the challenges of the time, contemporary leaders developed a pattern of reflection in which they continuously worked on the organization's values. The reflections establish a frame of discourses helping construct and shape present organizational work. The historical value discourse and relational practices become prominent in the organization when they enacted compassion and were sensitive to others' needs. Additionally, this approach appeared as institutional values work of revisualizing the Christian cross of the organization.

Through the stories told, the founder's practices and lived experiences were refigured and employed by contemporary leaders (Ricoeur 1984, 1991). When the story of the founder was related, it indicated a presupposition of organizational history and purpose, bringing forward the plot of taking care of the marginalized. However, the plot of the story and the legacy was understood not only by telling the story but also through the activities of 'doing something' (Ricoeur 1991, 57). Contemporary leaders, for instance, were not only writing about the story of the founder in strategic plans and annual reports but also inviting employees to be part of the story as an ongoing storytelling bringing forward the legacy (Espedal and Carlsen 2021a). Thus, when the story was told and acted upon, the intentions and purposes illuminated a link between history and remembering practice.

Hatch and Schultz (2017) describe historicizing in organizations as followed by micro-processes of rediscovering, reclaiming, renewing, and re-embedding. The most distinct

process of remembering institutional work in this study is the process of recontextualizing the past, of acting upon the intentions of the founders. When reclaimed and renewed, the pioneers become re-embedded, bringing forward the plot, soul, and legacy of the organization. The history established a foundation for reflections on the values and practices of the organization that enhanced what we might perceive as values work, giving insight to what might be identified as ‘wrong, good or bad, for its own sake’ (Gehman, Trevino, and Garud 2013). The values enhanced by practice appeared ‘with inner consistency’ as a way of understanding the life of the organization (Friedland 2017, 12–13), establishing a form of institutional beliefs (Gehman 2021, 13).

The invocation of the founder was leaning on what is named existential invocations, relating the founder directly to the organizational mission and values (Basque and Langley 2018). However, equally as important was invocations justifying the ongoing actions of the founder’s ideas, as expressed by the CEO: ‘I always think of what Cathinka Guldberg would have said when making decisions.’ Through this imitating work, the institutional leaders did not forget the organizational mission and legacy but included it in everyday activities though being busy healthcare workers (Foroughi and Al-Amoudi 2020).

Micro-processes bringing forward temporal aspects of moral awareness

Despite the temporal gap of more than 150 years, the contemporary leaders work on bringing forward micro-processes remembering the values of the pioneers, established a foundation for promoting and protecting the historical legacy and thus creating a platform of moral awareness. This work considered the institutional context of the deaconesses, not necessarily adopting their religious practices but remembering their historical values. The recognition of what was good and bad from history produced a fellowship of moral well-being (Selznick 1992) and the development of moral competence in which the involved became moral actors. In establishing an awareness of historical values, ethical sensitivity is brought forward as a way of being alert to which values have been in use and which values need to be maintained to further construct the community, along with the historical mission and aim (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2012). When institutional leaders present the existential and justificatory invocation of the founder, they are leaning on the past, as well as establishing standards for future actions. The enhanced moral and lived experiences produced an understanding of how to pursue a normative path that leans on the past, emphasizing the ‘primacy of the particular’ for future activities (Selznick 1992, 310).

In future research, to generalize research on the process of remembering institutional work, the concept can be developed by including a broader number of contemporary leaders over a longer period of time and broader perspectives of their everyday activities, not only their work on values. In addition, the language and inclusion of other symbolic practices that promote and hinder organizational activities require further investigation.

Conclusion

This study has investigated the question of how a values-based legacy is worked on to serve organizational purposes, leaning on theories investigating organizational memory and legacy, as well as organizational values work of infusing the organization with values. Earlier studies have highlighted the process of remembering the motto of the organization as a way of

recontextualizing the organizations' history, as well as the leaders' role in recalling values. The gap this study is filling is identifying a broader perspectives of micro-processes of the leaders to be found in remembering activities, establishing a foundation of recalling values. The micro-processes influencing this work are openness, anchoring, realizing values, and relational practices. The micro-processes are enhanced by mechanisms such as religious and historical inspiration, processes of expectations and interpretation, and inquiring about the good, as well as enacting compassion and quality by reaching out to marginalized patients and their existential needs. These micro-processes of remembering historical ideals, values, purposes, and intentions are enhancing standards of the work and a moral awareness in the organization to search for what might be right and wrong practices.

The practical implication of remembering institutional values is built on reintroducing the grand narrative of the founder of the organization through existential and justificatory invocations. The values practices of telling the founder's story, as well as using the story in the letters and re-inventing organizational symbols, bring forward the organizational memory. Enacting relational practices that enhance compassion and quality as values, as well as remembering the history in practical values-based activities, improves the processes of remembering. History is promoted through temporal processes enhanced by institutionalized values work. The remembering work establishes a form of moral awareness and ethical sensitivity working against mission drift.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to Editor R. Daniel Wadhvani, Anders Sørensen & Christian Stutz and two anonymous reviewers for thoughtful comments and helpful advice. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 15th Organization Studies Summer Workshop 2020, as well as at EGOS 2021 at the sub-theme 01 [SWG] Organization & Time: The Situated Activity of Time Enactment (digital), and at AOM at a synchronous session in 2021. I am in indebted to comments especially from Markus Helfen, Tor Hernes and Majken Schultz at these conferences.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

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