

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROBLEM OF THE LIFELESSNESS OF PEDAGOGICAL ESSENCES, THEIR VIABILITY AND THEIR ENLIVENMENT*

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1. INTRODUCTION

In a previous publication the following fundamental axiom was stated [in Afrikaans] that is related to the problematic in the title of this chapter: "A Christian-Protestant pedagogician who accepts the essences of educating as essences-for-himself feels called to realize these essences in his educative work. However, in this regard, there is a particular precondition that has to be fulfilled before they can be actualized. Something specific needs to be recognized: there has to be an **enlivenment** [awakening-of-life] of the essences of educating that are characterized not only by their **lifelessness**, but also by their **viability**. Because of their viability, their lifelessness can be transformed into **enlivenment**. The essences of a philosophy of life serve as **enlivening contents** for the essences of educating."⁽¹⁾

It is now necessary to take a closer look at this matter. One way to do this is to make a study of phenomenological analyses of the category "life" in order to try to determine what light is shed on the meaning of "lifelessness", "vitality", and "enlivenment". But first the following remarks:

When it is said that a pedagogical essence is lifeless but yet is viable, suddenly it becomes clear that such an essence is not lifeless in the same way as is, e.g., a stone. A stone is lifeless and will remain so since it is not viable. On the other hand, an essence is viable and thus its lifelessness in reality is typified as **latent enlivenment**. This means that with a pedagogical essence there is life that remains concealed, dormant and invisible⁽²⁾ until something particular happens. Latent living essences really become living essences when their latent but present life is awakened, thus when the act of awakening [the essence]-to-life is actualized. In this regard

* English translation also available at: http://www.landmanwa.co.za/funpedes_ch3.htm

particular philosophy of life essences serve as the means for doing this. For example, through intermediate Christian-Protestant [philosophy of life] essences a particular educator actually brings to life for himself particular pedagogical essences: real enlivenment is brought about with the help of life giving (life awakening) contents (essences). In light of what has just been discussed it also is clear why there is mention of life **awakening** activities and not of life **begetting** activities. Here no new life is created but already existing life is awakened, activated. Pedagogical essences, then, become particular acts (activities).

It also is because of this latent enlivenment of the pedagogical essences that it is possible to implement the "methods of a pedagogical perspective"⁽³⁾ in order to expand our knowledge of education. These methods imply that each of the manifested pedagogical essences are accepted and that there is a purposeful and thoughtful search for their life philosophy-essences in life philosophy sources. Each essence that in this way is accepted then serves as a light (perspective) which is cast on the mentioned sources; this is an action that decidedly would be impossible if a non-living lifelessness should be replaced by its real meaning, namely latent living. The latent enlivenment of the pedagogical essences then become really enlivened because of the philosophy of life perspective applied to them. The use of an essence is a particular awakening-of-life activity.

Above, two enlivening activities are described which can be called a **life philosophy** enlivenment and an **epistemological** enlivenment. (Another form of epistemological enlivenment is when an essence is used categorically).⁽⁴⁾ In the following pages attention is given to the **possibility** of the former that already appears as a possibility from the name "philosophy of life", when it is viewed as a **living** philosophy--a philosophy that has particular connections with a person's way of **life**.⁽⁵⁾

2. SOME ANALYSES OF THE PHENOMENON "LIFE"

(a) **Gerd Brand:** A person's living being-in-the-world is a being-directed and being directed is movement. It is a living movement, a movement of life that is lived in various ways. Life then is an event of movement by which a person is carried, by which progress is

possible, and by which something becomes useful.⁽⁶⁾ Pedagogical essences then have a latent enlivenment because of their characteristics of: **(i) being-directed:** There is mention of a possible being-directed to the actualization of other pedagogical essences and a possible being-directed to attaining the aims of educating; **(ii) living movement:** There is mention of possible dialectical-hermeneutic actualized movements as living progress;⁽⁷⁾ **(iii) movement that occurs:** educating is a possible occurrence when adults and children are involved with each other and decidedly is not process-like in nature.⁽⁸⁾

Because of being-directed, living movement and movement that occurs, pedagogical essences are available as usable possibilities in pedagogic situations. When these three characteristics are realized in practice, latent enlivenment has become functioning enlivenment. This is all possible because the pedagogical essences can be made viable, thus because of the essence's giving direction, living movement and whose movement occurs is susceptible to the life-awakening influence of particular life-philosophy essences (contents).⁽⁹⁾

(b) Edmund Husserl: In the lifeworld everything is actualization and activity. What is exercised in functioning really can be described as motivation. Among a person, the world and other persons there are motivating relations in the sense that a person is motivated to pay attention to others, to take a stand, to act practically, to evaluate, etc.⁽¹⁰⁾

To live implies coming into function (activity) in the form of attending, taking a stand, thinking, putting to practice, evaluating, etc. In this light it can be said that the mentioned ways of functioning are latently present in real pedagogical essences, that their viability indicates that these forms can function in relation to the essences and thus can become living essences. Awakening-to-life by being functional (in any way at all) leads to enlivenment. The philosophy of life is a particular instance of letting the essence function since it is life-awakening because of its life-giving contents.

In the practice of educating, attention has to be given to the pedagogical essences because educating is actualizing these essences; a position has to be taken with respect to the essences

because a choice has to be made **for** them and against their contradictions and also a choice has to be made among them. There has to be a **reflection**.⁽¹¹⁾

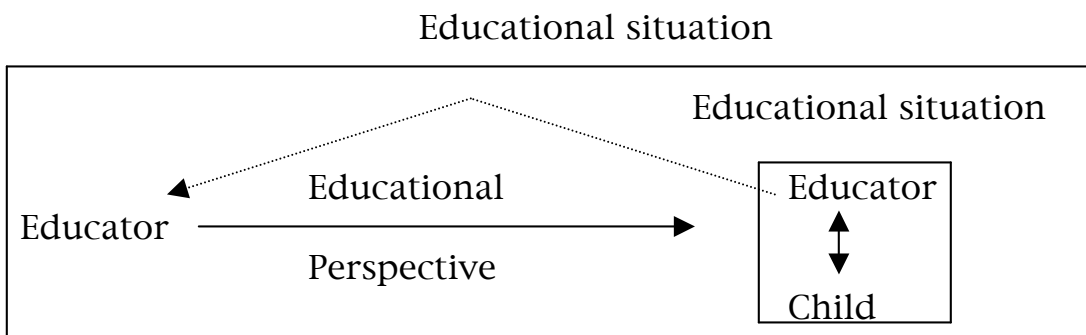
Today it is generally accepted that there are a number of possible perspectives on the reality of education. The aim of each perspective is to make a contribution to an understanding of what educating really is and/or to its improvement.

Questions that now are attended to are: What possible perspectives are there and what should they be called? The following are presented for consideration without claiming that the last word now is being said about the matter or that there are not other valid possibilities:

There are a variety of adults who in one way or another involve themselves with educative work, whether it is to perform it, to think about it or both:

(i) In the first place there are those who, on the basis of their educatorship (e.g., parents), are engaged in it and also who **reflect** on the educative activities that they are going to carry out or will yet exercise. They are **educators** who interact with children in **educational situations** and who reflect on this being together. In other words, they have their particular perspective on the event of educating that can be called an **educational perspective** (i.e., an educator's perspective). The educator thinks about his educative activities with the children with the aim of evaluating, improving, planning them, etc.

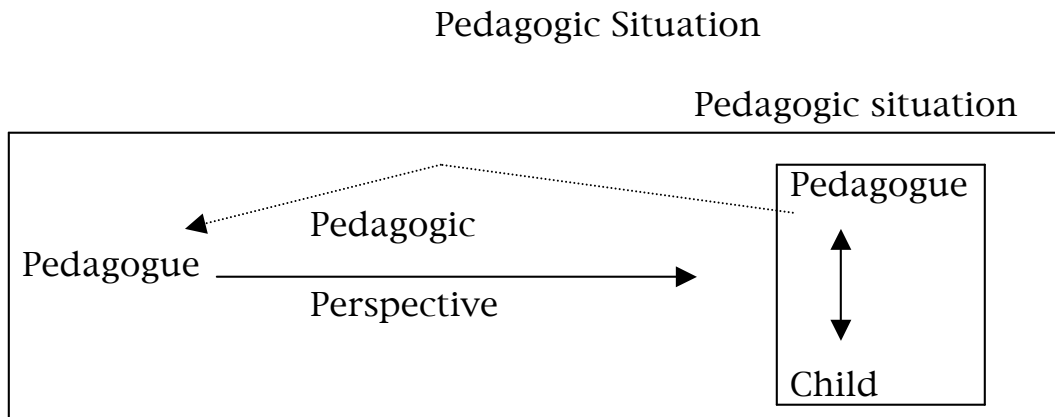
SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION



(ii) another group of educators are "experts" because of their

particular training in Pedagogics. They can be called **pedagogues** who interact with children in pedagogic situations and who can reflect in **expert** ways on the educative activities they engage in with children. In other words, they have an expert perspective on the educative event, which can be called a **pedagogic perspective** (i.e., a pedagogue's perspective). The pedagogue thinks in expert ways about his educative activities with the child in order to evaluate, improve and plan them, etc.

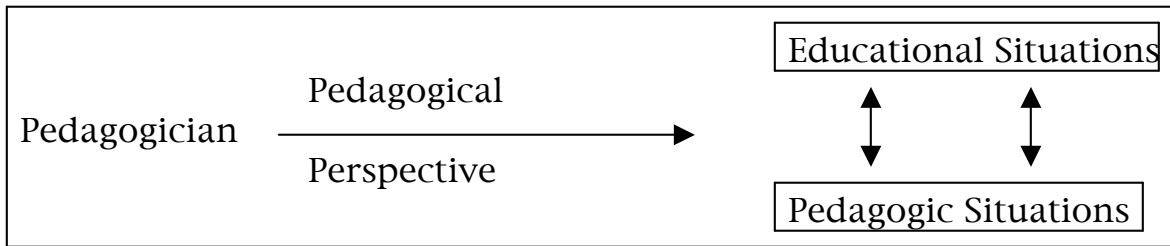
SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION



(iii) A third group of persons distinguishable are those who in **scientifically** accountable ways investigate educational and pedagogic situations in order to disclose real essences, their sense and meaningful relations with the aim of their being noted by pedagogues and giving guidance to educators. They are the **pedagogicians** who in **pedagogical situations** focus scientific research on the phenomenon of educating which, as an educative event, shows itself in educational and pedagogic situations. In other words, they have a scientific perspective on the event of educating that can be called a **pedagogical perspective** (i.e., a pedagogician's perspective). The pedagogician thinks about educational and pedagogic situations with the aim of understanding them ontologically.

SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION

Pedagogical Situation



Thus, there is mention of:

- (i) a (non-expert)* educational perspective;
- (ii) a (expert) pedagogic perspective;
- (iii) a (scientific) pedagogical perspective.

A particularly relevant question now is with which are the different part disciplines of pedagogics involved in their scientific practice?

- (i) Certainly not with an **educational perspective** because the practitioners and authorities of these disciplines possess expert knowledge of the event of educating;
- (ii) also not with a **pedagogic perspective** because they are not merely involved in applying their expertise in the child's interest;
- (iii) but indeed with a **pedagogical perspective** because each part-discipline has the task of the ontological understanding of the event of educating from its own perspective. Thus, each has to overcome essence blindness and disclose real pedagogic essences with their sense and meaningful relations.

This view implies that there are various part-disciplines of pedagogics that involve themselves with a **pedagogical perspective** on educative activities. Consequently, there is mention of a sociopedagogician's using the pedagogical perspective: a sociopedagogician implements the pedagogical perspective in sociopedagogical ways and then there is mention of a sociopedagogical perspective. For the same reason there is a psychopedagogical perspective, a didactic pedagogical perspective, etc.

* These three terms are placed between brackets because here one really has to do with a tautology.

Is there also mention of a sociopedagogic, a psychopedagogic, a didactic pedagogic perspective? Yes, to the extent that a **pedagogue** evaluates, plans, etc. his educative activities with a child in the light of his expert knowledge of sociopedagogics, psychopedagogics, etc. Here, however, a science (sociopedagogical, psychopedagogical, etc.) is not involved as such **but** there is use of sociopedagogical, etc. findings in practice.

(c) Martin Heidegger: that which is alive moves and a fundamental way of moving is not merely changing position but action as considered progression and breaking through.⁽¹²⁾ The way of actualizing a pedagogical essence (or group of essences) after another is one of considered progression since this way is thoughtfully actualized. There is a (dialectic) reflection on the most purposeful way of actualizing them and which ways ought to be followed. For example, it is determined that the direct way from pedagogic Association to Engagement is an impoverished way while this way via pedagogic Encounter is the most pedagogically accountable one.⁽¹³⁾ In addition, there is mention of breaking through. Pedagogic association is broken through when because, e.g., of an intensification of the actualization of the pedagogic relationship structures there is a movement to pedagogic encounter.⁽¹⁴⁾

Thus, with essence actualization there is mention of progression and breaking through, thus of life. Each essence is a possibility of progression and breaking through, i.e., it is latent enlivenment. When the progression and breaking through are actualized, latent enlivenment becomes actualized. This progression and breaking through occurs in concrete (particular) educative situations, i.e., in situations in which a philosophy of life is summonsed to the progression and breaking through.⁽¹⁵⁾

(d) Hans-Georg Gadamer: The life of a person is manifested in his lived experiences. This means there is a connection between life and lived experiencing and this relation is the particular connection between lived experiencing and life: moments of lived experiencing are moments of the event of living itself that allow life to be in its tangible scope and vigor. Because lived experiencing is itself embedded in the totality of life, the totality of life also is present in

it.⁽¹⁶⁾ When real pedagogical essences now are seen as able to be lived experienced⁽¹⁷⁾ this means that the following characteristic can be attributed to them: pedagogical essences are particular moments that the event of educating allows to live. Naturally, the precondition is that their latent enlivenment, thus the possibility of letting the event of educating live, has to be awakened to authentic enlivenment by implementing a life-giving philosophy of life. Pedagogical essences are possibilities that awaken life in the event of educating, provided they even are made living by life philosophy contents--a person lives from contents and to be living is to have a relationship with contents.⁽¹⁸⁾ A living educative event is one in which living pedagogical essences are actualized in their relationships in a particular way, namely, in a dialectic-hermeneutic way⁽¹⁹⁾ as living as well as life awakening movement. In this way the educator can support a child to enter into and lived experience the pedagogical essences with their life philosophy contents.

(e) M. De Tollenaere: The term "presence" often has a more dynamic and richer meaning than the terms "now" and "the present" since it clearly expresses the deep breadth of relationships among persons and of **living**. The living that brings the mere "now" of something to presence is its **being** (its being there and being such in its fullness--W. A. L.) that is discernible as an occurrence-in-function. Living as a functioning occurrence shows that which is hidden in human existence, thus brings it to presence. This living as presence is characterized by a rhythm of change: an activity is exercised and undergone; there is mention of creating and experiencing something, awakening and resting, of interrupting and building up, of coming and going.⁽²⁰⁾ Now when pedagogical essences are described as latent enlivenment, in light of the above, this means that they possess the following actualizable characteristics:

- (i) The educator can allow them to be, i.e., he can put them in the present in their fullness. This is precisely what occurs in pedagogic situations and therefore it also is possible to notice pedagogic essences;⁽²¹⁾
- (ii) The educator can allow the essences to occur. E.g., by noticing the objectionable the experience of opposition arises and after this opposition new ways of living are presented, etc.;⁽²²⁾ the essences become functional;

(iii) Pedagogic essence that live in reality are activities that are **carried out**. Thus, they are actions. Hence, e.g., there is mention of activities of trust that make encountering activities possible, of activities of authority which underlie activities of intervening, of activities of understanding that allow activities of agreement to progress meaningfully, etc. These activities also are **undergone** by the participants in the pedagogic event in the sense that they are embraced by them and consequently they are summonsed to actualize them;

(iv) Pedagogical essences live because they can be brought forth, i.e., can appear, can be awakened and then come to rest. An awakened pedagogic association leads to actualizing the pedagogic encounter and then comes to rest. This does not mean that its essences are switched off but that they tentatively are not observable. The observable becomes unobservable (see interrupted) and if necessary the unobservable again becomes observable (see built up). The enlivenment of pedagogical essences then appears in the rhythm of their presence, a rhythm that is co-dependent on the life-awakening effect of a philosophy of life, which also is dialectic in nature. Dialectic rhythm is evidence of enlivenment and enlivenment shows itself as dialectic rhythm.

(f) **Nicolai Hartmann:** Actual human life is filled with values and, consequently, a person continually works at disclosing and realizing values. Human life is characterized by an awareness of values. Therefore, it is possible to see **life as values**. Life is not created by persons but it exists, it is real, it is given to him as valuable and entrusted to his care. Among other things, here care refers to a **choice for** particular values, thus for taking a position in favor of them. Care as a choice for a positive position refers further to a becoming aware of the demanding nature of the valuable as a matter of propriety.⁽²³⁾

If "life" now is to be attributed to pedagogical essences, one has to be able to show that these essences are pedagogically valuable, i.e., that they are what have to be actualized if the child is to progress on his way to proper adulthood. If the contradictions of, e.g., the experience of security, gratitude for this experience, security because of acceptance, loving presence and personal initiative are conducive to becoming a proper adult, the presence of these essences of gratitude for pedagogic security⁽²⁴⁾ are worthless. Each of these essences serves as a precondition for actualizing other

essences and thus are necessary for progressing on the way to proper adulthood. For example, with the absence of the experience of security, anxiety arises and the pedagogic experience indicates that anxiety is anti-essence actualizing.

The educator has to choose ⁽²⁵⁾ in favor of particular living pedagogic essences, namely, for that which really is made living by his particular philosophy of life. Latent living in this sense means that an essence is available as a possible choice; thus it is one of the possibilities that the educator can chose to actualize: Life susceptibility will then mean susceptible to life because of choice, thus for actual enlivenment because it is chosen and then this enlivenment speaks in the form of a view and demand--the pedagogic essences have become particular demands of propriety.

Because of his being a person the educator has at his disposal a valuing consciousness, i.e., an inherent conception of values. This means that he is aware that he can and must value (judge). While he expresses value judgments he becomes aware that certain matters are more valuable to him than others. Thus, educating his children by him is appraised as valuable and child neglect as not valuable. He appraises in terms of contrasts such as educating as **value** and neglect as not valuable. This means that for him educating is acknowledged as elevated above neglect. He then is aware of the valuableness of educating and also is seized and claimed by educating-as-a-value. Educative work as a matter of living now places **demands** on him and indeed the demand to **properly** actualize the pedagogic relationship, sequence, activity and aim structures. These structures then are seen as demands of propriety. This means that if he will **properly** educate he has to fulfill the **demand** that these structures have to be actualized and this means that the following have to be clear to him:

the relationship of understanding as value,
the relationship of trust as value,
the relationship of authority as value,
association as value,
encounter as value,
engagement as value,
intervention as value,
return to association as value,
periodic breaking away as value,

educative aims as value,
pedagogic activities as valued and their **contrasts** as not valued.

The educator is aware that in valuing his educative work he has to judge whether these educative values are actualized by him. This means that these values are **yardsticks** (criteria) for determining whether the educative work is performed properly. Then these values have become **norms**.⁽²⁶⁾ The pedagogical structures mentioned now are for the educator an indication of what ought to occur, thus what has to be lived in his educative work. As norms these structures are direction-indicating for him especially in the sense that he knows that what for him are valuable in reality are demands for propriety (norms) to which he has to show unconditional obedience. This is the case because as far as the accepted norms (educative values as demands of propriety) are concerned, they are not open to choice since they are **mandates** for him. If he does not accept these demands of propriety (norms) as **mandates** he cannot be an educator who acts in pedagogically accountable⁽²⁷⁾ ways. The mandate is that these norms have to be obeyed. This occurs when the educator accepts the mentioned educative values as matters that have to be actualized and when he judges the quality of his educative work in their light.

The mentioned educative values are valuable for all living⁽²⁸⁾ educative situations and thus the norms flowing from them are valid for all educative work that is practiced. However, each educator is in a particular educative situation in which a particular philosophy of life speaks. This means that the universally valid norms have to be filled with particular life-view contents (e.g., Christian-National), thus they have to be made living. When this occurs these norms become **principles** for a particular educator. Then they become rules of behavior that are direction-giving for his actions with particular children (e.g., children of the Covenant).

FOR EXAMPLE

The relationship of understanding, as **value**, is **normative** (demand posing) in the form of understanding being-a-child and understanding the demands of propriety that, in their turn become the following **principles** in concrete educative situations: Understanding the significance and implications of being a child of the Covenant, and of Protestant-Christian demands of propriety.

(g) Heinrich Rombach: Movement is the presence of life. Only in an ontological respect can there be a distinction between rest and movement since they are only present with each other. In an ontological sphere, both are synthesizable so that movement can be "calm" and rest can be "lively". This means that a structure can be described as "lively-rest". Lively rest indicates that the structure lives and thus is not a substance but an event. In this sense, life is a category with ontological status. Thus, life is not an abstraction or absolute power but is the result of enlivenment; that is, enlivenment shows itself as life. The enlivened structure lives. Life is a phenomenon noticeable in all structures and gives each its particular nature. Living structures are authentic preconditions for a person's becoming and in this sense enlivenment can be used as a **criterion**. What is the quality of the enlivened life of the structures? What kind of enlivening is there of the structures? Enlivening means that structures are activated such that actions can immediately occur in their light.⁽²⁹⁾ These are actions that are possible because the educator is present in each structure as a person.⁽³⁰⁾

Fundamental pedagogical structures (with their essences) are viable because they are particular events that can be brought to lively rest. Calm lingers by a structure (e.g., the relationship of trust) and then it is possible to move meaningfully to another structure (e.g., the relationship of authority) by which there is a lingering until additional meaningful movement has become possible. However, such movement requires enlivenment and a philosophy of life, as life awakening action, enters the foreground. Now when enlivenment is applied as a criterion, questions such as the following become relevant: What is the quality of an educator's philosophy of life knowledge? Does he succeed in realizing and integrating life philosophical knowledge that is relevant at a particular point of time?, etc.

3. SOME METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the previous pages in terms of some phenomenological analyses of the phenomenon "life" an attempt was made to reflect on and describe lifelessness, viability and enlivenment (awaken life) as characteristic of fundamental pedagogical structures (with their essences and meaningful relations). The un-naive practitioner of

pedagogics now asks the following epistemological question: On what ground is such reflection possible? Answer: on the basis of the fact that the reflector (pedagogue) is **by** the event that has to be thought about. Reflecting (as phenomenological analysis) is possible because it bridges the empiricistic, idealistic and "ism" estrangement from the to be reflected on reality. Briefly, the pedagogue's being-in-the-world makes possible his reflecting and the resulting understanding. Viewed **epistemologically** the pedagogue lays down his own being-in-the-world as the **first** precondition for his reflecting. In other words, he poses being-in-the-world as an ontological category, thus as a light that makes further illumination possible. Only then is the following question meaningful: Which **point of departure** is possible because of my thinking being-in-the-world? Answer: the reality that I have selected to think about is the meaningful point of departure.

Thus: (i) the first precondition for thinking is the thinker's being-in-the-world (ontological category); (ii) the point of departure for thinking that now is possible is an aspect of reality itself.

The point of departure for pedagogical thinking is not the ontological category but the reality of educating itself as it is rooted in the life world (as a particular aspect of reality). **The ontological category refers to the first precondition that has to be satisfied in order to make the mentioned point of departure possible.**

In addition, it is the rootedness (embeddedness, foundedness) of the reality of educating in the life world itself that makes possible the approach followed in this chapter, namely, to first inquire into the **anthropological** meaning of the phenomenon "life" and then to determine its **pedagogic significance**. This is possible because pedagogical thinking is a particular form of anthropological thinking. In his particular way, a pedagogue is an anthropologist.* He asks particular anthropological questions from an autonomous pedagogical perspective.

4. PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE ESSENCES AS CONTENT

* Note that anthropology, anthropologist, etc. refer to **philosophical anthropology** and not to the social science. G. Y.

Lifeless (latent living) pedagogical essences become alive on the basis of their viability and enlivenment by life philosophy contents (essences). From this fundamental axiom that emanates from the previous pages it now can be deduced that it will be meaningful to give close attention to two pronouncements given about "content".

(a) **Viktor Warnach:** An unbiased phenomenological analysis clearly shows that each being has two fundamental moments not reducible to but associated with each other: an assimilation-holding and a content moment. The holding moment is receptive to content that has a particular function.⁽³¹⁾ For example, a relationship of trust with pedagogic content will **limit** that relationship to a pedagogic situation. Then there is mention of a pedagogic relationship of trust. The pedagogic relationship of trust can be further **limited** by Christian content to a Christian situation of educating. For the educator, knowledge of content thus is of particular significance paired with knowledge of the holder of or structure (essences) of this particular content.

The holder (structure with which the educator as person is present) seeks fulfillment (actualization) and it is the ontological function of the content to bring about this actualization.⁽³²⁾ Pedagogic content makes actualization possible in pedagogic situations and life philosophy enlivenment of the content makes actualization possible in particular pedagogic and educative situations. Once again knowledge of content is assumed.

(b) **Leo Gabriel:** Content is expressed in a form such that the form is a primary constituent of the content.⁽³³⁾ This means, for example, that philosophy of life contents (with which the educator as person is present) seeks fulfillment (actualization) and it is the ontological function of the form to bring this actualization about. Thus, the following contents seek fulfillment in the form (structure) known as a pedagogic relationship of trust: "And who so shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. (Matt. 18:5)". "... we and our children ... that You have accepted us and our children as Your children" (Baptismal vows); "For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength. (Is. 30:15)".

The unity of the reciprocal implications of form and content is corroborated in these two pronouncements. According to Warnach,

form is in search of content. Gabriel indicates that content is in search of form. As a synthesis, it can be said that form and content are in search of each other.

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