

# **De Kentheoretische Gegenstandsrelatie en de Logische Subject-Objectrelatie**

by Herman Dooyeweerd

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Newly translated and annotated for study purposes only

by Dr. J. Glenn Friesen

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## **Introduction by J. Glenn Friesen**

This was Dooyeweerd's last article, published two years before his death. I have been impressed with how consistent Dooyeweerd's ideas in this article are with those that he expressed at the beginning of his career—not only in his *Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, but in the development of that philosophy during the 1920's and 1930's.

An English summary of this article appeared in *Philosophia Reformata* in 1976, under the title “The Epistemo-logical Gegenstand-relation and the Logical Subject-Object-Relation.” But the English summary excluded many of the important arguments made by Dooyeweerd in the original Dutch article. Thus, Dooyeweerd's sharp criticisms have remained largely unknown to English-speaking reformational philosophers, who have frequently adopted precisely the philosophical views that Dooyeweerd here rejects. In this translation, I have underlined those parts that were not included in the English summary. Those parts of the original article that were included in the English summary do not always exactly correspond to my translation, but I have indicated the most significant differences. Translations from Afrikaans that are shown in bold are also my own. All the endnotes are my own, with the exception of endnote 56, which reproduces Dooyeweerd's only footnote in his original text. I have also included the original page numbers in square brackets and **bold** typeface.

## **Translation from the original Dutch article, with annotations and comparisons**

[p. 83]

The *Prolegomena* of the *Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee* opens its transcendental critique of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience<sup>1</sup> with three basic questions [grondvragen]. Since the 1960's, these questions have been the subject of increasing discussion.

In his *Christelike Wijsbegeerte. Standpunte en Probleme* (Bloemfontein 1973), P. de B. Kock, Professor of Philosophy at the University of the Orange Free State (Universiteit van Oranje Vrijstaat) has given a detailed survey of this discussion. He reviews the merits of arguments brought forward by various critics (including H.G. Stoker, F. Kuyper, H. van Riessen, A.L. Conradie, A.M.T. Meyer, V. Brümmer and C.A. van Peursen).

This discussion is of fundamental importance, because what is at stake is the philosophical view of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience that lies at the basis of the whole transcendental critique of this attitude in the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. I did not want to involve myself prematurely in this discussion, since it was still continuing in its movement, and I wanted to see whether it might perhaps open up fruitful new points of view.<sup>2</sup>

With the appearance in 1973 of the important dissertation *Begrip en Idee* [*Concept and Idea*] of the South-African philosopher D.F.M. Strauss, defended at the Free University, this discussion has reached a certain provisional conclusion [afronding]. This has made it possible to classify in some ways the objections that have been brought against my conception of the transcendental critique and the working out of that conception.

These objections relate primarily to the following points:

1. the acceptance by my critique of the antithetical (merely intentional) relation between our logical function of thought and the non-logical aspects of the human horizon of experience. In our theoretical attitude of thought and experience, these non-logical

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<sup>1</sup> This article refers to pre-theoretical and theoretical attitudes of thought *and experience*. The extent to which Dooyeweerd's philosophy is based on our experience has not been adequately appreciated. This is due to misunderstanding his philosophy as relying on theoretical "presuppositions." But Dooyeweerd does not rely on theoretical presuppositions, but rather on the ontical conditions of our thought and experience. *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*[WdW] also emphasizes experience, but it begins by referring to the "vóór-theoretische instelling." The 1975 article makes the emphasis on experience even more clear. See also the references in Thesis 2 of my "95 Theses on Herman Dooyeweerd," [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/95Theses.html>].

<sup>2</sup> The English summary refers to Dooyeweerd waiting to see whether the discussion "could open new aspects." This gives the misleading suggestion that it is the number of modal aspects that is in issue.

aspects are set over against the logical function of thought by means of theoretical abstraction,<sup>3</sup> they are thereby made into a theoretical problem for epistemology;

2. my opinion that, by means of the transcendental critique, which has brought to light the religious Ground-Motives that have demonstrably ruled the development of Western thought, a point of contact can again be restored among philosophical directions that often stand sharply opposed to each other, and which have increasingly shut themselves off from each other;

3. my view that the structures of the modal aspects and the typical structures of individuality are grounded in the cosmic order of time, and that human existence, although it is enclosed by cosmic time in its modal aspects and [p. 84] individuality structures, nevertheless transcends this time in its religious center.

4. the purely *formal* character of the law-idea and subject-idea as the necessary transcendental basic idea for *each* possible philosophy.

Some of the objections referred to above have been made by certain prominent adherents of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea; others have been made by critics from other fundamentally different philosophical directions. There is no doubt that all of these objections deserve serious consideration. This does not take away from the fact that the objections listed under the first point have a certain priority in light of the methodological design of the transcendental critique of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience, as developed by the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. That is why in this article I will only discuss the objections made by Strauss.

The transcendental critique developed by the Philosophy of the Law-Idea was the first to make the theoretical attitude of thought and experience into a critical problem. Until now it has usually been accepted as an unproblematic given for epistemology. The transcendental critique has initiated an investigation into the inner nature of this attitude, as well as of its necessary conditions, which first *make it possible* and which *themselves flow forth from out its inner nature and structure*, although they also appear to be partly of a supra-theoretical character. In doing this, the transcendental critique also cuts off the dogmatic acceptance of the autonomy of theoretic thought and knowledge. Although they were presumed to be self-evident consequences of their scientific basis, no critical account had been given of them.

Therefore the transcendental critique developed by the Philosophy of the Law-Idea had to begin with a critical investigation as to the nature and structure of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience. This took place, as is known, in a confrontation of this attitude with the non-theoretical attitude of thought and experience of everyday life. This confrontation then led to the discovery that theoretic thought is characterized by an antithetical attitude, what is called the ‘*Gegenstand*-relation,’ in which our logical or

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<sup>3</sup> As will become clear, Dooyeweerd intends ‘abstraction’ here in the sense of a dis-stasis from the concrete reality that we experience pre-theoretically. Abstraction involves an *epoché* or a refraining from the coherence and continuity of cosmic time. (*WdW* I, 72; II, 402-403). He does not mean abstraction in the sense of abstracting “properties” from presumed individual things.

analytical function of thought is set over against<sup>4</sup> certain fields of investigation that are distinguished from each other by the various theoretically abstracted modal aspects and individuality structures of the human world of experience.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> To set the aspects ‘over-against’ [*tegenoverstellen*] each other is not the same as a logical antithesis. If this distinction is not made, then Dooyeweerd’s argument against Strauss cannot be understood. To set one aspect over against the others is to compare it to the other aspects in order to derive the retrocipatory and anticipatory analogies. It is not a logical antithesis. Unfortunately, this distinction has been obscured in the translation of the *New Critique of Theoretical Thought*. It refers to this opposition as an ‘antithesis,’ which can too easily be misunderstood as a logical antithesis. See my discussion in “Did Dooyeweerd Contradict Himself? A Response to D.F.M. Strauss,” online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/aevum/Strauss.html>].

<sup>5</sup> ‘*Gegenstand*’ is the German word for object. But Dooyeweerd does not use ‘*Gegenstand*’ in the sense of object. He emphasizes that the *Gegenstand* is not the same as an object in the subject-object relation. In fact, the *Gegenstand* does not exist as an ontical reality, but only as an intentional, willed, epistemological reality. By assuming that our naïve experience has knowledge of the aspects as distinct, Strauss is confusing the ontical (where they are not distinct) with the epistemological (where they are first made distinct in the theoretical attitude of *dis-stasis*). The *Gegenstand* that is set over against our full act of thought. All acts come out of our supratemporal center. Only in theoretical thought do we oppose the temporal modal aspects to our selfhood. And when we do that, these aspects are split out from the temporal coherence in the abstraction of *epoché*. The *Gegenstand* can itself be broken down into smaller *Gegenstände*. In *New Critique II*, 469, he says that there are several levels of the *Gegenstand* [I have enumerated them within his text]:

1. The absolute *limit* of “gegenständliche” abstraction is found in the functional basic structure of the modal aspects.
2. An entire law-sphere with its immanent modality of meaning can function as a “*Gegenstand*.”
3. Within such an abstracted law-sphere, a whole field of mutually coherent particular “*Gegenstände*” reveal themselves.
4. Finally it is possible to abstract a *structural* “*Gegenstand*” from a thing or event of naïve experience.

Levels 1 and 4 represent opposite poles of the levels of *Gegenständlichkeit* (there is a limit in each direction). It seems that Strauss has not seen these levels of abstraction of a *Gegenstand*. He seems to assume that the problem of the *Gegenstand* and its synthesis arises only after the aspects are split apart. But the mere fact that we have split apart the temporal aspects means that there is also a *Gegenstand*. As I understand it, this first level of our theoretical experience is when the temporal aspects are set over against our supratemporal selfhood. We enter the modal “dimension” of our experience. This is something that we “will” or intend (WdW II, 402: “een gewilde aftrekking uit de volle tijdelijke werkelijkheid.” Our selfhood is not found in the temporal systasis; we must

The original formulation of this antithetical relation in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> editions of *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought* apparently had a more limited extent insofar as it spoke only of a setting-over-against of the non-logical modal aspects to the logical function of thought.<sup>6</sup> But later a correction was made in a note that even the logical aspect itself must become the “*Gegenstand*” of theoretical analysis, whenever we try to obtain an epistemological concept of this aspect in its modal structure. This correction, at first only mentioned in passing, was first worked out in the discussion of epistemology in Volume II. It became the starting point for the most acute criticism, to which the young Dr. Strauss has subjected my conception of the *Gegenstand*-relation in the dissertation referred to, *Begrip en Idee*.

His criticism is focused on my sharp distinction between this [p. 85] theoretical [*Gegenstand*] relation and the subject-object relation by which we understand the reality that presents itself to the horizon of human experience in the pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience of everyday life.

Strauss’s criticism has been of service in that it has brought to light a number of problems posed by this distinction for the transcendental critique, and which were not discussed in the *Prolegomena* of the *New Critique* in my formulation of the three transcendental basic problems [grondproblemen] of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience. It concerns the question of whether the theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation in which, as I have said, the modal aspects of our experienced world are set apart and over against each other, can be reduced to the subject-object relation, in which I have said that these aspects are objectified. In other words, does the theoretical antithesis between our analytical function of thought and the non-logical aspects have an inter-modal or of an intra-modal (and therefore logical) character? In the first case it cannot be explained how the logical aspect itself could become a “*Gegenstand*” of our logical or analytical function of thought, a possibility that I have explicitly acknowledged. In the second case the distinction I have made in the transcendental critique between the *Gegenstand*-relation and the subject-object relation could not be maintained.

That is a short summary of the dilemma that Strauss finds in the transcendental critique of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience that I have developed. Strauss is of the opinion that there is a logical contradiction in my attempt to maintain both the *Gegenstand*-relation and the subject-object relation. He himself is of the opinion that the only correct way out of this dilemma is to reduce the *Gegenstand*-relation to the theoretical subject-object relation, in which case the logical contradictions that he sees will disappear. He elucidates this solution in an extensive and acute argument, which at

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find a correlate to the *Gegenstand* within the temporal coherence of meaning (WdW II, 400; NC II, 467).

<sup>6</sup> Dooyeweerd had in fact written about the *Gegenstand*-relation as including the investigation of the logical aspect itself. See *WdW* II, 395-398, repeated later at *NC* II, 462-65). Dooyeweerd specifically says there that we can oppose the logical aspect of our real act of thought to the logical aspect. Analysis is not restricted to the non-logical aspects. Thus Strauss is wrong in stating that it is only much later that Dooyeweerd allows the logical to itself be a *Gegenstand*.

first sight appears to be irrefutable, and for which he has found complete agreement by J.P.A. Mekkes, the well-known professor *emeritus* of the Stichting Bijzondere Leerstoelen in de Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte. Before Strauss, Mekkes had sought a solution along the same lines.

This argumentation distinguishes Strauss's thought processes from that of Prof. van Riessen, who in his books *Wijsbegeerte* and *Op wijsgerige wegen* had asserted, without further argumentation, that the *Gegenstand*-relation simply does not exist and that it had never been proposed or understood by anyone other than myself. This bold assertion deserves, above all, to be critically investigated by a brief summary of the history of the origin of the antithetical *Gegenstand*-relation in ancient Greek epistemology.

In pre-Socratic philosophy, where the scientific forming of concepts had not yet become a theoretical problem, the general opinion was that "*Like is only known by like.*"<sup>7</sup> We find this opinion in the Ionian nature philosophy up to Anaxagoras as well as in the metaphysical doctrine of being founded by Parmenides. In the former, which was already undermined by Anaxagoras's opposition between *nous* as thinking spirit and the *matter* that was *ruled* by thought, this led to the view that we can know the "elements" from which, according to the ancient view, the cosmos has originated [p. 86] (water, earth, fire and light) only by means of these same elements, from which man himself has originated. And in Parmenides' metaphysical doctrine of being, the thought that "Like is known only by like" led to the identification of theoretical thought and being. For Parmenides, unchanging *being* is only known by *theoretical thought*, because this thought is the same as being, and theoretical thought, by virtue of the logical basic principle of identity, is the same as that to which this thought is related, i.e. *that which can only be thought.*

But as soon as the Socratic insight was gained, that theoretical thought can only be obtained by means of a *theoretical-logical concept*, the identification of theoretical knowledge with what is known could no longer be maintained.

Socrates always sharply set conceptual knowledge over against the sensory perception of that which can be perceived by the senses, to which both the Ionian philosophers of nature as well as the Sophists had reduced human knowledge. And, as Plato showed in his dialectical dialogue *Parmenides*, the logical identity of being can only be understood in its correlation to the logical diversity of *being other.*

And so we find that Plato, the greatest student of Socrates, also expressly rejects the thesis that "Like is known only by like" (*Politeia* 438e). Instead, he characterizes the theoretically knowable as the *antichaimenon*, that which is set over-against the theoretical-logical activity of thought. The theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation was therefore already known in classical Greek philosophy. Of course it was not understood within the

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<sup>7</sup> The English summary translates this as,

...the general opinion was that knowledge is identical with its object. This was meant by the adage "the equal is known by the equal."

The phrase is generally translated in English as, "Like is known by like." That is the way it appears in translations of Empedocles, Aristotle's *De Anima* I, 5 and Aquinas's *Summa*.

framework of the modal aspects of the horizon of human experience, as it is understood in the transcendental critique of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. For insight into the modal meaning-structure<sup>8</sup> of these aspects and their unbreakable mutual meaning-coherence was here completely blocked [geblokkeerd]<sup>9</sup> by the dualistic Ground-Motive of Greek thought, the form-matter motive, which drove Plato to his sharp antithesis between the “*genos horaton*” (the material world perceivable by the senses, subjected to coming into existence and perishing) and the “*genos noëton*” (the intelligible world of ideal mathematical and eidetic forms of being). As I have shown in the first volume of my *Reformation and Scholasticism*, Plato’s restless attempts to try to bridge this antithesis by a theoretical synthesis were stopped by the *religious* character (in its deepest sense) of the Greek form-matter motive. Before Aristotle, this motive was usually referred to with the Pythagorean terms *peras* and *apeiron*.

After this brief exposition of the origin of the history of the *Gegenstand*-relation in ancient Greek philosophy, we return to the critical argument of Strauss, where he argues for the untenability of the distinction that I have made in my transcendental critique of the theoretical attitude of thought and knowledge between an inter-modal theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation and an intra-modal logical subject-object relation.

I must first point out that in the preliminary description of the theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation, we must sharply distinguish it from the subject-object relation as we meet it in the non-theoretical and what we have called ‘naïve experience,’ in which our logical function of thought is still completely “enstatically” set within the continuity of cosmic time, and in which there is still no setting apart or setting over against of the modal aspects. Here [p. 87] the subject-object relations have only what we may call an “ontical” character—that is, they belong to the *integral temporal reality* itself, as it gives itself within the human horizon of experience. Because of this, I have formulated the contrast between these subject-object relations and the theoretical *Gegenständlich* relations as: the former leave empirical reality *in-one* or *intact* [*in-een* of *intact*], whereas the latter *splits it apart*, and does not correspond to reality as it gives itself to our experience.

In contrast to this, the *theoretical* subject-object relations are inseparably bound to the epistemological *Gegenstand*-relation. They are therefore only mentioned [in the *New Critique*] after the *Prolegomena* had set out the fundamental difference between the theoretical and the pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience.

[The English summary here says]

This investigation led to the conclusion that theoretical thought is characterized by an antithetical inter-modal groundrelation, the *gegenstand*-relation, in which we oppose our logical or analytical act of thinking to the different modal aspects of empirical reality in order to get them in the grip of an epistemological systematic concept. These aspects

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<sup>8</sup> The English summary says ‘irreducibility.’

<sup>9</sup> This word ‘*geblokkeerd*’ is the same word that Dooyeweerd later uses to refer to Strauss’s philosophy.

offer resistance to our attempt to form a concept of them and from this resistance the epistemological problem originates.

This theoretical attitude of thought and experience does not correspond to reality as it gives itself to our non-theoretic experience of every day. It is the result of theoretical abstraction by means of which we lift the modal aspects out of the ontic systasis of reality in order to get them in our analytical look.

Pre-theoretical, so-called naïve experience lacks the antithetical *gegenstand*-relation. It conceives empirical reality in the typical totality structure of concrete individual things, events, societal unities and their inter-relations in the integral systatic coherence of all their modal aspects. They function within these aspects in *ontical* subject-objectrelations, e.g. a bird's nest, a church building, a work of fine art, a living room etc.

Because Strauss supposes that he can reject what distinguishes the theoretical attitude of thought and experience—the inter-modal *Gegenstand*-relations and the necessarily related inter-modal synthesis<sup>10</sup>—he blurs the fundamental difference between the ontical subject-object relations in the naïve pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience on the one hand and the epistemological subject-object relations on the other hand. In this way it seems that he has given up a fundamental part of the transcendental critique that I developed in my four volume work, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*.

For it was just this identification of the *Gegenstand*-relation with the epistemological subject-object relation that led the neo-Kantian and the followers of Husserl to the untenable identification of what we have called 'naïve experience' with the theoretical vision of reality held by naïve realism. And that certainly could not have been Strauss's intention!

[The English summary here says]

This was necessary in order to subject the current dogma concerning the autonomy of theoretical thought as a pretended self-evident result of its inner nature to a radical criticism, and in order to refute the current misunderstanding of naïve experience as a false *theory* of reality, namely that of "naïve realism", a misunderstanding particularly found in Kant, the neo-Kantians and Husserl.

In his work *Die Samenhang van Wijsbegeerte en Vakwetenschap*, Strauss has refuted in such an excellent way Stoker's objections against the transcendental-critical method of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, and Stoker's supposed replacement of this method by what he calls the "phaperotische" [phanerotische] method (which proceeds from the self-revelation of creation). It is therefore necessary to enter more deeply into these arguments of Strauss.

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<sup>10</sup> Thus, Strauss rejects not only the *Gegenstand*-relations, but also the idea of theoretical synthesis. Note Dooyeweerd's use of the plural: '*Gegenstand*-relations.' See footnote 5.



It was to be expected that Strauss's attack on my concept of the *Gegenstand*-relation would be focused on my acknowledgement that the logical aspect itself could be made into a "*Gegenstand*" of our actual logical function of thought and knowledge, in order to obtain theoretical knowledge of its modal structure. Our logical or analytical function of thought always itself acts [fungeert] within the logical aspect of our horizon of experience and existence. How then can this aspect stand in an *inter-modal* *Gegenstand*-relation to our logical function of thought? At first sight, it appears irrefutable that the epistemological relation must have an *intra-modal* logical character.

But Strauss himself knows very well, that our *actual* analytical function of thought does not function within the *theoretically abstracted* aspect of thought and experience. Our actual thought can only function in this aspect as it is *previously given* to us within the integral cosmic order of time of the *real* world of human experience, i.e. *not* as analyzed in theoretical abstraction, and in the subjective analytical splitting-apart and setting over against, but in its full inter-modal coherence of meaning with the other modal aspects.

Our actual theoretical-analytical function of thought can only reveal its actuality [p. 88] in typical analytically qualified acts of thought<sup>11</sup>, which in their individuality-structures act in principle within all modal aspects. According to the intentional content of these acts,<sup>12</sup> there is effected both a theoretical abstraction of the logical aspect as well as its inter-modal setting over against all non-logical aspects of the human experienced world. For a proper analysis of the logical aspect, it is necessary to recognize that these acts also set the abstracted non-logical aspects over against each other. We would never be able to distinguish the analogical moments in the structure of the logical aspect without setting the modal aspects in a theoretical-logical antithesis to each other. But, says Strauss, this theoretical antithesis would not allow of any inter-modal synthesis, and it results from something wholly different than the theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation, which according to me [Dooyeweerd] requires just such an inter-modal synthesis.

But Strauss cannot maintain this objection. For *each* theoretical *inter-modal* antithesis finds its necessary reciprocal [keerzijde] in a theoretical *inter-modal* synthesis, for it has no other goal than to come to a corresponding concept of the aspects that have been set over against each other.

If his objection were correct, then it would not be possible to form a theoretical concept of an individuality-structure, which is characterized by a typical internal qualifying function and a typical foundational function. Both functions can only be understood in an unbreakable theoretical meaning-coherence in their individuality-type, and both functions have a non-logical "gegenständlich" nature. Strauss is really much too

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<sup>11</sup> There is a difference between our acts, which come out of our supratemporal center, and which function in all aspects, and the aspects themselves. And there is a difference between the aspects in their ontical coherence and the merely intentionally distinguished aspects that are abstracted from out of this coherence.

<sup>12</sup> Intentional: This does not mean directed towards things [as in the phenomenological view of intentionality], but a directness towards the splitting apart of aspects, a selective "over-against." We can intend various levels of the *Gegenstand*.

comfortable in forming theoretical concepts of these structures in order to accept this consequence for himself.

In order to come to a corresponding epistemological concept of the logical aspect abstracted from out of its continuous coherence within cosmic time, we require a successive series of inter-modal analytical and synthetic acts of knowing. By means of these acts we understand the logically qualified analogical meaning-moments in both their modal difference from the non-logical modal nuclear moments, to which they refer either in retrocipation or anticipation,<sup>13</sup> as well as in their inter-modal meaning coherence

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<sup>13</sup> The analogies within an aspect thus refer to the nuclear meaning moments of other aspects. The relation of these nuclear meaning moments to the analogical meaning moments is often not understood. Dooyeweerd says elsewhere that we cannot form a concept of the nuclear moment, but only an Idea. This is because the nuclear meaning moment is supratemporal, and is only known in its analogical meaning moments, which refer to the supratemporal centers of other aspects. This is probably one of the main reasons for the disagreement between Strauss and Dooyeweerd. It also explains why Dooyeweerd's statement in the 1975 article that the mutual irreducibility of the law-spheres and their unbreakable reciprocal meaning-coherence are "not to be separated from the transcendental idea of the root-unity of the modal aspects in the religious center of human existence." For the nuclear meaning-moments are in the center! This also explains Dooyeweerd's statement that the "meaning-kernels cannot be interpreted in an intra-modal logical sense without canceling their irreducibility." For if we interpret them in an intra-modal logical sense, we have obtained a concept of the meaning-kernel, something that he says cannot be done.

Some of the references elsewhere that confirm this view of the nuclear meaning-moment being central are set out below.

"Sphere-sovereignty of modal aspects can only reveal itself within the inter-modal temporal meaning-coherence..." (NC III, 627).

and

"The structure of a specific aspect is always a unity in diversity of moments and never an absolute unity above the moments." ("Introduction to a Transcendental Criticism of Philosophic Thought, *Evangelical Quarterly*, XIX (1) Jan 1947 51)

Thus, an aspect displays an expression from out of the center within the temporal diversity of meaning. There is a unity and coherence within each aspect. The same article says that the kernel or nucleus of each aspect is that which gives that aspect its sphere sovereignty. By this kernel or nucleus, the aspect maintains its individuality with respect to all the other aspects of temporal reality. It is the central and directive moment within each aspect. The article also says that we know the kernel of an aspect in its retrocipations and anticipations:

The "nuclear moment," however, cannot display its individuality except in close liaison with a series of other moments. These latter are by nature partially analogical, i.e. they recall the "nuclear moments" of all the

with the non-logical modal nuclear moments. And by these acts we find their proper place in the cosmologically determined succession order of analogies. That is to say that this extremely complicated process of theoretical concept formation of the logical aspect, just like that of each other aspect has both a *positive* as well as a *negative* side, both of which must observe the inter-modal meaning coherence of the logical and the non-logical aspects.<sup>14</sup>

In his excellent three-volume work, *Die Samenhang van Wijsbegeerte en Vakwetenschap*, Strauss has shown himself to be fully aware of this method of concept formation of the modal aspects. But in my view, his insight into the true consequences of this has now been blocked<sup>15</sup> (at least in part) by his rejection of the whole line of thought of the inter-

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aspects which have an anterior place in the order of aspects. Partially also they are of the nature of anticipations, which recall the "nuclear moments" of all the aspects which have a later place in that order.

The kernel meaning of the law-sides of reality is therefore in the supratemporal center. Steen correctly points out that for Dooyeweerd there is an eternal moment in each sphere of law (Steen 170). There is a systatic coherence between the kernel and its analogies (*De Crisis der Humanistische Staatsleer*, 1931, p. 102-103, excerpted in Verburg, 143).

The *WdW* says

The coherence of meaning of the law spheres is an order of cosmic time. In our religious apriori we refer this back to divine predestination in the broadest sense of plan for the world. It is a law-order of a horizontal nature that spans particularized meaning, in contrast to the vertical, which comes to expression in particularized meaning by sovereignty in its own sphere. (I, 70; not in NC)

And Dooyeweerd says,

What in the totality of meaning has no meaning is the sovereignty in its own sphere in the particularity of meaning (*WdW* I, 71).

The law-order is horizontal in that it spans across all law-spheres. The coherence of the aspects is maintained "horizontally" by cosmic time. But the meaning of each law-sphere is related to its expression from the center. That is why the kernel or nuclear moment of each sphere is supratemporal. Because it is beyond time, we cannot obtain a concept of it.

The kernel of the aspect, the sovereignty in its own sphere, is related "vertically" to the sovereignty of God, and to humanity as the image of God, who expresses the aspects. It is not just the kernel of the law-side that is found in the supratemporal. All of our acts come out of our supratemporal selfhood, and Dooyeweerd says that this is our actuality. He relates it to the kernel of each subject function. The kernel of each subject function is the actuality that is referred to in phenomenology. (I, 78; NC I, 101).

<sup>14</sup> The positive and negative sides appear to be the coherence of the analogies and their differentiation.

<sup>15</sup> See footnote 9 regarding 'geblokkeerd.'

modal *Gegenstand*-relation and the inter-modal synthesis as characterizing the theoretical attitude of thought and experience, although in his previous work he had fully accepted it.

[The English summary here says]

Strauss, who in his earlier extensive work on the relation of philosophy and the different special sciences had completely accepted my view of the inter-modal *gegenstand*-relation and the inter-modal epistemological synthesis as characteristics of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience, has in his thesis *Begrip en Idee*, raised serious objections against it. He now tries to show that the inter-modal character of the *Gegenstand*-relation is already refuted by my own admission that the logical aspect itself can be made the *gegenstand* of our subjective logical analysis in order to gain theoretical knowledge of its modal structure. In addition he tries to prove that my view according to which the distinction between the modal meaning-kernel and the analogical moments of a modal aspect requires an inter-modal synthesis with all the other aspects, entangles itself in a vicious circle and logical contradictions. The author is of the opinion that all these supposed difficulties are to be overcome by placing the *gegenstand*-relation within the frame-work of the logical subject-object relation and by consequently abandoning my sharp distinction of these two.]

On page 105 of his dissertation at the Free University, [p. 89] Strauss says,

De teorie van 'n intermodale sintese impliseer...'n merkwaardige en onhoudbare sirkel: om die logiese aspek te analiseer word 'n inter-modal sintese met al die nie-logiese aspeke benodig sonder dat als resultaat gekom word tot 'n inter-modale sintese met die modale struktuur van die logiese aspek sêlf

[But the theory of an inter-modal synthesis implies a curious and vicious circle; in order to analyze the logical aspect we first require an inter-modal synthesis with all the non-logical aspects without as a result coming to an inter-modal synthesis with the modal structure of the logical aspect itself.]

Strauss believes he has formulated this supposed circle in the form of a logical contradiction:

...de modale struktuur van die logiese aspek kan nie in 'n inter-modale sintese geanaliseer word nie as en slegs as dit wel in een inter-modale sintese gevat kan word (page 106)

[...the modal structure of the logical aspect can never be analyzed in an inter-modal synthesis, unless and only if it can first be understood in an inter-modal synthesis.]

In his summary of his objections against the inter-modal understanding of the epistemological conceptual insight in the modal structure of the logical aspect, Strauss remarks,

Is die teoretiese begrip van die modale struktuur van die logiese aspek inter-modaal of intra-modaal van aard? Ons het gesien dat beide moontlikhede ewe onhoudbare konsekwensies bevat vir die teorie van 'n inter-modale sintese. As dit intramodaal [Dooyeweerd: d.w.z. alleen binne het logies aspek besloten] is, verskil die teoretiese begrip van die logiese aspek van alle ander teoretiese begrippe. Dat dit inter-modaal is beteken schijnbaar slegs dat die logiese aspek via 'n inter-modale sintese met die nie-logiese aspekte genaliseer kan word. Dit geld egter eweseeer van elke nie-logiese aspek en bevat bovendien die...[Dooyeweerd: vroeger genoemde] “logiese contradiksie...”

[Is the theoretical concept of the modal structure of the logical aspect of an inter-modal or intra-modal nature? In our opinion, both possibilities hold equally untenable consequences for the theory of an inter-modal synthesis. If it is intra-modal [Dooyeweerd: that is, enclosed wholly within the logical aspect], then this theoretical concept differs from all other theoretical concepts. If it is inter-modal, then this seems to mean that the logical aspect can only be analyzed with the non-logical aspects. This holds just as well for each non-logical aspect, and furthermore comprises the [Dooyeweerd: previously referred to] “logical contradiction...”]

These are no doubt well intended, but nevertheless somewhat challenging assertions, which from my side could not remain unanswered.

In order to enter further into this argumentation, I want to first discuss in more detail the already mentioned serious blurring in Strauss's vision of the relation of the theoretical to the pre-theoretical (or 'naïve') attitude of thought and experience, which is the consequence of his attempt to reduce the *Gegenstand*-relation to the logical subject-object relation.

[The English summary here says]

The first result of Strauss' attempt to reduce the inter-modal *gegenstand*-relation to the intra-modal logical subject-object relation is the blurring of the fundamental difference between the theoretical and the non-theoretical attitude of thought and experience. This is a great pity because by so doing he has no longer sufficient defence against the theoretization of naïve experience.

According to him, an *implicit concept* of the modal aspect is already present in pre-theoretical thought.<sup>16</sup> In his view, theoretical thought does nothing more than to make this implicit concept *explicit by means of a setting apart* of these aspects, and the explication of their analogical modal structural moments, which are already understood implicitly in the pre-theoretical concept. In support of this he refers to my assertion that theoretical thought cannot demolish pre-theoretical (or 'naïve') experience, but only

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<sup>16</sup> The English summary adds, “in their individualization in concrete things and events.” As set out below, Dooyeweerd denies that the aspects are individualized in concrete things and events.

unfold and deepen it. But this reference to my work is really misplaced. For what I intended in my assertion had nothing to do with Strauss's opinion that we already have an implicit concept of the modal aspects and their modal structures in our naïve attitude of thought and experience. The meaning of my assertion was nothing other than a fundamental opposition to the opinion commonly held in the epistemology of modern immanence philosophy, that what is called 'naïve experience' could be a theory about empirical reality—in other words, an opposition to the theory of naïve realism or the "Abbild theorie," which Kant's critical epistemology, combined with Müller's theory of sensory perception (the theory of what he calls "the specific energy of the senses") is supposed to have completely refuted.

Strauss's present opinion, that in our pre-theoretical thought we already have an implicit concept of the structures of the modal aspects, [p. 90] is in conflict with the *strict givenness* in the naïve attitude of thought and experience. What does Strauss mean by asserting that in pre-theoretical concepts there is already *implied* a *concept* of the modal aspects and their modal structures? He acknowledges that pre-theoretical concepts are related to individual entities, which in their concrete reality function in principle in all modal aspects of human experience of reality. But this functioning is only possible within the individuality-structures of concrete reality, which can in no way be deduced from the modal structures of the aspects, just as the modal structures of the aspects can in no way be deduced from the individuality-structures of concrete reality. There is a serious misunderstanding concerning this cardinal point even by some adherents of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, insofar as they are of the opinion that the modal structures can be discovered by an ever-continuing abstraction from the concrete experience of reality.<sup>17</sup> This misunderstanding rests on the supposition that the modal structures are themselves individualized by the individuality-structures. The true state of affairs is rather that the modal structures belong to another dimension of the horizon of human experience. Their *individualization* would amount to their *elimination*.<sup>18</sup> It is not *the*

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<sup>17</sup> Dooyeweerd's reference to "serious misunderstanding" by some adherents would seem to include Roy Clouser. Clouser says that the modal structures of the aspects can be deduced from the individuality structures, by an ever-increasing abstraction of properties into "kinds of properties." Clouser sees only a difference in intensity between pre-theoretical and theoretical concept formation; aspects are "kinds of properties." In his book *The Myth of Religious Neutrality*, Clouser says (p. 54) that in theory we intensify the focus of our attention to such a degree that we isolate a property from something, and focus on the property itself; he calls this "high abstraction." In his article, "Dooyeweerd's Metathetical Critique and its Application to Descartes and Heisenberg" Clouser says that naïve experience sees an entity-with-its-properties, as opposed to a theoretical analysis of the properties in themselves. But the Dooyeweerd Archives in Amsterdam contain a letter from Roy Clouser to Dooyeweerd dated June 21, 1972. It confirms that Dooyeweerd still objected to the idea of modes of experience being referred to as 'property-kinds.' This was after Clouser completed his dissertation, and despite extensive discussions between Clouser and Dooyeweerd the year before.

<sup>18</sup> Why does it follow that the individualization of the aspects into individuality structures would amount to their elimination? The answer seems to be that they are of a different

*aspects* that are individualized within the various structural types of things, events, societal relations, etc., but only *the functions of concrete reality* within these aspects that are so individualized.<sup>19</sup> The modal structures lie at the foundation of the individuality-structures, and not the other way around. For without the foundation of modal structures with no individuality, we would not be able to speak of a typical ordering and gradual individuation of the functions in these modal aspects of concrete entities in their individuality structures.<sup>20</sup> Therefore it seems to me that Strauss's remark is incorrect, when he says in the note on page 118 of his thesis, that it is *only in a methodological sense* that an analysis of the modal structures precedes an explicit analysis of typical structures of totality of naïve experience. He believes that, in view of the fact that naïve experience is the irreplaceable foundation of all theoretical thought, theoretical thought must proceed from out of ["vertrekken"] the typical structures of totality in which naïve experience understands concrete reality.

But this opinion clearly depends on the thought that I have already fundamentally rejected—that the modal structures are only given to us in their supposed individualization

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dimension of our experience. To reduce the modal dimension to the plastic dimension of individuality structures would destroy the distinction between these dimensions. It also has to do with the difference between *aspects* and *functions*. Aspects are the modal dimension of our experience. Our experience of concrete reality is in the plastic dimension, which *functions* in those aspects.

<sup>19</sup> Dooyeweerd thus distinguishes between the aspects and functions. Reformational philosophy usually sees these terms as synonymous. But aspects belong to the dimension of modal aspects, and functions belong to the plastic dimension of structures of individuality. In an early article, Dooyeweerd says that aspects are "*gezichtsvelden*," perspectives of our full supratemporal selfhood on the temporal world. The "aspects" are abstracted from out of our subjective [as supratemporal subjects] activity of thought; in the *epoché*, we "refrain" from the continuity of cosmic time (*WdW* II, 402; *NC* II, 468 ft.1). The abstraction of theoretical thought is not just from the continuity of cosmic time, but from the actual, full selfhood that thinks and expresses itself in all its functions (*WdW* I, 6; *NC* I, 5). The "functions" relate to the objective reality (understood in terms of the subject-object relation).

<sup>20</sup> This whole idea of a gradual individuation into various individuality structures depends on Dooyeweerd's starting point with a totality that needs to be individuated. He says in this article, "For without the foundation of modal structures with no individuality...". The modal structures have no individuality, and provide the foundation for individuality structures. There is a difference between modal structures and individuality structures. Modal structures have no individuality, but they are prior to the individuality structures.

The pole reached by modal individualization in the full temporal reality on its subjectside, is the complete or a-typical individuality of the modal meaning. (*NC* II, 424).

This is entirely foreign to Strauss's way of thinking, which begins with individual things and seeks to deduce aspects from them.

within the individuality-structures of concrete things, event, social relations and so on, and that their *universal* modal character is only to be discovered by theoretical abstraction from out of these individuality-structures.

This incorrect opinion fits wholly within Strauss's train of thought that we already have an *implicit concept* of the modal structures within our naïve experience, which only needs to be *explicated* by theoretical thought. But such an implicit concept should at the least presuppose some insight in the distinction between the analogical meaning-moments of a modal structure and the nuclear meaning of the modal aspects of which they are analogies, a distinction that reveals itself in the fact that their modal meaning is not determined by the analogies, but by the nuclear meaning of their own aspect.

Strauss thinks that we do indeed have an implicit concept of this distinction within the pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience, and he tries to make this clear with a concrete example. He says that in naive experience [p. 91] we are thoroughly conscious of the (concrete) distinction between social intercourse and juridical intercourse. I cite his argument in the Afrikaans text:

...vriende op besoek is iets gans anders as 'n ampteljk besoek van die polisie (p. 119)

[...a visit from friends is something completely different than an official visit of the police]

Undoubtedly. But this does not concern the *modal* difference between on the one hand intercourse in the original meaning of the relations of social intercourse, which are subjected to the particular [eigensoortige] norms of politeness, respectability, good manners, conviviality, fashion, and so on, and on the other hand, of the modal juridical meaning of juridical intercourse, which appears in this situation as a retrocipatory analogy of this [social] mode of intercourse within the juridical aspect, which is subjected to the modal law-sphere of juridical norms. Strauss's example concerns much more the concrete distinction between a visit of friends and an official visit from the police, each of which has its own individuality structure. Both the official visit from the police and a visit from friends function in the social modal sphere, and not just in the juridical sphere. For the police, too, in their official visit, are subjected to certain social norms such as politeness, respectability and so on. That the police in their official visit represent the authority of government, whereas friends in their visiting associate with each other on the basis of equality in a sympathetic relationship plays no role at all in the *modal structure* of the juridical or the social aspects. The distinction is exclusively due to the *individuality-structures* of this concrete event.<sup>21</sup>

The same holds for the state of affairs, that an official visit from the police finds its typical qualifying function in the juridical sphere of public law.

It is therefore out of the question that in the pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience we should already have an implicit concept of the modal structures of the

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<sup>21</sup> As noted above, events also have individuality structures. Events are not just the coming together of entities.



different experiential aspects with their original meaning-kernels and analogical meaning-moments.

Only by complete abstraction<sup>22</sup> of the individuality-structures of concrete reality can the modal structures of the various aspects of reality come into view. And, as Strauss certainly also acknowledges, we cannot speak of any such abstraction within the naïve attitude of thought and experience.

As a consequence of his blurring of the fundamental distinction between the theoretical and the pre-theoretical attitudes of thought and experience, caused by his seeking to reduce the epistemological *Gegenstand*-relation to the logical subject-object relation, we also find in Strauss a continual confusion between the “ontical” and the epistemological states of affairs. In the *Prolegomena* of the transcendental critique of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience, I have remarked that in the subject-object relations of naïve attitude of thought and experience, empirical reality is understood as it *gives itself*, that is to say in the continuous systatic coherence and relatedness of its modal aspects within cosmic time. But in the *Gegenstand*-relation, these modal aspects are *epistemologically* (not “ontically”) split apart and set over against each other, with the intention of bringing them into view in their general modality, and thereby making them available for theoretical concepts.

These aspects with their modal structures do not come into view in naïve, i.e. pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience. [p. 92] In the transcendental critique, I have explained this as due to the fact that in the naïve attitude, our acts of thought and experience still remain wholly enstatically placed within the concrete, individual reality of things and events, and that our concept formation here still rests inertly upon our sensory representation.<sup>23</sup> As long as our analytical view is not directed to the modal aspects of our experienced world, we cannot speak of a *concept* of these aspects, not even an *implied* concept. As Strauss himself acknowledges, such a concept would at the very least suppose some insight in the distinction between a modal nuclear meaning-moment and the analogical meaning-moments of a modal structure.

But the previously mentioned example, intended by Strauss to give such an insight, turned out to not be of any use. This is also evident from the two other examples where Strauss supposes to find pre-theoretical conceptual knowledge of the modal structures, namely those of (numerical) quantity and spatiality. In his commentary on these examples, Strauss no longer mentions the distinction between meaning-kernel and analogical meaning-moments. And that is quite understandable! For it is really

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<sup>22</sup> The word ‘abstraction’ is used in the sense of “lifting out” of the temporal coherence. The English summary has “a complete theoretic elimination of the individuality-structures of concrete reality.”

<sup>23</sup> This is seldom understood. Pre-theoretical concepts are limited to the sensory. They are only retrocipatory, and have no anticipations beyond the sensory aspect. Our pre-theoretical experience participates in all aspects, but *only in their retrocipatory analogies* (NC II, 373, 383, 470). Naïve experience is therefore not a completely integral experience, unlike the Romantic view of the pre-theoretical.

impossible to maintain that in the pre-theoretic attitude of thought and experience one should already know the difference between the original irreducible modal meaning-kernel of the spatial aspect and the various different spatial analogies within the other aspects which are qualified by the meaning-kernels of these other aspects—such as physical space, biotic space, sensory perceptual space, logical (thought) space, cultural historical space juridical space (the area of validity for a legal order, and the juridical place of a legal fact), economic space etc. Nor can we find within the pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience an implicit conceptual insight into the difference between number in its original quantitative sense of determining how much, and the various numerical analogies in the non-arithmetical aspects (such as logical unity and multiplicity,<sup>24</sup> juridical unity and multiplicity,<sup>25</sup> the moral two-unity of marriage partners, the Tri-Unity of God as oecumenical article of faith of the Christian Churches<sup>26</sup> with its pistical numerical analogy and so on).

The ontical systasis of the modal functions of an individual entity does not at all guarantee a pre-theoretic conceptual insight into the modal structures of the different aspects, as Strauss thinks. To the contrary, it conceals them to the [pre-theoretical] analytical view that is still enstatically bound to concrete entities. Strauss's remark that the transcendental critique ought to begin by asking how a pre-theoretic implicit concept of the modal aspects is possible consequently makes no sense.

What we have called 'naïve experience' does not yet know any transcendental theoretical problematic. This problematic arises first in the theoretical attitude of thought and experience, with its characteristic *Gegenstand*-relations. The transcendental critique certainly must give an account of the mutual relation and coherence of the pre-theoretical and the theoretical attitudes of thought and experience. But Strauss's views certainly do not fulfill this requirement.

The blurring of the fundamental distinction between the pre-theoretical and the theoretical attitudes of thought and experience also appears clearly in Strauss's critique of the role that I have ascribed to theoretical intuition in the process of the inter-modal epistemological [p. 93] concept formation. Strauss thereby ignores my explicit distinction between theoretical and pre-theoretical intuition, although it is here of fundamental importance. Theoretical intuition can never become effective in the process of knowing apart from the theoretical attitude of knowledge. It is necessary in order for

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<sup>24</sup> The English summary says here “logical unity of a concept in the multiplicity of its characteristics.”

<sup>25</sup> The English summary adds “of legal facts, dependent on legal norms.”

<sup>26</sup> The English summary adds,

...which, if conceived in an arithmetical sense, would lead to the antinomy  $1 + 1 + 1 = 3$ , to the effect that the article of faith would contradict the arithmetical rule of addition.

us to acquire a certain *insight* into the modal structures, after we have, by the *Gegenstand*-relation, obtained an analytical view of these structures.<sup>27</sup>

This theoretical insight remains dependent on the transcendental Ground-Idea of a philosophical theory of knowledge, and as is evident from the history of Western philosophy, it can itself sometimes entirely be absent as a result of an absolutization of certain modal aspects. But that only shows that theoretical intuition cannot be an autonomous source of knowledge, as was asserted by Edmund Husserl in his “intuitive view of essences [“intuitieve Wesenschau.”].

Now Strauss is of the opinion that my appeal to theoretical intuition cannot provide an explanation for the possibility of an inter-modal synthesis between our analytical activity of thought and its epistemological “*Gegenstand*.”<sup>28</sup> And he says that he makes this claim upon my own reasoning!

[The English summary here says:

For, so he says, according to my own conception, intuition cannot function within theoretically abstracted aspects, which, in this abstraction have lost their actuality. An actual intuitive contact is, according to Strauss, only possible between the *actual* logical thought function and the *actual* non-logical functions of our experience.<sup>29</sup> As long as the latter are actually individualized, they are only given in an unsoluble [sic] *systatic* meaning-coherence, which according to Strauss would make their inter-modal theoretical synthesis impossible. But evidently the author here too has been caught in the pitfall of a false identification of the ontic and the epistemological states of affairs.<sup>30</sup>

On page 109 he argues that a conscious actual intuitive contact is only possible between the *actual* logical thought function and the *actual* non-logical functions of consciousness and experience. He says that as long as the non-logical aspects are actually individualized in the concrete act of thinking, an inter-modal relation is fundamentally impossible, because in their actual individualized being, the logical and non-logical aspects (both arising in the individual act of thinking) are given in inseparable meaning-relatedness.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> The English summary is not clear that the theoretical intuition (based on our transcendent selfhood) occurs only after the *Gegenstand*-relation, which alone makes the analytical view possible.

<sup>28</sup> The English summary does not include the words “between our analytical activity of thought and its epistemological “*Gegenstand*.”

<sup>29</sup> As is shown below, Dooyeweerd says that the synthesis is not between two actual functions.

<sup>30</sup> Actually, this is the reverse of the mistake of aspects being individualized in things. Now Strauss is confusing the religious dimension, where acts occur (in our supratemporal selfhood), with the dimension of aspects.

<sup>31</sup> The English summary translates this as,

But the theoretical inter-modal synthesis rather concerns the actual logical function of thought and the non-actual, intentionally abstracted non-logical aspects of experience.<sup>32</sup>

[Strauss says:]<sup>33</sup>

In light of the actual (non-abstracted) nature of intuition, it can never really *actually appear within* abstracted *aspects* (which have been lifted out [uitgelicht] from our theoretical-logical analysis. In conflict with this, Dooyeweerd asserts, “My intuition moves to and fro between my deepened analysis and its “Gegenstand” to bring them into actual contact in the inter-modal synthesis of meaning.”<sup>34</sup>

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...they are only given in an unsoluble [sic] *static* meaning-coherence, which according to Strauss would make their inter-modal theoretical synthesis impossible.

<sup>32</sup> This is one of the most important statements, and it has surprisingly been left out of the English summary. The synthesis is not between two actual functions, but rather between my *actual* thought [in the temporal coherence of my concrete act of thinking, which is a temporal expression of an act from out of my supratemporal selfhood in the religious dimension] and the non-logical aspects lifted out of ("abstracted from") the temporal coherence of my experience. The abstracted aspects are non-actual, and only intentional. The synthesis can also be between my concrete act of thinking and any one of the non-actual aspects, including the analytical aspect.

<sup>33</sup> The original is not very clear here, but because the paragraph refers to Dooyeweerd, it must be a quotation from Strauss.

<sup>34</sup> See NC II, 478 for this quotation. It reads:

My intuition moves to and fro between my deepened analysis and its “*Gegenstand*” to bring them into actual contact in the inter-modal synthesis of meaning. In this process I become conscious of my theoretical freedom of thought. The actual synthesis of meaning accomplished in it can never be explained by means of the isolated functions of consciousness. Theoretical intuition is operative in deepened analysis itself, and only by its intermediary is theoretical thought able to analyse the “*Gegenstand*” in the intermodal synthesis of meaning. In this intuition I implicitly relate the intermodal meaning-synthesis to the transcendent identity of the modal functions I experience in the religious root of my existence.

But the original Dutch does not refer to ‘inter-modal’ at all:

In de heen- en weder schouwende intuïtie, waarin ik mij mijn theoretische denkvrijheid bewust wordt, komen de verdiepte analyse en haar “*Gegenstand*” in het actuele kennis-contact, in de actuele zin-synthese, die van uit de geïsoleerde bewustzijnsfuncties nimmer is te verklaren. Alleen doordat die theoretische intuïtie in de verdiepte analyse zelve werkzaam is, vermag het theoretisch denken den “*Gegenstand*” in zin-

This reasoning again appears to be logically irrefutable if we lose sight of the fundamental distinction between theoretical and pre-theoretical (or practical) intuition. Theoretical intuition can only become effective in the theoretical attitude of thought and experience, in which the actual analytical view is directed to the modal aspects that theoretical thought has split apart and set over against each other, including the logical

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synthesis te analyseeren. Theoretische zin-onderscheiding is inderdaad slechts in de intuïtieve theoretische zin-verbinding mogelijk. En in die intuïtie betrek ik de zin-synthese op de transcendente identiteit der modale zinfuncties, welke ik in den religieuzen wortel van mijn bestaan ervaar.

Although *NC II*, 468 refers to “inter-modal theoretical synthesis,” the original Dutch only refers to “*zin-synthesis*.” (*WdW II*, 401) The text at *NC II*, 470 refers to “an inter-modal synthesis of meaning,” the original Dutch only refers to a “meaning-synthesis” [*zin-synthetisch*, *WdW II*, 404]. Similarly, *NC II*, 479 speaks of “the inter-modal synthesis and analytical disjunction of the modal synthetical thought as *insight*.” But the original Dutch reads: “De theoretische intuïtie, als in de actueele verdiepte analyse werkzaam zin-verbindend en zin-onderscheidend in-zicht” (*WdW II*, 414). Similarly *NC II*, 494 and *WdW II*, 429. It is true that the dis-stasis is inter-modal: one aspect is set over against others [*WdW II*, 401]. But the synthesis is more than inter-modal; it relates to the religious root. It is also true that things have an inter-modal character (*NC III*, 63) but that does not mean that a theoretical synthesis has this character. Temporal coherence is not the same as supratemporal totality!

Perhaps what is confusing is the term ‘inter-modal’ for something that is a synthesis between the religious dimension and the modal dimension. The synthesis occurs already in making the *Gegenstand*. *Strauss mistakenly assumes that synthesis takes place only after the Gegenstand is there*. But the *Gegenstand* itself only arises in the synthesis:

Only in the deepened theoretic thought does the mere en-static attitude of thought give place to the over-against and dis-static attitude. The deepened analysis first executes [*voltrekt zich*] an inter-modal synthesis of meaning, in which the non-analytic meaning is made into a ‘*Gegenstand*’ of the analytic aspect. A ‘*Gegenstand*’ arises only in theoretic knowledge, in the synthesis of meaning and over against the deepened analysis. *WdW II*, 401

and

Only in the concept within the synthesis of meaning is the ‘*Gegenstand*’ abstracted from the continuity of the coherence of meaning. As we shall later see, this insight is of fundamental importance if we want to give account of the possibility of a synthesis of meaning. *WdW II*, 405

and

The structure of the inter-modal synthesis of meaning is the cosmological apriori of theoretical knowledge as to its law-side. It forms the horizon of all true theoretical knowledge. *WdW II*, 484

aspect. These aspects have all been abstracted from out of their “ontical” systatic relatedness. In the pre-theoretical attitude of knowledge, these aspects had been covered over and concealed, but their theoretical abstraction cannot cancel their ontical systatic coherence in the continuity of cosmic time.

Strauss is apparently of the opinion that this ontical systasis would fundamentally make impossible the epistemological synthesis (and consequently also the epistemological antithesis) between our analyzing act of thought and the abstracted modal aspects. According to him, intuition can therefore play no role in the inter-modal epistemological relation of our actual logical function of thought with the abstracted modal aspects, which we set over against this act of thought as “Gegenstand.” Strauss’s basis for this claim is that intuition can only become effective in the “ontical” systasis and not in the abstracted modal aspects.

[p. 94] With this last statement I am naturally completely in agreement. But the conclusion made by him from this statement cannot be maintained due to the obvious confusion of the theoretical with pre-theoretical intuition. It is not the given ontical systasis of the modal aspects of our experiential that prevents our pre-theoretical intuition from acquiring insight into their structure. It is much rather the enstatic character of pre-theoretical experience, still wholly set within concrete reality, that prevents pre-theoretical intuition from acquiring this insight.<sup>35</sup> It is only in the theoretical attitude of thought and experience, in which we receive in our analytic view of the modal aspects that have been analytically split apart and set over against each other, that intuition can lead to an epistemological insight into their modal structure.

We have earlier seen that this insight with respect to the modal structure of the logical aspect can only become effective in the theoretical attitude of thought, which only by means of its characteristic inter-modal *Gegenstand*-relation and the inter-modal synthesis can come to an epistemological concept of the modal structures. For these structures display both an intra-modal as well as an inter-modal meaning-coherence, both of which must be duly taken into account in the epistemological conceptual insight.<sup>36</sup> And this is

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<sup>35</sup>The English summary misses the point here, by not distinguishing between pre-theoretical and theoretical intuition:

It is not the given ontical systasis of the modal aspects of our experiential world, but much rather the *enstatic attitude of thought and experience*, still completely attached to concrete reality which makes the theoretic antithesis and synthesis impossible in our conceptual knowledge. I have always stressed the fact that theoretical analysis and synthesis is only possible of what is *given in ontical systasis*. This is why a reduction of theoretical gegenstandrelations to given ontological subject-objectrelations can never succeed.

<sup>36</sup> The English summary adds:

I have always stressed the fact that theoretical analysis and synthesis is only possible of what is *given in ontical systasis*.

exactly the reason why an attempt to reduce the theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation to the logical subject-object relation can never succeed.

I will now discuss the role that the subject-object relation plays in the epistemological process of the formation of concepts of the modal aspects.

It cannot be doubted that the theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation presupposes the logical subject-object relation. For the modal aspects are given to us neither in a theoretical abstraction from out of their ontical systasis, nor as analyzed in their structural meaning-moments. They can only be *object* of our subjective analysis.<sup>37</sup> In the transcendental critique of theoretical thought, this is expressed by saying that they have an object function within the logical aspect, that is to say that they display objective characteristics, which can be brought to light by means of subjective-logical analysis, and brought together<sup>38</sup> into a concept. But are these characteristics of only a logical (analytical) character? It is beyond doubt that *with respect to their logical object function* they must function within the intra-modal subject-object relation. But from that it by no means follows that they themselves are of a modal-analytical nature and that we can only come to a theoretical knowledge of their characteristic structural moments by means of a logical objectivizing of the modal aspects.<sup>39</sup>

Strauss has implicitly acknowledged this, when he (p. 127) remarks that [because of the inter-modal coherence of all aspects], the intra-modal logical can never be identified with the exclusively logical, or the pure (“rein”) logical.<sup>40</sup>

As a result of his continual confusion of the ontical with the epistemological states of affairs, and the necessarily consequent blurring of the fundamental difference between pre-theoretical and theoretical attitudes of thought and experience, he has prevented himself from drawing the correct conclusion from this insight, namely *that the intra-modal theoretical-logical subject-object relation is dependent on the inter-modal epistemological *Gegenstand*-relation*.<sup>41</sup> Nevertheless [p. 95] Strauss has performed an exceptional service in giving this unquestionably acutely designed argument, in which he

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<sup>37</sup> The word ‘subjective’ refers to the selfhood as subject. The act of analysis is an act from out of the selfhood.

<sup>38</sup> The English summary translates ‘*samengevat*’ as ‘synthesized.’

<sup>39</sup> The English summary says,

...but it by no means follows that they themselves in their *ontical* sense must be of a logical character, and that by a mere logical objectivation of the non-logical modal aspects we could arrive at theoretical knowledge of their characteristic structural moments.

<sup>40</sup> The English summary adds, “and when he speaks e.g. of the *sensory characteristics* of a chair.”

<sup>41</sup> This is confusing until we see the difference between a pre-theoretical and a theoretical use of the subject-object relation. Although the *Gegenstand*-relation is dependent on the pre-theoretical subject-object relation, the *Gegenstand*-relation is itself the basis for the theoretical subject-object relation.

has tried to reduce the inter-modal *Gegenstand*-relation to the logical subject object-relation. He has expressly made the relation between these into a *critical problem of the first order*. Perhaps in my transcendental critique this problem remained too much in the background.

I therefore want to examine this problem more closely within the context in which he first posed it, by means of the following questions:

1. Strauss has tried to throw light on the problem of the relation of the epistemological *Gegenstand*-relation and the logical subject-object relation. From the standpoint of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, can we assume that he has done so from out of the standpoint of Kantian and neo-Kantian epistemologies?

2. Has Strauss in fact succeeded in reducing the inter-modal *Gegenstand*-relation to an intra-modal logical relation?

3. Strauss believes that he has demonstrated that the inter-modal conception of epistemology contains antinomies (which he has improperly reduced to logical contradictions). Has he, in his intra-modal view of this relation avoided these antinomies, or must this view necessarily lead to *genuine* antinomies?

Question 1: In the 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the second (systematic) volume of his thesis, Strauss goes into more detail with respect to the question whether the concept, as a logical unity in a diversity of characteristics of what is knowable [kenmerken van het kenbare], can be viewed as a synthesis [verbinding] of logical and non-logical moments.

He begins in this task by looking at the *aporias* in which Kant's epistemology becomes entangled by Kant's view of the concept as a synthesis of spontaneous logical activity of reason [Verstand] and the merely receptive sensory perception. Similar problems are found in the logicistic views of the Marburg school of neo-Kantianism, which supposes that it can avoid Kant's *aporias* by viewing the concept in a purely logical way, discarding sensory perception as a source of knowledge. Strauss then immediately discusses my conception of the theoretical *Gegenstand*-relation and the inter-modal theoretical synthesis. He certainly does not neglect to show the fundamental differences between my conception and that of Kant.

In itself there can of course be no objection to this way of proceeding. In the 1930's, when I published my first systematic elaboration of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, neo-Kantianism was indeed the dominant direction of thought, both in its Marburg and Baden schools.

Here in the Netherlands, the neo-Kantians founded the Association for Critical Philosophy [Genootschap voor kritische filosofie], and in the first edition of their journal, *Annalen der critische filosofie*, they proclaimed what they called the 'critical transcendental philosophy' to be the only truly scientific one. It was therefore obvious that in my fight against the then almost universally accepted dogma of the autonomy of theoretical thought, I had to devote particular attention to Immanuel Kant, the founder of the humanistically oriented critical transcendental philosophy, and on neo-Kantianism. Neo-Kantianism posed a dilemma for Kantian epistemology—whether with Rickert and the other adherents of the Baden school to accept Kant's conception of theoretical knowledge as a [p. 96] synthesis of logical categories of thought with a sensory



experiential matter, or whether to view the epistemological concept as purely logical, in an effort to avoid the aporias in which Kant's conception had become entangled, such as the question how a joining together of two different kinds of functions of thought could be made into the logical unity of the concept. This dilemma indeed has a certain relation to the dilemma that Strauss says is faced by followers of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea with respect to the question whether my conception of theoretical knowledge as an inter-modal synthesis of logical and non-logical moments can be maintained or whether it must be understood in an intra-modal logical sense.

For the South African philosopher Prof. Dr. H.G. Stoker, this similarity was sufficient for him to ascribe to Kantian influence the whole of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. This was a fundamental misunderstanding, and was conclusively refuted by Strauss in his earlier work *The Relation between Philosophy and the Special Sciences [Wijsbegeerte en Vakwetenschap]*.

It is therefore so surprising that Strauss, in his thesis *Begrip en Idee*, has leveled the charge of Kantian subjectivity against the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. This is notwithstanding the fact that he has himself extensively discussed the radical difference between the Kantian view of the transcendental logical function of thought as formal lawgiver for nature, and my own conception.<sup>42</sup> He makes this reproach against me in an assertion, which in its distortedness actually contradicts itself. I cite the original Afrikaans text:

Deur de miskenning van die logiese objeksj in de formulering van die antithetiese denkrelasie (origens weerspreek deur di erkenning van 'n ontslote objektief-logiese distase in N.C.II pp. 469 e.v. [italics Dooyeweerd]), is die subjektief-logiese denkaktiwiteit impliciet opgetrek in en vereenselwig met die totale modale struktuur van die analitiese aspek waaruit vanself die konsekwensi voortgevloei het dat die "Gegenstand" van ons analise in die nie-logiese ervaringsaspekte gesoek moes word. Dooyeweerd se skerp kritiek op Kant se rasionalistiese siening van die verstand as algemeen-geldige logiese wetgewer van die natuur (waardoor die subjektiewe denke d.m.v. die denkkategorië (begrippe) algemeen geldige vormgewer van die psigiese ervaringmateriaal word) moet dus gemodificeerd op hemsself van toepassing gemaak word (met inagneming van die feit dat Dooyeweerd sekerlijk nie die menslike aktuele denke tot algemeen-geldige wetgewer (resp. vorm-gewer) van die natuur (resp. kosmos) verhef het nie).

[By failing to understand the logical objection in the formulation of the antithetical relation of thought (elsewhere contradicted by the acknowledgement of an opened up objective-logical dis-stasis in N.C. II

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<sup>42</sup> The English summary adds:

...of the correlation of the logical subject-function and the normative laws to which this subject-function is *subjected*.

pp. 469 ff [italics Dooyeweerd],<sup>43</sup> the subjective-logical activity of thought is implicitly lifted up and identified with the total modal structure of the analytical aspect. From this the consequence must naturally follow that the “Gegenstand” of our analysis must be sought in the non-logical aspects of our experience. Dooyeweerd’s sharp critique of Kant’s rationalistic view of the understanding (i.e. intellect) as the universally valid lawgiver of nature (in which subjective thought by means of the categories of thought (concepts) becomes the universal formgiver of the psychological matter of experience) must consequently in a modified sense be levelled against himself, with due observance of the fact that Dooyeweerd certainly does not elevate actual human thought to the position of universally valid legislator (respectively form-giver) of nature (or respectively of the cosmos)].

This amounts to saying that my sharp critique of Kant’s view of the subjective-logical activity of thought as formal lawgiver for nature is applicable to myself, with this correction—that it does *not* apply to me! This obvious logical contradiction in his argument (which he himself does not appear to be aware of) should alert Strauss against this way of using the formal-logical method for which he has such a preference to try to show the untenability of a philosophical view that he opposes by pouring it into the form of a logical contradiction.

This method of trying to show a logical contradiction is fundamentally different from the method developed in the Philosophy of the Law-Idea of laying bare the antinomies that are necessarily the result of every attempt to absolutize certain modal aspects [p. 97] at the cost of the remaining aspects. Strauss’s method is completely defective for the purpose of trying to show the untenability of a material philosophical conception.<sup>44</sup> Formal-logical contradictions in a philosophical argument can generally be corrected, without affecting the underlying material conception<sup>45</sup>. Antinomies on the other hand are not of an *intra-modal logical character*, but of an *inter-modal character*. They imply a

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<sup>43</sup> NC II, 470 says that enstatic logical analysis (in pre-theoretical thought) is “restrictively bound to sensory perception and can only analytically distinguish concrete things and their relations according to sensorily founded characteristics.” Strauss’s criticism is wrong here; Unlike Kant, Dooyeweerd has no thing in itself of which we have only sensory experience. But Dooyeweerd does make a distinction between the natural modes and the spiritual modes. It is unclear whether Strauss understands the point made by Dooyeweerd that pre-theoretical concepts are only retrocipatory.

<sup>44</sup> The English summary adds,

There is a clear connection between Strauss’ formal logical method and his attempts at reducing the *inter-modal Gegenstand-relation* to the *intra-modal logical subject-object relation*.

<sup>45</sup> The English summary says “material content.” But I believe that it is not a matter of logical form versus content, but of some concepts being more material than others. This is how it was translated a few lines earlier.

material conflict between the law-spheres of mutually irreducible modal aspects, as soon as one tries to break through this irreducibility.

In his transcendental dialectic of his *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* [*Critique of Pure Reason*], Kant neglected this fundamental difference by trying to reduce theoretical<sup>46</sup> antinomies to logical contradictions. In the logicistic direction of the Marburg school of the neo-Kantians, such a reduction was the immediate consequence of their denial of the inter-modal character of theoretical conceptual knowledge. For Kant, who tried to maintain the inter-modal character in the synthesis of the logical forms of thought with a sensory matter of experience, his reduction [of antinomies to logical contradictions] was due to his logicistic view of the epistemological synthesis, which according to him is only brought about by the transcendental-logical function of thought.

[The English summary here says]:

...which was even maintained in his doctrine concerning the “Schematisierung der Verstandsbegriffe in die apriorischen Anschauungsformen durch die tranzendente Einbildungskraft.”

Nevertheless he tries to maintain the inter-modal character of conceptual knowledge by means of his epistemological [sic] form-matterscheme: It is, according to him, the logical form of the category which arranges the in itself chaotic multiplicity of sensory impressions to the logical unity of the concept.

It was not Kant's acknowledgement of the inter-modal character of the epistemological synthesis, as Strauss thinks, but much rather the form-matterscheme, by means of which he tried to account for it, which involved his view in antinomies.<sup>47</sup> This is why the Marburg school of [sic] neo-Kantians, sticking by Kant's logicist view of the epistemological

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<sup>46</sup> The English summary adds

...identifying the metaphysical antinomies with logical contradictions between two opposed arguments, which both seem to be irrefutable, though he *did* see that these contradictions are insoluble because of a false view of the theoretical ideas.

<sup>47</sup> This is an important statement that has been often overlooked. Dooyeweerd says about Kant and his followers:

The only, but fundamental, mistake in their argument was the identification of the real act with a purely psychological temporal event, which in its turn could become a ‘Gegenstand’ of the ultimate transcendental-logical ‘cogito’ (NC I, 50).

Kant's mistake was trying to find the starting point for synthesis in the antithetical relation itself (NC I, 54). In other words, Kant took the theoretical antithesis as fundamental, and regarded the antinomies as necessary. Kant did not take into account the synthesis with the supratemporal self.

synthesis, abandoned this scheme and did not accept a sensory source of knowledge presenting the matter to the logical form.

The Philosophy of the Law-Idea can accept neither the Kantian [form-matter scheme] nor the neo-Kantian [logicistic] view of the epistemological concept. Strauss supposes that he has avoided both of these erroneous views in his attempt to reduce the inter-modal epistemological *Gegenstand*-relation to the intra-modal logical subject-object relation. The logical subject-object relation, which he emphasizes, was to serve as the guarantee for such avoidance.

Strauss has evidently not seen that it is just this identification of the epistemological *Gegenstand*-relation with the subject-object relation in human knowledge that belongs to the most current presuppositions in modern epistemology, which as we have earlier seen, have darkened their insight into the correct relation of the naïve or pre-theoretical to the theoretical, scientific attitude of thought and experience.<sup>48</sup>

[English summary:

Strauss thinks to avoid this Kantian and neo-Kantian subjectivistic logicism by taking the logical subject-object relation in an ontological sense. That this subject-object relation in itself, i.e. apart from the *Gegenstand*-relation, is not of an epistemological character appears from the fact that it plays an essential part in pre-theoretical concept formation, which does not yet know epistemological problems. In consequence of the blurring of the limits between the theoretical and the pre-theoretical attitude of thought, the author [Strauss] has not paid due attention to this important point.

[Question2]

I come now to the second question that I have directed to Strauss: has he succeeded in reducing the inter-modal *Gegenstand*-relation to the intra-modal logical subject-object relation?<sup>49</sup>

That the logical subject-object relation, taken in itself, cannot be of an epistemological nature, appears from the fact that it also plays a necessary role in naïve, pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience, although such a naïve attitude does not yet know epistemological problems, and has no insight into the merely modal character of the logical subject-object relation.

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<sup>48</sup> Dooyeweerd therefore seems to answer his first question in the affirmative—Strauss's questioning is itself based on a neo-Kantian framework.

<sup>49</sup> The English summary is much softer in tone:

Since the author's [Strauss's] intention is certainly not to abandon the foundations of the Cosmonomic Idea, the question must be asked if within the framework of this philosophy his reduction of the *gegenstand*-relation to the intra-modal logical subject-objectrelation might be possible. At any rate we must establish that he has not yet succeeded in this reduction.

The still primitive and unsystematic formation of concepts in the pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience is oriented exclusively to the ontical subject-object relations of concrete reality; as a consequence, the logical subject-object relation is here an essential component of reality—that is to say that we cannot speak of it as already functioning in its modal analytical function. For although the modal aspects are thoroughly a constitutive component of the ontical structure of the human horizon of experience, it by no means follows that they are already *discerned* as such in the pre-theoretical attitude of thought and experience. Although we can speak here of an *implicit experience* of the aspects, [p. 98] this is in any case no *implicit conceptual knowledge*.

Has Strauss been able to eliminate the *Gegenstand*-relation in its inter-modal character in the exposition of his own views of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience? Whoever reads his argument carefully must come to the conclusion that he has only *apparently* succeeded in this attempt. For the supposedly rejected epistemological relation comes back immediately when he says (wholly in agreement with my own conception) that the characteristic of this attitude of thought and experience is its character of *splitting apart and setting over-against* [uiteen- en tegenoverstellende].<sup>50</sup> It is impossible to explain this by the subject-object relation; this is evident from the fact that the subject-object relation as such has nothing to do with this activity of splitting apart and setting over-against. Our theoretical attitude always concerns the splitting apart and setting over-against of the abstracted modal aspects of our experiential world by means of our subjective analyzing activity of thought.<sup>51</sup>

Strauss is also forced to acknowledge the *inter-modal character* of the epistemological splitting apart and setting over-against relation between the abstracted aspects, which he now in an intrinsically contradictory way now tries to convert to a modal-logical relation. I cite here the original Afrikaans text from his work *Begrip en Idee* (p. 125):

Binnen (modaal in) die ontsloten subjek-objek relasie staan die modale werklikheidsaspekte *onderskeie* (d.i. logies geobjektiveerd) inter-modaal teenover mekaar!

[Within (modally within) the deepened subject-object relation, the modal aspects of reality *are distinguished* (i.e. logically objectified) inter-modally over-against each other!]

Here Strauss's argument is not only *contradictory in a formal-logical sense*. It also contains a *genuine antinomy*, as I shall demonstrate in my answer to the third question that I have formulated with respect to him.

My answer to the second question was only intended to show that Strauss could not *really eliminate* the inter-modal character of the fundamental epistemological relation;

<sup>50</sup> The English summary weakens the force of this statement by translating this as “antithetical activity,” which wrongly suggests logical antithesis instead of the over-against that Dooyeweerd is emphasizing.

<sup>51</sup> ‘Subjective’ here means from out of our supratemporal center, where all acts originate. And ‘abstracted’ means the “lifting out” by the *epoché* of these aspects from their temporal coherence.

he was only able to *camouflage* it by setting it out as a relation of the deepened subject-object relation. And by his acknowledgement of the inter-modal character of the epistemological antithesis between [his view of] the logically abstracted and split-apart modal aspects, there again arises the problem of the epistemological inter-modal synthesis, which Strauss had intended to completely eliminate in his view of the logical objectivization of the modal aspects. I have demonstrated this in detail in my transcendental critique of the theoretical attitude of thought and experience, in the theoretical analysis of the modal structures of the distinguished aspects of empirical reality. And we have already seen that the ontical systasis in which the modal aspects are implicitly given in the pre-theoretical experience does not at all effect an implicit *conceptual knowledge* of them; on the contrary, the discontinuity of the modal meaning of these aspects is *concealed* [verhult] in the pre-theoretical manner of making analytical distinctions.

Question 3. Strauss has devoted a lot of effort in trying to show the untenability and the supposed intrinsic *logical contradiction* of the inter-modal conception of the epistemological *Gegenstand*-relation [p. 99] and the epistemological synthesis. It appears that he is not speaking of *antinomies* here. That is important, because as I have already remarked, to show formal-logical contradictions in an argument does not at all demonstrate the untenability of the material conception lying at the basis of the fundamental epistemological relation.<sup>52</sup>

I must moreover deny that he has in fact demonstrated logical contradictions in my argument of the inter-modal character of this basic [epistemological] relation. There are only apparent contradictions, and these are due to his improper [foutieve] application of formal logic in his critique of the method I have followed in analyzing the modal structures of the distinguished aspects. I use this method continually in my *New Critique of Theoretical Thought* and in my *Encyclopedie der Rechtswetenschap*. It has proved its fruitfulness in its application to various areas of science<sup>53</sup> by prominent adherents of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, among which the early [jonge] Dr. Strauss may be included.

A single example may make this clear, where the argument of this South African philosopher is derailed by an incorrect use of formal logic, in his supposed demonstration of the vicious circle and logical contradictions involved in the inter-modal conception of the epistemological antithesis. I cite the Afrikaans text (p. 105) of his thesis (*Begrip en Idee*):

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<sup>52</sup> The English summary says:

But, as we have noted, the difference between the intra-modal logical contradiction and the inter-modal antinomy does not fit in his reduction of the inter-modal *gegenstand*-relation to the intra-modal logical subject-objectrelation.

<sup>53</sup> The English summary says:

...has proved its usefulness and material fruitfulness over against both the static traditional and the present day historicistic methods of theoretical concept formation.

Nie slegs die analiseerbaarheid van die logiese aspek vereis dat die logiese aspek teenoor die nielogiese aspekte gestel moet word nie, want diezelfde kan in beginsel van die analiseerbaarheid van elk ander aspek gesé word. Om die modale struktuur-momente van die juridiese aspek in sigte krij moet die juridiese aspek ewenseer gestel word teenoor al die nie-juridiese aspekte omdat ook die juridiese aspek (net soos die analitiese aspek) sy *sin* slegs openbaar in samenhange met alle ander aspekte. Wanneer die getalaspék bv. teenoor die juridiese aspek gestel word, om te kom tot ‘n insig in die (retrosiperende) struktuurmonument<sup>54</sup> van *juridiese eenheid en menigvuldigheid*, het ons als resultaat met ‘n begrip van ‘n juridiese stand van sake te make. Dieselfde geld van analitiese eenheid en menigvuldigheid as struktuur-moment binne die *analitiese* aspek. Indien dit dus van die analitiese aspek geld, geld dit ook net so van elke nie-analitiese aspek dat di aspekte wat daarvan onderskei word. Die juridiese aspek is dan slegs analiseerbaar via ‘n intermodale sintese tussen ons aktuele logiese denkfunksie en die geabstraheerde modale struktuur van alle nie-juridiese aspekte.

Die geabstraheerde modale struktuur van die logiese aspek is egter sêlf een van die geabstraheerde nie-juridiese aspekte, waaruit vanself volgt dat ons aktueel-logiese denkfunksie en die geabstraheerde modale struktuur van die logiese aspek *vereis* (hoe anders kan ons tot ‘n begrip kom van die logiese analogie in die modale struktuur van die regsaspek?). Die teorie van ‘n inter-modale sintese impliseer hiermee ‘n merkwaardige en onhoudbare *sirkel*: om die logiese aspek te analiseer word ‘n inter-modale sintese met al die nie-logiese benodig zónder dat as resultaat gekom word tot ‘n inter-modale [p. 100] sintese met die modale struktuur van die logiese aspek sêlf. Die juridiese aspek, as een van die nie-logiese aspekte wat in ‘n inter-modale sintese gevat moet word om die analitiese aspek te analiseer, kan egter as sodanig slegs geanaliseer word via ‘n inter-modale sintese met alle nie-juridiese (w.o. die logiese) aspekte (hoewel origens resulterend gekom kan word tot ‘n intermodale sintese met die modale struktuur van die juridiese aspek). M.a.w. om die juridiese aspek te analiseer word ‘n inter-modale sintese met die logiese aspek benodig (wat origens onmoontlik geag word omdat die logiese aspek slegs via ‘n inter-modale sintese met die nie-logiese aspekte geanaliseer kan word, en om die logiese aspek te analiseer word een inter-modale sintese met die juridiese aspek o.m. benodig. In die taal van ‘n logiese kontradiksie geformuleer sien die sirkel soos volg daaruit: “die modale struktuur van die logiese aspek kan nie in ‘n intermodale sintese geanaliseer word nie as en slegs as die wel in ‘n intermodale sintese gevat kan wordt.

[It is not only the analyzability of the logical aspect that requires that the logical aspect be set over against the non-logical aspects, for the same can in principle be seen in the analyzability of every other aspect. In order to

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<sup>54</sup> This must be a typo for ‘*struktuurmoment*.’

obtain sight of the juridical aspect, the juridical aspect must in the same way be set over against the non-juridical aspects, because the juridical aspect (just like the analytical aspect) reveals its *meaning* only in the coherence with all the other aspects. Whenever for example the arithmetical aspect is set over against the juridical aspect, in order to obtain an insight into the (retrociatory) structural moment of *juridical* unity and diversity, the result is to allow us to arrive at a concept of a juridical state of affairs. The same holds for analytical unity and diversity as a structural moment within the *analytical* aspect. If this therefore holds for the analytical aspect, it also holds for each non-analytical aspect that is distinguished from that aspect. The juridical aspect is then only analyzable via an inter-modal synthesis between our actual logical function of thought and the abstracted modal structure of all non-juridical aspects.

The abstracted modal structure of the logical aspect is rather itself one of the abstracted non-juridical aspects, from which necessarily follows that our logical aspect and the abstracted modal structure of the logical aspect *require* these other aspects (how else can we come to a concept of the logical analogy in the modal structure of the juridical aspect?)<sup>55</sup> But the theory of an inter-modal synthesis implies a curious and vicious *circle*; in order to analyze the logical aspect we first require an inter-modal synthesis with all the non-logical aspects without as a result coming to an inter-modal synthesis with the modal structure of the logical aspect itself. The juridical aspect, as one of the non-logical aspects that must be understood in an inter-modal synthesis in order to analyze the logical aspect itself, can itself be analyzed as such only via an inter-modal synthesis with all the non-juridical aspects (including the logical) (which itself must somehow come to an inter-modal synthesis with the modal structure of the juridical aspect). In other words, in order to analyze the juridical aspect, an inter-modal synthesis with the logical aspect is required (which otherwise must be regarded as impossible because this logical aspect itself can only be analyzed via an inter-modal synthesis with

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<sup>55</sup> Strauss's argument here seems to be that in order to discern the analogical moments in the logical aspect, we must first know the other aspects of which they are analogies. But Strauss does not appear to understand that Dooyeweerd's view that inter-modal synthesis already includes this stage of setting over-against. We are able to do this not because we distinguish the aspects by the logical aspect, but because in synthesis with the acts of our supratemporal selfhood, we are able to set one aspect over against other aspects. See also my discussion of the alleged circularity in Dooyeweerd's philosophy in "Did Dooyeweerd Contradict Himself? A Response to D.F.M. Strauss," online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/aevum/Strauss.html>].



the non-logical aspects,<sup>56</sup> and in order to analyze the logical aspect, an inter-modal synthesis with the juridical aspect is required. Formulated in the language of a logical contradiction, the vicious circle can be expressed as follows: the modal structure of the logical aspect can never be analyzed in an inter-modal synthesis, unless and only if it can first be understood in an inter-modal synthesis.

This extensive quotation throws a sharp light on the short-circuiting that arises in Strauss's argument as a result of his losing sight of the fact that, what he calls a "vicious circle" in my train of thought is in reality a necessary consequence of the transcendental ideas—which he himself accepts—of the mutual irreducibility and unbreakable reciprocal meaning-coherence of the modal aspects. For these ideas are unquestionably of an *inter-modal* character, and they lie at the basis of the epistemological forming of concepts of the modal aspects, as developed in the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. There does not exist any logical contradiction between both of these transcendental ideas. Rather, they cohere unbreakably with each other, and these ideas are in turn not to be separated from the transcendental idea of the root-unity of the modal aspects in the religious center of human existence,<sup>57</sup> and the idea of their divine Origin in the will of the Creator.<sup>58</sup>

Because Strauss tries to interpret in an *intra-modal logical sense* the *inter-modal antithesis* that he himself maintains between the logically objectified modal aspects, he falls not only into an obvious logical contradiction, but also into insoluble genuine antinomies. In order for him to simultaneously maintain the mutual irreducibility of the theoretically abstracted modal aspects and his supposed intra-modal logical character of the epistemological antithesis, he is obliged to let their distinguished modal nuclear moments also function in an *intra-modal logical sense*, *excluding any inter-modal theoretical synthesis*. A necessary antinomy thereby arises between the modal law-sphere of the logical aspect and that of the other aspects, *whose meaning-kernels cannot be interpreted in an intra-modal logical sense without canceling their irreducibility.*<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> **Note by Dooyeweerd:** This is certainly not an expression of *my* view, but Strauss's commentary on it. It would have been more correct, if at the beginning of his bracketed comments he had said 'wat origins *naar mijn siening* onmoontlijk geag moet word.'

<sup>57</sup> It must be asked why the translator/editor has not included this crucial part of Dooyeweerd's idea of the religious root-unity: the religious root-unity is concentrated in "the religious center of human existence." Dooyeweerd calls this the "key of knowledge." See *In the Twilight of Western Thought*, 125, 135-36, 145.

<sup>58</sup> The English summary replaces "will of the Creator" with "God's creative Word."

<sup>59</sup> The English summary says,

...he [Strauss] is now obliged to assume that also their irreducible meaning-kernels function in an intra-modal logical sense without an inter-modal synthesis of our analytical activity with the non-analytical modes of our experience. This would be tantamount to a complete destruction of the material contents of the epistemological concept and its dissolution into empty logical relations. From this indeed logicist view of the concept

Strauss tries in vain to save himself from this impasse, which threatens to lead him directly in a logicistic pitfall that he himself recognizes, by emphasizing that the modal structure of the logical aspect cannot be understood in a *purely* logical way, because the analogical structural moments [p. 101] themselves of this aspect point to the inter-modal meaning-coherence. For he has not answered the question of how we can arrive at *conceptual insight* in these modal structures. For the *pointing-to* that he refers to *must come to expression in the epistemological concept itself of the modal structures*. And it is precisely this that has been cut off by trying to reduce the inter-modal *Gegenstand*-relation to the intra-modal logical subject-object relation.<sup>60</sup>

We have seen that Strauss's own solution itself does not work with respect to the epistemological conceptual insight into the modal structure of the logical or analytical aspect. For without theoretical insight into the inter-modal meaning-coherence of the logical aspect and the non-logical aspects, we cannot understand the distinction between the modal meaning-kernel as well as the analogical structural moments. And it then is also impossible to obtain a truly essential concept of the logical aspect.

#### Appendix by J. Glenn Friesen

In his article "An Analysis of the Structure of Analysis: The *Gegenstand*-relation in discussion), *Philosophia Reformata* 49 (1984) 35-56, D.F.M. Strauss provided a response to some of Dooyeweerd's arguments. This article was published 9 years after Dooyeweerd's article and 7 years after Dooyeweerd's death. In my view, it does not address the points raised by Dooyeweerd, but repeats many of the same arguments that Dooyeweerd believed he had refuted.

I have provided a detailed critique of that article by Strauss, showing that his arguments are based on numerous misunderstandings and misinterpretations of Dooyeweerd's philosophy. Furthermore, the Strauss's actual logical arguments are fallacious. See "Did Dooyeweerd Contradict Himself? A Response to D.F.M. Strauss," online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/aevum/Strauss.html>].

See also my article summarizing the differences between Dooyeweerd and D.F.M. Strauss: Dooyeweerd versus Strauss: Objections to immanence philosophy within reformational thought, online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Objections.html>].

I view it as unfortunate that when Strauss became General Editor of *The Collected Works of Herman Dooyeweerd*, several references to Strauss's 1984 article were included in the footnotes to Dooyeweerd's *Encyclopedia of Legal Science* (2002). For example, the editor of that work, Alan Cameron, says at p. 28, ft. 1:

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there arises an authentic antinomy between the modal lawsphere of the logical aspect and those of the other aspects *whose meaning-kernels cannot be interpreted in an intra-modal logical sense without canceling their irreducibility*.

<sup>60</sup> The English summary adds, "This is the weak spot in Strauss' acute argument."

More complicated internal inconsistencies in Dooyeweerd's understanding of the *Gegenstand*-relation are extensively discussed in D.F.M. Strauss, "An Analysis of the Structure of Analysis (The *Gegenstand*-relation in discussion),"...

Cameron refers to the Strauss article again on p. 90, ft. 1, in connection with his judgment that "...there still remains [sic] unresolved difficulties in Dooyeweerd's account of the basic transcendental problems of theoretical thought."

Strauss and Dooyeweerd seem to be talking past each other. I hope that the annotations I have made to Dooyeweerd's article can also help to explain the differences between them, even if these differences cannot be bridged. In particular, I would point to (1) The various levels of the *Gegenstand*, including the initial splitting out of the aspects from their temporal coherence. (2) The first level of *Gegenstand* is therefore the whole modal dimension, which is set over against our act of knowing, an act from out of our supratemporal selfhood, which is not itself within the temporal systasis that is split apart in dis-stasis. (3) Dooyeweerd's statement that the irreducibility of the law-spheres is "not to be separated from the transcendental idea of the root-unity of the modal aspects in the religious center of human existence" is to be understood in relation to his view that the nuclear meaning-moments are supratemporal and central. They therefore cannot be conceptualized. (4) For Strauss, synthesis applies after the *Gegenstand* has been identified, whereas for Dooyeweerd, synthesis already starts in setting a *Gegenstand* over against the act of thought from out of our supratemporal selfhood (5) Dooyeweerd's rejection of the idea that the aspects can be deduced from the individuality-structures of concrete experience (6) Dooyeweerd's distinction between naïve experience as responding to the ontical, and theoretical thought as only intentional and not ontical (7) The fact that Dooyeweerd begins with totality and religious root, and that these are different from mere temporal or inter-modal coherence and (8) Dooyeweerd's view that individuality structures are individuated not from the aspects, but from their functions within those aspects.

And see the many other misunderstandings and misinterpretations made by Strauss, as identified in the article already mentioned, "Did Dooyeweerd Contradict Himself? A Response to D.F.M. Strauss," online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/aevum/Strauss.html>].