

“Center and Periphery:  
The Philosophy of the Law-Idea in a changing world”

by Herman Dooyeweerd

Thursday, January 2, 1964 Lecture at the annual meeting of the  
Association for Calvinistic Philosophy

Translated by Dr. J. Glenn Friesen

**Note:** The Dutch text of the lecture alone will be published in *Philosophia Reformata* 72 (2007) 1-19. The text below is a provisional translation of both the lecture and the discussion that followed. Copyright is held by the Dooyeweerd Centre, Ancaster, Ontario, and publishing right is held by Mellen Press, Lewiston, New York. A definitive translation will be published in the series *The Collected Works of Herman Dooyeweerd*.

Translator’s Introduction:

Dooyeweerd’s January, 1964 lecture, together with the discussion that followed, is a very important text for reformational philosophy. Marcel Verburg refers to excerpts from it, in his book *Herman Dooyeweerd: Leven en werk van een Nederlands christen-wijsgeer* (Baarn: Ten Have, 1989) [‘Verburg’]. But the entire lecture and discussion have never been published, and never translated into English.

Here are some of the reasons that this Dooyeweerd’s lecture and the following discussion are important:

1. Dooyeweerd says that the reason that he did not publish Volume II of his trilogy *Reformation and Scholasticism* is that the book had been aimed against Roman Catholic philosophy, but that such powerful changes had taken place in Catholic theology that the book had lost its point. Dooyeweerd expresses great appreciation for *la nouvelle théologie* in Roman Catholicism.
2. Because of his appreciation for these new developments in Catholic theology, and because of some contacts with people from other denominations, Dooyeweerd makes a very strong plea for an ecumenical approach to reformational philosophy, and for the

Association to give up its label ‘Calvinistic.’ Dooyeweerd says that this label is an obstacle that prevents people from accepting the Philosophy of the Law-Idea (Discussion 17-19). This is all very strongly opposed by Vollenhoven, who wants to restrict ecumenism to those within the *Gereformeerde* persuasion (Discussion, p. 23ff).

3. The lecture gives a good summary of the cultural situation at the time that Dooyeweerd wrote *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*.

4. Dooyeweerd reaffirms the importance of the idea of supratemporal heart as the center of man’s existence, and “out of which are the issues of life” [Prov. 4:23]. And he says that this idea is necessary in order to understand the doctrine of Christ’s incarnation, as well as of the working of the Word of God upon this supratemporal religious center of our existence. But in answer to a question by Pete Steen, Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the supratemporal heart is the center of *man’s* existence [not Christ’s], and that he never used the expression ‘supratemporal heart’ in the theological way that Steen’s question assumed.<sup>1</sup> Dooyeweerd says that Christ’s incarnation is an event that simultaneously reaches into the central sphere of our life as well as in the temporal sphere of our bodily existence. (Lecture, pp. 6, 8, 13-14, Discussion p. 4-5). In *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, Dooyeweerd speaks of man’s redeemed selfhood *participating* or *having part* in Christ, the New Root, thus making a distinction between man’s central selfhood and Christ (NC I, 99). And elsewhere, Dooyeweerd distinguishes between man’s supratemporality as a created eternity or *aevum*, and God’s uncreated eternity.

5. Dooyeweerd also relates the idea of religious center and the temporal periphery to the title of this lecture, “Center and Periphery: The Philosophy of the Law-Idea in a Changing World.” Dooyeweerd had already made a similar distinction between center and periphery in the opening pages of *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*.<sup>2</sup> But Vollenhoven says that this distinction applies only to religion, but that it does not apply to philosophy. For philosophical differences, instead of speaking of religious root and temporal fruit, Vollenhoven prefers to speak of “cardinal questions and secondary questions” (Discussion, p. 22). And that is how Vollenhoven would like his own differences with Dooyeweerd to be regarded, since he says that he and Dooyeweerd still agree on the distinction between religion and philosophy (Discussion, p. 25). But although

Dooyeweerd agrees that the religious center is not to be found in philosophy itself (Discussion, p. 27), he also says that some philosophers, like Prof. Stoker, cannot be viewed as adherents of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea because of the way that they speak about the center (Discussion, p. 1).

6. The lecture is important for interpreting the idea of the religious antithesis, and Dooyeweerd's conviction that this antithesis is not something that can be organized within institutions. There appear to be fundamental differences from his views and what reformational philosophy has assumed to be the case, especially in relation to reformational philosophy's assumption of a pluriform or pluralistic society. Dooyeweerd emphasizes that Christians are also not free from apostate Ground-motives. Dooyeweerd's views here may also be significantly different from those of Abraham Kuyper and Groen van Prinsterer, although Dooyeweerd interprets Kuyper in a way similar to his own views, that the religious antithesis was not intended to lead to exclusivism or to a closing oneself up in one's own circle (Lecture, pp. 12, 15; Discussion, p. 16).

7. The lecture and discussion set out many of the philosophical differences between Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd (see Vollenhoven, especially Discussion p. 25). I have referred to these differences in my article "Dooyeweerd versus Vollenhoven: The religious dialectic in reformational philosophy."<sup>3</sup> From Dooyeweerd's point of view, are these central or peripheral differences? It seems to me that Verburg is right when he says that Vollenhoven perceived that Dooyeweerd's comments in the lecture had been directed against him (Verburg, 381).

8. Dooyeweerd says that the idea of the modal aspects is one of the least understood ideas of his philosophy, and that the modal aspects are frequently understood in precisely the opposite way from what he intended (Discussion, pp. 2, 8). Dooyeweerd describes this theory of the modal aspects as a "vision" that has to be completed (Discussion, p. 3).

9. Dooyeweerd distinguishes his meaning of boundary concept [*grensbegrip*] from the way that Kant used the term (Discussion, pp. 5-6).

10. Dooyeweerd discusses how the function of faith is directed to things beyond time (Discussion, pp. 6-7).

11. There are interesting points about Dooyeweerd's views on sociology (Discussion, pp. 8-13, 15).

12. Dooyeweerd expresses misgivings about the name 'Philosophy of the Law-Idea' for his philosophy (Discussion, p. 14).

Provenance and condition of the text:

This is a corrected transcript of a tape recording of Dooyeweerd's lecture. Although it seems that Dooyeweerd used some notes for his lecture, the typewritten transcript was prepared by someone else. In October 2006, I located transcripts of both the lecture and the discussion in the Dooyeweerd Archives at the Historische Documentiecentrum voor het Nederlandse Protestantisme in Amsterdam. Marcel Verburg assembled the Dooyeweerd Archives, but he never completed the work, and the documents in the archives have never been indexed. These archives are therefore in a very disorganized state. The transcript of the lecture and the discussion were in the same box (*Lade II, 1*), but not in the same folder. The actual tape recording is not there.

The transcript of the lecture is 17 typewritten pages. It contains extensive handwritten notes in Dooyeweerd's handwriting in the margins and on an additional handwritten page. Perhaps the transcript was given to Dooyeweerd to review prior to publication, since the chairman of the meeting, Prof. Van Riessen, expressed the hope that the proceedings could be published. Dooyeweerd did not complete his review of the transcript of the lecture. There are therefore some typographical errors that remain in the original Dutch transcript, including some errors made by the typist in wrongly substituting a word that sounded like the word that fits the context. Sometimes the same word is spelled in two different ways. In a few instances, corrections were made to the transcript in handwriting that is different from Dooyeweerd's. I am grateful to Dr. A.P. Bos for his careful review of the original Dutch text, and for his advice in correcting these evident errors in the transcript.

I located another copy of the transcript of the lecture in a stack of course syllabi offered for sale by the Association for Reformational Philosophy, which is now located in Soest. I purchased that copy and I compared it with the one found in the archives. It therefore appears that the 17 typewritten pages were made available to members of the

Association, but that the one with handwritten notations expresses what Dooyeweerd wanted to say. I have numbered the pages of the lecture from 1 to 17, and the pages of the discussion from 1 to 28, following the numbering in the respective transcripts.

With respect to the discussion, there is another problem in that some of the questions were not recorded because the person who had asked the question stood too far from the microphone. I have been able to fill in some gaps here through the records of Dr. K.A. Bril, who was a student at the time. Dr. Bril was actually present at this lecture, and it was his practice to make notes of each meeting of the Association that he attended. His notes distinguish between the question asked and the answer given. He has carefully preserved these records. I visited Dr. Bril recently in the Netherlands and discussed this matter with him in person. He shared his notes with me. I have indicated by the symbols < and > in the text where I have supplemented the transcript of the recording of the discussion with these notes by Dr. Bril.

J. Glenn Friesen, 2006

#### Dooyeweerd's Lecture January 2, 1964

[Lecture, page 1]

As far as I can remember, this is the first time that I will speak at the annual meeting of our Association on a topic that I did not myself choose. I must honestly admit that at first I was not pleased by the formulation of the topic, as it had been presented to me by the Committee [of the Association]. "Changing World" is one of the fashionable terms of our time, and I am not fond of the term. It is misused in many ways. But in the end, I submitted to the wishes of the committee, since I certainly understood what their intention was: not merely the changing world, because we always live in that; the world continually changes. But what they had in mind, and what was also apparent from the information that they gave me, was that [the topic] concerns the presentation of our philosophy in a greatly changed world, a world in which the pace of change has become so fast that we can hardly keep up with it. When they think of change, people sometimes think of the situation that began to develop after the Second World War. And usually,

people have only that in mind. But just because of this, I want to emphasize that from its very beginnings, the Philosophy of the Law-idea was confronted with a strongly changing world. And it is on just this point that I want to put special emphasis in my lecture, because it may possibly cast light on the task that philosophy still has today, and which it will continue to have in the near future.

The Philosophy of the Law-Idea made its first appearance to the outside world in the first half of the 1920's, although it certainly did not yet appear in its full-grown form. That was a turbulent [*felbewogen*] time; there are probably not many of us who can still personally remember the experience of that intense tension. The First World War, which no one believed possible, was unleashed by demonic powers. No diplomatic negotiations seemed able to bring it into check, and it ended after millions of sacrificed human lives. Terrible revolutions had taken place in central and Eastern Europe. It was supposed that democracy had triumphed over the autocratic regimes. But in Russia, revolution finally brought communism to power. Its totalitarianism ideology ruthlessly broke with the traditional foundations of democracy, and it held within itself an increasing threat for the whole Western world. Communistic Russia remained outside of the *Volkenbond* [League of Nations], which was called into existence in order to do away with war, once and for all, as a means of deciding differences between peoples. But really, the great hopes that people had for the League of Nations, and for human reason in which they had trusted, were alas soon enough put to shame. Germany, and its allies, who had been defeated, saw the Treaty of Versailles forced upon them. And this Treaty hid within itself all the seeds of a new world catastrophe. Not a single German scholar of international law acknowledged this Treaty as a true treaty, since it had been one-sidedly dictated, in conflict with the foundations of the armistice treaty, which had always been based upon the acknowledged fourteen points of Wilson, which had also been accepted by Germany. And when Germany made objections, it was forced to relent—by being threatened with the immediate reopening of hostilities.

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Now after the fall of the Kaiser, it seemed that Germany had been won for Western democracy, and that along with Germany, the smaller Austria, as well as the newly

formed states in central Europe had also been won. Austria had been left over from the liquidation of the Danube Monarchy [former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy]. Democracy showed itself here in an excessively rationalized form. In 1919, the constitutional law of Weimar ventured for the first time to express the rules of the parliamentary system within its constitutional law itself. In lands where this parliamentary system had really taken root, these rules had never been written down. But Germany did not appear to be ripe for democracy. And under the socialistic administration, the parliamentary system died a natural death, since it lacked a historical basis in which to be nourished. And so the way was opened for what took place at lightning speed in the 1930's—by means of democracy, Germany brought Adolf Hitler's National Socialism to power.

What was the spiritual situation at that time, when the Philosophy of the Law-Idea first made its appearance? What were the schools of thought that set the tone for philosophy? In 1917, during the war, Oswald Spengler's important book was published in Germany: *Der Untergang des Abendlandes* [*The Decline of the West*]. This book was not written with the First World War in mind, for according to his own testimony, [the decline] was already there in principle before the outbreak of that war. In its catastrophic and impressive background there could already be seen a prophecy of its downfall. This book set out the logical consequences of a way of thinking about history that had become absolutized by a radical historicism, which reduced the whole human horizon of experience into its cultural-historical aspect. According to Spengler, man has no vantage point from which he can direct his view to that which is found outside the stream of historical development in which he is placed. If man has no view outside of the stream of historical development, then he also can no longer obtain any distance or perspective, no final goal that world history is to serve. And that was exactly what Spengler meant. He wrote a book, which we could take to be a philosophy of history, but it was really not that at all, for it lacked the philosophical idea of a "*Weltgeschichte*" [world history], such as the idea that could still be found in Leopold Ranke. In place of it, Spengler put what he called a "morphology of world culture." And in this view, Western civilization, which previously had been regarded as central, and as giving direction, and in which all classical values—including those for other cultures—had been united, was wholly forced from out of its central position. Western culture was viewed as one culture alongside of

others. These cultures were described according to the model of a living organism. A living organism undergoes a development process. Of course, this development is not itself of a cultural-historical nature.

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It begins with germination, proceeds through a period of ripening, and then comes the phase of being full-grown. Then comes old age, and then irrevocably comes death. But Spengler now viewed this as the model of the historical development of western culture, the culture of the West [*avondland*]. It was seen as a spiritual organism, closed up in itself, subjected to the same kind of process of development and decline as a natural organism. He said that Western culture has for a long time been past the period of manhood; it is in its last phase of old age. And now as an irrevocable *fatum*, a “*Schicksal*,” [destiny] as Spengler called it, the decline of the West would follow. In this view of history, there was missing a true idea of historical development. That is to say, it lacked a guideline to direct the cultural-historical for us in a process of unfolding and deepening, a process that is directed to a final goal, a final perspective. This final goal is something that itself transcends the historical aspect of our experiential world. And Spengler also demolished the historical idea of time. Spengler separated the ancient culture of the Greeks and Romans from Western civilization, which nevertheless found one of its formative bases in Greek and Roman Culture. Western civilization was viewed as a cultural organism that was closed up in itself. In such a closed-off state, there can no longer be any talk of a development process in which the achievements of one culture are taken over and further developed by another culture. We can then discover only parallel phenomena in the development of these separate cultural organisms. In a confusing way, Spengler saw these organisms appear as “historically simultaneous.” So, for example, in the culture of the West, the old mathematician Euclid from ancient Greek culture was named the contemporary of Einstein. Yes, this was historicism at its most logically consistent. A consistency that ends in nothing, in decline. And it is not often noticed that Spengler already made use of all kinds of terms and categories of modern existential thought. For example, he used terms like ‘*Sorge*,’ [concern] ‘*Geschick*,’ [fate] and ‘*Schicksal*’ [destiny], which today have been worked out by Martin Heidegger in an extensive, systematic whole.



Spengler's book did not just fall from the air. It drew its most extreme conclusions from out of an historicistic way of thinking, which had already appeared in the beginning of the previous century, but which was then also strongly influenced by German idealism, which believed in eternal ideas that realized themselves in history in a temporal manner. These ideas again and again displayed new individual forms, as a revelation of their inexhaustible riches. So, the historical way of thinking came partly from out of German idealism, and in the first half of the last century, it was also held in check by that idealism. It was not the radical historicism that we see in Spengler's *Untergang des Abendlands*. It was an idealistic historicism that still believed in the idea of humanity in its freedom, its self-determination, its complete autonomy, and that believed in a course of development by humanity in a continually ascending line of historical realization, brought forth from that idea. Well now, this belief [in progress] was undermined in

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the ever-more radical turning that historicism began to take, following the collapse of German idealism around the middle of the previous century. In Spengler it had been completely lost. Radical historicism also viewed German idealism (or at least its belief in the eternal ideas), as merely an historical product of Western civilization.

Were there then no opposing tendencies in philosophical thought during this time? Certainly. Already in the last century there was a certain renaissance of Kantian, or what is called 'critical-idealistic philosophy.' In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, neo-Kantianism itself became to be a dominant direction of thought. Neo-Kantianism divided itself into two currents: the Marburg school, which was primarily directed towards Kantian epistemology, but which reshaped it in an important way, and the Baden school, which was primarily oriented to the philosophy of culture and the science of history. The Baden school tried to rein in radical historicism by positing that we must acknowledge an ideal world of eternal values outside the experiential world. These eternal values had *validity* [*gelding*] but no *being*, no *reality*. Man had [wrongly] allowed the experiential world to be reduced to the reality of nature, as it was viewed by the natural sciences. According to the neo-Kantian school, between these two worlds—the world of nature (the "empirical reality") and the ideal world of values, could be found the area of culture or of

“meaning” [*zin*]. This in-between realm of meaning or culture was supposed to be constituted, called into life, by a certain choice of position made by one’s faculty of judgment, whereby we subjectively relate the natural reality (which in itself is blind with respect to values and therefore meaningless) to the eternal realm of “values.” And that was to be done in an individualizing sense, because in the area of culture it is just the individual that acquires value for man. But immediately there came another renaissance of German idealism, in a revival of Hegelian philosophy. A neo-Hegelianism also arose, it also had its representatives in the Netherlands, just like neo-Kantianism. And then there arose the remarkable movement of phenomenology, which still today has an important number of adherents. It claimed to be able to open up totally new ways for philosophy, [to regain] previous certainties that had become lost in the crisis that was becoming ever more clear in Western culture. It was founded by the German thinker Edmund Husserl, who

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wanted to take a position both against historicism as well as against psychologism. Gradually, this thought was sharpened into what was called a transcendental-idealistic epistemological direction, which Husserl believed had a radical critical character.

Neo-Kantianism also claimed to be a critical philosophy of a transcendental-idealistic character, but in Kant’s line. But epistemologically, it remained stuck in a formalism that reduced the objective content of our experience of the world into our material sensory impressions, which are themselves of a chaotic nature. These impressions could only be ordered and determined by subjective *a priori* forms of thought.

The new phenomenology broke through this formalism. It wanted to make completely transparent our natural consciousness of a given world, in which we live and move, both according to our subjective modalities of experience as well as according to their objective content. But it wanted to separate this from our natural attitude of thought and of experience. Phenomenology then divided into different schools, including existentialism, which was to play a dominant role in European thought after the Second World War. But in the 1920’s almost no one had seen its far-reaching significance.

In 1927, Martin Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* [*Being and Time*] was published, in which the existential way of thought announced itself in an impressive way. It originally did not appear as a book, but as a long essay in the *Jahrbuch der Philosophie und der phänomenologischen Forschung*, which was published by Edmund Husserl. Only later was it published in book form, and its increasing influence was reflected by an ever-increasing number of editions.

What was the spiritual situation in *Gereformeerde* circles? I of course do not mean 'Gereformeerde circle' in a denominational sense, but in the broad meaning of "those who are the *Gereformeerde* persuasion." The 1920's were also a very turbulent time for this circle. This was partly caused by the death of Dr. Kuyper, who can be called the spiritual father of the Calvinistic revival [*Reveil*]. Kuyper had awakened a part of the population who had not been viewed as belonging to the intellectual part of the nation, as the jargon of enlightened liberalism of the previous century might have called it. In general, these were people who mistrusted modern culture, and who regarded science and philosophy as dangerous. Kuyper taught them that such an attitude towards culture and science certainly did not fit for those who called themselves spiritual heirs of Calvin, since it implied a failure to appreciate God's common grace. And that this clearly distinguished them from Roman Catholicism and Humanism. In many works, he had shown that Calvinism had a broader meaning than merely for church and theology. In his well-known *Stone Lectures* that he gave at Princeton concerning Calvinism, he showed—in a way that spoke to the people in a tremendous way—that Calvinism is an all-inclusive life- and worldview, which desires to carry out the Scriptural principle of the Reformation in every area of life. And Kuyper had developed a number of basic ideas, which would be of great importance

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for the reformational movement and also for the reformational philosophy that arose after his death. In the first place, his concept of the radical antithesis between the spirit of God's Word and the spirit of this world, the spirit of falling away. This antithesis was to be regarded as the central antithesis, which must come to be revealed in every area of life, including science. Already in Kuyper's time, this was a view that became a true rock of

offence; it went directly against the traditional scholastic teaching of two realms [of nature and grace].

In the second place, there was an idea that is most closely related to the first idea. Although Kuyper did not develop it in his great theological works, but rather in his more popular writings, it was an idea of very far-reaching importance. It is the idea that man was created by God with a religious center of life, which the Bible concisely names “the heart,” out of which are the issues of life.<sup>4</sup> In Old Testament terminology, the heart must be circumcised.<sup>5</sup> According to the testimony of Jesus Christ, it is from out of the heart that all sins come forth.<sup>6</sup> And it is in the heart that man’s rebirth takes place, through the working of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> This central Biblical vision of man had become lost in scholastic philosophy. And under scholastic influence, it was also lost in *Gereformeerde* theology. In a flash, Kuyper again made evident this radical Biblical vision, and he confronted others with it. But such a flash of Biblical light concerning the center of human existence passed by unnoticed by the theology of his time. It continued to hold fast to scholasticism’s traditional dualistic image of man. And this [wrong, dualistic image] remained just as dominant in Kuyper’s own theoretical theological works.

Kuyper set out a third great idea, whose significance was not yet foreseen, in his still rudimentarily developed teaching of the particular laws and the mutual irreducibility of the spheres of life that he distinguished, especially of the various spheres of human society. Here he relied on a Biblical position against what he called “the blurring of the boundaries” in the prevailing views. Kuyper forged his own terminology. He referred to his idea as “sovereignty in its own sphere”—a term that now, through frequent and not well-considered usage has become worn-out [*versleten*]. But during his own time, it was a new and concise expression that gave notice of a reversal of the traditional scholastic view concerning the temporal life- and world order. But this deep purport of Kuyper’s conception of sovereignty in its own sphere was not at first perceived. Very quickly, its meaning was limited to the area of anti-revolutionary politics, where it had to accommodate itself to Groen’s Christian-historical vision of state and society.<sup>8</sup> This was strongly under the influence of the German Historical School, to which the Lutheran statesman Fr. J. Stahl also belonged—someone whom Groen later very much admired.<sup>9</sup> In its connection with this Christian-historical way of thinking, the [conception of]

sovereignty in its own sphere, which could only be applied to societal spheres of a fundamentally different nature, was from the very beginning confused with the autonomy, which for historical reasons had been granted to municipalities, provinces and water-board jurisdictions, which as parts of the state could really never have sovereignty in their own sphere.<sup>10</sup> In this way, Kuyper's great conception of sovereignty in its own sphere, which he had expressly based on the creation order, became watered down to an internally confused political slogan, to which people seemed to have so little connection that even during the time of Kuyper's leadership, the idea was not even included in the platform of the A.R. [Anti-Revolutionary] Party. And yet Kuyper's original concept was deeply Biblically founded in the idea of the creation of all things according to their nature.

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Kuyper developed a fourth important idea in his theological view of faith. Again, this idea is linked most closely with both of the first two ideas. Scholastic theology had always distinguished between natural knowledge of God, which just like other knowledge that remains within the "natural sphere," can only be obtained by the natural light of human reason, and supernatural divine knowledge, in which we can share only by means of special divine revelation, and which requires the supernatural gift of faith. Kuyper certainly did not dispute that true Christian faith is a gift of grace. But he did attack the scholastic view that faith plays no role in natural knowledge. He argued that the function of faith is created within human nature, and that it plays an essential role in all human knowledge. Therefore no science exists that can be neutral over against the faith that one proceeds from. But as long as the human heart, following the fall into sin, remains closed up to God's Word revelation, the function of faith that is created within man will acquire an apostate direction. It will direct itself to idols of all kinds. Only by means of the gracious working of God's Spirit can it [our heart] again require the direction to the Word revelation of the living God, a revelation that finds its fulfillment in Christ Jesus. In this sense, Kuyper spoke about the plus and minus directions of faith.

It was especially these four basic ideas, which I have briefly summarized here, which were to have such a fundamental significance for the Philosophy of the Law-Idea,

because the originally Biblical thrust [*geladenheid*] of these ideas broke through the scholastic direction of ideas in Christian thought.

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From the time that the Free University was founded until the beginning of the 1920's, the development of *Gereformeerde* thought displayed no direction of its own in the area of philosophical thought. During this period, it was still strongly bound to traditional Thomistic-Aristotelian scholasticism, which served as the foundation for dogmatic theology. Scholastic philosophy was itself considered as belonging to the area of natural knowledge. In this scholastic philosophy, Greek thought—which has an anti-Biblical religious foundation—was expressly adapted to the church's teaching. But by doing so, this philosophy did not in the least become a reformed philosophy in the Biblical spirit.<sup>11</sup> Yes, well, there came about a revival of the Kantian questioning with respect to human knowledge, scientific knowledge: how is universally valid knowledge possible? In relation to that, the question was also raised in *Gereformeerde* scientific circles: should we not reflect separately on these critical problems? And that also happened, and Kuyper set the example. In his *Encyclopaedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid* (*Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology*; 1893-1895), Kuyper developed a theory of science, in which the critical questions of neo-Kantianism were to some extent addressed: the question of how knowledge of a universally valid nature is possible. But it really happened in the same way as what happened in Louvain when there was an adaptation of scholastic philosophy to the new problems that had been raised by Kant and the neo-Kantians—there was a certain linking up, a synthesis. The principle of scholastic thought remained preserved. There is a reality [*een werkelijkheid, een realiteit*], being, which as such is independent from human experience, even from all possible human experience, and this being has its existence directly from God. And then there is the area of subjective, human knowledge of that being. And these ideas were then used in order to purify neo-Kantian idealism from its non-Christian characteristics. It resulted in what was called 'critical realism,' and you can find it developed in Kuyper's theory of science. Those who have been members of our Association for some time may perhaps remember that at the annual meeting of 1939 I chose the special subject of "Kuyper's Theory of Science" ["Kuyper's Wetenschapsleer"].<sup>12</sup> For yes, that [article] was again in relation to a very quickly

developing situation, now also occurring in *Gereformeerde* life. Kuyper had died, and as could have been predicted, after his death there was a battle with respect to his spiritual heritage. In which line should reformational thought further develop? For it was clear that two lines could be observed. And not only in Kuyper but also in Herman Bavinck<sup>13</sup>—one of the other leading members of the older generation—and also in Jan Woltjer<sup>14</sup>. There was a truly reformational line, which sought an inner reformation,

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an inner re-forming of the whole attitude towards life and thought, which came from out of the driving force, the *dunamis* of the divine Word. And the other direction, which merely proceeded in the old scholastic line and that did not want to know about reformation, inner formation of thought. But as Voetius had named it, they wanted accommodation, adaptation, an external adaptation of thought to traditional theology, which itself appeared in every respect to be infected by Greek philosophy, which cannot be reconciled with the Biblical basic principle [*grondgedachte*]. The Philosophy of the Law-Idea immediately chose the reformational line, in this radical sense. It concerns reformation, inner reformation of our attitude of thought, through God's Word—and, as was always added, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. That's what it's about. It was against the scholastic accommodation. But then the conflict occurred with the theological faculty of the Free University, which at that time was still wholly in the grip of the scholastic way of thinking.<sup>15</sup> It related in particular to the attack that the Philosophy of the Law-Idea had made against the traditional scholastic view of man, the view that man is a composite, something put together out of two substances, two independent entities [*zelfstandigheden*] as they were called: a material body that is mortal, and a soul that is immortal because it is spiritual, an *anima rationalis*, a rational soul that is characterized by reason, by its ability to think. In this picture of man there was no room for the core [*kern*] of human existence, as it has been revealed to us by the light of the Bible, namely the religious center of man's existence, the concentration point of his whole existence. It is what the Bible concisely names “the heart, out of which are the issues of life.” Sometimes it also uses the word [word in text unclear, probably ‘soul’<sup>16</sup>] of human existence or ‘spirit’ of human existence, but by this the Bible always intends something other than the Greeks, who broke apart man's temporal human

existence into two substances, two independent entities: a material body and a rational soul. And the rational soul was viewed as immortal. The Philosophy of the Law-Idea directed a sharp attack against this view. And that led to the conflict [with the theological faculty]. After the publication of Volume III of *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, there immediately appeared the well-known series of brochures by Prof. Hepp. Hepp was then professor of dogmatics. The brochures were entitled *Dreigende Deformatie* [*The Threatening Deformation*]. The people against whom he was directing his polemics remained anonymous, but it was very clear that the brochures were against this philosophy, and that it was intended to point to the founders of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea.

It was at this time that I received the request from the publisher Wever in Franeker to write a brochure about the relation of Calvinism and philosophy. This was a request that did not attract me at all, and I did not in any way intend to follow up on it. But I wrote him back, that I was certainly prepared to write about something else.

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That was the subject “*Reformatie en Scholastiek in de Wijsbegeerte*” [*Reformation and Scholasticism in Philosophy*]. That became a very sad matter for me, for this subject grabbed my interest, and my work on it grew to become a new trilogy, a large work of three volumes, a companion set to *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*. But only the first volume was published.<sup>17</sup>

And now I will come back to the Philosophy of the Law-Idea in changing times. For the situation changed in an unbelievably short time, one could almost not keep up to it. Yes, Volume II was intended as a polemic against the scholastic way of thinking, and I had this in view because it was a current topic in the 1930’s and also at the beginning of the 1940’s. I had in view the traditional scholasticism, what was called Neo-Thomist, which had been adapted and polished up to fit into *Gereformeerde* theology. That’s what I had in view, but in between, such a powerful change took place in Roman Catholic understanding, in the Roman Catholic circle itself and in the circle of what was called neo-Scholasticism. You have all heard about it—the coming into existence of *une nouvelle théologie*, against which the encyclical *humani* [*Humani Generis*, by Pope Pius



XII in 1950] was clearly directed. There were noises heard in the new theology, of which we said: “These seem to be purely reformational, that is no longer Roman-Catholic.” They spoke again about man’s radical corruption. There were polemics against the view of Cardinal Merchy<sup>18</sup>, the Louvain school, which had always taught that there is, that a sharp distinction must be made between the domain of philosophy, which belongs to the area of natural light, and the domain of theology, for that belongs to the supernatural light of revelation. It was generally acknowledged that philosophy couldn’t be Christian. That was a generally accepted idea and now some totally difference noises could be heard. People again began to speak the language of Augustine, who had denied the autonomy of thought, of natural thought, and who had said that outside the enlightenment of the Divine Word (leaving aside now whether Augustine understood this in a more precise way), but outside of the enlightenment of the Divine Word, man could never find the truth, not even in science. Now it is true that even in the Middle Ages there remained a conflict between Augustinian and the Thomistic schools, but [it was believed at that time] that they must of course be accommodated, adapted. A synthesis must be found, since they all wanted to remain within the hierarchical relation of the Roman Catholic Church. And now, now the *nouvelle théologie* arose and in the neo-Scholastic philosophy there were totally new noises that could be heard. They spoke about the religious center of man. Yes, so at once Volume II of my book *Reformation and Scholasticism* immediately lost its basic foundation, for the Roman Catholics would be able to say,

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“What do you mean? We live in a changed time, and neo-scholasticism has for quite some time grown out of that old standpoint.” They have now to a large extent come closer.<sup>19</sup> We had already observed this here with one of our most faithful visitors of our annual meeting, Prof. Marlet, a Jesuit, and an adherent of the *nouvelle théologie*. And as he has always said to me, and as appeared from his dissertation, he is also an adherent of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. Of course, for in his dissertation at the Gregorian University of Rome, he defended the idea that this philosophy completely falls within the framework of the *Philosophia in ecclesia accepta ac agnita*, meaning philosophy as it has always been accepted and acknowledged by the Catholic Church.<sup>20</sup> But the reason was also, that was also the reason why I have never published in its entirety Volume II of

*Reformation and Scholasticism*. It no longer satisfied me. And [only those] various chapters, which really brought about an extension of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea—thus, those that carried a thetical character—were published by me in our journal *Philosophia Reformata*.

Yes, and then in 1941, after the World War [commenced], a second split occurred in the *Gereformeerde* Church. As you know, we had the first split in 1926. That was the Geelkerken conflict, which concerned the view of Scripture.<sup>21</sup> Although that split had only an exceedingly narrow and provincial basis, it led to the exodus of Geelkerken's followers and the formation of a new church, the *Gereformeerde Kerk in Hersteld Verband*. This was a great split in the unity of the church. And in 1941 there came the second great split with the conflict about Schilder, Prof. Schilder and his followers.<sup>22</sup> That led to a liberation [*vrijmaken*], and there arose the *Vrijgemaakte Gereformeerde* Churches. And then suddenly there was a sort of fearful mood in the *Gereformeerde* Churches: "Let's never have *that* again." And the result was that now everything could be, and everything could be said, and everything was *permitted* to be said, and really no one precisely knew any more what the guidelines were for what might and what could be said.

Yes, the Second World War, with its judgment of the totalitarian Nazi regime and of fascism. When the Second World War was over, the break-through movement [*doorbraakbeweging*] arose in the Netherlands. I'm sure you still remember it well. The Dutch people's movement arose. At that time I was the Editor-in-Chief of the weekly periodical *Nieuw Nederland*.<sup>23</sup> I directed it for two years. And it published a series of articles about the antithesis, in relation to the appearance of this people's movement. For these articles opposed the antithesis. There must be a spiritual breakthrough. Yes, these articles opposed what one could call the organization of the antithesis, which is indeed something dangerous. As you know, Kuyper had organized that part of the Christian population who wanted to go further in his line. And he did this very powerfully in the political area. The Anti-Revolutionary Party was the first really well organized party in the Netherlands.

And he did it in the area of higher education, the Free University. And yes, the whole rearguard [*achtertocht*] of the Free University, that part of the people on whom the Free University depended for its support, had to be organized. And then soon also the trade organizations became Christian. But in all of this, Kuyper had an ecumenical idea in mind, and this is often forgotten. It was an ecumenical idea, no ecclesiasticism [*kerkism*], no binding of a party, of a political party, or of an institution for higher education or of a trade organization to a certain church denomination. Now yes, what did Kuyper really envision? One could no longer have any church confession as a foundation. That also applied to the Free University—it doesn't have the confession of the *Gereformeerde* Church as its basis. Article 2 of the statute only refers to “*Gereformeerde* principles.” And that in itself was an amazingly risky venture, for these principles were not formulated. What was to be understood by them? What drove Kuyper, what did he really envisage? And what has he not said? What could he probably also not have been able to say? What did he really envisage at that time?

And now I will speak about something that I cannot prove. It is based on my own convictions. I have seen it myself, and I have gradually brought this more sharply to the foreground during the further development of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea.

In 1939, there was for the first time mention made in the Philosophy of the Law-Idea of a transcendental critique of philosophic thought. I had really forgotten this, but there are certain dissertations and articles written in English, which have refreshed my memory. They have researched the historical development of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, and have shown that in 1939 (and *nota bene* not in *Philosophia Reformata*, but in an article in the periodical *Synthese*) there was a long article. That article was entitled “De Transcendentale Kritiek van het Wijsgerig Denken” [The Transcendental Critique of Philosophic Thought].<sup>24</sup> And now, after my memory has been refreshed (for I have lost the article, I no longer have it), I suddenly remember again what that article was about. In 1939, the whole thing had become philosophically stuck. People had brought about the formation of a school, which they had organized into a narrow circle. That was the *Kritisch Genootschap* [Critical Society], a society for critical philosophy. They published their journal *Analen der Kritische Filosofie*. And in the first volume of that

journal there appeared a threefold repetition of the assurance that critical philosophy was the only scientific one, and that it really had the monopoly on truth.

But the Hegelian circle in the Netherlands had separately organized itself, and it published its own journal *Idee*. And it announced the same thing. They thought that the Society for Critical Philosophy really belonged to the narrow-minded group who only believed in reason, but who did not allow pure reason to be heard. For pure reason is only that which creates the good synthesis above the antithesis between different directions. That was the Hegelian train of thought.

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And there was also a neo-Spinozist direction in the Netherlands, and of course a neo-Thomistic one, which were both separately organized. And indeed, there also arose an Association for Calvinistic Philosophy. Did our Association really have to be the umpteenth formation of a group that would also claim a monopoly on truth? Then the idea, the question that arose for me, I felt that it was necessary to show a way, in order to allow to be seen that the antithesis, as it is taught by the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, and which followed in the line of Dr. Abraham Kuyper, that this did not lead to exclusivism, towards isolation in the wrong sense of the word, closing oneself up in one's own circle. But, to use a new word that has come into fashion—a word which came into vogue, into fashion, after the Second World War, which called for the creation of a center for dialogue that would really be able to lead to dialogue, to a dialogue with opponents who stood under a totally different religious standpoint. And I thought that it was just the transcendental critique of philosophic thought, as it had been developed by the Philosophy of the Law-idea, that would open the way, since it set out the requirement that in our dialogue with an opponent in principle—let's say with a humanist, who is not a Christian—the only way to real communication is to approach him from out of his own deepest basic principles. And there came the word “religious Ground-motive.”

In Volume I of *Reformation and Scholasticism in Philosophy*, I have sketched out four of these motives. I have first tried to let Greek thought speak, and to disclose its own deepest religious Ground-motive out of its deepest, spiritual driving force. I have tried to do the same with scholasticism and with humanism. I had really already done that in

Volume I of *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*. And now the word ‘religious Ground-motive’ must also apply with respect to the reformational direction of thought. What was its religious Ground-motive?

To speak about religious Ground-motives was naturally unpleasant for a theology that still was based wholly on a scholastic standpoint, for it saw itself unmasked. It saw that in the dualistic view of what was called “nature and grace.” The natural domain, where the natural light of reason was sufficient in order to arrive at knowledge of natural truths—that this domain is not neutral as they declared, and that reason is not autonomous there. But in that way, they viewed nature in the light of a deeper religious Ground-motive that was not Biblical. The motive of nature and grace included the tendency towards accommodation, an accommodation of the Greek religious motive to the official teaching of the church. Yes, that was the purpose of the work *Reformation and Scholasticism*.

And now, in the development that I have so briefly outlined, the development of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea in a rapidly changing time,

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the question always came up as to what was really the core [*kern*], the center, and what was the periphery [*omtrek*] in this philosophy. You are all my witnesses that from the very beginning I have said that, as philosophy, the Philosophy of the Law-Idea is human work, fallible. I have said that it requires no privileged position with respect to other philosophical systems. That is something that could easily happen, to hide oneself behind the name ‘Christian,’ or ‘reformational,’ and to say, “Yes, but this is a philosophy that is a better guarantee against error than the others.” No. Every time I have warned against that and with great emphasis. That is not the way it is. Philosophy itself remains human work. But it is human work that is directed from out of a spiritual driving force that does not come from man, but which comes forth from out of the Word of God, and which works in the community, *de communio*, *Spiritus sanctus*, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

Yes, whenever these Ground-motives—I am convinced that there still is much misunderstanding about them, also in our circle, also in the circle of our own Association.

Some have become afraid when they have heard this and they have thought, “Here a selection is being made.” For the Ground-motive is described as that of creation, fall into sin and redemption through Jesus Christ in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And then it is said, “And after this the Bible can remain closed. If that alone is the Ground-motive that leads this philosophy, then the Bible can remain closed.” Now, it was so difficult to remove this misunderstanding. For I have said that the Ground-motive is the key of knowledge of Holy Scripture, and a key serves in order to open something up. And what must be opened up, that is Holy Scripture. Thus the key belongs to Holy Scripture, and it is itself only to be understood from out of Holy Scripture. It is not something that is imposed upon it, but it is certainly something, this motive in its completely central, in its radical character, that completely fits with the revelation given by God in the beginning, in the first chapter of Genesis, of the creation of man according to the image of God. If you read that further in relation to everything that the Bible also teaches us about the religious center of human existence, then it must become clear that the divine revelation, the revelation of the Word, which became flesh, must be adapted to human existence as it was created by God. Otherwise there would be no revelation. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. Christ became man. Jesus Christ, and lived among us. And God’s Word has spoken in our human language and in our human world and has thereby also entered our human horizon of experience. And just as man, who was created by God,

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with a great diversity of functions and structures with respect to his bodily existence, but with *one* central unity. The heart of his existence, that religious center, out of which are the issues of life, and which according to the order of creation was destined to concentrically direct all the powers that God had placed in the temporal world. These were to be directed in the service of love to God and to our neighbour as the bearer of the image of God. For our neighbour, too, is created according to the image of God.

When you see that, then it is no longer strange that Holy Scripture also has a center, a religious center and a periphery, which belong to each other in an unbreakable way. That center is the spiritual *dunamis*, the spiritual driving force that proceeds from God’s Word in this central, all-inclusive motive of creation, revelation of the fall into sin, redemption

through Jesus Christ in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. And naturally, we can also speak about creation as an article of faith, a doctrine, and that is also clear. Naturally. And one can theologize about that. Of course that can occur. It is also necessary. But when it concerns true knowledge of God and true knowledge of self, then we must say, “There is no theology in the world and no philosophy in the world that can achieve that for man. It is the immediate fruit of the working, the central working of God’s Word itself in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, in the heart, the *radix*, the root unity of human existence.”

The core [*kern*] of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea is not of a philosophic nature. The core of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea is of a central religious nature. And I believe that its strength is there, and that is also where its meaning will be in the future. As long as we continue to see this, as long as we continue to see that in the final analysis it comes down to the driving force of God’s Word, which is active in the religious center of our existence, through the power of Christ Jesus, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. As long as we continue to see this, the Philosophy of the Law-Idea will not become meager, it will not become irrelevant to a rapidly changing world, but it will retain its full relevance. For through it they will hear a call in the world, an *appèl*.

OK, some people have said, “What the Philosophy of the Law-Idea says here, the inner reformation of thought and so on, that is something eschatological, that is something from the age to come and not in this dispensation, not in this sinful world in which man is sinful. In our philosophic thought we can never know what is directed by the Biblical Ground-motive and what is directed by non-Biblical Ground-motives. If we admit that there is an antithesis between the Word of God and the spirit of apostasy, and each Christian acknowledges this,

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our objection against the Philosophy of the Law-Idea is that it wants to carry out this antithesis in the domain of philosophy.” And one can naturally add to this: “Our objection in general against this reformatinal direction is also outside of the domain of philosophy, in that it wants to carry it out in the domain of politics and trade organizations, and that it there also speaks about antithesis.”

Now I must say one thing, and I hope that I will not be misunderstood. Antithesis is indeed something that cannot be organized. There was certainly some emphasis on this idea, also by Dr. Kuyper himself, who spoke about *we* Calvinists. See the title of his address to the deputies [*deputatenrede*]. That had the sound of a certain pride: *we* Calvinists, and the *Anti-Revolutionary Party*, and *our* people, etc. And oh, how quickly the idea came about that we should have no contact with others who did not belong to this. But yet there is a solidarity of the fall into sin. We cannot say that we ourselves are free from apostate motives. That would be distinctly unbiblical.<sup>25</sup> No, that is naturally completely true and that was just the great danger in the beginning, and the danger must also be continually warned against. [This warning was needed] when the Philosophy of the Law-Idea first appeared, again with the antithesis, again with that *appel*, with the call. Be careful! Do not think that you can organize the antithesis. Not in philosophy and not in an Association for Calvinistic Philosophy, which only can come up with a good foundation. Oh, you can make that foundation as good and as excellent as you want, but if the Spirit of God does not blow into it, then it is nothing. It is then less than nothing, chaff and not wheat. And no foundation, no basis that we ourselves may lay down and that we ourselves may formulate can really give the reformational, Christian, Biblical direction to our thought. That is the work of God's Word by the working of the Holy Spirit, Who is always at work in fellowship. Yes, the core [*kern*], the center of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, hold on to it, it is not made by man! The periphery, there was a time, in the beginning of our Association, when there was no criticism given in our circle about what the Philosophy of the Law-Idea had brought forward. Everything was accepted with a certain gratitude, but there was no critique. I have then repeatedly worked towards critique. Each part of this philosophy [of the Law-Idea] must be critically weighed, because don't forget, it is human work. I have had an alarming success in [being subjected to] such criticism! After the Second World War it came to the point that I sometimes thought, "No pillar remains standing. At the moment everything lies knocked down flat. There is no part of this philosophy that has not been subjected to a sharp critique. The theory of time, in my opinion



a very fundamental piece of the philosophy of the law-Idea, has been struck at in its foundation.” The teaching of the law-spheres...has in various parts been so injured that I thought, “Okay, now where are we going?” It was in fact said to me, “Yes, we agree with you, there is a diversity of modes of experience..., but we hesitate to speak of a historical aspect of experience,” and “We do not want to become historicists. That [aspect] must remain outside.” And others said, “Now, the intuition of time; it is such an all-encompassing time, in which all the aspects are fitted. That we can't accept. There are aspects—the arithmetical aspect, the spatial aspect—which are timeless. We must maybe make time itself into an aspect...etc.” I thought, “There goes the whole philosophy of the Law-Idea.” Some have objected to the view of science as an activity that is characterized by its theoretical, logical function. That was perhaps less far-reaching, but it was still a point where you could say, “Well, that still means something, that which has here been abandoned.” And then especially, and that was of course in connection with the second split in the church, the so-called liberation, a fundamental critique was given of the view given by the Philosophy of the Law-Idea of the institution of the church. This critique was along the lines of Prof. Schilder, who had always objected to these ideas. They said, “Yes, this is all terrific, the teaching of the temporal individuality structures, as these ideas have been worked out for society and for the spheres of our everyday world of experience. But the church must stay outside, for don't forget that the church—the church comes from above. It is something totally different, and cannot be viewed as something that is just given in experience.” Yes, this concerns—how shall I really say this—is this still in the periphery? Or is the church—doesn't the church concern really the core of what is believed, and can it really in any way be separated from the religious center of our existence? Center or periphery, center or circumference? Well at the moment I don't think I have an answer. I shall also not try. But let me only say this. The periphery does not exist without the center, but the center is *destined* [*bestemmd*] prior to the periphery. It is destined to direct the periphery. In other words, the religious Ground-motive of God's Word is destined to give a reformational direction to our philosophic thought. In all brokenness, in all fallibility, in all sinfulness we shall try to hold on to this task, also for the near future. Now I want to say this to you. If you sometimes think, “Ah, this Philosophy of the Law-Idea, when it

first appeared it was regarded as belonging to the *avant-garde*. At the moment it is viewed as out of date, as conservative.” I want to say to you: That depends a lot on you yourself. If we now begin to speak of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea in a sort of mood of the *bourgeois satisfait* [the satisfied bourgeoisie]:

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“We have a system etc. and we can reproduce it theoretically,” then our influence is *nihil*. Of course there is no influence. But the Philosophy of the Law-Idea will last as long as the Spirit remains active in our life, in our thought, even if it has to change in its philosophical conception (which I do not absolutely rule out). This philosophy will last that long, and it will not become meager and not change.

With that, ladies and gentleman, I would like to end this speech, for I cannot give you much more.

### **Discussion following the Lecture**

[Discussion, page 1]

Prof. Dooyeweerd:

Mr. Chairman, I will gladly try to answer your questions.

[Answers to the three questions put by the first person to ask questions, Prof. H. van Riessen, who was also the chairman of the meeting.

1. Concerning the first question, I can say this: the third volume [of my forthcoming work *Reformation and Scholasticism*] really deals with anthropology, and that part is not finished. I must honestly say that after completing about half of it, I became stuck in the question about evolution. And I came to the conclusion that I would very much like to see the question first thoroughly addressed by a biologist. As you know, that is what then happened in the book by Prof. [Jan] Lever.<sup>26</sup> So yes, that obstacle has now in a sense been removed, especially since I hope that I have sufficiently expressed my views about Lever’s book in our journal [*Philosophia Reformata*]. Therefore I hope to still be given the strength to complete this third volume.<sup>27</sup>

2. With respect to the second and third questions, I asked that the third question be repeated, and that was simply because it was still not clear to me that the third question differed from the second; but that was clearly the intention. So yes, the second question was: “Can one develop different directions in Philosophy of the Law-Idea from out of the same center [*kern*]?” And you then added something else, that it seems that I have said one thing on the one hand, that philosophy as such is subjective human work, but that in response to critique that came my way, I have also said that I sometimes remain true to my heart. I don’t know whether I have said that, but it may well be so if you have remembered it that way.

Now, concerning differing directions in the Philosophy of the Law-idea from out of one and the same center, that is not totally impossible, but it is not very likely. For what we have seen up to now is that whenever differing directions developed, this was most closely connected to the fact that these people only accepted the Philosophy of the Law-idea up to a certain point. I am thinking now of Prof. Stoker and his immediate followers. And for Prof. Stoker there was a difference—a not unimportant difference regarding what I call the center [*kern*], and therefore regarding the religious point of departure as such. Professor Stoker held to the old idea of the *Logos*, the *Logos* doctrine, He also held to the traditional view of man, where man was seen as composed of two substances, body and soul—the soul as a rational substance and the body as a material substance. He was not ready to give that up. Therefore, that is not a difference in the periphery [*omtrek*] but it is in fact a difference in the core [*kern*]. And that central difference touches on the opposition between what in my book I have called “reformation and scholasticism” in philosophy. I have not wanted to say that Prof. Stoker completely holds to the scholastic tradition, but in the old speculative *Logos* idea, he has really held fast to points that touch on really central matters.

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You can find another example of this being still worked out in the English dissertation of Vincent Brümmer, who obtained his doctorate [the University of] Utrecht. And it is probably also to be found in that book of Mrs. [A. L] Conradi from the University of [Natal].<sup>28</sup> Both [Brümmer and Conradi] use the same standpoint: that Christian

philosophy must not have any presuppositions, and that you must eliminate all presuppositions in order to let the *Logos* speak, just as it has revealed itself (as Prof. Hepp said in “*in statu*” [Text unclear], that is to say, through the things themselves—that creation can reveal to us the nature of things themselves. And from the very beginning, I have fought against this *Logos* idea. Not just me, but as you know, also my neighbour sitting on my right [Prof. D.H.Th. Vollenhoven?]. And really our whole Association has fought against that standpoint. On this point, therefore, Prof. Stoker cannot simply be called an adherent of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. It is undoubtedly a different direction, and one that does not come from out of the same center.

3. Concerning the third question, yes this is therefore indeed very different from the second question. Now you ask, “Is it possible that from out of the same *dunamis* (by which I understand the same religious Ground-motive), Christians can come together and maybe organize themselves in an Association for Christian Philosophy, without us knowing in advance whether this will result in a Philosophy of the Law-Idea?” I would say, undoubtedly, for I myself did not know that this philosophy would result, and I certainly didn’t know that it would be called that. The name [Philosophy of the Law-Idea] was more or less a matter of chance, and as you know, I do not oppose it at all. But I did not know in advance that it would turn out that way. And I would not want to assert that it is not possible, not possible for there to be a different approach, another way. I am certainly confident that the manner of approach of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea has certain moments, which may not again become lost. The insight into the various modes of experience was a *novum* [something new] when the Philosophy of the Law-Idea appeared. And yes, that was later worked out philosophically in the theory of the modal structures that I have analyzed. And on top of that was built the theory of the individuality structures. And with these theories I have said that they are not at all finished. In other words, you cannot say that we have now totally thought it through and thoroughly analyzed it and that we now have it in a form we simply have to reproduce. That would also not be very pleasant [*verheugend*]. But luckily it is the case that the largest part of this philosophy has not yet been worked out and not yet thought through. And I found that to be particularly important with respect to the theory of the modal aspects. For again and again, I have experienced that this is one of the least understood

parts of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. This is in contrast to what is usually asserted about this philosophy.

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For those who have sometimes heard about this philosophy at second hand will say: “Oh yes, that is the Philosophy of the law-spheres; we know about that.” But as far as I can tell, only a few people have understood what this theory [of the modal aspects] really is, and what it really means. I frequently see that it is interpreted in a way that completely contradicts the original intention. Therefore I believe that for the present we still have much to do to appropriate for ourselves what has been brought forward in this theory of the modal aspects. This can be done in a critical spirit, that is of course wonderful and I have always stimulated such discussion. But if you want to exercise criticism, you first have to know what you are being critical of. It is not sufficient that you know the name and not the nature of the beast—the nature that is covered over [*gedekt*] by the name, the nature that carries the name. Therefore, I believe that there remains much to be done here. And the same thing goes for the theory of the individuality structures. As an example, I would like to warn against what I sometimes noticed in South Africa when I was there. There were some who were very loyal, but who carried out the theory in such a manner that I said, “No, no, no, not that way!” Applying it to associations—to associations that did not have *one* aim but various aims and then they said, “Yes, there is then something totalitarian in that.” No, you really must be very careful. It cannot be applied in this way. The theory is also wholly not finished, not ready; it is a vision that is set out here, and which I have tried to illustrate with various examples. And I have of course carefully thought through and analyzed these examples. But yes, reality is so rich that I cannot survey it, and no one can survey it. Therefore I would not like to begin with an *a priori*, that this [theory] must always match reality. Think for example—Prof. Stoker has brought an idea forward, which in itself I can wholeheartedly agree with, when he says, “Reality is so rich, as it has been created. It must then have other dimensions than those that have been brought forward here.” I have always immediately admitted this. However, if someone does come up with something, then I must also immediately be able to say what I can do with it philosophically. For example, when some people say, “No, we don’t want to make history into an aspect.” Well that is something that I have never

done, if you mean history in the concrete sense of events. But OK, they don't want to know about our historical mode of experience, or shall I say, the historical aspect of our experiential world [*ervaringswereld*]. Some people didn't want to know anything about that, and they say, "No, history must be a third dimension." They set history above the two dimensions of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. But I have then always said this, "That sounds really nice, but tell me then what you will then do with that philosophically.

[Discussion, page 4]

For it is still the case that I can do nothing with these historical events if I do not first analyze them according to their nature, their typical nature and structure. If I have not done that, then there is nothing I can do with them." Now I have not yet received an answer from Prof. Stoker, but it is possible that an answer is still coming, and I am waiting for it with great interest. Let's just say that it may indeed be the case that it will be able to enrich the Philosophy of the Law-Idea with a new addition. Now that is really my answer.

I have also sometimes expressed what *cannot* be expected if we remain faithful to the core of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea—that we would then see here the same kind of phenomenon that we see in scholasticism and also in humanistic thought—the divergence of currents that stand opposed to each other in a polar way. For example, in humanistic thought, you have "materialistic" standing opposed to "idealistic." I have tried to show that such polar opposites come out of the polarity, the dualism in the Ground-motive from which [these philosophies] proceed. But since it comes out of the Biblical Ground-motive, and since the Biblical Ground-motive does not know of such a polarity, a Christian philosophy that remains true to the Biblical motive, the Biblical Ground-motive, will also not end up in schools of thought [*richtingen*] that stand over against each other in a polar way. But there various nuances may appear. I believe that to be very probable and something that should not at all be regretted. They would in fact make me happy. Thus I hope I have thereby answered your questions.

Mr. [Peter] Steen (from Philadelphia). Bril adds: <Student of van Til.>

I can answer you in English? But I am not sure that I have completely understood, what you mean and I think the real reason is that I am not a philosopher. You see that my questions were mainly theological and not philosophical. And especially the first question, I think I do not understand completely the meaning of this question. [...Too far from the microphone]

Dr. Bril's notes show that Steen's question included the following words: <The Word became flesh. As it was in the beginning by God. Transcends time and took place within time. >

Prof. Dooyeweerd

Concerning your first question, yes, I now understand you better. It revolves around that painful point, where I sometimes pull the hair from my head (you understand?) that I have ever used these words—I also don't believe that I have ever used these words. The 'supratemporal heart'—I don't think that I have ever used this expression in that way. I have certainly said that in the center of his existence, man transcends the temporal, the cosmic temporal order. That is now something else. [The following two sentences by Dooyeweerd in English]: "Translated in English: I only ascertain that man in the center of his existence is transcending, does transcend the temporal order in its cosmic sense. To say in the sense of his world, with this world of this man, you see?"

[Discussion, page 5]

Now you will say, "Yes, but, 'the Word became flesh'," which you of course accept, and how can that be whenever there is a community, a community [*gemeenschap*] of egos, or shall I say, of "I's" [*ikken*], "*selfhood*," which transcend the temporal order [Following words in English] "Transcend the temporal order. Well, I think there is no contradiction at all with these two assertions. It is so, man is with his bodily existence completely incorporated in the temporal world." According to his bodily existence, man is naturally wholly contained [*vervat*] in the temporal order. But man is also able to direct himself to the things that transcend time. That is a purely Biblical idea. In the *eternal* things. Paul speaks there expressly about the contrast: the things that man sees are temporal, but the things that man does not see, they are eternal.<sup>29</sup> Well now, man is able to direct himself,

to direct his heart to these things that transcend time. And it [this directing to invisible things] is also necessary if we want to understand that doctrine of our salvation, the incarnation of the Word. [the following sentence by Dooyeweerd in English] “That the world has been incorporated, infleshed.” It is completely needed, completely necessary, for that is an event, a real event, the incarnation of the Word, an event that simultaneously reaches into the central sphere of our life as well as in the temporal sphere of our bodily existence. “The Word became flesh,” the Word itself, yes, just as it was in the beginning with God and through which all things were made—that Word was not bodily. About that we can agree. And it was also not temporal. But that same Word became flesh. This is a doctrine of our salvation, that we believe this, and that we learn to see this. Thus we must see in the incarnation that it is at the same time a completely incomprehensible mystery—that it is an event that transcends time—and at the same time that it has taken place in the middle of time.

Prof. Van Riessen:

Oh, good. And now who else would like to ask a question?

Rev. Schoep:

Bril adds: <Related to boundary concepts [*grensbegrippen*]. God is above and beyond the place of the heavens. Bultmann. *Honest to God* [J.A.T. Robinson]. With this problem we must reflect and assimilate. For example, about the Last Day, the Day of Judgment. We can merely let the word ‘day’ remain [does not have to be varied, we can use everyday language]>

Prof. Dooyeweerd:

I am really very happy [with this question], because I now don’t very often hear such remarks from the theological pulpit.

Prof. Van Riessen [Chairman]

But that’s also your own fault! [*U hebt het er dan ook naar gemaakt*]

Prof. Dooyeweerd (continuing)



All right, the word ‘boundary concept’ [*grensbegrip*]. I myself felt when I used the word, I myself felt that it is of course is open to a sea of misunderstandings. If someone wants to point out Kantian influences in the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, he has an open field here with respect to this terminology of boundary concepts. I use the term not only with respect to theology, but I use it in general for what I call transcendental Ideas, which together form the Ground-Idea [*grondidee*]. These Ground-Ideas have received the name of ‘Law-Ideas.’ It is a less than happy choice of words, but it has occurred. But, and the issue is this, I have never been afraid to acknowledge that non-Christian thought has influenced the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. It would be completely dishonest and also impossible to have denied that.

[Discussion, page 6]

For no one can withdraw from all the influences of thought that surround him. The question is merely in what sense they have influenced me. I have said that Kant’s basic Idea of a transcendental critique is completely correct. But from Kant’s point of departure—the autonomy of theoretical thought, the theoretical *Vernunft*—he was not able to succeed in the program he had set out for himself. Therefore, what he finally gave to us was an article of dogmatic epistemology, which has completely impoverished our experiential world [*ervaringswereld*]. But I have retained the basic Idea of a transcendental critique, because I believe that it is a Biblical Idea. Take the proposition that there is no neutral thought, and that there is not even anything such as the natural reason that used to be talked about, a *naturalis ratio* that is completely autonomous, i.e. a reason that by its own powers can philosophize about God in what is called ‘natural theology,’ *theologia naturalis*. If we are really serious about this proposition, then according to the Biblical insight, it means that the revelation given to us by God in His Word, and the work that He exercises through His Holy Spirit in the center of human existence, must then also be revealed in our entire attitude of life and thought. That is then a requirement, the first requirement of a truly critical Christian philosophy, that it begins by showing where the inner point of contact can be found between theoretical thought (the area where philosophy is found) and religion. And by ‘religion’ I do not merely mean the true religion, as it is given to us in the Christian religion, but also the apostate religions. But okay, I have therefore not been afraid to use the term

‘*grensbegrip*.’ Kant also used the term ‘*Grenzbegriff*.’ The Idea was a *Grenzbegriff*. And yet if you look at it, it [Idea] as I use it is totally non-Kantian in its purport and in its content. I only meant to say this: suppose that theology is a science. Theology has always claimed that for itself. Prof. Popma (whom I regret is not here tonight) opposed that view.<sup>30</sup> He said, “There is no theological science!” But I believe that he still stands somewhat alone in that view in the circle of our Association. I believe, that the view that theology is a science is generally held, or at least fairly generally. And I have even said that [theology] a special science. It is not a total science like philosophy, which has a view of totality over the human experiential world. The horizon of our experience—as I have said, a horizon with its many aspects, its many modalities, and its multiplicity of structures. Now if what the Philosophy of the Law-Idea says is true, that theology is directed to the divine revelation, the Word revelation, but under the aspect of faith, that is to say if it therefore understands revelation according to the mode of experience of faith, well then we immediately come to stand before the very special position that this mode of experience occupies in our whole human experience, as it was created.

[Discussion, page 7]

For faith, faith as a function, is very definitely directed to the things that transcend time. It is of course also continually directed to the temporal, but also to the things that are eternal. As Paul says: “The things that transcend time” [2 Cor. 4:18]. Faith is directed to God, the Triune God, and God has revealed Himself to man. But He has revealed Himself to man in a mode of human experience, because otherwise there would be no revelation.

And now as a science, theology must work with concepts. It cannot avoid doing that. But they are *all* concepts in which we cannot grasp God Himself. That is now just the issue. If that is true, then we are in the grasp of God, but God never comes within the grasp of man, and also not within the rational grasp of man. So, not in man’s rational grasp, in the grasp of the concept. We can form concepts of things, of events, of relations, relationships, which play themselves out and present themselves in the temporal horizon of our experience. That is, within the zone of time. From that we can form really adequate concepts. But when it concerns things that transcend time, well then

man cannot form any adequate concepts, and then in fact he forms boundary concepts [*grensbegrippen*]. He continues to use concepts, but they are allegorical concepts, which cling to the analogical structure.

[Second part of the tape recording of the discussion]

Faith is concentrically directed in man's heart towards the divine message [*boodschap*], to the divine revelation. And in that concentric direction, these boundary concepts also obtain truth, true significance. It is not for nothing that God speaks by means of this analogy. They are true because it is God's Word. It is not mere metaphor, it is truth, provided that we see in the concentric direction. In God all these things are present in their original fullness, whereas in the temporal order of man's experience they are found in the divergent direction of the modalities, which we can distinguish from each other in the temporal order. And we say, "Yes, but justice is not love in its temporal relation, and justice is not power." True, but in God they are the same, since in the fulfillment, in the fullness of their original existence [*oorsprongsbestaan*] all of this is one and the same.<sup>31</sup> God's justice is His love and is God's omnipotence, etc. Thus that is the meaning of the boundary concepts. That is what I intended, and I thought that there was indeed some truth hidden in that idea, and that it does indeed correspond with what the Bible teaches us. I hope by this I have to some extent given a satisfactory answer to your question.

[Discussion, page 8]

Mr. van de Berg

[Question not understandable; too far from microphone]

Bril adds: <Sociologist,

Sociology and special sciences. The relation with respect to other people: is that a modality or an individuality [structure]? Previously you have said that treatment of others [*bejegening*] is the meaning-kernel of the social aspect, or is that only in the form of social intercourse? Later you moved away from that view; why?

Concerning politeness [*hoflijkheid*] and such. Sociology is thus a total science. In my view, sociology concerns power, help, etc. And also treatment of others. Thus these

limitations would be too narrow. Thus Dooyeweerd says sociology is a total science. Really, treatment is also broader. It can be a special science.>

Prof. Dooyeweerd

Now that I meet Mr. Van de Berg face to face, and now that I hear him, I must say that I have really regretted that I was unable to be present when Mr. Van de Berg received his doctorate. I had wanted very much to do that, and I would have liked to have exchanged ideas with him in response to the proposition which he had added to his dissertation, and which he has now brought up, which he here now brings forward. Yes, I must say, that I can really only have a good exchange of ideas once I have read your dissertation one more time, once more <à tête> *réposé*. Yet the question you have asked is quite clear enough that I can answer these questions as *I* see them, without having at this moment everything before me in the way it has been worked out.

From the very beginning, I have had objections against viewing sociology as a special science. As you know, there has been an attempt made to make sociology into a special science as a result of the critique of what was called the universalistic view of sociology that had been practiced. That attempt was made by [name not clear in transcript] as well as other historians in the area. And as far as I know, first came Simmel<sup>32</sup>, or maybe Tönnies came first, I don't know, but Simmel came forward, and he is generally held to be the father of what was called formal sociology, and he intended to refer to a certain aspect. Now you do not mean 'aspect' in the same sense as the Philosophy of the Law-Idea uses that word, but you intend it as a certain viewpoint, a special scientific viewpoint to delimit the field of sociology. That attempt failed. I believe that you agree with me there. More and more, this has come to be the general conclusion, notwithstanding the great works that have come into existence in this line of thought. I think first of Tönnies<sup>33</sup>, but even more of Leopold von Wiese, who presented sociology rather as a kind of *mathesis*.<sup>34</sup> He worked with certain basic relations such as *zu einander und aus einander*, which he then differentiated in various ways into basic relations, social forms. Just as Simmel called them, although he understood them really as elementary social relationships, which come back in all complexes [*gecompliceerden*]. All complexes are really put together from those elementary relations. Yes, and that attempt was a failure.

In the first place, the formal school never kept to its program, to its program as a special science. For example, there are huge bits of social psychology in it, as well as value philosophy, crypto-value philosophy, etc. And in the second place, the attempt was doomed to failure, because what was sociology finally about? Sociology was a theory about human society, and that is something that cannot really be changed about the theory. In the end, that's what it's really about, societal relations. Well, those societal relations are not one particular modality, not a particular aspect of our experience, but they function in all aspects of our experience. That also cannot be changed.

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And only when that has been realized has the problem been set out properly. For that presents the greatest difficulty—to decide whether sociology is what people call an empirical science (or positive sociology) or whether sociology is to be understood in a philosophical sense. For according to the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, sociology has the task of seeing and analyzing the structural principles of societal relations, and their mutual relationships, their interwovenness (or of what the Philosophy of the Law-Idea calls their enkaptic relations). Well at the moment I won't repeat all that jargon [*dieventermen*], although I still continue to hold my standpoint.

But in the past, I have used such jargon, and that has brought about confusion, particularly in the English work *A New Critique*. There I was immediately confronted with great difficulties, for I could not just carry over these terms into English. So there, when for example I was discussing the social aspect, which I really see as an aspect, or discussing experience as the mode of societal relations, etc., I really could not translate it in English in any way other than as the aspect of social intercourse. And I hope that English readers have to some extent understood this—that this means what we understand more or less as '*omgang*.' And this term '*omgang*' I have more precisely [set out], as you yourself say, because it is also necessary to say it in Dutch—yes, I am thinking of *that* aspect of the social reality of societal relationships in which we see societal relations as subjected to norms, to the particular norms that we refer to as forms of social intercourse [*omgangsvormen*], of manners, of politeness, of respect, of conviviality [*gezelligheid*], of play, etc. This is also evident in the working out of the theory of the “modal fields” (as

they are called in English), of the modal aspects. In the theory of the aspects, it appears again and again how the other aspects display essential analogies of the social aspect. In the juridical aspect you at once have to do with acts by which members of a society legally relate to each other [*rechtsverkeer*]-that is, the juridical form of intercourse, mode of intercourse, etc. And the Dutch High Court [*Hoge Raad*] has itself in various decisions spoken about obligations of manners, out of which arise legal obligations. It is not possible that these are relationships of manners in the original sense, because then you would never know when you were dealing with legal [relations of your] life. If all manners were a legal obligation, then you would not know where you were headed. For example, there is an obligation of manners, that if I have invited a guest, that I should not insult [*negeer*] him. But no legal obligation can arise from out of that. But the High Court has said that obligations of manners and morals also arise in natural bonds [*verbintenissen*]. They are real legal obligations.

And similarly in the aspect of faith. There we have to do with intercourse with God and our fellow believers. That is intercourse in faith. That is not intercourse in its original meaning, of the social aspect that is subjected to norms of manners, etc. Anyway, these are all the things that you yourself have summed up. So that is what we have to deal with, and as a result of further analyses that I have made of the modal aspects, I have confirmed my conviction that we are really dealing with an original modality, an original modal aspect.

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Of course, that always remains open to critique, it is not an irrefutable truth. But we are here really dealing with an original modality, an original modal aspect.

And now the question of sociology as a science in a narrower sense, thus as a non-philosophical science, well yes, there we have this unhappy fact that the traditional view of sociology is that sociology exclusively investigates our factual societal relationships, in order to explain them in a causal way, leaving the normative views of these matters outside the field of sociology. They then say that these norms belong to legal science, or to ethical theory, and so forth. Now I have tried to show that this view is in conflict with social reality-that such a reality does not exist. The whole social reality as such, what we

call social facts, can only be ascertained by the application of norms and lines of responsibility. For example, if I say that there is a marriage between A and B, then I undoubtedly have a social relationship in view, which also has its juridical aspect. But it is a real social relationship. It is a social fact that this is a marriage. But I cannot establish that fact without the application of norms. How else would I be able to distinguish marriage from concubinage or from a relationship of free love? And so on. If I say that someone is a minister, then without a doubt I am relating a social fact. But can I establish that without applying a norm? Being a minister presupposes qualifications, it presupposes an office. Yes, these are all things that I can only establish by applying norms.

In other words, this is the dilemma for sociology: is it a true science in the sense of *wetenschap* or is it 'science' in the English sense? Americans are presently much broader in their understanding of 'science,' for they understand it to also mean normative science. But the English have not yet come that far, for they sharply distinguish between science and the arts. And they say, okay, legal science as a normative science, and ethics, the ethical science—those are arts but not science, for science concerns reality as it really is, the facts. And the arts, they can of course say how things ought to be. That's the way these two areas are, and they should be that way; they should not be mixed up with each other. All right, but then I must state that it cannot all be reduced to social reality. For from out of social reality, we try to abstract social norms in the broadest sense of the word from out of social reality, then we do not retain any single social fact. And here, where sociology concerns itself as a non-philosophical science, and concerns itself with facts—here is now a point where from a Christian standpoint, I believe we are forced to also make our Christian voice heard. And in my view what we must say is this, that this

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whole dualism of what is and what ought to be [*sein en sollen*], which ever since Immanuel Kant has established itself as a kind of dogma, that this can be shown to derive from a dualistic religious Ground-motive. The humanistic Ground-motive is what I have sketched out as a motive of nature and freedom. On the one hand, there is the motive to control nature by means of scientific causal thought, and on the other hand there is the

area of morals, ethics in a broader sense and the area of belief, as the domain of the autonomous freedom of the human personality. These two domains were separated from each other and now it is put forward as a scientific axiom that there are sciences and there are the arts, fine arts [*kunst*] therefore, and skills [*kunstvaardigen*]. They say that fine arts have to do with practical things and therefore also with norms, but that the sciences have to do exclusively with how things are [*met het zo zijn*], with facts and not with norms. And now the Christian voice must be heard, the Christian answer in my opinion. But that cannot be reduced to social reality.

Now you have talked about power [*macht*] and of help, both of which you have approached in your dissertation, and you have approached them as modalities. Concerning power, I am in agreement with you, but power does not fall within, it certainly does not fall within the social aspect. When power appears [in the social aspect] then this is not in its original meaning, in the cultural meaning. There is certainly power, also in the meaning of social intercourse, just as there is also power in the sense of law. We call that ‘legal power.’ And there is also power in the meaning of faith. We speak of the omnipotence [*almacht*] of God. Undoubtedly. But power in its original cultural-historical sense—that is a modal concept, and it does not fall under the aspect of social intercourse.

And now with respect to help, which you of course have discussed in your dissertation, and which you now want to view as an aspect, I don’t believe that that is possible, for help has various aspects. Think first of all of the moral aspect, that of the temporal relationships of love, relations of love between people with the requirement of universal love of neighbour, and then of love practiced in a narrower sphere, etc. For there are various typical relations of love. We know about spousal love between man and wife, we know of paternal and maternal love, the love of elders with respect to their children. We know about common love for one’s country, which binds us together. We also know the love towards those of the same faith, at least we ought to know about it. Yes, we find ourselves in an area where again and again, we find ourselves coming into contact with analogies. For in the temporal horizon of experience there is in fact one aspect in which love has an original aspect, and that is the moral aspect. I have thought about this a lot, and analyzed it a lot. I have not yet ever been able to discover another meaning-kernel



for the moral aspect than that of love in its temporal relation. If you refer instead to virtue, then you are on dangerous ground. For example, when people speak of bravery as a virtue, they have in mind more the Greek understanding of virtue, as it was set out by Socrates and, following in his path, by Aristotle.

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Virtue is defended by Plato, who says that virtue exists in the first place in a *hèxis*, a habit, a *habitus*, a constant inclination of the will to subject itself to the rule of reason. But there you are in a cultural area. You can in this way bring your passions and emotions under control by practicing—as Aristotle says, by constant practice of your reason in a completely immoral sense. For example an important businessman, who completely controls his emotions and in that respect is virtuous, and who also knows how to maintain the golden mean, but who uses all of that in the service of a goal that is immoral when measured by the standard of love. In the same way, a tyrant can have the virtues of bravery and moderation, etc. To practice these virtues, as the Greeks say. Thus, if you do not name love as the meaning-nucleus of moral relationships, then I must say with Nietzsche, “We still do not know what good and evil are.” He has said to us, “Morality concerns the question of good and evil.” But then we still don’t know what good and evil are, for ‘good’ in the full sense of the word is something that we know only from divine revelation. And then we also know that no man does good.

So that is really my answer to your question. I have a lot of respect for the attempts that you have made in your dissertation to think through these matters, especially because the topic was one that you were really interested in. But I would still have a definite objection against making power and help to appear as [separate] modalities.

[Someone in the room says something].

Prof. Dooyeweerd

Oh, oh I have taken it down literally from out of your own mouth. If we try to describe the cultural mode of experience more precisely, then we necessarily arrive at the following: there is a mode of giving form to a material, but it differs radically from all giving of form that we encounter in nature. There we also find a giving of form: a spider that spins its nest, its web, termites who skillfully build a nest, etc. Giving form. Yes,

but what now is the distinction from the cultural mode [of giving form], the cultural modality? It is this, that for man, who is a cultural being, giving form takes place in a controlling manner, with control of the material and according to a freely variable plan. I can design a chair. We can make all kinds of designs, for a chair, a desk [*schrijffareaal*]. That is why it is also an object of historical research. But what is in nature cannot be an object of historical research, because nature does not know the free, individual giving of form that is inherent to culture, to the cultural aspect of human society. For the cultural is an aspect of human society. Thus in this way, power is a modal moment; it is the nuclear moment of the cultural mode of experience, the cultural-historical, culture-historical of society. And no other [nuclear moment] can be found. If you could give another description of culture, then I would be grateful to know of it. It is remarkable that the Bible—at least to a certain extent,

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for the Bible does not at all analyze modalities—when it concerns the cultural mandate [*cultuurgebod*], it immediately formulates it in this way and not in another way: “Subdue the earth, let us make man, so that they can rule over it.”<sup>35</sup> See, there it is. It is a [modal] moment that we cannot eliminate. And that is why I would not want to make this [power, *macht*] into an individual revelation of the social aspect, in the sense of the aspect of social intercourse. For otherwise there will be confusion, and the aspect of social intercourse will also be set outside of its natural boundaries, and then we will try to see everything in terms of that aspect, including analogies of intercourse in legal relations, in aesthetic relation, faith relations, moral relations, and so on. And I do not believe that that would contribute to the [understanding of] relations. So, that is would I would like to give as my answer to your question.

Mr. Frieman [Bril has <Freeman>]

Professor, I would like to ask the question, what do you now think at this time, and I emphasize “at this time,” about the function of the law in the *Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*. For I am a previous student of yours and at the moment I am studying biology shall I say. And in that study it has become clear to me that along with the religious center, the law also has a central function in the system. But now today, if I have correctly followed

your reading, or better said, your lecture, I have missed what you have said, that alongside the religious center the law is also a central moment. That has made me rather anxious. Now it is of course very modern to be anxious, and that is how one is really supposed to be, but I would find it very nice if you could take away this anxiety, for I think this evening you have, in answer to the question...you have allowed yourself to say that the basic Idea was in a rather unfortunate manner referred to as a 'law-Idea.'

Bril adds: <concerning law and Ground-Idea.>

Prof. Dooyeweerd

My previous student Frieman may still remember, that I have said this about the law, and there is no fundamental change in my standpoint here. But I have never said that the law has that central position, that is to say, that it has a religious Ground-motive as such. For it cannot be found on the same level. Yes, God's law is determinative of everything that is created by God. If there were no divine ordering, no divine determination by the law [*wetsbapaling*], then the creature, whom God has made, would not be able to exist.<sup>36</sup> And in the beginning, I expressed it in this way, in the beginning of *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, in *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, but Prof. Vollenhoven has also repeatedly formulated it in this way, that there is a boundary between God and creation. Which can also be understood in the wrong way. For the intention was of course not to separate the law from God. On the contrary. But this alone was said: the law is not something to which God is subject; only creation is subject to the law, the law that finds its origin in a divine giving of the law. That was the idea.

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Now, in the first place, the law reveals itself in the temporal order of our existence, in a great divergence of ordinances, which we all can acknowledge as having the character of law. I have always said that law is always correlated to the subject that is subjected to it. And so I have said, that our experiential world displays two sides, a law-side and a factual side that is subjected to it, a subject-side. But these two cannot be separated from each other, for the law has no meaning without a subject, and the subject has no meaning without the law. But now, in the fullness, in the religious fulfillment of the law, the whole law in all its branches can be summarized in the central command of law: love

God above everything and your neighbour as yourself. I think that Mr. Frieman will still remember that when he heard my lectures, and you have also seen in the class notes [*dictaten*] that you have studied, that you will find that this is what I said. I take full responsibility for this. But when I then said, that this philosophy happened to choose in a rather unfortunate way the name ‘Philosophy of the Law-Idea’ [*Wetsidee*], I then had something else in view. I then had this in mind, that people immediately began to use this term against me and to say: “Yes, that is a philosophy of the Law-Idea, which can never give an account of individual reality, which can never be reduced to law.” And yes, I had also said that the law has its correlate in the subject and that the law-Idea thus finds its correlate in the subject-Idea. But Prof. Stoker then maintained, “Here there has taken place an absolutization of the law, an attempt to reduce factuality to the law. According to him, factuality could only be explained from out of the *logos*. Then it also came about that the law became identified with the goal that God sets out for creation, since man is fallen and in sin, and man transgresses God’s laws and thus does not respond to the goal. And that was discussed by Mr. Vincent Brümmer, which he defended in his 1956 dissertation at the University of Utrecht.<sup>37</sup> There he alleged that the Philosophy of the Law-Idea could not arrive at giving an account of reality, but that it ran the danger of becoming stranded in a law idealism. That is why I have spoken about the rather unfortunate term ‘law-Idea.’ But in *The New Critique* I have also said, “I am not attached to this term. As far as I am concerned, it can be replaced by ‘transcendental Ground-Idea’ or ‘basic Idea.’ I will let the matter now rest, about the law and all the misunderstandings about it, and so on. There are enough misunderstandings concerning the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, and I will attempt to clear away the dust as much as I can.

All of this does not negate the fact that I no longer have control [about how the philosophy is named]. I can certainly give my preference, but it is now the case that this philosophy is generally characterized, both within and outside of our circle, with the name of the title of my first trilogy, “*De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*.” And there I must let it rest. I can do nothing about it.

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But there are no reasons Mr. Freeman to be anxious. For what he learned during the time that he listened to my lectures about this, that is something for which I still completely take responsibility.

Prof. P.A. Verburg

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to make a few remarks with respect to the discussion in Prof. Dooyeweerd's answer to the questions of Prof. Van den Berg. I am myself also very interested in what the social function now really is, since in my profession I must be occupied with linguistics and from out of this school comes the philosophy of law and especially those questions concerning the philosophy of language.

Bril adds: <Influence of Vollenhoven. Social function is just above the linguistic function. But with this term not much can be done. Social and communications and language theory. One can distinguish (1) social intersubjectivity and (2) values [*waardigheid*], dignity, respect. Now in language there is an anticipation of dignity. You can say 'jij' or 'U' [second person singular or formal second person plural]. Now if you say, "General, you have a nice outfit," then there is no anticipation in language. An example of retrocipation is if you stick out your tongue, like a greeting in Tibet. Human relations. What does dignity mean? That's what I would like to call the social. Intersubjectivity, a bundle of flowers is the handling of objects.>

Prof. Dooyeweerd

I don't really regard this as a critique of what I have said. It is rather something that I have listened to with interest, the relation between the aspect of social intercourse and the aspect of, I would rather not say "of language." Yes, now Mr. Verburg will grab me by the throat, but I would rather call it "the aspect of symbolic significance," or I can also speak of "a symbolic mode of experience." But I don't know whether he has objections against that and at the moment I don't want to stir up this issue. For at the present time we are not yet ready for that. We have discussed it in the *Smalle Coetus*, and we also did not come to agreement there. Thus, for the moment I will let that issue rest, but I am completely in agreement when he says that it would be very desirable if we would not use the word 'social,' which has so many meanings, in a theoretical argument without immediately defining what we mean by it. That is something that I have already tried to

do. I indeed never use this word, which has so many meanings, without first trying to more precisely define what I mean by it. When in the English [translation] I was at a certain time required to use the word ‘social aspect,’ I immediately placed a note and said, “The meaning of the term ‘social’ is here not the same as in other places of my work.” I then gave a definition, of what I meant by it. I used ‘social intercourse’; I could not find a better term. Thus, on this point I am entirely in agreement with him and also with his remarks, that there are both retrocipatory and anticipatory elements in the linguistic aspect, which have a relation with corresponding analogical moments in the aspect of social intercourse.

[Prof. van Riessen?]

Is there someone else who wants to say something about one of these facets? (For I may not say ‘aspects.’)

Bril adds: <Mr. Van Popta (economist; Economy of Russia)>

[person cannot to be understood]

Bril adds: <a) Kuyper b)\_\_\_>

Prof. Dooyeweerd

Concerning your first question, what Kuyper really intended when, in the founding documents of the Free University,

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he definitely did not want to define term ‘*Gereformeerde* principles’, yes, there I would have to say, I am here in the realm of hypothesis, because Kuyper himself did not express his views here. But I know for certain that Kuyper wanted to take a position here against sectarianism. He did not want an ecclesiastical sectarianism in the broad domain of culture, where Christians should work together with each other. He also did not want that in the area of Christian schools. He did not want separate *Gereformeerde*, *Hervormde* and Lutheran schools, etc. He merely wanted Christian Protestant schools.

Kuyper also did not wish this for the Anti-Revolutionary Party—the name of which is not so very fortunate, perhaps no longer. But okay, I will let that issue rest. But there, too he has immediately said, even when he brought this party in an expressly Calvinistic

direction—Kuyper’s view was not at all intended in an ecclesiastical way—then Kuyper said, “This party is open for anyone who accepts the principles of this party.” And the Roman Catholics have later adopted this idea of Kuyper. The K.V.P. has the same thing in its party platform [*beginselprogram*]. Anyone may join. Nevertheless, their platform also states that the party is bound to the authority of the Pope, the authority of the Bishop, and so on. Thus, it is bound to the authority of the Roman Church. So it is therefore a party that has an ecclesiastical signature.

So what Kuyper’s real intention was, I know for certain that when Kuyper dared to make this risky undertaking, in speaking merely of “*Gereformeerde* principles”—today we would speak of “principles of the Reformation,” or “reformational principles”—that he definitely envisioned something that would have the closest connection with what I have called “the religious Ground-motive of man’s attitude towards life and thought.” That he strove towards this, towards a genuinely catholic, that is, ecumenical view of Christendom. “For that reason I did not want being bound to any ecclesiastical confession, and also not any written confessions of faith. Definitely not.” Kuyper himself has never explained it in this way. But you can find other places where he speaks about these things, where he speaks about man’s religious center, about the driving force of God’s Word, of His Spirit. Throughout these places you will find allusions to the same idea that I have here brought forward.<sup>37A</sup>

Yes, in my argument today I did not mention one point. That was because I had put to one side the annotations that I had made, where I had made notes about that point. So I want to say something in connection with it. Our Association is still called the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy. Of course, as an individual, as just one person, I cannot change that. But already in my 1956 article that I wrote for the handbook *Scientia*<sup>38</sup>, I have given my personal conviction,

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which became firm after the Second World War, that we must give up this term [‘Calvinistic’]. That it is not good for us to maintain it. I have come more and more to this conviction, and I have also come ever more to think of this along ecumenical lines. This has come about as a result of all kinds of experiences, which for me have been

surprising in the extreme. I noticed it for the first during the [wartime] occupation, when the Free University still remained open. There were many students from other universities. At that time, we had an especially large number of Roman Catholic students, and they were rather taken with my lectures. At the end of the lectures they came to me and set before me a question of conscience. They said, “Professor, we feel especially attracted to these ideas, but may we as Roman Catholics accept this Calvinistic philosophy?” And I thought then immediately of the words of Paul, “This one calls himself a follower of Paul and another of Apollos etc.”<sup>39</sup> Now yes, the term “Calvinistic’ is no good [*deugd niet*]. It is non-Biblical. Kuyper himself must have thoroughly understood this when he introduced the term for the worldview that he wanted to describe, for he himself immediately said that the use of this term held within it a danger, for it could of course immediately bring about the misunderstanding that the movement was named after a person, and that therefore a certain authority was being acknowledged with respect to that person. Kuyper always fought against the idea that [the use of the term ‘Calvinistic’] implied being bound to the *Gereformeerde* Churches or anything like that. He fought very hard against sectarianism. But he could not help it that this term found its way into the language and that those in circles outside of *Gereformeerde* circles have generally viewed this as the label for a very narrow group. And then they refer to the trilogy: *Gereformeerde* Churches, Anti-Revolutionary Party and the Free University. And in the beginning, that is also the way that it was proposed. But it was definitely squarely in conflict with the foundations of the Free University as the founders had intended them. It was not intended to bind the university to the church. And the name ‘Calvinistic’ has contributed to the idea of such binding. That what was going on was the formation of a sect. A group, rather narrow, that oh, maybe could proclaim some interesting ideas, but as Prof. Van Ooyen once expressed in a review of *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*: “The influence of this movement is still very limited.” He was not so very well informed, for he wrote that outside of the Netherlands it was limited to the Theological Seminary at Grand Rapids. I hope that I don’t have most of my followers there! So in that article in *Scientia*, I therefore from then on openly rejected the name ‘Calvinism.’ And I repeated this in *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*.<sup>40</sup> I added to this that one should not really be so afraid of this, for this did not in



the least deny the fact that this philosophy came out of the Calvinistic *Reveille*; that simply cannot be denied. It also does not mean that I thereby gave up the basic Idea that Kuyper had wanted to express by the term ‘Calvinistic’–

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“the purest revelation of the influence of God’s Word on all areas of our life,” as Kuyper expressed it. That speaks for itself, I do not intend to reject that. What is involved here is merely taking away of the rock of offence, which in spite of all the interpretations that we may give of it, continues to burden us with the label: “A sect, a group, etc. And this is now that little group, that clique of Calvinists, and so on. They are interesting people, but yes, their influence is very limited, narrow-minded [*geborneerd*], etc.” Over against these views I have thrown the windows as wide open as possible, and I have merely said, “The Ground-motive of the Bible is, in the full meaning of the words catholic, that is, ecumenical. It does not allow itself to be bound up, or better said, locked up in any church denomination whatsoever, not even in that denomination that we regard as being the most pure revelation on earth of the Body of Christ. Not even in that body.” And God doesn’t do that, either, locking up the Kingdom of God within the walls of a particular church denomination. That is my personal conviction, which I of course cannot force upon you. You may have your own convictions in this area, but I am convinced that we must bring forward in an increasingly strong way the Biblical-ecumenical motive of our actions and of our thought. And we must no longer continue to be an obstacle to those people who are attracted to us, but who say, “Yes but that is something that we cannot do, we cannot come within the narrow circle of Calvinists. We can’t do that.”

I have just had sent to me, and this is my most recent experience, the last edition of the *Archief voor Rechts- und Wirtschaftsphilosophie*. That is a big international journal for jurisprudence. There is an extensive article about the development of recent legal philosophy in the Netherlands. And it says something about the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, and at least in part in a very appreciative way. It is said that there have really been only two philosophies in the Netherlands that have really resulted in the formation of schools of thought. On the one side there is the philosophy of Heymans, who was also

named this morning, named by the Chairman I believe.<sup>41</sup> Yes and the other one is that of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. But then it is immediately added that, although the influence of the thought of Heimans is visibly declining and really has begun to run towards its end, the Philosophy of the Law-Idea really shows exceptional vitality and life-force in its influence, and that this also applies to the future. But then come the words. “If you ask me whether this philosophy will in future receive a wider influence than upon its own circle, then I must answer that to me this seems very doubtful. For it is too strongly bound to a particular denomination, you know, the well-known idea of reformation of the church.” I immediately sent a letter to the writer and responded to the matter. I said, “Allow me here to make the observation that this shows a lack of insight into the standpoint, the foundation of this philosophy.”

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I received in return a very extensive letter. He said that he was very alarmed and very unsettled, that although he had intensively studied the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, that he had then totally misunderstood it. But that appears from all sides. The term ‘Calvinistic’ is hurting us.

Furthermore, I have also, I have also had to travel a lot, and time and again I have come into contact with expressions of what is called Calvinism, and of which I said, “But if this is what Calvinism is, then I want nothing to do with it.” Therefore, why Kuyper really chose to use this word, yes, he said, “All other terms had become devalued. I cannot use the term ‘reformational,’ for it can be understood in all kinds of possible ways. The term ‘Christian’ can be understood in all possible senses; I use it, although it is as dangerous as the term ‘Calvinism.’” Well now, what he intended by this term—that is a goal that has not yet been reached. And so therefore we must seek for another name. And what should it be? Ach, we shall see that in the future, but in any event it must become evident that we are ecumenically oriented in this area, in a Biblical sense.

That was what I wanted to say, Mr. Chairman.

Prof. Van Riessen

Yes, that was a load off your mind and we also know that that is a high priority for you, and I may also say that many of us are also occupied with that problem. I don't believe that this is the time to discuss it further, but it is appropriate to make certain that we—to begin with those of us on the directing Committee—speak further about this, for of course what must be done is to sum up and to weigh the sunny side and the shadow side of such a proposal, apart from the alternatives of course. A lot depends on this, that is also evident from Prof. Dooyeweerd's argument. We will therefore definitely keep it in mind in order to examine it further. And then at the appropriate time, we will come back with it to this Association.

Prof. V. d. Fliert still wanted to say something?

Prof. V. d. Fliert

...The written confessions of faith of the *Gereformeerde* Churches.

Bril: <v. d. Fliert is a geologist, *Vrijemaakte Gereformeerden*.

- a) The church confession is not sectarian
- b) Revelation concerning the fall into sin>

Prof. Dooyeweerd

In the first place that is in it. There are all kinds of other points that are in it, which have only arisen as a result of church conflicts, where people wanted to express something about it [in the confession of faith]. Of course in their view, this was what was most in agreement with the Scriptures. That was what always bothered me when I read the written confessions of faith, that they frequently take place in that area, that they say, "Whereas it is as clear as daylight [*zonneklaar*]." That they must be used with a lot of suspicion, for there are certain texts cited, which to my lay Christian understanding have nothing to do with this matter, or at least do not settle the matter. But that word '*zonneklaar*' is always used when the argument is not very strong. Then the word '*zonneklaar*' is used. It is thus something that one cannot speak out against. That the

written confessions of faith can be sectarian, and that they in fact are so, alas. Otherwise we would not have come to this endless splitting off [from the church]. That is something that we can never reason away. You can explain it in many different ways, but we are stuck with it.

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This splitting off reaches out to infinity. And now there is *one* thing that really belongs to the changing time, the strongly changing time, the time that changes in a fast tempo. Whoever at the moment puts his ear to the ground and sympathizes with what is going on, will observe *one* thing: the labels that were used earlier, the qualification of whole groups. That this group is Remonstrant—that used to be sufficient to pronounce an anathema. These people are always judged in the *Five Articles against the Remonstrants*.<sup>42</sup> Now that is sufficient, we know precisely who and what Remonstrants are. We also suppose that we know precisely what Roman Catholic is. That all used to be taught to us a little bit. At the moment we are learning to know Roman Catholicism from many different angles. Then we come to the conclusion: “Now, we have earlier made it rather too easy in our fight against the Roman Catholic Church.” And concerning the *Gereformeerde* Churches, I hardly dare to say it, the many separations and splintering: *Gereformeerd* and *Vrijgemaakt Gereformeerd*; merely *Gereformeerde* Churches and there may well be more. I don’t know all of that. I myself can’t keep up with it. But who can deny that sectarianism is occurring here? The confession should be in accordance with the Scriptures, yes, we agree on that. But have people always adhered to the Scriptures? Or has theology perhaps wanted to play a dominant role? And wanted to bring in all kinds of vague decisions of a theological nature? That is only a question that I put forward. But indeed, with respect to this point we are in a strongly changing world. A world that is changing at an extremely fast speed. We must remain awake, and keep our eyes open. The old labels can no longer be used to qualify whole groups of people, for within the groups who bear these labels, there is a great diversity of opinions. And there is also much happening, of new life.

I will now tell you about *one* example, which made an impression on me. It was, I don’t know how long ago it was, four or five years ago, that I had a debate with Prof. Kremer,

the well-known professor in Leiden. The debate concerned the justification of the Free University, which I had to defend, and that of the public university. And the following morning, a young woman came to me and asked me if she could speak with me a moment. She said, "Professor, I have something on my mind. Twenty years ago I heard you give some lectures in Leiden. I was there with one of my female friends. I want to first say that I am a Remonstrant preacher. And we listened to you and we said, 'Now he can speak very well, but he is fundamentally wrong.' We had great objections to what you said. And now I heard you yesterday evening, and yes, I am so happy, for those objections have been swept away. I understand you much better at this time." Then she said, "Do you know why that is? You will of course not believe it, but you are really a Remonstrant and you are also a Baptist." For she had also been a Baptist. Before she became a Remonstrant, she had been a Baptist.

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I said, "You have given me the greatest compliment that you could have given me. For if what you say is true, then I must have been speaking in tongues." Yes, she immediately agreed with this. Then I said to her, "I'm not joking. Isn't it so that as long as we speak theologically with each other we shall never find each other?" Then she said, "Professor, as far as theology goes, I must admit that I also have some serious criticisms against the theology of my Remonstrant [church] fathers concerning these points." I said, "Yes, that is what is now so strange in this meeting. If I had been theologically inclined against you and you of course would have theologically defended yourself, then we would again have stood over against each other in accordance with the old labels. Yesterday evening you suddenly heard me speaking in tongues. You have heard what binds us together. And that is not a trifling matter. For I have spoken about the very deepest truths from the Bible, and there we can find each other." Yes, and that is really my conviction, that the great cracks and splits that have taken place have without doubt been caused, at least in part, because of theological discussions. In those discussions, human elements were mixed in, and it was said that it could be seen from Scripture, as clear as daylight, etc. But then people were wielding these Scriptural texts in their own way. And because of that, if there something good to come of a truly ecumenical movement, then I believe that none of it can be realized by trying to add to the foundations of the World Council of

Churches some further foundations, as people have begun to do. For that is a formulization, to try to formulate everything. That is of course necessary, I don't deny the need in itself. I also don't deny the need for the organization. But in the end, there is no possibility that such formulations can realize a true ecumenical unity. This always remains true: it is Christ Himself who gathers his community, his church. No man does that and no man can do it. Man can certainly organize church denominations. That he can do. He can formulate confessions of faith, and that is also necessary. He can do all of that, but it is the Spirit of God alone who gathers, who brings together. And that is really our comfort in this great division that we presently experience. The unity, the catholic church, is there. It does not have to be made by us, it has already been there for a long time. We only have to see it, and time and again we come in contact with it, each moment over the walls that divide, walls that we thought could never be overcome.

But Mr. Chairman, I shall not further...

Prof. Van Riessen

You had another question? The question from Mr. v. d. Fliert concerning revelation, which was combined with the bit about the Trinity. That was sly<sup>43</sup>, hey?

Prof. Dooyeweerd

No, that was not at all sly. It was here. When I used the shorter formula, "creation, fall into sin and redemption," the phrase 'revelation of' must of course stand before all three of them.

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For without the revelation of the Word, we would not know about creation. But that I now specially added the word 'revelation' for the fall into sin—"revelation of the fall into sin," was caused solely by the fact that when I chose the short formulation, people said, "Yes, I understand creation, but the fall into sin cannot really belong to the religious Ground-motive of the Bible." And they were undoubtedly correct in that. What is intended is of course the revelation of God concerning the fall into sin. That was self-evident. But that applied just as well to the other [parts of the formulation]. Also to redemption, etc. And of course, also to creation.

Prof. Vollenhoven

Because we were all in agreement with the...

I wanted to say something about that, but then I would have broken the mood. And that was something I didn't want to do. Because of that...

Now I also do not want to debate with Prof. Dooyeweerd, but only to make a few observations. In the first place, it seems to me that he has discussed two different subjects. First, the relation between religion and philosophy, of Christian philosophy and our philosophical work. With that we are all in agreement, here is the relation of the root and the fruit. Religion is not philosophy. Philosophy is also not religion, but it is yet the fruit of religion, at least if it is Christian philosophy. Let's move on to center and periphery of philosophy. I don't believe that that can be dealt with on the basis of root and fruit. Whenever we ourselves want to strengthen our insight into the basic question of our life, the significance of our work, then isn't it the case that we say again, "religion?" And that is itself non-philosophical. And out of this root, from out of the root of the Christian religion we are occupied in a philosophic way. But now another question: center and periphery in philosophy. Now we are no longer occupied with the forms of religion and philosophy, now we are occupied with the relation of certain parts of philosophy. That is something that I missed [hearing] and that is now the distinction. For Prof. Dooyeweerd discussed both of these matters, but I would have liked to see them somewhat more sharply distinguished.

Then this evening in the discussion, certain matters concerning this point [center and periphery] have been brought forward. Perhaps people did not want to speak about root and fruit, otherwise we do not escape the ambiguity, but I would like to speak of cardinal [*kardinale*] questions and less cardinal questions. Then, perhaps by coincidence there was the example given of Prof. Stoker, and then Prof. Dooyeweerd has said, "It is therefore very clear that these are not matters of secondary importance."<sup>44</sup> I agree with him. Thus I was in agreement with some things, and yet with a holding fast to \_\_\_[text missing],

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which does not accord with the basic ideas as we have formulated them, and also cannot be made to accord with them, unless they are radically changed. But there are also other examples.

Now I come to the theology that is both notorious and renowned in our circle. Notorious \_\_\_[text missing] [because they] have published a theology of philosophy, which is being especially worked out through the theme of nature and grace, for there they give a sort of supernatural philosophy above the natural one. And it is renowned because some splendid things have come as a reaction to the irritation concerning this brouhaha [gedoe].

Now today, Prof. Dooyeweerd has clearly reminded us of this, and I have spoken with several young people who did not know about the time that this movement first appeared, and they found that it was very instructive, something that I also well understand. And Prof. Dooyeweerd has also reminded us about the fight against the theologians, how it was so difficult for us, who made it so difficult for us. Those theologians who knew everything, except the foundations of their own philosophy. In my lectures I once made the acquaintance of one of the descendants of one of these theologians. I was relating the history of approximately 200 to 300 B.C., and then this question was asked, "But Professor, when then did theology really come into existence?" And with the word 'theology' his eyes sort of moved upwards. I gave the answer, "*The* theology does not exist, sir. At that time, in the time of Hellenism, when Christendom came to Europe, there were about eighty philosophic conceptions and from out of them arose eighty Christian theologies. And today there are maybe more." That is to say, that we must be cautious with theology, and the use that is made of theology when it tries to simply ignore the philosophical work in the root of Christendom and when it says, "We have had that [philosophy] for a long time, without it having to be said, and it is still thought and it is much, much better." If you do that, you arrive at the most terrible things. Only recently I read the obituary of someone, \_\_\_[text missing], the theology of beholding [aanschouwing]. It was all very piously intended, but I shivered as if I had had a fever. The theologians against whom we have fought, they knew far too much, they knew



everything, they knew how Christ was in Himself [*in elkaar zat*] and how God was in Himself. They could make such minute distinctions. That, too was \_\_[text missing]

...had problems with the haughtiness of the theologians. But now that appears to have all changed. Colleague Dooyeweerd has spoken about the Romans [Roman Catholics], who now speak totally differently, etc. And then I must say: “Are you well enough equipped with weapons against the theologians? I value your guilelessness [*argeloosheid*]. I like that. That is a good confidence, by means of which we can enter into life.” I have sometimes heard it said, “Theologians today are no longer haughty.” I don’t know that. I would want to say this: “They are presently creators. And creation<sup>45</sup> is also sometimes a form of haughtiness, because \_\_\_ difficult \_\_\_ thinks [text missing]. For that is what is happening at the moment in theology. They are putting one problem after the other up for discussion. And the first problem has not yet been worked out and then

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something else comes up for discussion and then a third comes with a more mature idea. And then nothing remains firm anymore. In South Africa we find the problem not so pronounced as here. Then I have said, “Listen now, hermeneutics, which tries to determine what must be believed, what really is stated in the Bible. But people placidly continue with eating and drinking, what the Word of God gives, just as our fathers have also thought. The great battle in the *Hervormde* Church in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, etc., then people have simply built upon the Word of God. They have not occupied themselves with questions of textual criticism, etc. Of this it has been said \_\_[text missing].”

\_\_\_ [text missing] Then nothing remains of it. They have everything left. They sometimes, here and there, have had bad ideas, which were brought to them by a wrong theory, but the best thing was that they trusted on God, that they trusted on His *Word*, and in this way they have lived and in this way they have died. And therefore I would like to say to you, “Look, you must understand me well. I care nothing for ecclesiasticism. That little sentence about eighty or ninety theologians, I still mean it.

[...text missing] and believing sons to read up on, so that we can dig deep into the history of early Christendom, to make clear, that in each theology, in its synthesis doctrine, the

theology of the time, the synthesis doctrine, not only that of Arius, but also that of Athanasius, and not only that of Pelagius, but also that of Augustine. But now you must not say, “Now let’s go to work on ecumenism.” For then we get the eighty or ninety theologians all mixed up and then there is a Babylonian confusion of tongues and finally there is also a church that no longer believes anything, since each of the ninety have been corrected by the other eight-nine. So let us take care, let us not be guileless. Theology at the present time is no less haughty than it was twenty years ago. It has put aside scholasticism to some extent, albeit only a particular form of scholasticism, and other similar things, such as substance theology etc. Yes, but be careful! Today the example was given of Marlet. He is not here, but I may still say it, first because I shall say nothing bad about him and secondly because all of us find him congenial. But people can say the theme of nature and grace. Is there then no longer any synthesis in his conception? Does he not just as much have the real Roman [Roman Catholic], although then no longer medieval but even earlier Roman doctrine of nature and supernature, which comes from the Council of Orange and which itself learned it from a theologian, Johannes of Ascensio? And that was the father of the school of thought that today reigns supreme in what is called Augustinian scholasticism, which then is no longer Thomistic, but which is more Platonizing. Merely Platonic-Aristotelian. For these gentlemen of substance theology spoke just as well of form and material as did the [later] Thomists and they also had a basic idea with it. This is all called Augustinian, because one thinks of the opposition of Aristotle and Plato and Thomas and Albertus Magnus, but they are both representatives of the substance theology, let us be sure not to make any mistake about that.

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And I believe that it is our task to dig deeply into the history of all these men, to see whether they were sympathetic or antipathetic towards our stance. To let all these people see: “Listen now, you want to be Christians, but you have a conception that still has taken over a dreadful amount of Greek thought. And banish that then, just as we are engaged in banishing these ideas from our *Gereformeerde* views.” And if we do that, if we work in such a way that this word finds an echo, then I see, it is as if I see a whole great perspective, a reformation that will come in all churches, and then in the future perhaps

something can also flow from out of ecumenism. But if we try to do it now, in the joy that theologians have changed so much, then I believe that we will be grievously mistaken, and that the end will be miserable.

So much over theology and now the questions regarding the main question, the cardinal question and the secondary issues. I will not discuss that further now. They can certainly not be discussed, but let me yet say just this: The theory of the law-spheres, the theory of the modalities—that has been splendidly developed by Dooyeweerd. The theory of retrocipations and anticipations, the theory of the object—these are rather mixed up [*door elkaar geslagen*], as I have recently shown. ‘Individuality structures’—I have always hesitated about that idea; I thought, “I don’t need that word.” And the theory of time—yes, I have a very broad understanding of that. But as for the place of religion in philosophy, we are in precise agreement and therefore these other questions are of a different nature. And they must remain sharply distinguished.

And finally, something more about Kuyper. I believe that Dooyeweerd has not succeeded in reproducing Kuyper’s basic idea. Kuyper did not want to bind the Free University to the church, but that goes without saying. That was a consistent carrying out of his teaching of sovereignty in its own sphere. Thus the Free University as a university must not be bound to the confession of the *Gereformeerde* churches. A different confession was not yet practical for Kuyper. Apart from that one point of Article 36, he himself had not had much difficulty with the confession. But he wanted the Free University to follow *Gereformeerde* principles. And I do not say that he thought ecumenically. No, he explained these principles in this sense, “Look, I don’t intend that in a denominational [*kerkelijk*] sense.” But he was intending it in the sense of the *Gereformeerde* persuasion, which in Kuyper’s time was already very divided and today even more so. And I still believe that it is good to hold fast to *that* [*Gereformeerde* persuasion], and to continue to work along that line, for the ecumenism that I see in the future—I don’t know if it shall ever become a reality—is an ecumenism that shall still continue for many decades. But the other ecumenism, the *Gereformeerde* ecumenism, now I don’t say that it will take less time, but it should take less time to obtain. We stand much closer to each other. We

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also all know, at least insofar as we sympathize with the fault of our own churches, that it must yet be possible to have Christian love and compassion in order to reach out to each other. I must honestly say, this ecumenical striving, as it is carried out today, also in the *Gereformeerde* churches, I find something dishonest in it. If I go up the street, and I preach about the brotherhood of all men, and then I go have the greatest quarrels with my neighbours to the left and right of me, I would be laughed at by the boys in the street. And so we need to also laugh at ourselves with our ecumenical efforts within the *Gereformeerde* persuasion, as long as the groups within the *Gereformeerde* persuasion do not know how to better understand each other.

I thank you very much.

Prof. Dooyeweerd

If I remained silent, then there would be a very great misunderstanding about what I have said. I would regret that very much. I will not discuss everything that Prof. Vollenhoven has brought forward, for we don't have time for that, but I will certainly say something about ecumenism. And there I must honestly say, Prof. Vollenhoven has not understood me. For he has begun again with theology, and he has said: "Theology, there are so many theologies, and theology has not yet put aside any of her haughtiness and so on, and it can come from all corners and we must seek a *Gereformeerde* ecumenism and in the future there may perhaps then come about an ecumenism in the true sense of the word." Now I would like to say that. Prof. Vollenhoven cannot really mean that, for that is simply in conflict with the Bible. Ecumenism has been here for a long time. If that were not the case, then Christ did not speak the truth, that He gathers together his community.<sup>46</sup> He Himself and no one else. It does not depend on us, it does not depend on the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, it does not depend on a better theology and so on or whether an ecumenism will come about. But ecumenism exists. If that were not the case, then Christendom and the Christian church would be untenable here on earth. But thank God there is a catholic, *one* universal Christian church; for we confess it, we begin with it. What do we do with the confession if we say, "For the time being, we want only the catholic church within the *Gereformeerde* persuasion?" That can never be. I have not

said this about theology. I have said this just in connection with the example of the Remonstrant young lady. I have said, if she begins in a theological way, and I begin in a theological way and so on, yes, then ecumenism is hard to find. But this was a fact, that when it concerned the central Biblical truth in its deepest meaning, that this Remonstrant lady—who furthermore explained that she had many great objections against the Remonstrant theology of her fathers—immediately understood what was at issue. And thank God that is our situation. Everywhere in the world we meet people from all denominations. Whatever they are called, they are members of the one, universal, Christian church. And we cannot organize this kind of ecumenism. Fortunately not.

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And it does not depend on our efforts, on our intellectual efforts, on our purifying—those are all to a high degree stained with sin. Let us especially not think that we must bring it to the point where in the future the universal Christian church shall again appear. It would be hopeless if it was not [already] there. What I mean is just that. I have also said it, when I said, “The World Council of churches, which has begun to extend its foundation and so on and maybe will build more extensions.” And that they then say, “Look, we now have it, now we have become really orthodox and we have all these beautiful terms to go along with it.” I don’t care about this a whit and I don’t believe it, not at all, that ecumenism depends on this. I prefer to use the old term ‘universal Christian church.’ But if ecumenism depends on what these people say, then it is just hopeless. For that depends on man, and it depends on human insight and human purification and human theology and human philosophy. But thank God it is independent of all that.

This is what I only wanted to say, and I have therefore emphasized it throughout: in the final analysis, when it concerns the core [*kern*], or rather the center of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, that is something that fortunately is found outside of its pillars. If it was to be found *within* philosophy, now then it would be just as fallible as man is generally. But it is fortunately found outside of philosophy, for God Himself works, and He does that directly and He gathers and He scatters no one.<sup>47</sup> That is an article of faith, an ecumenical article of faith of the one, universal, Christian church. And that certainly

does not mean to say, that this not mean that we must then also take it in this way with respect to the reformation of the church. I believe that you have also understood this well, and that can easily be deduced from this. If we say, “Now yes, we already have ecumenism, we do not need to work further with it.” No, that of course is silly. We now really have the task in the area of philosophy, in the area of our church life, in the temporal, broken form in which we know it, the sectarian forms, to strive toward bringing them together. And also what should be brought together in the confessions; of course. No doubt. That is not the issue. But if it concerns the question that I touched upon, the central driving force of God’s Word, which is active and which is not bothered by church walls and church denominations, then I believe that our fixed point is to be found in our catholic belief, which binds together all Christians who are truly a member of the one, *de una sancta ecclesia*.

Yes, and there I must leave it, Mr. Chairman.

Prof. Van Riessen

Thank you very much, Prof. Dooyeweerd, for this clarification, which in the discussion between you and Prof. Vollenhoven was evidently also necessary. I think it has also become somewhat clearer to this meeting that in recent discussions, this difficult subject has been clearly approached from two sides, both of which must be held to be valid, and that now in your last words you have become closer to each other.<sup>48</sup> So that the

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misunderstanding has been taken away, which I at first feared in your first words, but no longer. For one could have deduced from your first words something in relation to what we must do, and that was something you had really separated from it. In your second speech you have to some extent restored that, but it concerned the issue that it is not dependent on man, but that Christ gathers His church, and in that we are all of course heartily in agreement.

I will now be brief. I find that we have had an especially instructive—well, that is much too weak a word, beautiful day have had in connection with the report of Prof. Dooyeweerd. I thought that we should be especially thankful to him for the fact that he

was willing to do this, and to once again be willing to give us a summary of the history grouped around central ideas that deeply move him and that therefore also deeply move us. And I think that it has also been of great importance for the many, many young people who are here, for the older ones still have an attachment to everything that has happened. Young people frequently join in and the older ones then frequently also quickly go further, so that the attachment to what is fought for and how it is thought about and how things have developed are not given justice, unless there are such reports and discussions like we had today. I thought that this has been especially valuable and that we should try to promote the publication of it.

Professor Dooyeweerd, heartfelt thanks for all your efforts...

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<sup>1</sup> JGF: Steen may have been influenced by J.M. Spier, who had previously argued against the idea of supratemporality by relating it to the issue of Christ's nature. Spier also rejected Dooyeweerd's idea of the *aevum*, which distinguishes man's supratemporality (as a created eternity) from God's uncreated eternity. See J.M. Spier: *Tijd en Eeuwigheid*, (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1953), 151, 163. In 1962, Okke Jager had written the book, *Het eeuwige leven, met name in verband met tijd en eeuwigheid* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1962). Steen wrote a review of this book later in 1964 (thus, after this discussion with Dooyeweerd. See *Westminster Theological Journal* (November 1964), pp. 61-65. In that review, Steen agrees with Jager that Dooyeweerd's view of time and eternity is faulty, in that it "eternalizes" God's acts to outside of time, and that it brings with it the danger of confusing Creator and creature. But it is evident that Dooyeweerd had not changed his views in response to Steen's 1964 question. For in his 1970 dissertation, Steen continued to battle Dooyeweerd's idea of supratemporality. See Peter J. Steen: *The Structure of Herman Dooyeweerd's Thought* (Toronto: Wedge, 1983), where there are many references to the issue. Steen cites both Spier and Jager in his arguments against supratemporality. But Steen does acknowledge at p. 149 that G.C. Berkouwer had defended Dooyeweerd against Spier's view that supratemporality involved some sort of super-creatureliness. G.C. Berkouwer: *Man: The Image of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962).

<sup>2</sup> Dooyeweerd says that the central meaning of the heart as religious root of man's existence gave such a revolution in philosophic thought that Kant's "Copernican Revolution" can only be seen as peripheral. For the central conception of the heart relativizes the whole temporal cosmos (*De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, pp. v, vi). This is also Dooyeweerd's view of the relation of Ideas and concepts to the Center and periphery: "Research proceeds from the Center to the periphery; it is *egkuklios*." *Encyclopedia of Legal Science*, 1946 Edition, p. 6, online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Encyclopedia.html>]. There is also a central and peripheral relationship between the nuclear meaning moment and its analogies within each law-sphere. Dooyeweerd says that the nucleus or kernel of the modal aspect is the center, and the other aspects surround it. See Herman Dooyeweerd: "Introduction to a Transcendental Criticism of Philosophic Thought," *Evangelical Quarterly* 19 (1947), 42-51.

<sup>3</sup> J. Glenn Friesen: "Dooyeweerd versus Vollenhoven: The religious dialectic in reformational philosophy" *Philosophia Reformata* 70 (2005) 102-132, online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Dialectic.html>][['Dialectic']].

<sup>4</sup> JGF: The reference is to Prov. 4:23: "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life."

<sup>5</sup> JGF: The reference is to Deut. 10:16: "Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart." See also Deut. 30:6, Jeremiah 4:4, Acts 7:51, Rom. 2:29.

<sup>6</sup> JGF: the reference is to Matt. 15:19: "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. And Mark 7:21: "For from within, out of the heart, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders."

<sup>7</sup> JGF: The reference may be to John 3:6, where in answer to the question by Nicodemus, Jesus says he must be born again, and says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Or perhaps 1 Cor. 15:49: "and as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Or 1 Peter 1:23, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." There are of course many other references to 'heart' in the New Testament.

<sup>8</sup> JGF: The reference is to the statesman Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876).

<sup>9</sup> JGF: The reference is to Friedrich Julius Stahl (1802-1861).

<sup>10</sup> JGF: Compare this to what Dooyeweerd says in *Vernieuwing en Bezinning* (Zutphen: J.B. van den Brink & Co.). In a passage that for some reason is omitted from the (partial) English translation, *Roots of Western Culture* (Toronto: Wedge, 1979), Dooyeweerd seems to criticize any view of the religious antithesis in terms of the idea of pluriform democracy (or *verzuiling*), in conflict with the views expressed at p. ix of the Preface by the translator, John Kraay. In my view, Kraay confuses sphere sovereignty and political pluralism. At p. 49 of *Roots*, after the sentence on line 2 ["If one takes sphere sovereignty as no more than a historical given, somehow grown on Dutch soil as an



expression of Holland's love of freedom, then one automatically detaches it from the constant, inner nature of the societal sphere.”], Kraay omits the following long passage from pages 47-48 of *Vernieuwing*, where Dooyeweerd is critical of certain developments:

Daaronder verstaat men dan, dat alle andere levenskringen zich als zelfstandige delen in het staatsgeheel moeten incorporeren met behoud van een zekere autonomie. De staatstaak zou zich dan op deze wijze laten decentraliseren, door naast gemeenten, provincies en waterschappen, “nieuwe organen” te scheppen, bekleed met een publiekrechtelijke regelingsbevoegdheid onder oppertoezicht van de overheid. Zo zouden dan de centrale organen van wetgeving en bestuur van een belangrijk deel van hun taak worden ontlast. Dan zouden inderdaad socialist, Rooms-katholiek en anti-revolutionair zich in ditzelfde principe van staatsontlasting kunnen vinden. De “sovereiniteit in eigen kring” zou dan met iedere nieuw historisch-politische situatie een andere zin aannemen.

Hoe komt het, dat het met de fundamentele misvatting van dit principe zover kon komen? Daarover de volgende paragraaf.

[They then understand [sphere sovereignty] in the sense that all other spheres of life must be incorporated as independent parts of the state as a whole, but each retaining a certain autonomy. The task of the state could in this way allow itself to be decentralized, by creating “new organs” in addition to municipalities, provinces and water-board jurisdictions, invested with the ability to govern themselves by public law, under the supervision of the government. In this way the central organs would be relieved of an important part of their task of law-giving and government. Then socialist, Roman Catholic and Anti-Revolutionary [groups] would indeed find themselves within this same principle of relieving the burden of the state. So in each new historical-political situation, “sovereignty in its own sphere” would then be able to take on another meaning.

How was it able to come so far that this principle [of sphere sovereignty] could be misunderstood in such a fundamental way? I will deal with this in the following paragraph.]

<sup>11</sup> Dooyeweerd: Already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Utrecht theologian Gijsbertus Voetius had said that this philosophy would have to fit with, to be accommodated to *Gereformeerde* theology (and not the other way around). As Voetius said, *philosophia est accommodata theologiae, non contra*.

<sup>12</sup> JGF: See Herman Dooyeweerd: “Kuyper’s Wetenschapsleer,” *Philosophia Reformata* 4 (1939), 193-232.

<sup>13</sup> JGF: Herman Bavinck (1854-1921).

<sup>14</sup> JGF: Jan Woltjer (1849-1917). Woltjer was one of the teachers of both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven.

<sup>15</sup> JGF: In 1937, both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven were asked by the Curators of the Free University to respond to accusations about their philosophy, which had been made by the theologian Valentijn Hepp in a series of brochures, he published entitled *Dreigende Deformatie* [Threatening Deformation]. See The Responses to Curators, by Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven, translated online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Curators.html>].

<sup>16</sup> JGF: The word is missing from the typewritten text. A word is penciled in, but not legible. ‘Soul’ fits with what Dooyeweerd says in the New Critique:

The Biblical meaning of the word 'soul,' where it is used in its pregnant sense of religious centre of human existence, has nothing to do with a theoretically abstracted complex of modal functions. Neither has it anything to do with the metaphysical Greek conception of the psyche. This must be clear to any one who has discovered that the background of all such views is the immanence standpoint in philosophy. The Bible does not theorize at all about the human soul (let alone theorizing from the philosophical immanence standpoint (*NC II*, 111).

<sup>17</sup> JGF: See Herman Dooyeweerd: *Reformatie en Scholastiek in de Wijsbegeerte* (Franeker: T. Wever, 1949). Published in English as *Reformation and Scholasticism in Philosophy, Volume I, The Greek Prelude* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2004).

<sup>18</sup> JGF: Dooyeweerd is apparently referring to Cardinal Mercier (1851-1926).

<sup>19</sup> “Ze nadert nu in hoge mate.”

<sup>20</sup> See Michael Fr. J. Marlet S.J.: *Grundlinien der kalvinistischen “Philosophie der Gesetzidee” als christlicher Transzendentalphilosophie* (Munich: Karl Zink Verlag).

<sup>21</sup> JGF: In 1926, the synod of Assen of the *Gereformeerde* church judged and removed from office the pastor J.G. Geelkerken because he denied the literal nature of the fall. Geelkerken had denied that the snake literally spoke.

<sup>22</sup> JGF: The reference is to Klaas Schilder (1890-1952).

<sup>23</sup> JGF: Some of the articles that Dooyeweerd wrote as Editor of *Nieuw Nederland* were collected and published in *Vernieuwing en Bezinning* (Zutphen: J.B. van den Brink & Co.). This was partially translated as *Roots of Western Culture* (Toronto: Wedge, 1979).

<sup>24</sup> JGF: The full title of this article is “De transcendentale Critiek van het wijsgerig denken. Een bijdrage tot overwinning van het wetenschappelijk exclusivisme der richtingen”, *Synthese* 4 (1939) 314-339. Later, Dooyeweerd did publish “De transcendentale critiek van het wijsgeerig denken,” *Philosophia Reformata* 5 (1941), 1-20. Dooyeweerd already distinguished between transcendent and transcendental critique in *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*. See *WdW* I, 45, 51-58; II, 399, 407-422, 482-484). He also referred to Ground-motives (*grondidee, grondmotief*) (*WdW* I, 467-473). In response to Van Til, Dooyeweerd says that his later work was merely a sharpening of the transcendental critique.

<sup>25</sup> JGF: For Dooyeweerd, the religious antithesis runs through the heart of each of us, even Christians (*WdW* I, 492; *NC* I, 524).

<sup>26</sup> Jan Lever: *Creation and Evolution*, tr. Peter G. Berkhout (Grand Rapids International Publications; 1958). However, Dooyeweerd was not entirely satisfied with Lever's views. See Dooyeweerd's letter to Prof. Dr. JJ. Duyvené de Wit of Bloemfontein, South Africa. De Wit had written to him about creation science. Dooyeweerd says in a letter Feb. 11, 1964:

Ik dacht dat van te voren voor lezers en hoorders dit duidelijk moest zijn: òf er een genetische lijn loopt van een eencellig wezen via meercellige organismen tot de eerste mens, daar kunnen we geen ja èn geen nee op zeggen. Het antwoord op de vraag "hoe God geschapen heeft" ligt buiten onze menselijk-creatuurlijke wetenschappelijke mogelijkheden. En wie hièr ja òf ook nee gaat zeggen, meent als mens naast God, wat dan meestal neerkomt op: op de plaats van de Schepper, te kunnen gaan staan.

[I thought that it should be clear at the outset for readers and listeners: whether there is a genetic line that runs from a one-celled being via multi-celled organisms to the first man—about this we can say neither yes nor no. The answer to the question "how God has created" lies outside our human-creaturely scientific possibilities. And whoever says yes or no to this pretends to stand as human next to God, which usually is the same as to stand in place of the Creator.]

and

Wanneer we tegen hen die een "macroëvolutie" met behulp van de "mechanismen der microëvolutie", mutaties e.d. die we vandaag kunnen waarnemen, opwerpen: Mijne heren, op deze manier wordt de "genenpot" alleen maar minder en kan nooit méér worden, dan is dat wetenschappelijk van groot belang maar bewijst niet en kàn niet bewijzen dat er geen macroëvolutie heeft plaats gehad.

[Whenever we try to oppose "macroevolution" with the help of the "mechanisms of microevolution," such as mutations and so on that we can observe today, we may say, "Gentlemen, in this way the "gene pool" can only grow smaller and can never become greater." That is of great importance scientifically, but it does not prove, and cannot prove that there has been no macroevolution.]

<sup>27</sup> JGF: Volume III has still not been published. But an extensive discussion of this work, and excerpts of it can be found in the dissertation by Willem J. Ouweneel: *De leer van de mens* (Amsterdam: Buijten & Schipperheijn, 1986).

<sup>28</sup> JGF: The reference is to *The Neo-Calvinist Concept of Philosophy: a study in the problem of philosophic communication* (Natal: University Press, 1960).

<sup>29</sup> The reference is to 2 Corinthians 4:18

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While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

<sup>30</sup> JGF: Klaas Jan Popma (1903-1986).

<sup>31</sup> JGF: It would be a mistake to view this as a *coincidentia oppositorum*, or a coincidence of opposites. That is the way that Vollenhoven interprets this, along the lines of the philosophy of Cusanus (Nicholas of Cusa). But love and justice are not opposites, but different modal aspects, each of which may have its own opposite (love/hate; justice/injustice).

<sup>32</sup> JGF: The reference appears to be to Georg Simmel (1858-1919).

<sup>33</sup> JGF: The transcript says ‘Tannis,’ but the reference appears to be to Ferdinand Tönnies (1855-1936).

<sup>34</sup> JGF: Leopold von Wiese (1876-1969).

<sup>35</sup> JGF: The reference is to Gen. 1:28: “and God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living that moveth upon the earth.”

<sup>36</sup> JGF: The transcript here has ‘*verstaan*’ [understand], but the context makes it clear that what Dooyeweerd said was ‘*bestaan*’ [exist].

<sup>37</sup> JGF: See Vincent Brümmer. *Transcendental Criticism and Christian Philosophy* (Franeker: T. Wever, 1961).

<sup>37A</sup> On Oct 16, 1965 (the following year), Dooyeweerd gave his farewell lecture [*afscheidscollege*]: “Het Oecumenisch-Reformatorisch Grondmotief van de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee en de grondslag der Vrije Universiteit,” *Philosophia Reformata* 31 (1966) 3-15. In that lecture, Dooyeweerd again discusses the reformational principles [*gereformeerde beginselen*] that were at the basis of the founding of the Free University. He relates these principles to Kuyper's re-discovery of the religious root of human existence, which is the key to true self-knowledge. This idea was also decisive for Kuyper's proposal of the idea of antithesis, an idea that Dooyeweerd says has caused so much annoyance and misunderstanding (see pages 8-9). Dooyeweerd says that this idea of the religious root needed to be worked out in his transcendental critique of theoretical thought. This transcendental critique affords the possibility of a truly ecumenical dialogue. Dooyeweerd again mentions his appreciation for J. Marlet's dissertation, and Marlet's opinion that the Philosophy of the Law-Idea fits within the Christian philosophy “*in ecclesia recepta et agnita*” (pages 14-15).

<sup>38</sup> JGF: The reference is to Dooyeweerd's article ‘*Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte*,’ published in *Scientia, Handboek voor wetenschap, kunst en religie*, ed. E.J. Dijksterhuis (Zeist, 1956). See Verburg, 344.

<sup>39</sup> JGF: The reference is to 1 Cor. 1:12: “Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.” And 1 Cor. 3:4: “For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?”

<sup>40</sup> JGF: In *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, Dooyeweerd says that Kuyper’s Idea of the religious antithesis “does not draw a line of *personal* classification but a line of division according to fundamental principles in the world, a line of division which passes transversely through the existence of every Christian personality.” He then says,

It may be clear from the preceding that I definitely reject the term “*Calvinistic*” as being appropriate to name the *Philosophy of the Cosmonomic Idea*. I reject the term Calvinistic, even though I fully acknowledge that this philosophy was the fruit of the Calvinistic re-awakening in the Netherlands.

Because of its religious basic motive and its transcendental ground-Idea, however, this philosophy deserves to be called *Christian philosophy* without any further qualification. (NC I, 524).

And in a footnote on the same page:

Therefore, I regret the fact that the philosophical association, which was formed in Holland [after the appearance of the Dutch edition of this work], chose the name “The Association for Calvinistic Philosophy.” But I will give due allowance for the fact that I, myself, in an earlier stage of my development, called my philosophy “Calvinistic.” (NC I, 524 ft. 1).

<sup>41</sup> JGF: The reference [‘Heimans’] appears to be to Gerard Heymans (1857-1930), professor of philosophy and psychology in Groningen. In Dooyeweerd’s *Encyclopedia of Legal Science* (1946), he mentions at p. 14 the psycho-monistic philosophy of Heymans, and the legal theory of Krabbe that was based upon it. Online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Encyclopedia.html>].

<sup>42</sup> JGF: *The Five Articles Against the Remonstrants* are *The Canons of Dort*, statements of doctrine adopted by the synod of Dort in 1618-19. They are also called *The Five points Against the Arminians*. See online at [<http://www.canrc.org/resources/bop/candort/index.html>].

<sup>43</sup> JGF: The word used by van Riessen here is ‘clever’ [*slim*].

<sup>44</sup> JGF: That is not what Dooyeweerd said in the lecture. Dooyeweerd said that the difference was “not unimportant” (*niet onbelangrijk*). More importantly, Dooyeweerd said that the difference was one that came from out of a different center. In other words, it was not just a difference of nuance, or a difference in the periphery.

<sup>45</sup> JGF: Transcript has ‘*schepsels*’ but that does not follow from the previous idea, which seems to be a warning against over-creative theology.

<sup>46</sup> JGF: The reference may be to Matt. 23:37: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered

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thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!”

<sup>47</sup> JGF: The reference may be to Matt. 12:30: “He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” Similarly Luke 11:23. And see John 10:12.

<sup>48</sup> JGF: Van Riessen is obviously trying to smooth over the differences between Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd. But Dooyeweerd’s response to Vollenhoven’s remarks does not bring the two philosophers closer together. Dooyeweerd emphasizes that Vollenhoven is too theological in his opposition to ecumenical dialogue. And van Riessen is also incorrect that Dooyeweerd was not speaking of what should be done. Dooyeweerd spoke not only of what God does in gathering his church, but of what reformational philosophers should be doing—these philosophers must retain what is central to the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, the central religious Idea of the supratemporal selfhood, the religious centre of our existence, our heart. Dooyeweerd finds this central Idea in Kuyper, but it is an Idea that Vollenhoven rejects.