

CRITICAL STUDY

INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCES UPON THE REFORMATIONAL
PHILOSOPHY OF DOOYEWEERD

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1. *Introduction*

On the basis of an initial reference to a number of critical appraisals of H. Dooyeweerd's philosophy, this article proceeds by provisionally focusing on the image of Franz Xavier Von Baader¹ — who was intellectually active during the first part of the nineteenth century (he lived from 1765-1841) — in secondary literature (late nineteenth century and early twentieth century). The main concern, however, is to enter into a more detailed evaluation of the claim made by J.G. Friesen,² namely that *all the basic systematic insights and distinctions* found in the philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd are already present in the thought of Von Baader. That Dooyeweerd was indeed influenced by numerous philosophers and philosophical insights spanning the entire history of philosophy is beyond doubt. However, that there is any *direct* influence on his thought from Von Baader cannot be substantiated on the basis of the available sources even though it is not unlikely that he might have been aware of the existence of Von Baader. Both the quotations used by Friesen in support of his thesis and an extensive reading of the original *Collected Works* of Von Baader serve as a basis for the assessment of the claims made by Friesen. In fact, there are a number of philosophical distinctions found in the original works of Von Baader (not mentioned by Friesen) that, considered in isolation, are much closer to views of Dooyeweerd. However, once these are placed within the context of Von Baader's thought, the striking and significant *distance* between the thought of Von Baader and Dooyeweerd once again become apparent.

Von Baader is a fascinating philosopher in his own right since he also aimed at an integration of his Christian faith and his philosophical endeavours. Consequently, there are indeed important similarities also on the level of a shared Christian faith between Dooyeweerd and Von Baader. Yet, as soon as the domain of philosophical reflection proper is entered, the differences between these two thinkers are so prominent that what they share diminishes

¹ On the WEB I have discovered that a complete set of the *Collected Works* of Von Baader is available in the Library of MacMaster University (Hamilton, Ontario, Canada). In November 2003 I visited Hamilton where I had the opportunity to access these works and to make numerous photocopies of sections relevant to this article. I have also much profited from the work of Peter Koslowski.

² J. Friesen, The mystical Dooyeweerd. The relation of his thought to Franz Von Baader, *Ars disputandi* [<http://www.arsdisputandi.org>] Volume 3 (2003). Hereafter: *MD*.

into insignificance. It turns out that highlighting merely *verbal* or *formal* similarities is not sufficient to substantiate the general thesis made by Friesen. Von Baader's thinking is imbedded in the intellectual climate of his time to such an extent that one cannot fail to observe the conceptual distance between the thought of Dooyeweerd and that of Von Baader. The analysis is concluded with an assessment of the "mystical" element in the thought of Von Baader which allegedly had an influence on the thought of Dooyeweerd.

2. *Orientation*

In advance it should be noted that the fairly young tradition of reformational philosophy, in spite of a shared biblical point of departure and motivation, does not represent a *conceptual unity*. Neither Dooyeweerd nor Vollenhoven (or any of the later generations of philosophers) ever claimed a *canonical status* for their provisional and in principle *fallible* philosophical insights and distinctions. Since the author of this article developed a thorough *immanent criticism* on Dooyeweerd's epistemology and his theory of the *Gegenstand*-relation,³ questioning the entire argument of Dooyeweerd's transcendental critique, it must be clear from the outset that his assessment of the article written by Friesen will focus exclusively on the *scholarly soundness* of the arguments formulated and claims made by the latter and of the supporting quotations that Friesen extracted from the works of Von Baader.

Dooyeweerd is fully aware of the fact that his philosophical ideas did not fall from the sky. With numerous strings they are tied to the entire philosophical tradition as well as to the ideas of his contemporaries. Acknowledging this state of affairs also constitutes a key element in the "problem historical" method of D.H.Th. Vollenhoven. In addition to this fact it must be noted that Dooyeweerd's thought evinces an on-going dynamics — he was constantly reconsidering certain basic distinctions and there is also a noticeable shift in facets of his terminology. For example, J. Kraay discerns three successive conceptions in the development of Dooyeweerd's systematic orientation.⁴ Oftentimes Dooyeweerd will add a footnote in a later work highlighting the fact that he corrected a shortcoming in an earlier position and explaining his new orientation.⁵

Particularly in the light of the *originality* of the new philosophical understanding of reality advanced by Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd — though

³ D.F.M. Strauss, An Analysis of the Structure of Analysis, (The *Gegenstand*-relation in discussion), *Philosophia Reformata*, 49 (1984), 35-56.

⁴ J. Kraay, Successive conceptions in the development of the Christian philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd, *Philosophia Reformata*, 44 (1979), 137-149; and J. Kraay, Successive conceptions in the development of the Christian philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd, *Philosophia Reformata*, 45 (1980), 1-46.

⁵ See for example his self-critical remarks about the subject-object relation, *NC II*, 374 ff., and H. Dooyeweerd, Het substantiebegrif in de moderne natuurphilosophie en de theorie van het enkaptisch structuurgeheel: *Philosophia Reformata*, 15 (1950), 75 (note 8), regarding the *foundational function* of things found in nature.

elaborated in a distinct way by each of them — it is always fascinating to try to discover possible sources that may shed light on certain distinctions and insights and which may thus apparently cause them to be *less original* than initially suspected.

3. *Critical studies on Dooyeweerd's philosophy*

A fairly critical appraisal of Dooyeweerd's philosophy is found in the studies published by scholars such as C.A. Van Peursen,⁶ A.L. Conradie,⁷ and V. Brümmer.⁸ Dooyeweerd responded to Van Peursen^{9,10} while the views of Conradie and Brümmer were discussed by J.P.A. Mekkes.¹¹ More sympathetic critical studies are found in the excellent intellectual biography of M. Verburg, the Ph.D.-thesis of R.D. Henderson¹² and the assessment of A.M. Wolters.¹³

Critical studies falling within the category of lacking sufficient (i.e., lacking *convincing*) textual support, are found in the work of A. Antonites¹⁴ — who attempted to “demonstrate” that the philosophy of Dooyeweerd is fully in the grip of the neo-Hegelian thoughts of F.H. Bradley (the tutor of Bertrand Russell) — and J.G. Friesen who aims at demonstrating a similar claim in respect of the thought of Von Baader. Bradley advocated an understanding of the diverse facets of reality as being a self-contradictory appearance of what he termed the “Absolute.” His panentheism (literally: “pan-en-absolutism”) resolved everything within the supposed contradiction-free *Absolute Whole*. Though this construction in no way reveals any inherent point of contact with the philosophical ideas of Dooyeweerd, there is a link with the holistic back

⁶ C.A. Van Peursen, Enkele critische vragen in margine bij “A New Critique of Theoretical Thought”, *Philosophia Reformata*, 24 (1959), 160-168.

⁷ A.L. Conradie, *The Neo-Calvinistic Concept of Philosophy* (Durban, 1960).

⁸ V. Brümmer, *Transcendental Criticism and Christian Philosophy* (Utrecht, 1961).

⁹ C.A. Van Peursen, Enkele critische vragen in margine bij “A New Critique of Theoretical Thought”, *Philosophia Reformata*, 24 (1959), 160-168.

¹⁰ See H. Dooyeweerd, Van Peursen's critische vragen bij “A New Critique of Theoretical Thought”, *Philosophia Reformata*, 25 (1960), 97-150.

¹¹ J.P.A. Mekkes, Wet en Subject in de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee, *Philosophia Reformata*, 27 (1962), 126-190.

¹² R.D. Henderson, *Illuminating Law, The Construction of Herman Dooyeweerd's Philosophy 1918-1928* (Ph.D.-thesis at the Free University of Amsterdam, 1994).

¹³ Wolters asserts that the “underlying worldview of Dooyeweerd's thought stands in essential continuity with the vision of neo-Calvinism, while the philosophical elaboration of that vision is basically constructed with conceptual tools from German philosophy — chiefly neo-Kantianism, secondarily phenomenology.” (See A.M. Wolters, *The Intellectual Milieu of Herman Dooyeweerd*, C.T. McIntire, (Editor) *The Legacy of Herman Dooyeweerd*, New York: University Press of America, 1985, p.16). Wolters also refers to N. Hartmann. However, see the last footnote (note 131) of this article. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that Dooyeweerd elaborated his own philosophy in *reaction to* the conceptual tools found in neo-Kantianism and phenomenology (and in that reaction *partially* took over some of their distinctions).

¹⁴ See D.F.M. Strauss, Christelike wetenskap bestempel as neo-Hegeliaanse metafisika [Christian Scholarship accused of being neo-Hegelian Metaphysics], *Journal for Christian Scholarship*, 9 (1973), 47-82.

ground found in the thought of Hegel and his (romantic) contemporaries — amongst whom Von Baader is also found.

Before I enter into a discussion of the 2003 article of Friesen a brief overview will be given of some traces of Von Baader's thought as they are found in diverse secondary sources. In some cases his name is merely mentioned,¹⁵ while in others a more extensive exposition is found. R. Falkenberg characterizes Von Baader as a liberal-minded medieval thinker who went through the critical philosophy (of Kant) in his search for a solution to the problem of *reason* and *faith*. In an important respect Von Baader indeed continues the age-old *realistic* heritage [in terms of which “universals” pre-existed in God's Mind (*ante rem*), reside inside creatures (*in re*), and are afterwards grasped by human understanding (*post rem*)], for P. Koslowski mentions that according to Von Baader knowledge is only acquired through re-thinking the creational ideas that are not created by the human being.¹⁶ Falkenberg also mentions that Von Baader sympathized with neo-Platonism, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Eckhart, and Paracelsus and above all with Jakob Böhme and his follower Louis Claude St. Martin (1743-1804). In line with the thought of Immanuel Kant he commences with the epistemological problem, with Fichte he observes in self-consciousness the essence (and not merely a property) of the human spirit, with Hegel he recognizes in God the Absolute Spirit (*Geist*) (both Subject and Object of knowledge).¹⁷ He rejects a straight-forward pantheism because although human thinking shares in the divine wisdom it does not become an integral *part* of it.

Philosophy differentiates in three subdivisions, namely logic and theology, nature philosophy, and philosophy of mind (correlated with the “objects” God, nature and the human being) and should be treated in a religious way. Human self-consciousness is a being-known by God (*cogitor, ergo cogito et sum* — I am being thought, therefore I think and I am). God first of all created the *immaterial world* — in which two forces operate; *desire* and *wisdom, matter* and *form*. The *materialization* of the world is an *effect* of the fall into sin.¹⁸ With reference to Koslowski's book A.P. Bos also mentions Von Baader's view of the genesis of matter from the ideal world (where evil is conceived as a “*privation*” of the good).¹⁹

Copleston points at a conviction of Von Baader that may be compared with the stance of reformational philosophy: “It was Baader's conviction that since

¹⁵ See for example W. Windelband, (Editor Heinz Heimsoeth). *Lehrbuch der Geschichte der Philosophie* (Tübingen: Verlag J.C.B. Mohr / Paul Siebeck, 1935), 521.

¹⁶ “... der Mensch ... kann nur erkennen, indem er die Schöpfungsideen, deren Schöpfer er nicht ist, nachdenkt” P. Koslowski, *Philosophien der Offenbarung. Antiker Gnostizismus, Franz Von Baader, Schelling* (Paderborn-München-Wien-Zürich: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2001; 2nd Impression 2003), 325. Hereafter: *PO*.

¹⁷ R. Falkenberg, *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie, Von Nikolaus von Kues bis zur Gegenwart* (Leipzig: Verlag Von Veit & Comp, 1905), 410. Hereafter: *GnP*.

¹⁸ Falkenberg, *GnP*, 411.

¹⁹ A.P. Bos, Review of Koslowski's book: *Philosophien der Offenbarung, Antiker Gnostizismus, Franz Von Baader, Schelling, Philosophia Reformata*, Vol.68 (2003), 171. See page 172 where it is mentioned that according to Von Baader “man's coarse-material corporeality is a result of the Fall”.

the time of Francis Bacon and René Descartes philosophy had tended to become more and more divorced from religion, whereas true philosophy should have its foundations in faith".²⁰ Yet this fairly *general* statement represents an element both of the Augustinian and the Thomistic tradition as well of the Calvinistic legacy and therefore a further analysis of the *context* of this statement is needed — respectively in the thought of Von Baader and Dooyeweerd — if the aim is to show that Dooyeweerd derives this idea particularly from Von Baader. The way in which Copleston formulates the point rather gives the impression that the old problem of *reason* and *faith* is resolved by Von Baader by giving *primacy* to faith,²¹ whereas Dooyeweerd argued (eventually through his transcendental critique) that one should penetrate to the central root of both "faith" and "reason" without merely opting for the primacy of the one over the other, i.e. one ought to take into account the depth dimension of human existence where the seat of the directional choice between God or an idol is found. It is therefore understandable that Dooyeweerd speaks in a very *articulate way* about the meaning of faith, making a clear distinction between the universal modal structure of the aspect of faith and its ultimate root:

The modal law-sphere of faith is often identified with religion, which is very detrimental to religious self-knowledge. Up to now we have always spoken of faith as of a modal meaning-function, viz. as the second terminal function of temporal human experience and temporal reality. As a subject-function faith is at the same time the terminal function of human existence in the transcendental direction of time. As such it is found in *all* human beings, in believers in Christ as well as in those whose faith reveals itself in an apostate direction. There is an apostate faith, and there is a faith which can only come into action in man through the Spirit of God. *But both function within the modal structure of a law-sphere, implanted in human nature at creation.* In both a sharp distinction must be made between the *subjective function*, the *principium*, the *content*, the *direction* and the *root* of belief. And in both cases it is obvious that the function of faith cannot be identified with the religious root of temporal existence or, in the words of the Ecclesiastes, with the heart from which spring the issues of life. Believing, logical distinction, feeling, etc. are temporal *functions* delimited from one another in law-spheres of mutually irreducible meaning-modalities. But the religious root of our entire existence is not a function; religion is not enclosed in a temporal law sphere.²²

²⁰ S.J. Copleston, *A history of Philosophy*, Volumes VII-IX, (Toronto: Doubleday, first printing 1945, 1985). 146. Hereafter: *AhP*.

²¹ Von Baader believes that the human understanding as a natural ability to know requires a divinely given knowledge of God in order to partake in a supra-natural capacity to know, which fulfills, elevates, and highlights the naturally finite and imperfect human knowledge: "Unser Verstand als natürliches Erkenntnisvermögen verfügt aber von Natur nicht über die nichtnatürliche, supranaturale Disposition zur Erkenntnis. ... Wir können Gott nur durch Gott und in seiner von ihm selbst gegebenen *species* oder Form erkennen. Die Gotteserkenntnis ist daher dasjenige, was die Theologen das *lumen gloriae* nennen, eine von Gott dem Menschen mitgeteilte, sein natürliches endliches, unvollendetes Erkennen vollendende und erhebende Erleuchtung" (Koslowski, 2003:373-374).

²² H. Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought* (Collected Works of Herman Dooyeweerd, The Edwin Mellen Press, 1996) A-Series Vols. I-IV, (General Editor D.F.M. Strauss), II, 298. Hereafter: *NC*.

These distinctions are not found in the thought of Von Baader. The latter in fact aimed at absorbing every part of his philosophy in his system of “religion-philosophy” (*Religionsphilosophie*). Erdmann sharply criticizes the way in which Franz Hoffmann, as General Editor, subdivided the Collected Works of Von Baader by distinguishing between Metaphysics, Nature Philosophy, Social Philosophy and Philosophy of Religion, for whatever is contained in his works, even nature philosophy, actually belongs to *Religionsphilosophie*.²³ The last thing one can say of the philosophy of Dooyeweerd is that he had the intention to absorb his entire philosophy into a “philosophy of religion”!

Copleston also refers to the speculative idea of God found in the thought of Von Baader:

In God himself we can distinguish higher and lower principles, and though the sensible world is to be regarded as a divine self-manifestation it nonetheless represents a fall. Again, just as in God there is the eternal victory of the higher principle over the lower, of light over darkness, so in man there should be a process of spiritualization whereby the world would return to God. It is evident that Baader and Schelling²⁴ were kindred souls who drank from the same spiritual fountain (1985:146).

Von Baader’s view of the “sensible world” negates the *integral* meaning of what Dooyeweerd calls the biblical *creation motive*.

In the light of the fact that Dooyeweerd wrote an extensive series of articles dealing with the struggle for a Christian politics (to be published as Volume 6 of the B Series of the *Collected Works* of Dooyeweerd) and given the fact that Von Baader advocated — in opposition to the secular atheistic “power-State” — the ideal of the *Christian* state, one might have hoped that Dooyeweerd would refer to Von Baader in this work. Unfortunately such a reference is nowhere found in this series of articles. Nonetheless, one may discern some similarities: both Dooyeweerd and Von Baader reject the atomistic social contract theories of the Enlightenment. Von Baader also challenges the idea that the state is the ultimate sovereign power — God alone occupies this position.²⁵ But what about the *limited* (i.e., non-ultimate) sovereignty (in terms of Groen van Prinsterer, Kuyper and Dooyeweerd: “sphere-sovereignty”) of the state and other societal collectivities? Similar to traditional scholastic and reformed scholastic approaches Von Baader on the one hand calls upon the “moral law” and the penetration of society by *religion* and *morality*, and on the

²³ Erdmann holds that “eigentlich sein ganzes System” is “Religionsphilosophie” and he continues by saying that “alles, was in seinen Werken enthalten ist, selbst das, was in der logischen und naturphilosophischen Abtheilung steht, eigentlich in die Religionsphilosophie gehört und nur für diese brauchbar ist” (Erdmann, 1856:31).

²⁴ Hoffmann, the editor of the *Collected Works* of Von Baader repeatedly explains that Von Baader opposed the pantheism of Schelling. See Von Baader, 1853:285-286, footnote.

²⁵ Copleston remarks: “In them he expresses a resolute opposition to the theory of the State as a result of a social compact or contract between individuals. On the contrary, the State is a natural institution in the sense that it is grounded in and proceeds from the nature of man: it is not the product of a convention. At the same time Baader strongly attacks the notion that the State is the ultimate sovereign power. The ultimate sovereign is God alone” (1985:146).

other still operates with the dominant humanistic view according to which *sovereignty* is either assigned to the *monarch* or to the *people*. Copleston explains:

The ultimate sovereign is God alone, and reverence for God and the universal moral law, together with respect for the human person as the image of God, are the only real safeguards against tyranny. If these safeguards are neglected, tyranny and intolerance will result, no matter whether sovereignty is regarded as residing with the monarch or with the people. To the atheistic or secular power-State Baader opposes the ideal of the Christian State. The concentration of power which is characteristic of the secular or the atheistic national State and which leads to injustice at home and to war abroad can be overcome only if religion and morality penetrate the whole of human society (1985: 146).

Talking about “religion” and “morality” adjacent to each other reflects the implicit traditional nature-grace split — where *religion* and *morality* belong to the higher “spiritual-ethical” domain (as opposed to the *secular domain of nature*). The authentic Roman Catholic position, according to which this spiritual-ethical domain ought to have the *guidance* in societal life, is captured in the slogan that grace does not cancel nature, but perfects it (*gratia natura non tollit, sed perficit*). Even Abraham Kuyper articulates this legacy within the context of his distinction between general and particular grace (where Christ is eliminated in the former sphere).²⁶ In particular Kuyper holds that the (“side-ways”) influence of the congregation of Christ on “state and civil society” should result in a “moral triumph”, aimed at taking human life to a higher level, to enrich and purify it and to allow it to be disclosed in its fullness.²⁷ Compare the traditional Roman Catholic view — in line with the thought of Thomas Aquinas — where the Roman Catholic church later on took the following position in the papal encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* (15 May 1931):

Surely the church does not only have the task to bring the human person merely to a transient and deficient happiness, for it must carry a person to eternal bliss.²⁸

The differentiation between the sovereignty of the monarch as opposed to the sovereignty of the people as it is used by Von Baader actually originates in the distinction made by Niccolò Machiavelli between *monarchies* and *republics*. Dooyeweerd rejects this entire distinction: by its very nature the state is a *public legal institution*, a *res publica*:

An authentic state is not really present as long as the authority to govern in effect belongs, as a feudal right, to the private prerogatives of a ruler who in turn can convey, pawn, or lend them to officials belonging to the ruler's realm or even to private persons. According to its nature and inner structure, the state

²⁶ Just compare Kuyper's notion of the prayer to be used by the councils of municipalities where reference should be made only to God's providence, that will allow “almost everyone to participate in the prayer” (Kuyper, 1917:285).

²⁷ A. Kuyper, *De Gemeene Gratie* (Third unaltered impression, Kampen — date of appearance of the first impression not indicated. 1931-1932), Volume II, 249.

²⁸ Cf. H. Schnatz, *Päpstliche Verlautbarungen zu Staat und Gesellschaft, Originaldokumente mit deutscher Uebersetzung* (Edited by H. Schnatz, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973), 403.

is a *res publica*, a “public entity.” It is an institution qualified by public law, a community of government and subjects founded typically on a monopoly of sword power within a given territory. As Groen van Prinsterer declared in his second period of intellectual development, every true state has a republican character. Thus the division of the forms of the state into monarchies and republics commonly made since Machiavelli is basically incorrect. The word republic indicates nothing whatsoever about the form of government. It merely signifies that the state is a public rather than a private [163] institution. But the word monarchy does pertain to a form of government; the government here is monarchical, that is, a single person is the head of government. Conversely, the word monarchy does not relate to the question of whether a monarchy complies with the character of the state as a republic. Throughout the course of history many monarchies have lacked the character of a state, since governmental authority functioned not as an office serving the *res publica* but as the private property of a particular ruler. Governmental jurisdiction was an undifferentiated feudal prerogative. In such cases one should speak not of a state but of a realm (*regnum*), which was the property of a king. Not every realm is a state.²⁹

Dooyeweerd’s *radically new* theory of the state as a public legal institution (with its *typical* foundational and *typical* leading function) is absent in the quasi-scholastic approach of Von Baader. The latter in fact found a starting-point for his political views in the thought of Edmund Burke.³⁰

J.J. Louët Feisser mentions Von Baader’s invention that furthered the cause of *glass production* (during the year 1809) and also his interaction with the natural scientist J.W. Ritter and the philosophers F.H. Jacobi and F.W.J. Schelling³¹ The *Encyclopedia Britannica* honours his ecumenical activities (his contribution to the formation in 1815 of the “Holy Alliance” which, as a security pact, was intended to ensure a peaceful world — it was established amongst Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France)³² and it also mentions the fact that Von Baader established a Journal: *Eos* (= “dawn”) in service of the “Munich circle”. H.U. Lessing mentions Von Baader’s rejection of feeling as the basis for an appreciation of what is “mystical.” Von Baader reserves the term *mystical* for researching the natural and divine secrets (“Heimlichkeiten”) (Lessing, 1984:271). The *Grote Winkler Prins* points out that the influence of the views of Schelling is seen in the conception of the world-soul: “The world is conceived of as an organism with a divine centre”.³³ The human being is not

²⁹ H. Dooyeweerd, *Roots of Western Culture* (Collected Works of Herman Dooyeweerd, The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), B-Series Volume 3 (General Editor D.F.M. Strauss — first edition 1979), 162-163. Hereafter: *Roots*.

³⁰ See F.J.H.M. Van der Ven, De Rooms-Katholieken en het Sociale Vraagstuk, *Cultuur-geschiedenis van het Christendom* (Second Impression, Part II, Editor J. Waterink and others, Amsterdam: Elsevier 1957, pp.1770-1790), 1772.

³¹ An anonymous referee pointed out that this article of Louët Feisser does contain factual mistakes. For example, it refers to Böhme as a pupil of “Martin,” whereas in fact Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin lived more than a hundred years after Böhme died (1743-1803). J.J. Louët Feisser, Baader, *Christelijke Encyclopedie* (Editors F.W. Grosheide & G.P. Van Iterzon, Kampen : J.H. Kok N.V. 1956), Volume I, 424.

³² *Encyclopedia Britannica*, Baader, *Micropedia* (15th Edition, London., 1975), Volume 1, 703.

³³ Further on we shall see that the idea of an *organism* and the image of a *Centre* with its *periphery* are indeed essential in the thought of Von Baader.

autonomous since it is absorbed in the large whole (*Grote Winkler Prins*, 1971:798).

This brief overview of some of Von Baader's philosophical ideas would hardly prompt those familiar with Dooyeweerd's philosophy to suspect the kind of dependence that Friesen in his 2003 article claims to exist.³⁴ Let us now proceed and look at the way in which he wants to demonstrate that all the important systematic innovations and distinctions of Dooyeweerd's philosophy are indeed anticipated by/in the thought of Von Baader. In order to demonstrate the amenability of the method employed by Friesen some typical examples will be considered, since a detailed treatment of every single point raised by him will exceed the limits of a single article.³⁵

4. *Some views of Von Baader intersecting with views of Dooyeweerd*

4.1 Religion, autonomy and society

Von Baader explicitly wants to proceed from a biblical perspective. He holds that faith in God, in Christ as Redeemer, enables the human search for truth.³⁶ The life of the "Geist" (spirit/soul) is religion, i.e., service to God.³⁷ The unbeliever always enters into some or other form of "Bigotterie" — albeit it "Natur-" or "Geistes bigotterie."³⁸ The meaning and aim of all religious activities (cultic actions) are to rehabilitate the human being and to restore the original covenant (contract) with God.³⁹

Von Baader radically rejects the attempt of "non-religious" philosophy to declare the human being, in abstraction from God, as absolutely sovereign. He says that the law of authority is not a human discovery, but finds its foundation in God.⁴⁰

³⁴ Friesen believes that his analysis has demonstrated that the "following ideas of Dooyeweerd can all be found in Baader: (1) all philosophy is religious (2) the religious antithesis (3) the 'Wetsidee' (4) the dogma of the autonomy of thought (5) idolatry as the absolutization of the temporal (6) Ground Motives in history (7) the four types of Ground Motives (8) the three ideas within each Ground Motive (9) the method of antinomy (10) the use of Kant's ideas to criticize Kant's own *Critique of Pure Reason* (11) cosmic time (12) the supratemporal heart (13) the analogy of the prism (14) modalities (15) sphere sovereignty (16) sphere universality (17) analogies of time (18) anticipation and retrocipation (19) Man as the temporal root (20) Christ as the Second Root (21) the centrality of love (22) pre-theoretical experience (23) the Subject-Object relation (24) the *Gegenstand* relation (25) theoretical synthesis and (26) cultural development as an unfolding" (2003:1). [Since Friesen's article is available on the WEB any phrase quoted from his analysis could immediately be found with the normal search function of Word Processing packages.]

³⁵ However, in a WEB discussion ("Thinknet") I have made available additional comments — on the basis of which a preliminary interaction with Friesen took place.

³⁶ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 94.

³⁷ "Das Leben des Geistes ist daher — Religion — Gottesdienst." Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 111.

³⁸ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 115.

³⁹ "Der Sinn und Zweck alles religiösen Tuns (Kultus) ist kein anderer, als die Rehabilitation des Menschen zur effektiven Wiederherstellung seines Urkontrakts oder Bundes mit Gott" Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 194.

⁴⁰ "... so vermochten auch die Menschen nicht von selbst sich zur Gesellschaft zu

Taken on their *face-value* these views could have been articulated by Kuyper, Dooyeweerd or Vollenhoven. But let us look at the *context* in which they appear. Two pages further on Von Baader says that *authority* is *moral* in nature — and he distinguishes it from *power* (Macht) as *physical force*. Although completely justified in his *rejection* of Rousseau's view that the general will is always correct, Von Baader speaks about a coercive (physical) force and characterizes it as an aggregate that lacks a proper concentration because the unifying *moral principle* is absent.⁴¹ The term “aggregate” reveals his reaction to the atomistic (individualistic) orientation of the *Aufklärung*, and it must be understood from the perspective of his own “organic” preference — echoing the holistic (universalistic) mode of thought during the first half of the nineteenth century (amongst others manifested in the romantic movement — in spite of other differences with romanticism). The quotation given in the last footnote actually starts just after he has explained his “organic” view:

Therefore without social, organic hierarchy, without power, authority and submissiveness amongst them there cannot be a complete organism; ... (Von Baader, 1865:5).⁴²

It should also be noted that *individuality* is only *proper* when it is conceived of in *organic* terms (and incorporated in an organic structure).⁴³

4.2 Sphere sovereignty and enkapsis versus organicism

Perhaps one of the most striking positive ideas found in the thought of Von Baader is given in a formulation which is just as close to the idea of sphere sovereignty as those normally mentioned by Dooyeweerd with reference to Johannes Althusius (from his *Politica Methodice Digesta*, 1603).⁴⁴ Von Baader explicitly speaks about the free life of a creature “within its lawful region” (“inner der ihr gesetzlichen Region”). This statement indeed closely approximates the idea of sphere sovereignty. Unfortunately Von Baader did not develop an articulated analysis of the dimensions of functions (modal aspects) and entities needed to elaborate the idea of a “lawful region (sphere).” In addition he sometimes simply does not want to acknowledge the cosmomic significance of God's law for creation, for example when he opposes the term

constituieren, und nur ihre Gesellschaft mit Gott konnte und kann jene unter oder mit sich begründen; daher: omnis potestas a Deo. Daß das Gesetz der Autorität keine menschliche Erfindung ist, beweiset die irreligiöse Philosophie zwar ohne ihr Wissen schon damit, daß sie diese Macht nicht mehr zu erklären vermag, so wie sie von Gott dabei abstrahirt und den Menschen absolut souverain deklariert” (F. Von Baader, *Grundzüge der Societätsphilosophie, Ideen über Recht, Staat, Gesellschaft und Kirche* (With remarks and explanations by Franz Hoffman, Würzburg: A. Stuber's Buchhandlung. 1865), 5).

⁴¹ Von Baader, *Societätsphilosophie*, 6.

⁴² Von Baader, *Societätsphilosophie*, 5: “Ohne sociale, organische Hierarchie, ohne Macht, Autorität und Unterthänigkeit unter dieselbe besteht folglich kein vollständiger Organismus; ...”

⁴³ Koslowski, *PO*, 460: “Ein solcher Begriff der Individualität ist aber gerade das Gegenteil einer organischen und wahrhaften Individualität eines organischen Gebildes, in welchem das Individuelle das Indivisible und das Immiscibile zugleich ausdrückt.”

⁴⁴ Dooyeweerd, *NC III*, 662-663.

“free from law” (“gesetzfrei”) to *lawless* (“gesetzlos”) and *against law* (“gesetzwidrig”)⁴⁵ or when he relates the idea of cooperation according to a principle with G.W. Leibniz’s conception of the “*harmonia praestabilita*”.⁴⁶

The organicistic empathy present in Von Baader’s thought does not allow for the recognition of an intertwinement of *differently structured* entities into a new totality in such a way that the internal structural nature of the interlaced entities is continued (maintained) in spite of their presence within the whole. Dooyeweerd introduced the idea of *enkaptic interlacement* for this phenomenon. Von Baader, by contrast, affirms that such a union will terminate the independent sphere of operation of whatever is interlaced:

From what has been said one in addition appreciates the correctness of the proposition: that every union can only originate and exist through a shared subjection, similar to the opposite as it applies to dis-union. If, for that matter, two or more formerly independent entities (*Wesen*) are to build a totality, then they have to cease to be mutually independent.⁴⁷

In the context of a different argument Von Baader formulates a general principle, stating that every self-foundation and every “acquisition of independence” (*Verselbständigung*) only comes into existence through the coincidence of its own opposites.⁴⁸ In an earlier context the same idea is formulated as follows:

Every “Verselbständigung” is as founding a synthesizing (*Zusammenschließung*), encompassing or an immanent connection of an object, from whence it follows that I cannot and should not close myself off to what is higher, but that precisely only through my own being-closed-off with Him I can attain my independence (closing-off) outwards and downwards.⁴⁹

As soon as the apparently relatively positive views of Von Baader are considered within their “embeddedness” in his broader conception, however, it constantly happens that the philosophical articulation and elaboration given

⁴⁵ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 198.

⁴⁶ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 199: “... daß das Verhalten einer Kreatur als Mitwirkers zu der werkzeuglichen, nichtintelligenten Natur stets ihrem Verhalten zu ihrem Prinzip entspricht, wie es nicht zu leugnen ist, daß zwischen beiden Verhaltensweisen eine *Harmonia praestabilita* stattfindet, an welche jeder Mensch im Herzen glaubt, auf die jeder hofft, und die jeder fürchtet.”

⁴⁷ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 186: “Man sieht übrigens aus dem Gesagten auch die Richtigkeit des Satzes edaß jede Union nur durch eine gemeinsame Subjektion entsteht und in ihr besteht, sowie das Gegenteil von der Desunion gilt. Sollen nämlich zwei oder mehrere bis dahin selbständige Wesen eine Totalität bilden, so müssen sie eben aufhören, gegeneinander selbständig zu sein, und daß sie dieses können (ja auch nur wollen können), kann ihnen nur von einem gemeinsamen Höheren gegeben sein.”

⁴⁸ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 209: “... wie jede Selbstbegründung und Verselbständigung nur durch das Zusammenschließen eigenen Gegensatzes wird.” The “*coincidentia oppositorum*” of Nicolas of Cusa is apparent.

⁴⁹ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 171: “Jede Verselbständigung ist als Gründung Zusammenschließung, Einschließung oder immanente Beziehung eines Gegensatzes, woraus folgt, daß ich gegen mein mir Höheres mich nicht schließen und abschließen kann und soll, sondern daß ich gerade nur durch mein Zusammengeschlossenheit mit Ihm meine Selbständigkeit (Abschließen) nach auswärts und abwärts zu erhalten vermag.”

by him turns out to deviate radically from the philosophical stance found in Dooyeweerd's philosophy.

5. Views of Von Baader highlighting the distance between himself and Dooyeweerd

5.1 Good and evil: organic and inorganic

The statement of Von Baader quoted above to illuminate his position in respect of the intertwinement of differently natured entities (*enkapsis*), is preceded by a significant remark about the highest sense of the term *organism*. The word "organism" in this sense is understood in such a way that every branch at once originates, exists and passes away with all the others, implying that a truly living entity is neither divisible nor is it composed out of parts.⁵⁰ This view on the one hand dates back to Aristotle's definition of the soul in which the word '*organikon*' has always been misunderstood⁵¹ and is still alive in the biological thought of neo-vitalists from the twentieth century such as H. Driesch and E.W. Sinnott.

Von Baader associates the distinction between what is *organized* and *disorganization* with the directional antithesis between *good* and *evil* (sin).⁵² Different nuances of this view are found, for example where the contrary between love and hate is understood in terms of the opposition between *organic* and *inorganic*.⁵³ This position also fits Von Baader's identification of *antinomy* and *lack of wholeness* ("Widerspruch" and "Unganzheit").⁵⁴ Koslowski also explicitly mentions this opposition of *organic* and *inorganic* — identified by Von Baader with the antithesis between good and evil.⁵⁵ This orientation is consistent with the more general *vitalistic* conviction that *life* as the truly "primitive" and "inexplicable" is original and that every inorganic, non-living being is to be thought of as non-original (derived).⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 186: "Das Wort Organismus wird hier in seinem höchsten Sinne genommen, so daß nämlich jedes Glied nur mit allen übrigen zugleich entsteht, besteht und vergeht; weswegen ein wahrhaft Lebendiges weder teilbar noch (aus Teilen) zusammensetzbar ist ..."

⁵¹ See A.P. Bos, *The Soul and its Instrumental Body, A Reinterpretation of Aristotle's Philosophy of Living Nature* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2003a), 85 ff., 93-94, 107-108, 162, 174, 200.

⁵² F. Von Baader, *Societätsphilosophie*, 192.

⁵³ Von Baader, *Societätsphilosophie*, 2: "Die Liebe ist das organische und organisierende, der Haß das desorganisierende, anorganische Princip."

⁵⁴ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 203. On page 193 the *inorganic* is identified with the *hell*.

⁵⁵ Koslowski, *PO*, 446: "... daß man den Unterschied zwischen einer organischen oder wahrhaften und einer nichtorganischen oder schlechten Verbindung nicht genau erkannte ..."

⁵⁶ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 198: Koslowski explains his view as follows: "Wenn aber das Leben und seine Daseinsform der organischen Verbindung das Ursprüngliche, Unerklärbare und darum alles Erklärende sind, folgt daraus, daß das unmittelbar Hervorbringende dieses Lebendigen ebenfalls nur Lebendiges oder Organisches sein konnte. Alles unorganische, unlebendige Sein kann nicht als ursprüngliche, sondern muß als derivierte Seinsweise gedacht werden" (Koslowski, *PO*, 448-449). The twentieth century *holistic* biologist, A. Meyer defends a similar conviction. J. Needham summarizes the position of Meyer as follows: "Thus Meyer, in his interesting discussion of the concept of wholeness, maintains that the fundamental conceptions of physics ought to be deducible from the fundamental conceptions of biology; the latter not being reducible to the former. Thus entropy would be, as it were, a special case

5.2 God and the human being

In line with the ideas of Böhme Von Baader affirms that creatures are not directly proceeding from God, but proceed out of “eternal nature” (“der ewigen Natur”).⁵⁷ Von Baader talks about an *astral soul*⁵⁸ and a *world body*.⁵⁹ In addition he also refers to a *sensitive spirit* (*Nervengeist*) and a *vital spirit* (*Lebensgeist*)⁶⁰ — reminding us of the distinction between the *anima vegetativa* and *anima sensitiva* in aristotelian Scholasticism. By implication he suggests that the difference in sex between man and woman is only apparent after the paradise.⁶¹

The human being carries within itself the end of a total freedom from nature.⁶²

When Von Baader speaks about a “naturfreie Geist” (a *spirit* free from *nature*),⁶³ it should be read in combination with his remark that “love” is love only because it is “naturfrei”, i.e., free from *desire* and *need*.⁶⁴ What Von Baader says about the *morality of the genius* echoes the irrationalism of the early Romantic Movement.⁶⁵ The law functions as disciplinarian towards the aim of the liberated morality of the genius,⁶⁶ similar to true faith which is, like the genius, not bound to any formula.⁶⁷ Given this background it is not difficult to understand why Von Baader also speaks about the (*genial!*) divine creation as being *free from law*.⁶⁸

of biological disorganization; the uncertainty principle would follow from the psycho-physical relation; and the principle of relativity would be derivable from the relation between organism and environment.” J. Needham, *Order and Life* (2nd impression, London, 1968.1968), 27 note 34.

⁵⁷ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 193.

⁵⁸ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 177.

⁵⁹ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 208.

⁶⁰ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 181.

⁶¹ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 182-183.

⁶² Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 200: “... insofern der Mensch die Bestimmung einer gänzlichen Naturfreiheit in sich trägt.”

⁶³ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 157.

⁶⁴ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 113.

⁶⁵ See H. Dooyeweerd, *Roots of Western Culture* (Collected Works of Herman Dooyeweerd) (The Edwin Mellen Press, 2003, B-Series Volume 3, General Editor D.F.M. Strauss — first edition 1979), 52, 176 ff.

⁶⁶ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 198: “Die Religion nähmlich sieht das Gesetz als ein zeitliches Mittel und als Zuchtmeister an, um zum Zweck (d.i. zur freien, moralischen Genialität) zu gelangen.”

⁶⁷ Von Baader quotes Böhme saying: “Der rechte Glaube ist (wie das Genie) an keine Formel gebunden, er wirkt in und mit Gott, dem absolut Freien, seines Lebens Kraft und Stärke nur in der rechte Liebe holend, welche in die Freiheit geht, indes das Gesetz nicht tiefer als in den Naturgrund reicht” (Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 199).

⁶⁸ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 198: “Irrigerweise sehen nun viele diese Reflexion als identisch mit dem Bewußtsein selbst an, so daß ein gesetzfreies Tun, d.h. eben das geniale (göttlich, schaffende), das bewußtlose, instinktive wäre, während das letztere doch eigentlich durchaus kein Selbsttun ist und ebenso tief unter dem gesetzlichen, als dieses unter dem gesetzfreien steht.”

5.3 Fall into sin as a falling away from the idea (and from unity)

Von Baader refers to a fall of nature from the idea (wisdom) that took place “in” God.⁶⁹ A similar formulation is elsewhere found in his Collected Works: “such that here a fall of nature from the idea (wisdom) took place in God”.⁷⁰

A subtle after-effect of the long-standing simplicity metaphysics, dating back to Greek philosophy and Xenophanes,⁷¹ is found in the position Von Baader takes with regard to *unity* and *multiplicity*. The former is associated with what is *good*, and the latter with the *evil of the fall*. In the process Von Baader distinguishes between a “higher” and a “lower” nature as well, associating fall with *matter*.⁷² Union and division represent the opposition between good and evil.⁷³ The fall into sin caused the “materialization” of the human being. Koslowski remarks that the biblical reference regarding the clothing of the first human couple with animal skins continue a long-standing exegesis reaching back to Gregor of Nyssa, namely that through the fall into sin the human being was transformed into a material-bodily nature: the nature of the human nature was therefore changed through the fall into sin.⁷⁴ In passing we may note that Von Baader views *time* as the suspension of eternity⁷⁵ and redemption as an “Entzeitlichung” (liberation from time).⁷⁶

5.4 State and Society

Von Baader identifies the nature of a *social collectivity* with what Dooyeweerd calls an *organized community* (Dutch: “verband”). According to Von Baader “Gesellschaft” always entails a relation of *subjection*.⁷⁷ His view does not allow for communal forms of social life where a relation of super- and subordination is absent — such as within the extended family and a people in the sense of an ethnic or cultural community. He assigns a leading and integrating role to *love*

⁶⁹ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 161.

⁷⁰ F. Von Baader, *Gesammelte Schriften zur philosophischen Erkenntniswissenschaft oder Metaphysik, Sämtliche Werke* (Edited by F. Hoffmann & Julius Hamberger, Volume 2 (replicated by Scientia Verlag, Aalen, 1963. 1851), 248. Hereafter: *EoM*.

⁷¹ P.J. Visagie, 1982. Some basic concepts concerning the idea of Origin in reformational Philosophy and Theology, *Journal for Christian Scholarship*, 18 (1982), pp.8 ff.

⁷² Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 96: “Übrigens kann ein solches widernatürliches Befangensein in einer niedrigeren Region oder Natur nicht anders als entzweierend, Einung aufhebend und also Zusammengesetztheit bewirken auf die Elemente der höheren Natur selbst rückwirken. Wie dieses von dem Fall (*katabole*) der nichtintelligenten Natur als Leiblichkeit gilt, wodurch diese zur Materie im engeren Sinne entstellt ward.”

⁷³ See Von Baader, *EoM*, 59.

⁷⁴ “Baader schließt mit dieser Deutung der Schriftstelle von der Bekleidung des ersten Menschenpaares mit Tierfellen an eine in der patristischen Exegese verbreitete Deutung an, die auch z.B. von Gregor von Nyssa vertreten wurde. Die in der Bibel berichtete Bekleidung des ersten Menschenpaares mit Tierfellen nach dem Fall bedeutet danach, daß der Mensch durch den Fall materiell-leiblich wurde, also die Natur seiner Natur gewandelt wurde” (Koslowski, *PO*, 363 note).

⁷⁵ Koslowski, *PO*, 415.

⁷⁶ Koslowski, *PO*, 416 ff.

⁷⁷ Von Baader, *Societätsphilosophie*, 11.

within the state — neglecting completely what Dooyeweerd calls the *jural* qualifying function of the state.

But the most striking difference between Dooyeweerd's view of the state and the understanding of Von Baader is found in the relation between legislator and law. "Finally we even hear some of the new advocates of law speaking about laws to which the legislator should be subjected — and the same confusion in the concept of law reigns in most theories of the state."⁷⁸ It looks as if Von Baader here opts for a state-absolutistic view, elevating the head of state above all positive law.

5.5 Form and matter adjacent to nature and freedom

Where Von Baader discusses his views for a logic of the future he does not hesitate to interpret the Scriptural use of the word *Logos*, in the sense of wisdom, with the words "Urform" or "Urmaass."⁷⁹ The original Greek dualism between form and matter is thus projected into the biblical word *Logos*. At the same time Von Baader does not hesitate to affirm the apparent deeper synthesis between nature and freedom aimed at by Böhme. He says that according to the latter the Absolute (*der Ungrund*) as nature (desire) and freedom (lust) resolves itself in order to be reconnected deeper within itself.⁸⁰ Schelling struggled with the same problem and ended up with a duplicated tension: "But just this inner necessity is itself freedom; a person's being is essentially that person's own deed."⁸¹

Instead of providing us with a real synthesis, Schelling thus simply *duplicated* the initial dialectical tension between *freedom* and *necessity*. This is particularly seen from some other quotations presented by the translator from Schelling's *System des transcendentalen Idealismus*,⁸² where it turns out that a "plan of nature" thus "gradually introduces at least a mechanistic lawfulness into history."⁸³ On the other hand, within the third phase of history, "what appeared in the earlier one as fate and as nature will develop and reveal itself as Foresight."⁸⁴

5.6 Trinitarian "theo-ontology"

In Von Baader's thought the wish to incorporate the doctrine of the Trinity into the general ontology of finite being is similar to the position taken by

⁷⁸ Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 197: "Endlich aber hören wir einige dieser neueren Gesetzes-eiferer sogar von Gesetzen reden, denen der Gesetzgeber unterworfen sein soll!! Dieselbe Verwirrung im Begriffe des Gesetzes herrscht auch in den meisten Staatslehren."

⁷⁹ Von Baader, *EoM*, 528.

⁸⁰ "... wird sich der Richtigkeit der Konstruktion Böhmes überzeugen. Nach ihm hebt sich das Absolute (der Ungrund) als Natur (Begierde) und Freiheit (Lust) auf, um durch Wiederkonjunktion sich tiefer in sich fassen, höher in sich (in Majestät) erheben zu können" Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 203-204.

⁸¹ F.W.J. Schelling, *Philosophical Inquiries into the Nature of Human Freedom and matters connected therewith* (Translated by James Gutmann, Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1809 [1936]), 385. Hereafter: *PI*.

⁸² Published in 1800 (*Werke*), Vol.III, 603-604.

⁸³ Schelling, *PI*, 109.

⁸⁴ Schelling, *PI*, 110.

Hegel. Only in an analogical way is it possible to apply the logic of divinity to the ontology of what is finite. Yet the Trinitarian ontology is applicable to various ontic relationships. If it is the case that every self-contained form displays a threefold differentiation,⁸⁵ then also the form-giving principle or ground must display the same “threefoldness.”⁸⁶

6. *Friesen: Von Baader as the main source of Dooyeweerd’s philosophical ideas*

Against this general background, aimed at providing the reader with a glimpse of some of the philosophical reflections of Von Baader, we can now in more detail turn to the article of Friesen.

J.G. Friesen indeed managed to highlight certain *similarities* between Von Baader and Dooyeweerd. The logical point to be observed, however, is that similarities always presuppose *differences*. The crucial question therefore will be to what an extent one can conclude — on the basis of *verbal* and *formal* similarities — to genuine overlapping *philosophical conceptions*. The analysis below is intended to explore core facets of this issue.

Having quoted Dooyeweerd saying: It is a matter of life and death for this young philosophy that Christian scholars in all fields of science seek to put it to work in their own specialty, Friesen mentions a similar wording of Von Baader: a war of life and death — and then concludes that a “similar polemical spirit” is found in Von Baader and Dooyeweerd. Given their shared Christian convictions and their awareness of the struggle between Christianity and various non-Christian spiritual forces operative in their respective settings, this is not surprising. Yet, the real issue concerns the question whether or not the philosophical views of these two thinkers indeed converge as well. Friesen provides numerous references extracted by him from the works of Von Baader in order to show that this convergence indeed is a reality. While some issues will be treated in footnotes, the use of subheadings may make it easier for the reader to follow the subsequent discussion.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Both number and space analogically reflect this triadic imitation of the trinity, for according to Von Baader all numbers are reducible to the “Dreizahl” and within trigonometry all figures are reducible to the triangle (see Koslowski, *PO*, 456).

⁸⁶ Koslowski, *PO*, 456.

⁸⁷ A first relatively minor issue is found where Friesen compares Dooyeweerd and Von Baader under the subheading “All philosophy is religious” Friesen, *MD*, 3. Dooyeweerd says that theory (and all the other issues of life) are in the direction-giving grip of some or other *religious* ground-motive — but he does not say that “all philosophy is religious”. Runner is best known for this statement (“life is religion”). The first quotation provided in this context actually highlights the distance between Dooyeweerd and Von Baader. Friesen says that Von Baader “speaks of the ‘religiosity of science, and the scientific character of religiosity’ (*Fermenta*, p. 207)” Friesen, *MD*, 3. It has been one of the major battles of reformational philosophy with theologians to deny that faith (“religion”) is scientific in character. Both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven view religion as the whole-hearted service of God — entailing that all walks of life are religiously determined — but it does not mean “life is religion.”

6.1 Atomism and holism

Friesen immediately continues his explanation by saying that “Baader was opposed to the Enlightenment’s mechanistic and atomistic idea of nature (*Begründung*, 92, ft. 4). Because of this, Baader is often referred to as a philosopher of Romanticism, which emphasized the unmediated knowledge of intuition, and the importance of our experience.”⁸⁸ This reaction against the mechanistic and atomistic inclination of the Enlightenment era is a shared feature of the Romantic period — and in romanticism it is mainly advanced from an *organicistic* perspective. Through *romanticism* the entire nineteenth century came under the spell of this *organicism*. In fact, in his initial intellectual development Dooyeweerd also experienced the after-effect of this orientation, because until the mid thirties he frequently talked about an *organic coherence* in his systematic account of reality. Two observations (reservations) ought to be mentioned in this regard:

- (i) The organic mode of thinking does not originate in romanticism — it actually dominates the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition and continued to exert its influence also within reformed theology. This is a different source of Dooyeweerd’s use of the term *organic* — because during the period in which he still used this term he was already highly critical of *romanticism* and of *holistic* or *universalistic* modes of thought;
- (ii) By the late twenties Dooyeweerd experienced the “linguistic turn” and started to substitute “organic” with “meaning” — a new and decisive development in Dooyeweerd’s thought completely foreign to the thought of romanticism and the intellectual milieu of Von Baader since the latter pre-dates the linguistic turn.

6.2 Law and subject

In Friesen one reads:

Both Von Baader and Dooyeweerd use the word ‘subject’ in the sense of being subjected to God’s law. Dooyeweerd uses the French word ‘*sujet*’ — the created being is *subjected* to a law that does not originate from this subject itself (*NC*, I, 110; *WdW*, I, 76: ‘onderworpen zijn’). Baader speaks of being ‘subject’ in this same sense. The creature must be subordinated under the Creator (*Werke*, VIII, 84). This subordination is a ‘being subject.’ Baader speaks of subjection (‘*Subjektion*’) and also coins new words here, *subjicierender* and *subjiziert* (*Werke*, IV, 47 ft; *Weltalter*, 162; *Zeit*, 56).⁸⁹

The presence of similar words (*sujet*, *subject*, *subjected*, *being subject*) seems to suggest conceptual agreement. But what does Dooyeweerd say about God’s law? He sometimes gives a brief characterization of God’s law by saying that it *determines* and *delimits* whatever is *subjected* to it. In other words, Dooyeweerd

⁸⁸ Friesen, *MD*, 2.

⁸⁹ Friesen, *MD*, 3/3.

employs the idea of *being subjected* as the strict correlate of (God's) *law*. The quotations from Von Baader do not speak about a correlation between a (determining and delimiting) *law* and what is (correlatively) *subjected* to this law, but rather mention that creatures are subordinated under the *Creator*. This latter idea is a general feature of a long-standing Christian tradition but does not support what Friesen concludes. His quoted sentence: "Baader speaks of being 'subject' in this same sense" is written *directly* after he quoted Dooyeweerd saying that "created being is *subjected* to a law" — but the support quotation cited to show that Von Baader uses "subject" in "this same sense" merely speaks about the subordination of *God* and *subject*, and not of *law* and *subject* (unless Von Baader identifies God and law).⁹⁰ Friesen could have made an appeal to another quotation provided by him a bit further on in order to support a *formal similarity* with the thought of Dooyeweerd regarding the law-subject correlation. Before I mention the quotation I have in mind, I have to say in advance that it will be cited as part of a larger reference to Friesen's explanation, because this broader context will once again highlight important differences in spite of the obvious similarities.⁹¹

Each creature is set under its law, in a region or place in which it is to serve God. Our bliss is found only in fulfilling this law and serving God (*Weltalter*, 172, 178). The periphery is related to its supratemporal Center in an 'organic' relation. [21] We have free movement of life in the periphery when we are related to the Center:

“...die Begriffe des Zentrums und der Peripherie hier in ihrem gegenseitigen Bezug in einem und demselben organischen Systeme zu nehmen sind. Denn in einem solchen bewirkt nur die Ruhe, das Gesetzsein (*le posément*) des Zentrums die freie Bewegung in seiner Peripherie (in seinem Äußeren), weil jede Bewegung nur aus dem Unbeweglichen hervorgeht...” (*Zeit*, 24 ft.4).⁹²

The first sentence once again reflects a general biblical perspective: law-abiding obedient service to God — something to be found in Christian thinking ever since the time of the New Testament (the commandment of love), Augustine and so many other thinkers in the Christian tradition.⁹³ Dooyeweerd articulated this biblical idea in a *philosophical theory of modal and typical norms*. Therefore, if one wants to show that Dooyeweerd's *philosophical conception* derives from the *philosophical* ideas of Von Baader, the requirement is

⁹⁰ Friesen mentions that Von Baader says that “the law limits the creature; it is a *Hemmung* or limitation” (Friesen, *MD*, 2/3). Since *Hemmung* has the *negative* connotation of *hampering*, *standing in the way of*, *applying brakes*, and so on, it must be clear that Dooyeweerd and Von Baader have different ideas of “begrenzing” (limitation). In following Kuyper Dooyeweerd views God's law as a “law for life” (“levenswet”), as *enabling*, which is the opposite of *hampering*.

⁹¹ From a purely logical point of view similarities always presuppose differences!

⁹² Friesen, *MD*, 3/3.

⁹³ Friesen translates a quotation from Von Baader incorrectly in service of finding the similarities he wants to find: “Gott setzt nur und wird nicht gesetzt, der Mensch (jede Intelligenz) wird gesetzt und setzt nicht” (*Werke*, II, 456). Friesen translates this as saying: “God only places things under law and is not Himself under law; Man (each intelligence) is under law and does not place things under law” (Friesen, *MD*, 3/3). The German word “gesetzt” and “setzt” merely means “being placed” without the addition: “under law”!

to show where Von Baader articulated the idea of *modal norms/principles* and *typical norms/principles* anticipating/predating Dooyeweerd. Unfortunately the quotations given above do not accomplish this *decisive* challenge. In addition Von Baader operates with a view of reality where the latter is seen as an “organic system” — a view not found in Dooyeweerd’s philosophy.

6.3 Center and Periphery

Dooyeweerd frequently refers to the self-hood as the *religious centre* of human existence and he also emphasizes the *central* significance of Christ who, according to Christ’s human nature, is to be seen as the *totality of meaning* of creation. But Dooyeweerd does not operate with an anonymous idea of a cosmic “Center” which, “as essence”, is supposed to “stand ... over” the so-called “peripheral points”.⁹⁴

6.4 The Aristotelian unmoved mover?

Also look at the (above-quoted) strange idea that *movement proceeds from the unmoved*: “weil jede Bewegung nur aus dem Unbeweglichen hervorgeht”. Galileo’s law of inertia, used by Dooyeweerd in support of his (eventual) account of the kinematical mode, contradicts this outdated Aristotelian mode of thought.⁹⁵ In passing we can note that Von Baader distinguishes between a *mechanical* and *dynamic* perspective, approximating Dooyeweerd’s distinction between the *kinematical* and *physical* aspects of reality. Unfortunately Von Baader constantly identifies this dynamic element with the *organic*.⁹⁶

6.5 Autonomy

Von Baader’s reaction against the idea of human *autonomy*, already alluded to above, surely does exhibit a fundamental biblical trait in his thinking — at least dating back to Calvin. Read out of context one may think that at this point Von Baader indeed stands within a broader Christian tradition. Unfortunately the subsequent exposition of Friesen already reveals a problematic account [possibly quasi pan(en)theistic in nature]:

Baader says that we can choose to find our center either in God or in our own self. We either affirm the Central Unity or we deny it (*Zeit*, 24). As Sauer says, if our center is in God, then we understand ourselves as ordered (*gesetzt*), as participating in a previously given Ground. Or we can choose to deny our true center and attempt to find our ground in our own self (*Selbstsetzung*) (Sauer, 28,

⁹⁴ Friesen quotes the following words of Von Baader: “The Central Totality is different than just the sum of all the peripheral points (*Peripherie-Punkte*); rather, the Center stands as essence (*Inbegriff*) over them” (Friesen, *MD*, 3/8).

⁹⁵ Galileo realized that *motion* is original and irreducible and that it does not need a cause (as Aristotle believed). One can only speak about the cause of a *change* of motion — but then the shift to the physical aspect has already been made.

⁹⁶ See for example Von Baader, *EoM*, 52 ff.

citing *Werke*, XIV, 61f). The foundation of our existence can be immanent, insofar as it is founded in oneself by oneself, or ‘emanant’ — founded in another being (*Werke*, II, 520).⁹⁷

What is unclear is whether or not Von Baader upholds the Creator-creation distinction in all of this — whereas in Dooyeweerd our being reborn in Christ never eradicates the Creator/creature distinction and it never elevates the human being to the level of God (thus transgressing the law as boundary between God and creation). The central religious dimension of reality remains *subjected* to the fullness of God’s law, the central commandment of love.⁹⁸

6.6 Absolutizations

Friesen believes that the same rejection of absolutizations present in Dooyeweerd’s thought is found in Von Baader’s philosophy:

The denial of our true Center results in an absolutization of the temporal (‘Vergötterung oder Verewigung der Schein-Zeit’) (*Zeit*, 23). The negation of God always results in idolatry or the absolutization of the temporal (*Werke*, I, 21). This is what the Bible refers to as the denying ‘Spirit of Lies,’ and the ‘Murderer in the Beginning.’ It is the original lie of Lucifer, the *proton pseudos* (*Zeit*, 25, 41 ft. 21). Dooyeweerd also refers to this *proton pseudos* or ‘radical lie’ (*NC*, II, 561—563). Dooyeweerd says that this absolutizing is the source of the many — *isms* of thought, such as psychologism, historicism, etc. (*NC*, I, 46).⁹⁹

Although Von Baader mentions the absolutization of the temporal, his expression “Schein-Zeit” suggests a fundamental under-evaluation of the temporal — which is certainly not merely “appearance” (“Schein”). Since Von Baader does not know the various modal aspects as distinguished by Dooyeweerd, he cannot possibly have had a view in which he criticizes the absolutization of *modal aspects* — left alone a thorough analysis of the various *-isms*, absolutizing some or other modal function as found within the various disciplines.

6.7 Ground-motives

Explaining what Dooyeweerd understands by a ground-motive Friesen refers to the Dutch term “grondmotief” but then — without critically accounting for the step — jumps over to terms like “grondidee” (ground-idea), “grondprincipe” (ground principle) and so on. All these other terms refer to the domain of thought and could never be equated with the *central religious meaning* attached by Dooyeweerd to the term *ground-motive*. But Friesen had to make this jump, because the quotations gathered from Von Baader do not mention the term *ground-motive* anywhere (not to speak about the absence of Dooyeweerd’s

⁹⁷ Friesen, *MD*, 3/4.

⁹⁸ In passing we may note that the fact “that the Fall affected our reasoning ability” is common knowledge in the Christian tradition because this point is frequently highlighted in the Bible (just compare St. Paul’s remark where he refers to the *fleshy mind* — *noös tēs sarkós* — Colossians 2:18). (Cf. Van Woudenberg, 1998.)

⁹⁹ Friesen, *MD*, 3/5.

understanding of the *integral motivating power* of a ground-motive theoretically articulated in diverse *ground-ideas*). Consequently, since Von Baader does not speak about ground-motives, Friesen once again had to “re-interpret” other phrases (particularly *Grundprinzip*) to serve his purpose of establishing similarities between Von Baader and Dooyeweerd.

Baader expresses a similar idea, using the term ‘*Grund-Prinzip*’ or ‘Ground Principle or Idea’ (*Zeit*, 60). Principles lie at the Ground (*Grund*) of our knowledge (theology, physiology, natural philosophy); these principles may be open or hidden (*Werke*, V, 254, cited by Sauer, 128). Baader also refers to ‘Religious Ground Attitudes’ (‘*Grund einstellungen*’: *Werke*, II, 296; cited by Schumacher, 17) or ‘root convictions’ (‘*Wurzelüberzeugungen*’ or ‘*idées causes* or *mères*’: (*Elementarbegriffe*, 533)).¹⁰⁰

In the on-going argument the dubious notion of a “center” once again surfaces. Friesen mentions Von Baader’s awareness of the historical givenness of *dialectically opposed absolutizations* but apparently does not realize that such an awareness by far transcends the contribution of Baader and even the dawn of Christianity. One can just as well make an appeal to the *dialectical thinking* of Heraclitus in order to show that there are “similarities” between Heraclitus and Dooyeweerd. Furthermore, since the idea of opposing absolutizations are fully embedded in the problematic — quasi-pan(en)theistic? — idea of a *Center*, one should be extremely cautious to establish a *direct link* with Dooyeweerd’s thought in this respect.

The next challenge which Friesen has set for himself is to show that Von Baader already articulated all four ground-motives distinguished by Dooyeweerd. He therefore attempts to show that Von Baader already alluded to the biblical ground-motive of creation, fall and redemption by mentioning what Von Baader indeed says about creation, about fall and about redemption. He then concludes that it “corresponds with Dooyeweerd’s characterization of the Christian Ground-Motive.” Applying the same procedure could select almost *any thinker* within the Christian tradition (from Augustine onwards) — and every time such a thinker will be found to have said something about creation, fall and redemption. This will be the case not because those thinkers influenced Dooyeweerd per se, but because they have had access to the Bible itself — and the story of the Bible simply unfolds in the succession of *creation, fall* and *redemption!* Therefore, one can just as well use numerous medieval or modern protestant authors in a similar way, but it will not help in ascertaining whether or not they in fact already had the peculiar (original and novel) Dooyeweerdian idea of a (radical and integral) *ground-motive*.

Similarly, the mere fact that Von Baader employed the terms *form* and *matter* in his analysis of Greek philosophy does not warrant the idea that this mode of speech surfaced *late* in the history of philosophy, for already Aristotle, in his *Metaphysics*, captured the philosophy preceding his own contribution by using the terms *form* and *matter*. If it would have been the intention of Friesen to show that Dooyeweerd’s idea of the Greek ground-motive actually derives from

¹⁰⁰ Friesen, *MD*, 3/6.

Aristotle, this mere “fact” would have been “convincing” in terms of the method employed by him.¹⁰¹

When Friesen writes about “The three ideas within each ground-motive”¹⁰² the chosen heading is mistaken. According to Dooyeweerd the centrality of a ground-motive transcends the realm of theoretical thought — and it is within the latter that the transcendental ideas find their seat, not in the ground-motive directing them.

6.8 The coherence between modal aspects

In support of the claim that Von Baader already came to the idea of cohering modal aspects Friesen writes:

One of Baader’s main themes is the necessity of a coherence between the natural and the Spiritual [*Geistlich*]. He emphasizes the coherence between Intelligence and Nature (*Elementarbegriffe*, 550) and between ethics and physics (*Begründung*, 23, 49). Sometimes Baader uses the word ‘*Zusammenhang*’ (e.g. *Weltalter* 68—the coherence of all things in the All). Elsewhere he uses the word ‘*Kohärenz*’. The true coherence is an ‘embodiment’ which shows itself in the temporal region in ‘the array (*Ordnung*) of the periphery’ (*Zeit*, 36). This order of the periphery corresponds to Dooyeweerd’s coherence of temporal functions (aspects or modes).

A closer look at this method of comparison will substantiate my fear that superficial *verbal similarities* are explored in order to assert that the same philosophical theory is present — where in fact it is not. First of all we have to remember that Dooyeweerd advocates the view that there is a *threefold transcendental idea* (which is in the grip of a central ground-motive) operative in theoretical thought regarding the *coherence, totality* and *Origin* of all meaning. Dooyeweerd’s idea of coherence first of all relates to the diversity of *modal aspects*. But the similarity between Von Baader and Dooyeweerd *stops* at the word “coherence” because the phenomena featuring in the quotations from Von Baader are not at all modal aspects! Merely emphasizing the *coherence* between “intelligence and nature” therefore does not provide *any* substantial evidence regarding the actual philosophical conceptions of Von Baader and Dooyeweerd. Moreover, Dooyeweerd analyses the coherence between different *modal aspects* of reality — something different from talking about the coherence between *ethics* and *physics* — neither physics nor ethics are *modal aspects*. The center-periphery *root metaphor* used by Von Baader is simply equated with Dooyeweerd’s idea of an inter-modal meaning-coherence — Dooyeweerd would never — in the context of his theory of inter-modal connections

¹⁰¹ When Friesen mentions that Von Baader is reacting to Kant’s dualism between natural necessity and human freedom — which indeed could be identified as the *basic problem* in Kant’s thought merely on the basis of a first reading of Kant’s *CPR* itself (see I. Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*, Second Edition, Hamburg: Felix Meiner Verlag [1956] 1787, B:xxvii-xxviii) — it does not provide anything coming close to Dooyeweerd’s analysis of the origin and subsequent development of the *religious dialectic* present in humanistic thought since the Renaissance.

¹⁰² Friesen, *MD*, 3/8.

(anticipations and retroceptions) — speak about “embodiment” or ordering of the periphery. At this point the test would be to find — within the thought of Von Baader — an analysis of any (Dooyeweerdian) modal aspect in its retroceptions and anticipations, qualified by the meaning-nucleus of the aspect and differentiated into analogies on the law-side and the correlating factual side. Anything short of this would merely highlight the *theoretical distance* between Von Baader and Dooyeweerd — in spite of verbal and formal similarities that are indeed present (such as the use of the word “coherence”).

6.9 God as the “absolute Center” of creation

Friesen writes:

Baader also refers to the idea of Totality. The Central Totality is different than just the sum of all the peripheral points (*Peripherie-Punkte*); rather, the Center stands as essence (*Inbegriff*) over them. Just as the sum of all creation does not constitute a creator, so the Center is more than the sum of the periphery (*Begründung*, 63 ft. 7). Similarly, Dooyeweerd says that the religious Center of our existence *expresses* itself in all modal aspects of time but can never be *exhausted* by these (*NC*, I, 58). Baader identifies Man as the mirror of Totality (Schumacher, 57). Although Man is the mirror of Totality (as the image of God), ultimately God is the absolute Origin and absolute Center of creation.¹⁰³

Here the speculative *metaphysical* view of Von Baader regarding God as the “absolute Center” of creation surfaces and is related to Dooyeweerd — something Dooyeweerd nowhere said and never would have said. Dooyeweerd does not know anything of “peripheral points” where the “Center” stands *over* them. Nothing more than the word “totality” is given in this context — but what Dooyeweerd and Von Baader respectively say about “totality” highlights the huge abyss between their philosophical accounts. (i) First of all, the original modal seat of the term “totality” is given within the modal aspect of space (where the “whole-parts relation” is located).¹⁰⁴ (ii) Secondly, the idea (in its technical Dooyeweerdian sense) of the meaning-totality of reality employs this spatial term but uses it in a way transcending the limits of spatial concepts. But precisely for this reason Dooyeweerd would never, in respect of the central religious dimension of reality, operate with a whole-parts (or: center-periphery) scheme in a purely conceptual manner — as it is done by Von Baader.

6.10 The method of antinomy

It should be kept in mind that Dooyeweerd also frequently speaks about the inherent tension within a dialectical ground-motive — and then he employs the term “antinomy” in order to highlight what happens within the domain of theoretical thinking (as an expression of a ground-motive dialectic). Compare

¹⁰³ Friesen, *MD*, 8.

¹⁰⁴ See Dooyeweerd, *NC II*, 457.

for example *NC I*, 169 where the new Chapter-heading reads: “The development of the basic antinomy in the cosmonomic idea of humanistic immanence-philosophy”.

A clear and correct account is given of Dooyeweerd’s view in this regard:

Dooyeweerd uses the criterion of antinomy to distinguish one modal aspect from another. ‘Antinomy’ means ‘contradiction between laws.’ The laws of different modal aspects may not contradict one another, but this is what happens when we absolutize certain aspects. Antinomy is distinguished from contrariety within a modal sphere, as in logical contradiction (*NC*, II:37).¹⁰⁵

Friesen then proceeds:

In a similar way, Baader sees dualistic Ground Principles (or antinomies) arising whenever we absolutize one part of creation. “So wie man versucht die Materie (das Zeitlich-Räumliche) als etwas in sich Ganzes (Absolutes) zu begreifen, wird man die dialektischen Fortbewegung aus ihr inne, welche sich jedem Vereint- und Festhalten- (zum Standbringen-) Wollen des in sich Veruneinten und also Bestand lösen widersetzt. [...] Diese Materie weist uns hiermit auf eine *Anomie* und *Antinomie*, welche ihrem Entstehen und Bestehen unterliegt, und wie sie nur zufolge einer *Differenzierung* zum Vorschein kommt, so muß sie mit der ingetretenen *Reintegration* des in Differenz Gekommenen wieder verschwinden” (*Werke*, II, 488: *Schriften*, II, 103).

I do not read in the words of Von Baader that *antinomies* arise from the absolutization of a part of creation (if antinomies in Dooyeweerd’s sense are at stake, “part of creation” should read: “*aspect of creation*”). What is here asserted by Von Baader is that *matter* — that is something with an *individuality-structure* in terms of Dooyeweerd’s philosophy — points at an “Anomie” and “Antinomie” which underlies its origination (Entstehen) and existence (Bestehen). According to Von Baader matter only comes to the fore through a *differentiation*, but it once again has to *disappear* through the occurrence of a *re-integration* of what has been manifested in *difference*.¹⁰⁶ To be honest, in this case I do not even have any verbal similarity to hold on to — the entire story about matter simply has nothing to do with the absolutization of modal aspects.

We here find an example of an obviously *un-Biblical* dialectical approach which postulates (an inherently antinomic) matter that has to *disappear* in the coming *reintegration*. Von Baader himself plays with a dialectical whole-parts scheme. Yet, what is completely absent in the quotations from Von Baader is what Dooyeweerd introduced as the *cosmological principle of excluding antinomies* (the *principium exclusae antinomiae*), that lies at the *foundation* of the *logical principle of contradiction*.¹⁰⁷ Dooyeweerd writes:

¹⁰⁵ Friesen, *MD*, 9.

¹⁰⁶ Von Baader portrays God as the “*Vollender*” or “*Integrator*” of nature. Von Baader, *Fermenta*, 193.

¹⁰⁷ I assume that if Von Baader says that antinomies arise from the absolutization of modal aspects, such as the numerical, the spatial, the kinematical and so on, Friesen indeed would have quoted such statements. But he did not provide such quotations and I did not find anything like this in the *Collected Works* of Von Baader either.

Antinomy in this inter-modal theoretical sense ought to be sharply distinguished from the intra-modal relation of contrariety, including logical contradiction. Contraries like logical-illogical, polite-impolite, beautiful-ugly, lawful-unlawful, moral-immoral, belief-unbelief, and so on, present themselves *within the same modal aspect of meaning*. They do not contain a real antinomy between different modal law-spheres. In its theoretical character the latter *implies* a logical contradiction; but a logical contradiction as such is not an antinomy in the inter-modal sense here intended, referring as it does to the transcendental Idea concerning the mutual coherence of meaning between the different modal aspects of experience.¹⁰⁸

Friesen continues his exposition with reference to the remark by Von Baader that any “attempt to absolutize the periphery (the temporal), or to attempt the coordination of points on the periphery without their subordination to the Center will result in a polar dualism or antinomy” (*Weltalter*, 331).¹⁰⁹

Here it is clear that Von Baader identifies the word *antinomy* with what he apparently calls a “polar dualism.” What Dooyeweerd has in mind concerns all the cases where an attempt is made to reduce the meaning diversity within reality to merely one of its modal aspects — for example, if everything *is* history (law, morality, and so on) then there is nothing left that can *have* a history.¹¹⁰ Where did Von Baader introduce antinomies in this sense as the *intermodal foundation* of the *logical principle of contradiction*? For example, the illogical concept of a “square circle” constitutes a *logical* contradiction — it confuses two spatial figures in an intra-modal sense (which does not follow from an antinomy) — whereas the arguments of Zeno against *multiplicity* and *movement* are indeed *antinomic* in an intermodal sense because they serve the attempt to *reduce* movement to space. It is of course the case that every antinomy entails a logical contradiction, but the reverse is not true (the illogical concept of a “square circle” does not presuppose an antinomy).

6.11 Time

Friesen mentions that Von Baader distinguishes “three kinds of time” (*Zeit*, 19). “*True time* is the eternal or the supratemporal (*überzeitliche*); it encompasses a past, present and future. Our heart, the religious root, exists in this supratemporal, or true time.”¹¹¹

What a strange construction we find in Von Baader: “true time,” which “is the eternal” is “supratemporal”!? How can true time be “supratemporal”? And why is a notion of “eternity” necessary if “the eternal” is nothing but “true time”?!

Subsequently it is explained that only “the supratemporal (eternity) is true time.”¹¹² “Eternity is not just infinitely protracted time. Spinoza’s idea of a

¹⁰⁸ Dooyeweerd, *NC II*, 37.

¹⁰⁹ Friesen, *MD*, 9.

¹¹⁰ See Dooyeweerd, *NC II*, 228-229.

¹¹¹ Friesen, *MD*, 4.

¹¹² Friesen, *MD*, 4.

‘temporal eternity’ confuses the Creator with the creature in a pantheistic way (*Elementarbegriffe*, 538). The supratemporal is the now, the simultaneous Present, nontemporal and permanent. It is permanent in the sense that once we achieve it, we do not fall back into cosmic time. But the supratemporal must not be seen as permanent in a static sense.”¹¹³

Eternity as the supratemporal is not only true time, since the supratemporal (i.e., eternity) is the *now*, the “simultaneous Present” while it is asserted that it is “nontemporal and permanent” (is *permanence* not related to *enduring*?). What Von Baader indeed calls *appearance time* is equated by Friesen with what Dooyeweerd calls “cosmic time” — but note the absence of the *present* (the *now*) in Von Baader’s understanding of “Scheinzeit”:

The time of our temporal world or cosmos is what Baader calls ‘appearance time’ (*Scheinzeit*). This cosmic time has only a past and a future, but no present (*Werke*, II, 27). There is only a present-less and separated ‘one thing after and out of another’ (*nacheinander und auseinander*) in the periphery outside of the Center (*Zeit*, 57).

The classical legacy of speculation about time and eternity constantly explored the time-order of the first two modalities distinguished by Dooyeweerd, namely succession and simultaneity. Whenever *infinity* is understood in its most primitive (numerical) meaning of succession (endlessness — the *successive infinite*) eternity is merely designated as an (endless) on-going duration of time, but when the spatial intuition of simultaneity is explored the actual infinite (or, as I prefer to designate it, the *once infinite*)¹¹⁴ gave rise to the idea of eternity (supratemporality) as the time-less “now”. Dooyeweerd never entered into this speculative tradition, but it is clear from that what Von Baader has said that he is wrestling with a recombination of the elements of this speculative tradition.¹¹⁵

7. The “mystical” Dooyeweerd

In this connection Friesen writes in his seventh main section:

Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the idea of cosmic time is the basis of his philosophical theory of reality (*NC*, I, 28), and that the idea of the supratemporal selfhood must be the presupposition of *any truly Christian view*. Furthermore, he says that we can have actual experience of the supratemporal. This is Dooyeweerd’s mysticism.

¹¹³ Friesen, *MD*, 4.

¹¹⁴ See D.F.M. Strauss, *Filosofie van de Wiskunde, Kennis en Werkelijkheid, Tweede Inleiding tot een Christelijke Filosofie* (Editor R. Van Woudenberg, Amsterdam: Buijten & Schipperheijn, 1996), 143-176.

¹¹⁵ Much more is discussed by Friesen, but I leave this issue aside with the additional remark that the notion of “appearance-time” suggests a *devaluation* of time not found in Dooyeweerd. Friesen writes: “But cosmic time was not intended from the beginning of creation; it is a result of the Fall!” Dooyeweerd did not advocate such a view.

Let us begin by recognizing that the Bible does distinguish between *time* and *eternity*. Furthermore, humanity, according to the Bible, has an *eternal destination*. The problem seems to arise from the fact that we are used to identify *creation* with what is *temporal*, i.e., how is it possible to find *within* our *temporal creation* some form of existence extended into eternity?

7.1 Infinity and eternity

Without entering into an extensive discussion of the idea of *eternity*, it may be pointed out that what philosophers and theologians throughout the history said about *eternity* is (as briefly mentioned in the previous subsection) actually dependent upon the kind of *infinity* they (consciously or unconsciously) implicitly assume. If they accept what is traditionally called the *potential infinite* (the expression: the *successive infinite* is preferable) then endlessness in the literal sense of the word is incorporated within the idea of eternity. The successive infinite explores the quantitative time-order at the law-side of the arithmetical aspect and thus it underlies the view of eternity as an *endless duration of time*. But if the so-called *actual infinite* (the *at once infinite*)¹¹⁶ is chosen as point of orientation, then *eternity* is seen as *timelessness* — *a-temporality*, often identified with the *timeless present*.¹¹⁷

By and large the metaphysical speculation about eternity was therefore determined in a dominant way by the *static spatial metaphysics of being*.¹¹⁸ It is only since the rise of *historicism* that the last two hundred years witnessed a prominent re-emergence of the “endless duration” (successive infinite) tradition — for example exemplified in Oscar Cullmann’s work *Christ and Time*.¹¹⁹

7.2 Cosmic time

As is known, Dooyeweerd indeed introduced a *radically new* philosophy of time in which it is shown that *succession* and *simultaneity* are merely two (modal) expressions of the meaning of what he calls *cosmic time* — and that neither, as such, provides us with an *integral idea of eternity*. The expression “temporal reality” is meant in an *integral* sense, encompassing *all* modal aspects and *all* individuality-structures.

¹¹⁶ This represents a *numerical anticipation* to the *spatial time-order of simultaneity* (see Strauss, 1996:164 ff.).

¹¹⁷ See Parmenides B Fr.8, 3-6 and Plotinus, *Enneads* III/7. Boethius formulated his classical definition as follows: “Aeternitas igitur est interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio” — *De consolazione Philosophiae* V,6; continued by Augustin in his *De civitate Dei* (XII,19), and so on. The same legacy is found in the “nunc aeternum” of Kierkegaard and in the related ideas of the Dutch theologian K. Schilder.

¹¹⁸ The discovery of irrational numbers by the Pythagoreans caused a switch from the thesis that “everything is number” to a spatial orientation (the geometrization of Greek mathematics), opening up the “space” needed for a static metaphysics of being.

¹¹⁹ O. Cullman, *Christ and Time, The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History* (Revised edition, Translated from the German by Floyd v. Filson, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1949), 48 ff.

But it should be noted that *before* Dooyeweerd developed his philosophy of time (during the late twenties of the twentieth century), he *already* had realized that the human being cannot be enclosed within the dimensions of modal aspects and entity structures. Dooyeweerd **first** gained the biblical insight that the human self-hood (*heart*) is *supra-modal* and *supra-structural* and **then** developed his theory of *cosmic time* — as that cosmic dimension underlying and embracing both the modal aspects and individuality-structures. By conceiving *cosmic time* as a *unique cosmic dimension* embracing the modal and typical dimensions of creation, and by viewing the human self-hood as supra-modal and supra-structural,¹²⁰ it follows that the human heart ought to be seen as “supra-temporal”.¹²¹

Since it could hardly be denied that humanity has an *eternal* destination and that being human therefore hinges on the boundary-line of *time* and *eternity*, I think it is biblically justified to affirm the *time-transcending* nature of the *core meaning of being human*.

7.3 The aevum

Dooyeweerd might have made it easier for himself if he merely emphasized this *time-transcending* nature of being human. The way in which he proposed to “refresh” the notion of an *aevum* actually comes very close to my suggestion. In his series of articles on time (that appeared in *Philosophia Reformata*) the first reference to the *aevum* is in connection with the idea of a *created eternity*.¹²² In the second (follow-up) article on *The Problem of Time and its Antinomies on the Immanence Standpoint* Dooyeweerd expands on this issue. His positive account of introducing this term reads as follows:

Yet I would like to take over the term “aevum” in the sense of an intermediate state between time and eternity. It may be less objectionable because it arose within the context of a Christian argumentation which felt the need for a distinction between the supra-temporal in a creaturely sense and eternity in the sense of the being of God. In human self-consciousness as center of the religious concentration of all temporal functions we indeed encounter the supra-temporal meaning of this *aevum*. *As an actual condition the aevum therefore is nothing but the creaturely concentration of the temporal upon eternity in the religious transcendence of the boundary of time.*¹²³

¹²⁰ See for example the paragraph-heading in his article on the task of a philosophical anthropology: “The super-structural character of the human existential center and the unqualified structure of the human bodiliness” (Dooyeweerd, 1961:40 ff.). “*Het boven-structureel karakter van het menselijk existentiecentrum en de ongequalificeerde structuur der menselijke lichamelijkeheid.*”

¹²¹ The word-play between super- and supra-temporal should not mislead us. Dooyeweerd only employed the expression supra-temporal (for example, *NC I*, 31, note).

¹²² See H. Dooyeweerd, *Het tijdsprobleem en zijn antinomieën op het immanentie standpunt I*, *Philosophia Reformata*, 1 (1936), 69.

¹²³ H. Dooyeweerd, *Het tijdsprobleem en zijn antinomieën op het immanentie standpunt II*, *Philosophia Reformata*, 4 (1939), 5.

In Dooyeweerd 1959¹²⁴ as well as in Dooyeweerd 1960¹²⁵ he responds to those who questioned his notion of the supra-temporal.

7.4 Is Dooyeweerd a mystical thinker?

In his article on the words “Mystik” and “mystisch” Lessing first of all mentions the Greek root of these terms which is related to the meaning of the word “secret,” that which is not *revealed*.¹²⁶ Since Immanuel Kant a more critical tone surfaced in respect of what is *mystical*. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in general developed a negative sentiment disqualifying mysticism as “Gefühlsreligion” and occasionally even as “an unhealthy growth of the human being, as a source of being mentally disturbed, and therefore a case for the psychiatrist.”¹²⁷

¹²⁴ “De theologische exegesen van deze tekst, die in plaats van ‘eew(ig)heid’ willen vertalen de ‘tijden’ of ‘de geschiedenis’ ontnemen hem de centraal-religieuze zin; evenals de bekende tekst van Pred.: ‘Uit het hart zijn de uitgangen des levens’ door een bepaalde theologische exegese zijn centraal-religieuze zin verloor, toen men het hart als ‘zetel van het gevoel’ ging verstaan. Wanneer het slechts gaat over ‘de geschiedenis’, dan kan men de term ‘hart’ in de eerstbedoelde tekst rustig vervangen door ‘historisch bewustzijn’, of naar een oudere scholastieke opvatting door de ‘menselijke rede’, of ‘het menselijk denken’. Maar het heeft bepaald geen zin in plaats van de ‘eewigheid’, ‘de tijden’ of ‘de geschiedenis’ te stellen, wanneer men gelijk Spier in zijn boek *Tijd en Eewigheid* eraan vasthoudt, dat het woord ‘hart’ hier bedoeld is in de zin van het *religieuze centrum van het menselijk bestaan*. Want ‘de geschiedenis’ in haar tijdelijke zin moet juist in ‘s mensen hart haar *concentratie op Gods eeuwig heilsplan* krijgen. Zonder deze concentratie blijft de geschiedenis een tijdelijk proces zonder enige richting op wat de tijd te boven gaat, tenzij dan op een eeuwigheids*idool* in de zin van de zich dialectisch ontvouwende ‘idee’. Maar hoe kan het ‘hart’ in de bovenbedoelde zin als *religieus concentratiepunt van de geschiedenis* fungeren, wanneer het geheel en al ‘binnen de tijd’ zou zijn besloten? De invoering van een ‘religieuze tijd’ kan hier geen baat brengen, omdat de religieuze concentratie juist een centrale relatie tussen het menselijk ik en de eeuwig God impliceert die nooit in de tijd kan opgaan. Bovendien valt niet in te zien hoe zulk een religieuze tijd iets anders zou kunnen zijn dan wat in de *W.d.W* de *geloofstijd* genoemd wordt. De term ‘religieuze tijd’ blijft *hoogst* problematisch wat zijn mogelijke *zin* betreft” H. Dooyeweerd, *Schepping en Evolutie, Philosophia Reformata*, 24 (1959), 116-117, note 3.

¹²⁵ “In de afvallige richting van het menselijk hart is dit beeld Gods geheel verduisterd, maar in Christus Jezus is het ons in zijn ware zin-volheid geopenbaard. En slechts in en uit Hem leren wij in de gemeenschap van de H. Geest verstaan, in welke zin wij in het centrum onzer existentie de tijd *te boven gaan*, ofschoon wij tegelijk *binnen de tijd besloten zijn*.” H. Dooyeweerd, Van Peursen’s critische vragen bij “A New Critique of Theoretical Thought”, *Philosophia Reformata*, 25 (1960), 103.

¹²⁶ “Mystik, mystisch (griech. *mustike* [sc. *paradosis*], *mustikos*; lat. *mystica*, *mysticus*; engl. *mystic*, *mystical*; frz. *mystique*; ital. *mistica*, *mistico*). 1. Das griech. *mustikos* (Adjektivbildung vom Verb *muo* ‘sich schließen’, ‘zusammengehen’, bes. der Augen [1]) heißt zunächst soviel wie ‘auf die Mysterien bezogen’, ‘mit den Geheimriten verbunden’ [2], dann generell ‘dunkel’, ‘geheimnisvoll’ (Gegensatz: *faneron*, ‘offen’).” H-U. Lessing, *Mystik, mystisch, Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft Volume 6 (1984), 268.

¹²⁷ “Kant spricht kritisch von Mystik und «Mysticism» als einem «Übersprung (salto mortale) von Begriffen zum Undenkbaren, ... einer Erwartung von Geheimnissen, oder vielmehr Hinhaltung mit solchen”. Sie ist «Schwärmerei», «vernunfttödtend» und «schweift ins Überschwengliche hinaus». Dies entspricht einem im späten 18. und 19. Jh. einsetzenden breiten Sprachgebrauch, in dem «Mysticismus» als Schwärmerei und Gefühlsreligion abqualifiziert wird, ja auch gelegentlich als «krankhafter Auswuchs des menschlichen Wesens», «Quelle mannichfaltiger Seelenstörungen» und deshalb als Fall für den «psychischen Arzt» (Lessing, 1984:270).

Dooyeweerd does acknowledge the limitations of human understanding, and explicitly employs the epistemological distinction between what can be grasped in concepts and what can only be approximated in (what I prefer to call) concept-transcending knowledge, i.e., the distinction between *concept* and *idea*. The deepened meaning of an aspect, according to Dooyeweerd, only gives access to “idea-knowledge.”¹²⁸ and the same applies to the inter-modal identity and wholeness of an entity that can only be approximated in a *transcendental idea*.¹²⁹ In its technical sense the *idea* of cosmic time falls in this category and it also holds for the central religious dimension of reality.

Since the tri-unity of transcendental ideas in Dooyeweerd’s philosophy does not acknowledge something “mystical” in the sense of “not-being-revealed,” it is inappropriate to characterize his thought as *mystical* or in the grip of some or other form of mysticism. The mode of thinking of a truly mystical thinker closely borders upon the pitfall of a *negative theology* and of an *irrationalistic* approach. Since Dooyeweerd rejects both rationalism and irrationalism his intention is indeed to side-step the one-sidedness entailed in both these philosophical orientations. God is *revealed* to us, but that does not mean that we can conceptually *grasp* God — as human beings we can only approximate God through the aid of a concept-transcending idea of God. But this view is not mystical or in the grip of mysticism. The wonder and awe that we have for God and God’s creation humbles our thinking and it fills us with modesty, but it does not by definition tempt us into *mysticism*.

Dooyeweerd’s distinction between the dimension of cosmic time embracing the modal and typical dimensions as they are all rooted in the central religious dimension of creation does not justify the conclusion that his thinking is mystical, not even when the correlation between supra-modal and supra-structural is interpreted as supra-temporal.

If one wants to appreciate this view of Dooyeweerd positively, as Friesen indeed wants to do, it is nonetheless not necessary first of all to interpret it as mystical.

8. Conclusion

Although I am glad that Friesen introduced me to the fascinating thought of Von Baader, I am not at all convinced that he has succeeded in making a compelling case for what he claimed. His method of exploring merely *verbal* and in some cases *formal* similarities, did not succeed in showing any significant conceptual connections between the intrinsically philosophical views of Von Baader and those of Dooyeweerd.

Just as little as it is possible to “sell” Dooyeweerd’s thought “out” to the neo-Hegelianism of F.H. Bradley, is it possible to attempt something similar with respect to Von Baader, Nicolai Hartmann,¹³⁰ or any other single philosopher.

¹²⁸ Dooyeweerd, *NC II*, 186 ff.

¹²⁹ Dooyeweerd, *NC III*, 65.

¹³⁰ Hartmann, for example, introduces basic categories supposedly valid for all spheres and levels of being. This sounds quite “Dooyeweerdian”! A closer study of Hartmann’s philosophy,

Dooyeweerd benefited from the philosophical distinctions and insights of philosophers spread over the entire history of philosophy — sometimes in a *positive* and sometimes in a *negative* sense. But sometimes, as in the case of the thought of Von Baader, there is simply no *direct* link traceable.

In itself it is striking that Koslowski does not articulate any philosophical insights and distinctions present in Von Baader's thought that directly or indirectly approximates any systematic philosophical distinction made by Dooyeweerd!

It will definitely belong to the task of producing a critical edition of the *New Critique* to demonstrate in which way Dooyeweerd is (positively and negatively) connected with a thousand strings to the entire history of philosophy. Only then will it be possible to highlight what ought to be appreciated as his truly *novel* and *creative* contributions to philosophy.

however, does not reveal anything close to what Dooyeweerd has in mind with the modal and typical dimensions of reality. Hartmann in fact distinguishes 24 principles of being, arranged in pairs — and just enumerating them will reveal the distance with the views of Dooyeweerd: principle — concretum; structure — mode; form — matter; inner — outer; determination — dependence; quality — quantity; unity — multiplicity; unanimity — conflict; antithesis — dimension; discreteness — continuity; substrate — relation; element — system (see Stegmüller, 1969:237).