

## Andrews University Digital Commons @ Andrews University

---

Faculty Publications

Old Testament

---


January 2010

# Investigating the presuppositional realm of biblical-theological methodology: Part 3: Application and Comparison

Oliver Glanz

Andrews University, [glanz@andrews.edu](mailto:glanz@andrews.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/old-testament-pubs>

 Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Glanz, Oliver, "Investigating the presuppositional realm of biblical-theological methodology: Part 3: Application and Comparison" (2010). *Faculty Publications*. Paper 39.

<http://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/old-testament-pubs/39>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Old Testament at Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact [repository@andrews.edu](mailto:repository@andrews.edu).

**INVESTIGATING THE PRESUPPOSITIONAL  
REALM OF BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL  
METHODOLOGY, PART III:  
APPLICATION AND  
COMPARISON**

OLIVER GLANZ  
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

*3.1 Introduction*

In my first two articles,<sup>1</sup> I have illustrated the pioneering work of Hermann Dooyeweerd and Fernando Canale as they analyzed the realm and operation of human rational activities. An understanding of Dooyeweerd's analysis of theoretical thought and Canale's phenomenological investigation into human Reason sets a starting point for a much-needed critical investigation into the field of academic methodologies in general and the multifarious exegetical methods as they are applied in the field of today's biblical studies in specific.<sup>2</sup>

In order to gain better insight in the structural understanding of theoretical thought/Reason, the third article of this series will examine Dooyeweerd's and Canale's work from a different angle: on one side, I will show how their frameworks have been used as an analytic tool to critically inquire into theory building and data interpretation; on the other, I will describe the differences of their focus and analysis. Both the focus on the use-oriented benefit and the focus on comparing Dooyeweerd's and Canale's philosophical thinking will set the stage for a meaningful critique of their work. Such a critique will be part of my fourth and final article where I try to enhance and unify both works into a meaningful format, in which this format will not only function as an expedient framework for an in-depth criticism of biblical methodologies, but also as a grid for the development of a biblical methodology that does justice to both the complexity of the biblical data and the biblical hermeneutical horizon.

*3.2 Application of the Analysis of Theoretical  
Thought/Reason*

*3.2.1 Dooyeweerd*

Using his critique of theoretical thought, Dooyeweerd extensively analyzed various philosophical traditions and scientific trends, but did not spell out in

<sup>1</sup>Oliver Glanz, "Investigating the Presuppositional Realm of Biblical-Theological Methodology, Part I: Dooyeweerd on Reason," *AUSS* 47 (2009): 5-35; idem, "Investigating the Presuppositional Realm of Biblical-Theological Methodology, Part II: Canale on Reason," *AUSS* 47 (2009): 217-240.

<sup>2</sup>See the introduction of Glanz, "Part 1: Dooyeweerd on Reason."

detail how it can be used as a methodology for critical analysis in detail. In his article, "De verhouding tussen wijsbegeerte en theologie en de strijd der faculteiten" (the relation between philosophy and theology and the controversy between the departments) we can gain an idea of how Dooyeweerd himself applied his structural analysis in his critique of theology. As theology is also a discipline of theoretical thought, its place in Dooyeweerd's article can be exchanged for any other science. Here his article will serve as a starting point for revealing the methodological steps such a transcendental critique demands.

In his article, Dooyeweerd shows that theology is characterized by the attitude of theoretical thinking like any other science.<sup>3</sup> Thus one implication is that theology must choose an Archimedean standpoint<sup>4</sup> just as any other science must do. Therefore, the content of its Archimedean standpoint is not of a theological, i.e., theoretical character, but a religious character.<sup>5</sup> A second implication is that theology reflects one of the many *Gegenstand*-relations: the opposition of the logical modal aspect and the modal aspect of faith.<sup>6</sup> In Dooyeweerd's structural analysis of theoretical thought, theology cannot be understood as a means to come to true knowledge of God and the self as traditionally believed. Such knowledge is of a supratheoretical character and can only be obtained by reading the Holy Scriptures with the involvement of the human heart, which is of supratemporal character. This reading process is further in need of the guidance of the Holy Spirit.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, theology as bound to man's temporal theoretical thinking cannot claim infallibility or superiority over any other science. Between the central biblical starting point and the scientific discipline of theology as dogmatic theology, a necessary philosophical expression of a starting point that functions as a foundation is to be found, guaranteeing a theoretical, total view for all the possible *Gegenstand*-relations that man can involve himself in with his attitude of theoretical thinking.

From this Archimedean standpoint, it is possible to formulate an idea of the totality of meaning by which philosophical thought receives an insight into the totality of the modal diversity of coherence. This insight gives all the special sciences, among which is theology, their proper place and sphere. Thus to be able to do biblical theology, we are in need of a biblical philosophy

<sup>3</sup>H. Dooyeweerd, "De Verhouding Tussen Wijsbegeerte En Theologic En De Strijd Der Faculteiten," *Philosophia reformata: organ van de Vereniging voor Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte* 23 (1958): 1-2.

<sup>4</sup>An explanation of the term can be found in Glanz, "Part I: Dooyeweerd on Reason," 31.

<sup>5</sup>Dooyeweerd, 19.

<sup>6</sup>An overview of the different modal aspects and the *Gegenstandsrelation* can be found in Glanz, "Part I: Dooyeweerd on Reason," 19-20, 29-30, §§1.2.3 and 1.3.2.1.

<sup>7</sup>Dooyeweerd, 3.

that is fully dependent on the biblical ground-motive the self identifies with.<sup>8</sup> Giving insight into the modal diversity is the object of philosophical thinking, not of any specific science, which is unable to look beyond its own sphere. Since good science can only be done when the total temporal horizon and its inner relation is laid bare, without philosophy the performance of nonreductionistic relative science is impossible, as all sciences are in danger of finding their transcendental idea within its *Gegenstand*-relation.

According to Dooyeweerd, philosophy is thus not a "vakwetenschap" (i.e., specific scientific discipline), which searches its object of study within a certain aspect, but "Zij is veeleer de wetenschap der wetenschappelijke principia" (She [philosophy] is rather the science of the principles of science).<sup>9</sup>

Continuing in this line of thought, a methodological analysis of thought should investigate the following specific levels of content:

1. the level of the religious starting point that contains the three transcendental ideas of coherence, unity, and origin;
2. the level of the expression of the philosophical total view of reality;
3. the level of a specific science characterized by its *Gegenstand*-relation. In a critical analysis of thought, one can structure different expressions according to these three levels, while still being aware that thought constructions can be complex and not always reducible to these categories.

Total-view thoughts enable the transcendental analysis to uncover the content of the transcendental ideas because total-view thoughts determine the understanding of the structural datum. To be able to uncover the total-view perspective, the transcendental idea of origin needs to be found. As the *first* and *second ways* of Dooyeweerd's transcendental critique have shown, theoretical thinking, including theoretical synthesis, must assume a transcendental idea of origin. Since, I believe, the discovery of the radical dependence of philosophy on an idea of origin is most fruitful and will also give access to the idea of coherence and unity in the critical analysis of theoretical concepts, I will focus on the idea of origin. Along with Roy A. Clouser, a philosopher in the Dooyeweerdian tradition, I understand the idea of origin as a primary belief and as a tool for methodological analysis. Clouser detects a noetic and an antic sense of primary beliefs as the starting point of theoretical thinking. The *noetic sense* concerns the order of beliefs. A belief is primary when it functions as a necessary presupposition of another belief and does not itself presuppose yet another belief.<sup>10</sup> The *ontic sense* concerns the

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 15.

<sup>9</sup>Dooyeweerd, 84.

<sup>10</sup>Roy A. Clouser, *The Myth of Religious Neutrality: An Essay on the Hidden Role of Religious Belief in Theories*, rev. ed. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2005), 15-16.

order of reality: "In this sense one belief is primary with respect to another when the object of the secondary belief is taken to depend on the object of the primary belief for its reality?"<sup>11</sup>

The two senses of primacy (noetic and ontic) show that the idea of origin functions as an argumentative axiom and as generating a concept of reality. Noetic and ontic primacies are respectively responsible for the order of arguments and the order of the being-diversity.

The source of the multitude of different theoretical understandings is found in the different primary beliefs. A transcendental critique must therefore search for that which is supposed to exist independently from everything else, having "unconditional independent reality."<sup>12</sup>

There are two types of hypotheses occurring in science and philosophy that can help to uncover implicit primary beliefs. One is the "entity-hypothesis," an intellectual guess that postulates the existence of an underlying hidden reality that fills in the missing links in the observational data and that helps to make sense of the data.<sup>13</sup> Most helpful, however, is the "perspective-hypothesis," a proposed perspective on the arrangement of all structural data.<sup>14</sup> Hypotheses are helpful because they are our own inventions and therefore inspired by the understanding of ourselves in our sharing in a specific idea of origin, that functions as primary unconditional independent reality

The hermeneutical questions of a critique of theoretical thought should therefore be What kind of relations can be found in the presentation of the structural data? and How do properties of one kind produce properties of another kind in this theory? By means of these questions, thinkers have made so-called priority assignments that reveal the idea of origin a thinker has chosen.

### 3.2.2 Canale's Application of the Structural Analysis of Reason

In Canale's view, the diversity of interpretations of a certain subject matter does not necessarily result from faulty reasoning or evidence. The structure of Reason makes us understand that the differently chosen dimensionalities of Reason partly determine the specific interpretational result. Thus truly understanding and overcoming disagreement requires an analysis and evaluation of the deeper presuppositions behind interpretations.

On the basis of his formal structure of Reason and the resulting description of the hypotheticality of Reason, Canale wrote various articles on

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid. 23.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 72-76.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 76-78.

the methodological application of his structural analysis. Here I will give a short description of his suggested procedure to analyze interpretations.

### 3.2.2.1 *The Subject-Object Relation*

#### *As Point of Departure*

The subject-object relation, as the most foundational structure of Reason, functions as the point of departure for the analysis of different interpretations.<sup>15</sup> Human understanding moves from the interpreting subject to the issue or thing that is interpreted. The human act of interpretation therefore has a beginning, a movement, and an end. The beginning is represented by the subject and its chosen interpretational perspective (presuppositions); the end is represented by the issue (contained or expressed by the object) or object.<sup>16</sup> Consequently, the movement is the process by which the subject interprets the issue or object.

#### 3.2.2.2 *Method*

Canale understands the subject-object relation as a methodological one.<sup>17</sup> All knowledge, structured by the subject-object relationship, is thus the result of method as action. Method as action implies that method has the basic structure of action involving cause and condition. Action cannot take place without being caused or without certain conditions.<sup>18</sup> The "cause" of the hermeneutical method is found in the subject. The subject's causation is however not autonomous but dependent on and conditioned by the object. Canale detects three aspects that condition any method-action: the material, the final, and the formal. The *material aspect* represents the data that are to be researched to understand a certain subject matter. The material aspect is the material object under study; it is the object's condition of the method-action. The *final aspect* represents the specific subject matter that the subject tries to understand. Different subject matters can be approached with the study of a single object.<sup>19</sup> The formal *aspect* deals with the hermeneutical patterns that are

<sup>15</sup>Fernando Luis Canale, "Evangelical Theology and Open Theism: Toward a Biblical Understanding of the Macro Hermeneutical Principles of Theology?" *Enfoques* 26/1 (2004): 5.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Fernando Luis Canale, "Interdisciplinary Method in Christian Theology? In Search of a Working Proposal," *Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie and Religionsphilosophie* 43/4 (2001): 370-371.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 370-375.

<sup>19</sup>Using Dooyeweerd's terminology, one could say that the subject matter can be both of naive (the object of the subject would be the object as thing in its entirety) and of theoretical character (the object of the subject would be an aspect of the object as *Gegenstand*).

used in order to process the material or data. The formal side is the subject side's condition of the method-action.

The variety of methods (ways) stems from the aspects of methodological conditioning (material, final, and formal). For the sake of clarity, Canale distinguishes two categories of variety: structural variety and hermeneutical variety. The structural variety of methods is needed in order to do justice to the diversity of objects (material aspect) and subject matters (final aspect). The hermeneutical variety of methods points to the formal aspect of any act-condition. The formal aspect as the hypothetical character of Reason's structure lies fully on the subjective side as the subject's contribution to the subject-object relation. The hermeneutical variety originates from the different interpretations of hermeneutical principles. One could say that the formal aspect does not specifically belong to the essence of a scientific discipline, but to the very essence of human thinking.

Consequently, the formal aspect of act-condition does not only include the interpretation of Reason's frameworks, but also the understanding of the ground of Being as a dimensionality of Reason. Canale calls this foundational ontological level "system," the broadest and all-encompassing concept, which is synonymous with the "ground of Being." The system is the ultimate horizon and ground for the development of any paradigm. Canale, Küng, and others understand "paradigm" to be the interpretation of Reason's frameworks. There are thus two important theoretical distinctions, referring to two presuppositional levels, to be made in the formal aspect: the formal level of system and the formal level of paradigm.<sup>20</sup>

On the level of the system, i.e. foundational ontology, there is the formal condition of Reason, i.e., "systematism," and the material interpretation of this formal condition, i.e., "system." The formal condition of Reason expresses the systematic nature of Reason as Reason's dimensionality. We are confronted with this systematic nature at the very moment we arrange the available data into a system according to a principle. The systematism of Reason expresses its formal side by the need for a principle of arrangement and by the arrangement of a coherent view of the data observed. In order to arrange the experience of the subject-object relation into a coherent system, the articulation of a grounding Idea (i.e., a concept of Being) is needed.

On the level of the paradigm, we also find the formal condition, i.e., "methodological matrix," and a material interpretation of this formal condition, i.e., "paradigm."

The formal condition of the paradigm needs an understanding of how knowing functions (epistemology), what can be known (ontology), and what creates coherence between the two (theology), in order to have a clear viewpoint for the interpretational endeavor. This formal side or matrix needs

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 204-205.

a realization or interpretation out of which methodologies can be developed for the different subject-object relations.

In analyzing any understanding, whether of a scientific, philosophical, or naive character, one needs to distinguish the three conditional aspects of method.<sup>21</sup> The relation between the final and the material aspect is of great importance. The chosen object of study provides a specific subject matter that can give a hint about what kind of formal aspect is involved.<sup>22</sup> Further, awareness of the two different levels of the formal aspect, system, and paradigm, provides orientation in the analysis of scientific results.

The hermeneutical analysis must first uncover the final and material aspects and then search for the underlying paradigm of the methodology.<sup>23</sup> Understanding the epistemological, ontological, and theological perspectives of the paradigm and their deterministic influence on the data within the conditions of the final and material inputs, the analysis proceeds by searching the foundational ontology that undergirds the paradigm.

According to Canale, the various sciences with their various subject matters need to share the same interpretation of systematism and matrix if they want to create real unity within structural diversity." This call for presuppositional unity is urgent, as the differentiations and specializations of scientific disciplines increase." The urgency of an interdisciplinary matrix built upon the same understanding of systematism and matrix intensifies in the face of growing ideological diversity due to scientific fragmentation. As the ideological diversity increases, the structural diversity is in danger of losing its independence and justification. A unified basic ontological foundation is needed in order not to lose the coherent structural diversity, i.e., the interdisciplinary connections between the different scientific enterprises.

### 3.2.3 Summary

We can see that according to both Dooyeweerd and Canale, any understanding, but here explicitly scientific and philosophical understanding, has a hermeneutical nature that hints at the presuppositional levels brought by the subject or self. No science is able to use philosophy uncritically for its development of methodologies, since philosophical thinking needs to involve itself in a transcendental idea (Dooyeweerd) or the interpretation of the formal conditions of Reason (Canale). Similarly to Canale, Dooyeweerd

<sup>21</sup>Canale, "Interdisciplinary Method in Christian Theology?" 371-375.

<sup>22</sup>Fernando Luis Canale, *Back to Revelation-Inspiration: Searching for the Cognitive Foundation of Christian Theology in a Postmodern World* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2001), 11-17.

<sup>23</sup>Canale, "Interdisciplinary Method in Christian Theology?" 387-389.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 375-387.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 389.



can therefore say: "Theology is in need of a radical self-critique as to its philosophical fundamentals."<sup>26</sup> To both thinkers, the question is not whether theology should have a philosophical foundation but whether the philosophical foundation of theology has a biblical or nonbiblical nature.

### *3.3 Comparison between Dooyeweerd and Canale*

A comparison between Dooyeweerd and Canale on all levels is not possible. The reason is that Canale has not yet developed a complex philosophy such as Dooyeweerd's in his *New Critique*.<sup>27</sup>

Canale's philosophical work focuses on the phenomenological analysis of Reason and a biblical interpretation of foundational ontology. Aside from a short outline in his dissertation, Canale has not yet developed an actual interpretation of Reason's frameworks, especially an ontology and epistemology, within the setting of a temporal foundational ontology.

Thus the area of comparison is limited and much of Dooyeweerd's work cannot be included in a comparison. Still, a comparison on the level of transcendental presuppositions promises to be very fruitful as both Dooyeweerd and Canale accept transcendental presuppositions as basic and determinative.

#### 3.3.1 The Necessity of Discovering Transcendental Presuppositions

Both Dooyeweerd and Canale try to find the most important reasons for the diversity of philosophical and theological schools within the formal structure of the philosophical and scientific thought-activity itself. On one hand, this formal structure reveals the supratemporal character of the necessary transcendental ideas (Dooyeweerd) and, on the other, the formal structure reveals the hypotheticity of Reason's hermeneutical presuppositions (Canale). Both thinkers unite in the claim that an understanding of the inner structure of humanity's intellectual activity (theoretical thought/Reason) is promising as it delivers a deeper understanding of the diversity of positions. Insight in this inner structure, they believe, can lead to mutual understanding and dialogue between different schools and traditions of thought.<sup>28</sup>

The discovery of the presuppositional structure of man's intellectual activity leads both Dooyeweerd and Canale to the conclusion that neither

<sup>26</sup>Dooyeweerd, 21. Cf. Canale, "Evangelical Theology and Open Theology and Open Theism," 68-70.

<sup>27</sup>H. Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, 4 vols. (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997).

<sup>28</sup>Canale, *A Criticism of Theological Reason*, 400.

theoretical thought/Reason nor any other human faculty can be considered autonomous.

### 3.3.1.1 Reason and Thinking—Knowledge

Whereas Canale analyzes Reason, Dooyeweerd analyzes theoretical thought. While Canale understands Reason as all-encompassing, Dooyeweerd considers theoretical thinking as limited in scope. Canale understands Reason as basic Knowledge that springs from a subject-object relation, Dooyeweerd understands theoretical thought as an act that strives for theoretical synthesis to dissolve the antithetical character of the *Gegenstand*-relation.

While Canale makes the generation of any knowledge (specific and general) central to his analysis, Dooyeweerd critically inquires about the generation of theoretical concepts. As Canale does not offer an elaborate insight into the difference between scientific and naive thinking, a comparison with Dooyeweerd's understanding of theoretical thought is difficult. Nevertheless, an interesting comparison on the understanding of the term "knowledge" is possible and helpful.

Although Dooyeweerd does not explicitly conceptualize knowledge, N. G. Geertsema tries to uncover which concept may be assumed on the basis of Dooyeweerd's thought.<sup>29</sup> On the basis of Geertsema's study, further points of agreement and disagreement regarding the understanding of knowledge of the two thinkers can be found.

As explained, Dooyeweerd and Canale do not see the subject-object relation as problematic. They do not see a fundamental gap between subject and object or between the human being and the thing to be understood. Dooyeweerd understands the subject-object and subject-subject relations as meaningful, i.e., interdependent. Meaning-being implies living in relationship in a horizontal and vertical sense. In Canale's thought, there is no meaning outside of a subject-object relationship, since it is only on the basis of a subject-object relationship that meaning can be generated. To Canale, this fact is not grounded in an interpretation of the phenomenological structure, but is a structural necessity of the phenomenological structure itself. In Canale's work, the contribution of the subject is the interpretational framework that guides the creation of an image of the object, while the object contributes its lines of intelligibility. On the basis of his biblical-temporal interpretation of the phenomenological structure, the gap between the subject and object is annihilated. The biblical conception of Being does not allow for a dualism between being and appearance in the classical sense, but implies that being is appearance and that appearance already implies Knowledge.<sup>30</sup> Appearance

<sup>29</sup>H. G. Geertsema, "Dooyeweerd on Knowledge and Truth," in *Ways of Knowing: In Concert*, ed. John H. Kok (Sioux Center: Dordt College Press, 2005), 85-100.

<sup>30</sup>Canale, *A Criticism of Theological Reason*, 367.

implies knowledge because appearance is only appearance at the moment it is known, i.e., a subject-object relation exists.<sup>31</sup> Thus knowledge does not need to overcome an ontological gap by means of abstraction.<sup>32</sup> Both the subject's interpretational framework and the object's lines of intelligibility have temporal character.

In Dooyeweerd's philosophy, knowledge is closely related to experience.<sup>33</sup> Different experiences can be differently qualified. Nevertheless, the analytic aspect is present in all experience.<sup>34</sup> Knowledge does not necessarily need to be qualified by the analytic aspect in order to be knowledge. Because of this understanding, Dooyeweerd's concept of knowledge always emphasizes two aspects. The first aspect is that any thing, entity, event, or human is subject to the modal laws. Therefore, any act is characterized by all modal aspects. The other aspect is that all being is meaning-being and does not therefore have any existence in itself, but is interdependent. In the integral cosmic coherence, things cannot exist by themselves, but are dependent on other things to realize their subject- and object-functions.

Connecting knowledge closely to experience, Dooyeweerd rejects the idea that analytic or logical knowing is the one true way of knowing. The idea that logical knowing is the only reliable way of knowing is built upon the dogma of the autonomy of theoretical thought. To Dooyeweerd, analytic knowing is only one valid way of knowing among many others. He explains that besides logical knowing, there is also social knowing or instinct, as knowing that is qualified by the psychic aspect. Every knowing is legitimate and has its purpose within meaning-being. This does not mean that all subject-object relations are establishing knowledge. There are also subject-object and subject-subject relations that have only ontic and not epistemic character. In his transcendental critique of theoretical thought, however, Dooyeweerd especially focuses on the analytic way of knowing.

Since any kind of knowing is part of meaning-being, there is no knowledge that is absolute. All knowledge is relative, and "there is no truth in itself."<sup>35</sup> Knowledge as the integral experience of meaning-being is therefore always dependent on the relation of the knowing subject to a known object. Any object that we "perceive is related to and dependent on our perceptual apparatus."<sup>36</sup> This again stresses the radical meaning of meaning-being: the entirety of an object does not exist independently of a subject, and a subject

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 386.

<sup>33</sup>Geertsema, 87.

<sup>34</sup>René van Woudenberg, "Theorie Van Het Kennen," in *Kennis En Werkelijkheid*, ed. René van Woudenberg (Amsterdam- Buijten & Schipperheijn, 1996), 34-35.

<sup>35</sup>Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, 2:577.

<sup>36</sup>Geertsema, 89.

cannot fully realize itself when it is not related to an object. A further important point to understand about Dooyeweerd's conception of knowledge is that in the systase (i.e., existing in relationship together)<sup>37</sup> of the subject-object relation, the object is not a construction of the mind. Geertsema writes:

There are actual subject-functions of the thing that are objectified in the perceptual image. Therefore, the objective sensory perceptual image and the subjective image of my perception are not identical. . . We might even say that there should be a correspondence between the objective perceptual state of affairs and the subjective perceptual image (cf. 441). The one is the norm of the other.<sup>38</sup>

Since subject and object are under the same creational law, the subject- object relations cannot be consumed by either objectivism or subjectivism, but have a basic normative character. As the logical object-function of an object is related to the logical subject-function, it is the responsibility of the subject to disclose the object in a logical concept that does justice to the logical objective-function of the object as it corresponds with it.<sup>39</sup>

While both thinkers agree that meaning is established by the contribution of both subject and object and that the subject-object relation is considered temporal and thus nondualistic, Dooyeweerd's understanding of the subject- object relation and the distinct contribution of both sides creates a much clearer picture than Canale's. As far as I can see, Canale cannot be that clear in his explanation, because he has not yet developed an ontology that helps to explain how the subject-object relation takes place in the temporal horizon, and he does not introduce the biblical idea of the law to which all creation is bound. The latter demonstrates the strength of Dooyeweerd's interpretation of the subject-object relation.

In conclusion, Canale's understanding of Reason has much in common with Dooyeweerd's understanding of knowledge. While Canale finds Reason to include the many ways of knowing,<sup>40</sup> Dooyeweerd concentrates on an analysis of logically qualified knowing.

### 3.3.1 .2 Method

Canale does not choose a distinct religious position in his analysis of the structure of Reason, but works explicitly from phenomenology. Later we will return to the question of whether a phenomenological analysis does not in and of itself already imply a standpoint, rendering it nonneutral.

<sup>37</sup>Dooyeweerd's understanding of "systase" is described in Glanz, "Part I: Dooyeweerd on Reason," 28.

<sup>38</sup>Geertsema, 90.

<sup>39</sup>Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, 390-391.

<sup>40</sup>Canale, *Back to Revelation-Inspiration*, 132.

A practical advantage of a phenomenological analysis could be that it is likely to be more acceptable and accessible for non-Christian thinkers and schools of philosophy. Canale clearly distinguishes between the formal structure of Reason and the possible interpretations thereof. This means that the nonneutrality of human thinking is not defended on the basis of a Christian interpretation of the phenomenological structure of Reason, but on the analysis of the phenomenology of Reason itself. It does not imply that Canale does not have any assumptions, but only that his assumptions do not necessarily have a Christian background and promise to be shared by different philosophical schools — especially by those that take the subject-object problem as their point of departure. One such broadly acknowledged assumption is that knowledge is established in the structure of a subject-object relation. A connected assumption is that no understanding can be found outside of Reason.

In opposition to Canale, Dooyeweerd chooses an expressly Christian starting point. This starting point finds its expression in the modal theory that functions as a basis for especially the *second way* of his transcendental critique. Still, the modal theory is not only based on religious beliefs, but is provided with substantial and persuasive philosophical arguments. Therefore, the theory should not be unacceptable *per se* to non-Christian thinkers. Nevertheless, Dooyeweerd's entire analysis is strongly influenced by the assumption that God is the only absolute sovereign and that all creation, including all faculties of humanity, must be understood as relative toward the creator-God. By means of this religious presupposition, Dooyeweerd can uncover the inner structure of theoretical thought and reveal that thinking always has religious presuppositions.

That Dooyeweerd takes a clear ideological position in his structural analysis can be seen in the fact that in his whole thinking he assumes the temporal-supratemporal-[non-Greek]timelessness framework<sup>41</sup> and locates his entire critique of Western philosophy within this framework. Canale understands the interpretation of this framework to be the result of an act of faith whose content does not belong to the phenomenological structure of Reason, but to the interpretation of the phenomenological structure. Canale's biblical interpretation of the presuppositional structure of Reason, however, reveals the temporal-supratemporal distinction as problematic because it is nonbiblical.

Thus Canale's understanding that a concept is basically religious on its transcendental level builds upon two assumptions: first, Reason is identified with that which makes knowledge or meaning possible, and knowledge is identified with that which makes the expression of meaningful words possible;

<sup>41</sup>See Glanz, "Part I: Dooyeweerd on Reason," 22, n. 58.

second, Reason's basic structure is the subject-object relation, since there is no knowledge outside of this relationship.

One could say that Canale proceeds from a structural abstraction of the subject-object relationship of knowledge to the presuppositional level of foundational ontology. Dooyeweerd's understanding of the subject matter builds upon the claim that thinking is not absolute, but dependent on a relationship with God. Here one could say that Dooyeweerd proceeds from the content of his religious belief in the Christian God to the presuppositional level of transcendental ideas.

With this basic distinction in mind, we must clearly distinguish the Dooyeweerdian and Canalian use of the term "structure." To Dooyeweerd, the structure of thinking can only be uncovered by the radical biblical ground-motif of creation-fall-redemption. His structural understanding thus already includes a religious interpretation and is most likely not achievable without this religious standpoint. To Canale, the structure of any thought-act is not uncovered on the basis of an explicit *a priori* religious standpoint, but on the basis of a phenomenological analysis. Consequently Canale's uncovered structure of Reason still needs an interpretation on the basis of a choice on the level of foundational ontology, while Dooyeweerd's uncovered structure of thinking is only possible on the basis of a religious choice that has transcendental character.

### 3.3.1.3 *The Transcendental Presuppositions*

Dooyeweerd and Canale use different terms to refer to the transcendental presuppositions of thinking. Foundational ontology as the underlying structure of all three frameworks of Reason especially refers to the idea of coherence mediated by the conception of theos to which foundational ontology is attributed. In Dooyeweerd's terminology the idea of coherence is coupled with the ideas of origin and unity to constitute the transcendental ground idea. Thus, when it comes down to the idea of coherence, foundational ontology and transcendental ground idea seem to be equivalent. To Canale, however, the time-supratime-[non-Greek] timelessness framework does not refer to the idea of origin (which can be found in the theological framework of Reason's structure), but to the idea of coherence. To Canale, the idea of coherence has structural priority over the concept of theos/origin. This distinction is important, since it can be helpful to see a structural distinction between Being and origin, although a philosophical understanding of foundational ontology implies necessarily a concept of origin. Thus Canale would consider a transcendental ground idea that includes origin, unity, and coherence problematic, since it hides the important phenomenological finding that the framework of the theos already implies a foundational ontology. As I have tried to show before, foundational ontology conditions the interpretation of the theological

framework without conditioning the onticity of the origin. Dooyeweerd has a timeless conception of God because of a specific interpretation of Being. From a Canalian perspective, Dooyeweerd makes his idea of origin coappear with a timelessness interpretation of foundational ontology. To Dooyeweerd, God is beyond created time and created supratemporality, and as creator of time is himself timeless. Though Dooyeweerd tries to distance himself from the Greek conception of timelessness, it is questionable whether he really frees himself from the classical onto-theo-logical paradigm.<sup>42</sup> The fact is that Dooyeweerd connects his understanding of God with a conception of timelessness. All of his thinking is attributed to this temporal-supratemporal[non-Greek]timelessness framework. This framework represents the ground of his argument for coherence and unity. Dooyeweerd's interpretation of coherence and unity is therefore not simply rooted in the idea of origin as the one absolute sovereign God (which is a true biblical belief), but also in the timeless ground of Being that underlies this idea. This latter cannot be defended by biblical writings.<sup>43</sup>

Further, the ideas of coherence in Canale's foundational ontology and Dooyeweerd's transcendental ground idea have different degrees of complexity. The ideas of unity and coherence in Dooyeweerd's transcendental ground idea are elaborate. To Canale, the development and elaboration of Dooyeweerd's transcendental ideas of unity and coherence should be understood as developed interpretations of a basic foundational ontology. By this, I mean that the developed Dooyeweerdian concepts of unity and coherence belong to the interpretation of Canale's framework of ontology rather than to the underlying structure of foundational ontology. Attributing time to created reality, supratime to the self, and timelessness to God takes place as interpretation of the frameworks of Reason within timeless Being as ground.

While the interpretation of God is partly determined by a chosen ground of Being, the choice for a specific theos is not. In conclusion, besides the presuppositional choice for an interpretation of Being, a second presuppositional choice is required: a specific theos.

<sup>42</sup>Oliver Glanz, "Time, Reason, and Religious Belief: A Limited Comparison, Critical Assessment, and Further Development of Herman Dooyeweerd's Structural Analysis of Theoretical Thought and Fernando Canale's Phenomenological Analysis of the Structure of Reason and Its Biblical Interpretation" (master's thesis, Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, 2006), nn. 20 and 35.

<sup>43</sup>On this issue, see, e.g., Oscar Cullmann, "Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?" in *Immortality*, ed. Terence Penelhum (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1973), 53-85; Thorleif Boman, *Das Hebräische Denken im Vergleich mit dem Griechischen*, 5, neubearb. und erw. Aufl. ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 31-39, 131- 133; Canale, "Basic Elements of Christian Theology," §§33-40; James Muilenberg, "The Biblical View of Time," *The Harvard Theological Review* 54 (1961): 225-252.

The different methods of analyzing theoretical thought/Reason (Christian-philosophical versus phenomenological) can be found back in the different understandings of "transcendental" and "faith." Based on the slight but influential difference between the terms "foundational ontology" and "transcendental ideas," the structural need for a faith-act is differently interpreted. To Canale, the act of faith by the spontaneous subject is still an act of Reason.<sup>44</sup> To Dooyeweerd, the act of faith is beyond thinking and of supratemporal character, taking place in the supratemporal heart.<sup>45</sup> I have explained in the first article why Dooyeweerd places the starting point of theoretical thought outside of thought. Canale understands faith differently because of his universalization of Reason. Reason always functions actively and is present any moment we try to understand or even misunderstand. Since foundational ontology belongs to the structure of Reason, the structure of Reason also includes the transcendental primordial presupposition as ground for any conceptualization of theos, ontos, and the epistemic.

The spontaneity of the subject that chooses for an interpretation of the ground of Being belongs to the necessary structure of Reason, since it has a foundational function for the generation of meaning. Faith then belongs to the structure of Reason, and is therefore an act of Reason.<sup>46</sup>

These different understandings of the term "faith" give birth to different characterizations of the term "transcendental" in the thought of the two thinkers. To Dooyeweerd, "transcendental" refers to that which has supratemporal function, while Canale understands "transcendental" as the necessary content of foundational ontology contributed by the act of faith. This content does not have to be of supratemporal origin or function, but can also be of temporal character, depending on which foundational ontology is chosen.

At this point, we can see that Canale would understand Dooyeweerd's faith-act as a secondary faith-act. This is because Dooyeweerd can only arrive at his understanding of faith on the basis of a timeless ground of Being, which is the chosen content of the primary faith-act. Thus Dooyeweerd's understanding of faith is based on and strongly influenced by his choice of a distinct foundational ontology (primary faith-act).

As Canale reveals a primordial presuppositional level that goes beyond the transcendental level of Dooyeweerd, I suggest there are two structurally distinguished faith-acts that need to take place in order to establish a theoretical total view on reality. In the first faith-act, content is given to foundational ontology, while in the second faith-act the choice for a theos (e.g., the biblical

<sup>44</sup>Cf. Glanz, "Part 2: Canale on Reason," 226-230.

<sup>45</sup>Glanz, "Part 1: Dooyeweerd on Reason," 31-32.

<sup>46</sup>Glanz, "Part 2: Canale on Reason," 226-230.



creator-God, survival-of-the-fittest principle, physical-energy principle) is expressed within the chosen ground of Being.

The awareness of this distinction in faith-acts helps to identify the foundational ontological structure that underlies the frameworks of theos, ontos, and logos and helps to criticize the foundational ontological framework from the perspective of the chosen theos.<sup>47</sup>

The comparison thus far shows that a division between the phenomenological structure and the interpretation of the phenomenological structure helps to discern what content was given to Reason's frameworks in the course of interpreting them, and to criticize this content from the perspective of one's own interpretation of Reason's frameworks (as Dooyeweerd does).

### 3.3.2 Being of God—Created Being of Humanity

There are several similarities between Canale's interpretation of being and Dooyeweerd's understanding of meaning-being. To both Dooyeweerd and Canale, the biblical account does not problematize the relation between God's being and humanity's being. There is a difference between God's being and men's being, but not a gap that would make true understanding impossible. Therefore, neither dualism nor tension can be found in God's creation and its relative relation to him.

The fact that the difference between the source of being (God) and being (meaning-being) is not situated in dualism is in need of explanation. Such an explanation is not only of religious interest, but also of philosophical interest as the diversity of reality needs a coherent explanation rooted in the idea of origin. Such an explanation can be found in the terminology of the two thinkers. Canale speaks of the relation between the rational ground of Being and being as structural relation discovered through phenomenological analysis. The interpretation of God's being and creational being, i.e., theology and ontology, can be understood as "regional" interpretations placed within universal Reason. Being is, however, revealed by God (in Scripture), which makes a rational understanding of God's being (theology) possible. Dooyeweerd speaks of the relation between being and meaning-being ("zin-zijn"). Both thinkers try to point to the continuity-discontinuity relation between God and creation through their terminology. Their different interpretations of the transcendence of God constitute the core motif of their explanations of the fundamental relation between God and humanity.

In order to understand better the two approaches to this relation, I will summarize the classical Thomistic explanation of this relation (4.2.1) and the Dooyeweerdian and Canalian critique thereof (4.2.2).

<sup>47</sup>Canale, *A Criticism of Theological Reason*, 386.

### 3.3.2.1 Analogia entis

Dooyeweerd and Canale basically agree on the following description and analysis of the *analogia entis*:<sup>48</sup>

To Thomas, the perfection of God finds its expression in his creation. This means that we can only grasp the eternal timeless perfection of God through the diversity of reality. The temporal diversity of reality as a whole reflects and expresses the perfection of God. On the side of time, there is diversity, and on the side of God's divine timelessness, there is perfection. In a certain sense, the diversity points to the divine perfection within time. There are different levels of diversity that express the perfection of God in different degrees. Human beings express the being of God more exactly than any other creatures. These varying degrees of expression are crucial for understanding the Thomistic *analogia entis*. The diversity of being is located in the dualistic tension between being and nonbeing. The diversity of being is correlated to the diversity in intensity of taking part in the divine being. Every level of being thus expresses the perfection of God, but can be hierarchically organized in terms of exactness. Lower levels of being are more distant from the perfection of God and head toward nothingness.

The tension between God and nothingness forms the background of the classic understanding of the position of reason: the immortal soul as the substantial form of the body is understood as *anima rationalis*.<sup>49</sup> The *anima rationalis* is the closest to God and itself of timeless character. By this interpretation, reason received an absolutistic interpretation and position within the human scope of being. Reason is the central expression of humanity as *imago dei*. The absolutization of reason in classical thought and its accompanying dualism causes various ontological and epistemological problems.

### 3.3.2.2 Ways of Overcoming

Contrary to Thomas, both Dooyeweerd and Canale try to ground their philosophical understanding of the relation between God and humanity in Scripture (and more specifically in Exod 6).<sup>50</sup> Dooyeweerd and Canale also agree that a true, i.e., biblical understanding of meaning-being/being, can only

<sup>48</sup>Cf. H. G. Geertsema, "Transcendentale Opeilheid: Over Het Zinkarakter Van de Werkelijkheid in De Wijsbegeerte Van H. Dooyeweerd," *Philosophia reformata: organ van de Vereiging voor Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte* 35 (1970): 25-32; Canale, *A Criticism of Theological Reason*, 164-208.

<sup>49</sup>Hans Joachim Storig, *Kleine Weltgeschichte der Philosophie* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 2003), 288-289.

<sup>50</sup>See Geertsema, "Transcendentale Openheid"; Canale, *A Criticism of Theological Reason*, 285-289, 364-366.

be derived from an understanding of God, as he is the origin of meaning being/being.

Although both choose the biblical God as the radical origin of all creation, they clearly differ in the characterization of God's being. Canale views Being as radically connected with YHWH's being in Exod 6.<sup>51</sup> He characterizes the being of God as temporal since in Exod 6, YHWH explains his own being within a temporal ground of Being. With this background, Canale arrives at his foundational ontological interpretation of Reason's dimensionality that is contrary to Dooyeweerd.<sup>52</sup>

According to Canale, the Bible knows the being of God through the temporal extensions of past, present, and future. In Canale's exegetical discovery, YHWH is both the subject that causes the action and the object on which the action is accomplished.<sup>53</sup> Therefore, the appearance of God as object of his action is his being itself:<sup>54</sup> God's being and appearance are one and therefore express the covenant-trustworthiness of a personal God. There is no analogical gap between appearance and being as both are grounded in the same temporal ontological foundation.<sup>55</sup> In order to prevent misunderstanding, Canale stresses that the being-appearance identification is presenting itself as a dynamic one within the biblical text. God himself is in the fire, but he is not fire. To understand this fact, new epistemological categories need to be developed, since all the categories we use and know are placed within and understood from a timeless framework.<sup>56</sup>

According to Canale's interpretation of the phenomenological structure of Reason, the epistemological framework needs to be understood within temporality. This idea seems to harmonize with Dooyeweerd's conclusion that thinking is of nonsupratemporal character, bound to the horizon of time. Still, Canale characterizes the temporal-cognitive process differently as he disconnects it from a supratemporal heart. To Canale, the human soul/heart is as temporal as the self's thinking. In order to discover the meaning of the temporally extended subject matter, cognition must go through a "tension" (gathering) process. The classical idea of the *analogia entis* is overcome, as there is nothing behind the phenomenon: the phenomenon is everything. Only the coappearance of Being enables God, man, and other entities to appear. The denial of the *analogia entis* idea does not refuse an analogical procedure, but calls for a redefinition. The choice for a temporal dimensionality of Reason will lead to the concept that the analogical procedure does not require a

<sup>51</sup>Canale, *A Criticism of Theological Reason*, 373.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., 338.

<sup>53</sup>This is expressed in the Hebrew use of the reflective Nifal verb. <sup>54</sup>Cf.

Glanz, "Part 2: Canale on Reason," 235-236.

<sup>55</sup>Canale, *A Criticism of Theological Reason*, 358-359.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., 361-362.

discontinuity with the intelligibility of what is given in the temporal realm of appearances, but does require the continuity of the meaning and intelligibility of what is given in the temporal realm of appearances with what is beyond the moment of presence, i.e., the temporal extension of being (past and future appearances). Consequently, the continuity between the relation of God and creation is found within time.

According to Dooyeweerd, the term "being" does not exist in the Thomistic way of understanding. To Dooyeweerd, the term "being" only exists as Being, i.e., only as God's Being. All creation exists as meaning, not as being. This idea is connected to the biblical idea that Being<sup>57</sup> is only expressed in relation to YHWH and his revelation of the meaning of his name. Being is therefore understood as "zelfgenoegzaamheid" (self-satisfaction). Meaning is understood as relative and "onzelfgenoegzame" (not self-satisfied) meaning-being.<sup>58</sup> Thus Dooyeweerd does not create a single terminology to describe the existence of God and the reality of creation. He does not locate the cause of meaning-being in the being of God as such, but in his will. Thus Dooyeweerd seems to try to place the problem of continuity and discontinuity in a realm other than the ontological, since the will of God cannot be identified with the Being of God.<sup>59</sup>

This strategy suggests that the *analogia entis* no longer needs to bridge an ontological discontinuity. Nevertheless, the problem is not solved while the answer to the question of how we can come to an understanding of God remains completely mysterious. First, one might ask whether knowledge of God's will is itself not already knowledge about God's being. Second, there is the question of how an understanding of God is possible, if there is no basic naive conception of God's onticity. Such a naive understanding of God is crucial if Christian theoretical thought is to be possible. This question seems to lead Dooyeweerd back to a basic temporal ontological discontinuity between creator and creation in the end. This discontinuity finds expression in the importance of the time-supratime[non-Greek]timelessness framework that functions as the presupposition of his modal theory in his *New Critique*.<sup>60</sup> Still, this ontological discontinuity between God and man is not bridged by analogy, as Dooyeweerd argues for the radical dependence of all creation on God. Dooyeweerd solves the problem by placing the center of humanity in the heart and not in an *anima rationalis*.<sup>61</sup> Biblical understanding

<sup>57</sup>"Being" in this context should not be confused with Canale's use of the term. To Canale, "Being" is not equivalent to "existence." Cf. Glanz, "Part 2: Canale on Reason," §1.2.3.

<sup>58</sup>Geertsema, "Transcendentale Openheid," 39.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 53.

<sup>60</sup>Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*.

<sup>61</sup>F1. Dooyeweerd, "Het Tijdsprobleem in De Wigsbegeerte Der Wetsidee,"

places the heart beyond any *anima rationalis*.<sup>62</sup> Making the *anima rationalis* the center of humanity stems from an absolutization of rational capacity, which contradicts the biblical conception of relative and radically dependent creation, contradicts the biblical teaching of the all-encompassing fallenness of humanity, including the heart, and ignores the heart that is the center of human individuality and identity

Since Dooyeweerd identifies the heart with supratemporality and supramodality, he is able to prevent reductionistic tendencies when it shares in the biblical starting point of the only sovereign and independent God. By identifying the heart with supratemporality, Dooyeweerd needs to reinterpret the analogical idea as having temporal instead of supratemporal character. To Dooyeweerd, analogies were mistakenly used in classical thought to bridge the time-timelessness gap. In contrast, Dooyeweerd uses analogy to create inner coherence between the temporal diversity of modalities. These analogical moments do not bridge the gap between time and timelessness, but between the different modalities within time. Thomas, in contrast, uses analogy to relate the continuity and discontinuity between creation and creator.

We have seen that the critique of Dooyeweerd and Canale on the analogical understanding of Thomas does not destroy, but redefines analogical terminology. In the redefinition of analogical moments, Dooyeweerd and Canale, however, lose their conformity Dooyeweerd's critique targets the Thomistic misinterpretation of cosmic time, which is most centrally expressed in his idea that the human heart is the root-unity<sup>63</sup> of created reality. The two aspects, cosmic time and the heart as supratemporal root-unity, are the central focus of his critique. Canale focuses his critique of the analogical understanding much more on the time-timelessness framework that created the ontological gap between God and creation in the first place. If a biblical philosophy is to be developed, a reinterpretation of the relation between time and timelessness is not needed, but rather a reinterpretation of foundational ontology. Thus, while Dooyeweerd accepts the timeless interpretation of foundational ontology but reinterprets and modifies it in regard to the relation between creator and creation, Canale sees the need for a fully new foundational ontology that does justice to the biblical conception of God and thereby eliminates the specific ontological gap.

Both Dooyeweerd and Canale understand the classical epistemological problem as being ontological in nature. They, however, solve this ontological

---

*Philosophia reformata: organ van de Vereniging voor Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte* 5 (1940): 180-182.

<sup>62</sup>Geertsema, "Transcendentale Openheid," 10.

<sup>63</sup>Glanz, "Part 1" Dooyeweerd on Reason," 22-23, 23-25.

problem in different ways. Further, both argue that the concentration point and coherence of the ontic diversity is found in the thinking subject.

### 3.3.3 Understanding of the Subject-Object Relation

Dooyeweerd and Canale agree that the classical idea of correspondence between knowing and being is problematic, since its underlying metaphysical conception assumes a gap between subject and object.<sup>64</sup> The two thinkers locate the classical motives to problematize the subject-object relation, i.e., to recognize an ontological gap between subject and object, in presuppositions that were adopted by classical thinkers (cf. 1.3.1.1). Canale locates it in the classical timeless ground of Being, while Dooyeweerd locates it in the different unbiblical ground-motives that are characterized by the dogma of the autonomy of theoretical thought. The autonomy of theoretical thought leads to absolutizations of different possible *Gegenstand*-relations and misinterpretations of the modal kernel of the *Gegenstand* and its analogical relations as representing the content of transcendental ideas. Because of this the *Gegenstand*-relation has been mistaken for the subject-object relation in the history of philosophy. This led to the lack of awareness that theoretical thinking—being crucially different from naive thinking—has a necessarily religious starting point.

Because Dooyeweerd and Canale see that meaning-being/being always encompasses theoretical knowing/knowing, the theory of correspondence between knowing and being in its classical metaphysical sense is not acceptable. They come to similar conclusions by different arguments. Dooyeweerd grounds his argumentation in his ontology Based on his modal theory, Dooyeweerd knows that theoretical and pretheoretical thought are always characterized by cosmic time. The analytic aspect does not have a supraposition in regard to the diversity of modalities, but is itself a part thereof. Analytic thinking is therefore one aspect of meaning-being and thus cannot correspond with being. Further, the conception of reality that undergirds the correspondence theory is contrary to Dooyeweerd's philosophy. As explained, in our naive state of being, we experience the subject-object or subject-subject relations integrally intertwined. Things do exist in relationship (systasis). Things cannot exist by themselves: this would contradict the central character of meaning-

<sup>64</sup>Canale puts emphasis on the fact that from a rational perspective the adherents of the correspondence theory have overcome most of the epistemological problems and provide coherent explanations. Therefore, Canale does not consider the correspondence theory as necessarily problematic from a rational perspective, but from the perspective of biblical ontological and dimensionality. To him, it is not necessary to challenge the coherence of viability of classical or modern philosophy, but to point out that they have difficulties to integrate the phenomena and claims of Scripture. See Canale, *Back to Revelation-Inspiration*, 127.

being. Creation as meaning-being is defined as expressing radical dependence on its creator as relative being, and expressing inner interdependence and therefore uniformity in being subject to the same law.<sup>65</sup> Canale arrives at the conclusion that Being encompasses knowing without depending on an ontology. To him, the interrelation between Being and knowing is a structural necessity uncovered by the phenomenological analysis.

In contrast to Dooyeweerd, Canale shows that metaphysical abstractions like "form and matter," "grace and nature," or "freedom and nature" are necessarily determined by the presuppositional acceptance of a timeless dimensionality of Reason. Flowing from timeless Being, the time- timeless dualism as a basic framework of Reason has often functioned as an interpretative tool of philosophical thinking. Identifying the two poles has led to different absolutizations. The timeless conception has often been identified with reason and the existentiality of emotions. In the case of such identification, an idea of reality in itself was considered attainable by rational or emotional abstraction. In the absence of such identification, knowledge or reality in itself was considered unattainable. This conclusion was only possible because of the distinction between reality in itself and reality as it appears, which is based on the timeless dimensionality of Reason. Consequently, in Canale's critique there are two levels that account for the dualism within the subject-object relation: the chosen dimensionality of Reason that opens the structural possibility for dualistic interpretations, and the content of the different dualistic interpretations, varying in terms of which human faculty (if any at all) is identified with the realm of timelessness. To Canale, a biblical-temporal interpretation of the ground of Being negates the idea of a metaphysical thing in itself.

Dooyeweerd shares Canale's second level. In fact, as Dooyeweerd is not laying bare the foundational ontological level, but concentrates much more on the different interpretations of the time-timeless framework, he offers a more detailed understanding of the necessary interpretational act in which a supratemporal standpoint is sought. He argues that any abstraction that identifies something modal with supratemporality has its roots in the logical *Gegenstand*-relation that assumes thought itself to be supratemporal and therefore interprets the logical analogies within the modal diversity as the essence of reality. Since he connects the dichotomy of "reality in itself" and "reality as it appears" to the absolutization of something temporal, thereby rendering it supratemporal, he locates the problem much more in this idealization than in the time-timeless framework. The question here is whether a new identification with the supratemporal realm, as Dooyeweerd proposes in the form of the human heart, will really solve the dualistic problem of the subject-object relation. If it is possible to solve the subject-

<sup>65</sup>Dooyeweerd, *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, 1:4.

object dualism within a timeless ground of Being, a temporal dimensionality of Reason as a solution to the classical and modern subject-object problem would not be needed. Canale's argument that the time-timeless dichotomy is the cause of dualism would consequently be tremendously weakened. But to demonstrate that the subject-object problem is solved, Dooyeweerdian thinking would need to prove that the reidentification of the supratemporal with the human heart makes all dualism disappear.<sup>66</sup> Not only the classical *chorismos* between subject and object would need to be overcome, but also the *chorismos* between man and God that prevents a true understanding of temporal reality as it appears. I personally think that the latter problem will hardly be solvable if Dooyeweerdian thinking will hold on to its belief that thought and experience are temporal, the heart supratemporal, and God timeless.<sup>67</sup> But even if theoretically a dualism in Dooyeweerd's philosophy could be overcome, it does not necessarily mean that it proves to be biblical. In any case, Canale would stress that a truly biblical philosophy needs to work on the basis of a temporal dimensionality of Reason and establish a theory that does not overcome dualism within a time-timeless setting, but within a biblical-temporal setting. Christian philosophy does not accomplish its task when it reinterprets the widely accepted timeless interpretation of Being, but needs to be more fundamentally critical by investigating whether timeless Being is representing biblical foundational ontology at all. Canale can agree with Dooyeweerd's understanding of the erroneous absolutization or supratemporalization of the temporal, but he reaches beyond by challenging the very assumption that there is both a temporal and supratemporal world.

After having shown that Dooyeweerd and Canale argue against the autonomy of rational thinking, it can easily be pointed out that because they view Reason/theoretical thinking as being encompassed by being/Being, they agree that there is no absolute world and therefore no absolute knowledge.<sup>68</sup> Accordingly, both thinkers reject the idea of truth as agreement between thought and being. This rejection is based on the fact that such a definition implies a "thing in itself" that is timeless and requires a cognitive faculty that is able to participate in the supratemporal world in order to be

<sup>66</sup>There is reason to doubt that there is not a dualism between the supratemporal "heart" and the temporal "body" remaining (see Gerrit Glas, "Filosofische Antropologie," in *Kennis En Werkelijkheid: Tweede Inleiding Tot Een Christelijke Filosofie*, ed. René van Woudenberg, Verantwoording [Amsterdam: Buijten & Schipperheijn, Kok, 1996], 109, 114-121). Further, one might wonder if the discontinuity between theoretical thinking and naive thinking (the latter does not abstract from temporal coherence, the first does) is not a relict of classical-dualistic thinking.

<sup>67</sup>That there is a dualistic problem that would need to be worked out more clearly in order to be able to address it distinctively can be seen in the unclear explanation of how biblical revelation is communicated supratemporally to the human heart.

<sup>68</sup>Geertsema, "Dooyeweerd on Knowledge and Truth," 85-86.



known. If absoluteness is therefore understood as timeless and immutable, both Dooyeweerd and Canale see the need to reject the idea of absolute knowledge.

### 3.3.4 Application of Analysis

The application of the analysis of Dooyeweerd and Canale shows that they agree that philosophy has an important role in setting the stage for any scientific discipline. Philosophy is concerned with the interpretation of systematism and matrix (Canale) or the theoretical construction of reality in its totality (Dooyeweerd). Since any scientific discipline shares a system/total view on reality that largely determines the outcome of understanding, the discipline that addresses this level is most essential.

Dooyeweerd's analysis of theoretical thinking is much more persuasive in its application than Canale's. The three transcendental ideas prove to be helpful hermeneutical tools to uncover the presuppositional level of scientific theories and philosophies.

Further, with help of the modal theory, the individual sovereignty of different scientific disciplines can more easily be justified. To Canale, such justification, on the basis of his understanding of "method" is rather difficult, even though he emphasizes that a structural variety of methods is needed to do justice to the diversity of objects and subject matters. This difficulty exists because his formal structure of Reason does not allow for a classification of the many possible subject matters. Such a classification would demand an ontology. An ontology is necessary to differentiate between naive and theoretical thinking in terms of the subject-object relationship and *Gegenstand*-relation. The development thereof would help to distinguish different classifications of subject matters and objects. The current state of development of Canale's structure of Reason finds its best application in the discipline of Christian theology, where it is often the different groundings of the concept of God that generate different theological understandings. However, I believe that Canale's application of the structure of Reason can also be a great analytical tool in the realm of the humanities. Canale's analysis cannot yet be of much value to the natural sciences, as it does not yet include a developed ontology.

In the Christian perspective of both Dooyeweerd and Canale, it is God who provides through revelation the starting point of philosophy. Humanity in its spontaneity (Canale) or freedom (Dooyeweerd) is not determined to choose this specific starting point, but is determined to make a specific choice that functions as the starting point. The consequences of rejecting the Christian starting point are characterized differently by the two thinkers. In Dooyeweerd's modal theory, any nonbiblical starting point will raise antinomies. In contrast, Canale does see the possibility that many different interpretations

of Reason are all coherent. I think this contrast stems from Canale's neglect in distinguishing between meaning and the rational expression of Meaning. I agree with Canale that there are many different or even opposing expressions of Meaning possible that are coherent. However, not all expressions of Meaning equally correspond to the experience of Meaning. I will come back to this point in my critique in the forthcoming fourth article.

### *3.4 Summary*

On the basis of Dooyeweerd's and Canale's different analyses of presuppositions and a comparison of their thinking, we can see that Canale's analysis and biblical interpretation of the phenomenological structure provides a perspective to criticize Dooyeweerd's presuppositions. On the other hand, Dooyeweerd's modal theory is helpful for critically examining Canale's understanding of Meaning. In addition, the value of Dooyeweerd in contributing to a further development of the interpretation of Canale's frameworks of Reason lies in his inspiring modal theory, the clear distinction between theoretical and naïve thinking, and the central role given to the heart.

The fourth and last article will be dedicated to an integration of both thinkers into a meaningful system after a critique has revealed the weak or incomplete aspects of Dooyeweerd's and Canale's analysis and application thereof.