The Philosophy of the Law-Idea

Foreword

Now that what I regard as my life’s work—the foundation and systematic development of the “Philosophy of the Law-Idea”—has reached its first provisional conclusions, and I am able to let this extensive work appear in its present form, I want to first give thanks to God, who has permitted me to finish this work, in spite of what often appeared to me at first to be insurmountable difficulties. Second, I want to acknowledge my gratitude to the Directors of the Dr. Kuyper Foundation [‘Kuiperstichting’], who helped make possible the publication of this work, which in today’s difficult circumstances brings with it an especially great risk for the publisher.

It was only after much hesitation and after numerous revisions of the whole project that I decided to let this new systematic philosophy appear publicly. The first, still very rudimentary conception of this philosophy had already ripened before I arrived at the Kuiperstichting in The Hague [fall of 1922].

At first I was strongly under the influence of neo-Kantian philosophy, and later of Husserl’s phenomenology. The great turning point in my thought was the discovery of the religious root of thought itself. This discovery shed a new light on the continuing failure of all attempts, including my own, to bring an inner connection between Christian belief and a philosophy that is rooted in the belief of the self-sufficiency of human reason.

I came to understand the central significance that Holy Scripture repeatedly places on the “heart” as the religious root of all human existence.
From out of this central Christian viewpoint, it appeared to me that a revolution was necessary in philosophic thought, a revolution of so radical a character, that, compared with it, Kant’s “Copernican revolution” can only be qualified as a revolution in the periphery. For what is at stake here is no less than a relativizing of the whole temporal cosmos in what we refer to as both its “natural” sides as well as its “spiritual” sides, over against the religious root of creation in Christ. In comparison with this basic Scriptural idea [grondgedachte], of what significance is a revolution in a view of reality that relativizes the “natural” sides of temporal reality with respect to a theoretical abstraction such as Kant’s “homo noumenon” or his “transcendental subject of thought?”

In the light of Scripture, the whole attitude of that kind of philosophic thought that proclaims thought to be self-sufficient, appears to be one that takes its standpoint in a falling away [af-val] from our true human selfhood, since it essentially withdraws human thought from the divine revelation in Jesus Christ. The first result of the Scriptural viewpoint in relation to the root of the entire temporal reality was a radical break with the philosophic view of reality rooted in what I have called the 'immanence-standpoint.'

The discovery of the philosophic Ground-Idea, which lies at the foundation [grondslag] of all truly philosophic thinking, made it possible to see the dependence on a supra-theoretical, religious a priori in the various theoretical views about the structure of reality, as they have developed in the prevailing immanence-philosophy. It also allowed criticism of these theoretical views to be made on a much deeper lying plane than is possible on the immanence-standpoint.

Temporal reality cannot itself be regarded as neutral with respect to its religious root. In other words, the whole thought of a fixed temporal reality “an sich” [in itself and unrelated to our human subjectivity] rests on a fundamental misconception. If temporal reality is not neutral, how can we continue to seriously believe in the religious neutrality of theoretical thought?

The development and carrying out of the cosmological Ground-Principle of sphere sovereignty, which plays such a fundamental role in the Law-Idea of this new philosophy, was totally dependent on this newly won Christian-religious Ground-Attitude in philosophy. This Ground-Principle is intrinsically foreign to immanence-philosophy, and was first formulated by Kuyper.

On this foundation rests the general theory of the law-spheres, developed in Volume II. The first conception of this theory was obtained after the discovery of the inner structure of the temporal meaning-modalities. I could already explain this in my inaugural address [“The Significance of the Cosmonomic Idea for Jurisprudence and Philosophy of Law” (1926)].

Unforeseen difficulties arose in the working out of this theory. This was not only due to the fact that nowhere was there a point of contact in the prevailing philosophy, but also because it could not become fruitful without a close contact with the Christian Law-Idea.

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This is also the reason why in my earlier publications I connected the theory of the law-spheres to the particular fundamental problems of my own special field of science, i.e. jurisprudence. I wanted to first assure myself that this philosophical theory has a value in principle for the special sciences, before I drew any provisional systematic conclusions. I admit at once that it was just this omission of a systematic-philosophic development that made it difficult for observers to appreciate the true reach and extent of these publications.

I have also had many difficulties in working out the theory of the individuality-structures of reality, which is found in Volume III. In The Crisis in the Humanistic Theory of the State (1932), I had already given account of the new view that this theory offers of the structure of naïve experience, and especially its groundbreaking significance for so-called sociology and jurisprudence. But this theory, too lacks its own further working out in a systematic-philosophical way. Its significance is not limited to special sciences, since it touches the fundamental structure of reality itself.

In all of this I had the strong feeling that it is impossible to give a truly fruitful working out of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea for today’s level of scientific thinking without a staff of colleagues who are at home in special scientific disciplines. It is vital for this young philosophy for it to find acceptance by Christian scientific workers, and for a circle of adherents to be formed that is able to independently think through its Ground-Motives in relation to the special sciences, and to develop them further.

I am very grateful that from the beginning my colleague Dr. Vollenhoven has been at my side. Vollenhoven taught general philosophy at the Free University, and his name has become indissolubly connected with mine. It was also for us a great joy to find an enthusiastic independent colleague in Prof. Dr. H.G. Stoker, who in various publications has made known the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, and whose very keen, constructive criticism has called attention to various points that require a more precise working out.

Although I can not yet follow the full reach of Stoker’s own expansive ideas, and although I initially have certain reservations against them, this does not prevent me from rejoicing over the fact that he wants to offer the services of his philosophic talents, which he already showed in Scheler’s circle, in the further independent extension of this new philosophy. I regard his assistance of great value, especially in the field of psychology, his own specialty.

And finally there is the happy circumstance that among the younger scientists, a circle of adherents is gradually, although modestly, beginning to form. Each of these scientists is trying to make this new philosophy fruitful in his or her own specialty. This first circle of scientific workers has formed around the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. They are connected by the same Christian belief, and they all similarly experience the electrifying effect that flows out from the Christian vital root to the practice of science.

God grant that this modest circle may grow to become a large group and that many who should be our adherents, but who still out of an inner opposition resist the idea of a Christian science, will become convinced that it is not just a question of a “system” (subject to all the faults and mistakes of human thought) but much rather the foundation and the root of scientific thought as such.
In conclusion let me make two further remarks. First a remark that I intend in good will towards my main opponents. I am fully aware that a method of criticism that tries to follow a certain philosophic train of thought to its deepest religious foundations is something that must stir up the most extreme emotional reactions in an individual. I have repeatedly observed that an opponent feels personally attacked by this, or that the impression is formed that a judgment is being made by me in an ex-cathedra style by someone who wants to elevate himself above his opponents and continually exalts himself.

No one can be unhappier about such misunderstandings than myself. A judgment about the personal religious situation of an opponent would be human arrogance, an attempt to exalt oneself to the judgment seat of God. I have continually emphasized in this work that the Philosophy of the Law-Idea always remains within the objective framework of principles, even when it delivers sharp penetrating criticism on immanence-philosophy.

A self-satisfied scientific attitude in relation to immanence-philosophy hardly goes together with a Christian view of science and a Christian attitude towards knowledge. Whoever does not understand that the extensive criticism of the humanistic immanence-philosophy, which is given in Part Two of Volume I, is essentially intended as self-criticism, does not understand the intentions of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. It is like a legal case that the Christian thinker pleads with himself. I would not be able to make such sharp judgments about immanence-philosophy were it not for the fact that I have myself gone through it. I have personally experienced its problematics. And I would not have made such a sharp judgment over the attempts to accommodate immanence-philosophy and Christian beliefs had I not myself lived through the inner tension between both of them, and had I not myself wrestled with such attempts of synthesis.

My second remark is of a more formal nature. I have frequently noticed that many of those who study this new philosophy are scared off by its supposed obscurity and complicated nature. The new terminology also scares of many of those who are interested. They want a popular form that speaks to them immediately without much effort.

To this I can give only one answer: the Philosophy of the Law-Idea is in fact difficult and complicated, just because it breaks with all traditional philosophic views. Whoever wants to really make this philosophy his or her own must try to follow its turns of thought step by step and penetrate behind the theoretical structure to the religious Ground-Attitude of this whole way of philosophizing.

This philosophy will not open its meaning if people are not prepared to read it in a way that frees themselves from traditional ontological and epistemological views, or if they only read isolated parts of its system.

But no one can ignore this philosophy. Just as Christian thought cannot close itself off from immanence philosophy in an attitude of negation, immanence philosophy cannot close itself off in such an attitude with respect to the Philosophy of the Law-Idea.

It has always been a law of human knowledge, that truth is won only in the conflict of opinions. May then the conflict regarding the Philosophy of the Law-Idea be fought only for the sake of truth and thus in a chivalrous manner.
I do not consider it a disadvantage if this philosophy is not granted a quick and easy success. No one less than Kant explained in the Foreword to his *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik*:

I flatter myself that I could have given popularity to my discourses if all I had had to do was to develop a plan and to then commend its completion to others, and if the welfare of science, which has occupied me for so long had not been so dear to my heart; for otherwise much perseverance and self-denial is required in order to disregard the temptation of an early favourable reception for instead the prospect of an admittedly later, but permanent approval.\(^1\)

If Kant deemed his transcendental philosophy worthy of this self-denial, then it is also proper for those who do not just merely want to set up a “new system,” but rather are concerned with the *Christian foundations of theoretical thought*. A quickly obtained but purely personal and therefore worthless success should not be preferred to what is required—a lengthy difficult work in silence, carried out in the belief that thereby something permanent can be obtained in the realization of the Christian idea of theory. For in fact, no precarious and changing valuation by our fellow humans can count in the slightest as against the inner joy and happiness that is given by the practice of a science that seeks its standpoint in Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life!

The Author [1935]

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\(^1\) Original German cited by Dooyeweerd:

…allein Popularität hatte ich meinem Vortrage (wie ich mir schmeichele) wohl geben können, wenn es mir nur darum zu tun gewesen wäre, einen Plan zu entwerfen und dessen Vollziehung andern anzupreisen, und mir nicht das Wohl der Wissenschaft, die mich so lange beschäftigt hielt, am Herzen gelegen hätte; denn übrigens gehörte viel Beharrlichkeit und auch selbst nich wenig Selbstverläugnung dazu, die Anlockung einer früheren, günstigen Aufnahme der Aussicht auf einem zwar späten, aber dauerhaften Beifall nachzusetzen.

The 1902 Paul Carus translation is as follows:

Yet I flatter myself I might have made my own exposition popular, had my object been merely to sketch out a plan and leave its completion to others instead of having my heart in the welfare of the science, to which I had devoted myself so long; in truth, it required no little constancy, and even self-denial, to postpone the sweets of an immediate success to the prospect of a slower, but more lasting, reputation.
Whenever I give an account of reality, the first thing that I notice is that in my naïve, pre-theoretical attitude [of en-stasis], reality is originally given to me in an indissoluble interrelation [systasis] of all of its various sides. Whenever I confront this naïve experience with my theoretical or scientific attitude [of dis-stasis], reality appears to split up into various sides. These sides or aspects of reality are first articulately distinguished from each other by the theoretical attitude. But although I can distinguish the aspects, they continue to be inter-related. A continuing mutual dependence binds the numerical aspect to the spatial aspect, the spatial aspect with the kinetic aspect, the kinetic aspect with the aspect of organic life, organic life to the aspect of psychical feeling. Psychical feeling is connected with the analytical-logical aspect, which is connected with the historical aspect, the linguistic aspect, the social aspect, the economic aspect, the aesthetic aspect, the juridical aspect, the ethical aspect and the aspect of faith. Nothing exists in and of itself in the temporal coherence of the world; everything points within and beyond itself to all the others in their mutual coherence.

The coherence of all sides of the cosmos also expresses itself within each aspect of our cosmos. And this coherence points beyond itself to a deeper totality which has expressed itself in this coherence.²

Our selfhood, our "I-ness" expresses itself as a totality in the coherence of all its functions in all aspects of cosmic reality. And man, whose I-ness is expressed in the coherence of all his cosmic functions, was himself created by God as the expression of His image.³

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² Dooyeweerd: The reason that this deeper totality necessarily transcends the mutual coherence of all aspects of cosmic reality, just as our selfhood transcends its cosmic functions, will be discussed infra.

³ Dooyeweerd: This image was wiped out, when humans believed they were something in themselves. Compare the splendid expression in Calvin’s Épitre à tous amateurs de Jésus Christ 1535 (éd. J. Pannier, Paris; 1929), p. 36:

Car il l'avoit formé à son image & semblance, telleme(n)t que la lumière de sa gloire reluysoit clairement en ûy…Mails le malheureux voulant estre qu(el)que chose en soy-mesme…son image & semblance en estoit effacée.
This universal referring [heen-wijzende] and expressing [uitdrukkende] character of all our created cosmos, stamps created reality as meaning, in accordance with its dependent, non-self-sufficient way of being. Meaning is the being of all creaturely being. It is also the mode of being of our selfhood. It has a religious root and is of divine origin.

Now philosophy requires us to obtain a theoretical insight into the coherence of the [temporal] world. This temporal coherence in turn points towards a meaning-coherence that is a totality. We are fitted into this coherence of meaning with all our functions—what are called the natural functions as well as what are called the spiritual functions. Philosophy must direct the theoretical view of totality to our cosmos and within the boundaries of its possibilities it must answer the question, “Wie alles sich zum Ganzen webt.” [How everything moves towards totality].

The actual character of philosophic thought can never be misunderstood with impunity. Philosophic thought is theoretical thought directed to the meaning-totality of our cosmos.

These few introductory propositions already contain in themselves the whole problematics of the possibility of a truly philosophical thought!

Philosophic thought is an actual activity. In a philosophic concept, we abstract from the selfhood, the I-ness that is actually at work in this thinking. Such a reduced [afgetrokken] concept is therefore made at the expense of the actuality of the activity of philosophy.

Such an abstraction from the actual, complete I that thinks, may be necessary for a conceptual delimitation of philosophic thought. But even in this conceptual delimitation, the I-ness itself is actually doing the work. That I is not only actually at work in its thinking, but in all the functions in which it expresses itself within our temporal coherence. And there is no single meaning-side of our cosmos wherein I do not actually function. I have an actual function in the meaning of number expressed as unity, in space, in movement, in organic life, in psychical feeling, in logical thought, in historic development, in language, in association with my fellow man, in economic valuation, in aesthetic consideration or activity, in juridical life, in morality, in faith. In this whole composition [samenstel] of cosmic meaning-functions I am actually at work, in connection with other I’s.

Can philosophy, which in its theoretical actuality should be directed by the Idea of meaning-totality, ever be possible without philosophic reflection on the self-hood? Evidently not. A philosophy that in its philosophic thought does not arrive at philosophic reflection on the selfhood must necessarily miss its direction towards the meaning-
totality of our cosmos. The Gnothi seauton, the “know thyself” must indeed be written above the entranceway of philosophy.

But a great problem is hidden in just this philosophic demand for self-knowledge.

The I-ness that thinks philosophically, is certainly actually at work in this thought, but the I-ness necessarily transcends the philosophical concept. But, as shall be seen, the selfhood is the concentration point of all my cosmic functions. It is a subjective totality that can not be comprehended in philosophic thought nor in any other function, nor in the coherence of these functions. Rather it lies as the foundation of all of my functions as their presupposition [voor-onderstelde]. But without conceptual delimitation we cannot think at all; thus we cannot think in a philosophic way without conceptual delimitation.

How then is philosophic self-knowledge possible, unless this self-knowledge transcends the concept? [In for example Husserl’s phenomenology] there seems [at first sight] to be a way out of this difficulty. [Husserl says that] one cannot meaningfully ask philosophic thought to exceed its immanent boundaries in order to reach self-knowledge. Then, if it is admitted that I am actually at work in philosophic thinking, then philosophic thought must from the beginning concentrate on this I-ness, but only insofar as it reveals itself in thought itself as a subjectivity that cannot be eliminated. This I-ness is then the residue of a methodical elimination of all those moments in the concrete, temporally functioning “individual self,” which I cannot make into a “Gegenstand” of my thought.

[WdW I, 8] Study Notes #5
The supposed reduction of the I-ness to an immanent subjective pole of thought

[According to this rejected viewpoint] what then remains as subject is the so-called “transcendental logical subject of thought,” that has nothing individual in itself anymore and that is also not transcendent to thought, but rather an immanent subjective pole of thought. The counter-pole to this pole of thought is then the whole of experienceable reality.

The I-ness, which should arrive in philosophic self-reflection at a subjective turning inwards, is [in this rejected viewpoint] dissolved into an immanent “pure” actuality of thought [denk-actualiteit], which is then regarded as the necessary prerequisite of all theoretic thought. Philosophic self-reflection [on this rejected view] then consists of nothing else than a reflexiveness of philosophical thought on its own actuality.

But in this experiment of thought [of Husserl’s], the ghost of the “blessed Münchhausen” again appears. For what is called the 'transcendental logical subject of thought,' in which the ego is actually active, is here again truly abstracted (while still theoretically thinking) from our I-ness. In fact it is abstracted to the highest conceivable level of abstraction, since it is the product of a methodical process of elimination, in which the thinker supposes he is able to finally direct the thought-function entirely upon itself.
The transcendence of our selfhood above theoretical thought. The so-called transcendental subject of thought is as a theoretical abstraction and cannot be self-sufficient.

But this whole reduction of the thinking selfhood to a supposed “transcendental logical subject” can only be carried out by the thinking of our I-ness. And this theoretical thinking I-ness cannot itself be a product of abstractive thought. The “transcendental logical subject” in the supposed sense of a supra-individual subjective pole of thought, is finally nothing other than the bare concept of the subjective thinking subject that presupposes the thinking I-ness.

Philosophic thought can really not isolate itself in its subjective actuality. For as mere thought, as the so-called “reines Denken” [“pure thought”] it has no selfhood. All actuality in the act of thinking comes from the I-ness that transcends thinking. The “transcendental logical subject” remains an abstraction of the thinking I-ness. It is therefore a meaning-less, internally contradictory abstraction, because the actual thought-function can never be “an sich,” in itself. This is because without the transcending I-ness, this thinking function is just not actual, or rather it has no determined existence [aanzijn] at all.

Philosophic self-knowledge thus always supposes that our selfhood, which in its actual activity of thinking transcends the boundaries of thinking, directs its temporal activity of thinking to itself. It is not that philosophic thought reflexively turns inwards towards thought itself, but rather that I am required, in the process of philosophic thought, to turn inwards to my self. And this actual turning inwards in the act of thinking necessarily transcends the boundaries of philosophic thought if it is really to arrive at the desired self-knowledge. We may reach this same conclusion by another train of thought, which derives from the idea that philosophic thought is thinking about a totality.

As we have said, philosophic thought has the character of being directed to the totality of meaning. This cannot be disregarded with impunity. It is cosmological thought.

To therefore even make a beginning in philosophic thought, I already need the Idea of the totality of meaning in order to give my thought a fixed direction. If this Idea is not to remain completely without content, if it is to really give my philosophic thought a direction, then it must be possible for me, who wants to practice philosophy, to choose a standpoint for myself in the totality of meaning of our cosmos so that it does not remain foreign to me. My self-hood [I-ness] must participate in the totality of meaning if I can have an Idea of it in my philosophic thought.

To use an image: In order for my philosophic thought to be directed in this Idea to the totality of meaning, I must myself be able to climb a lookout tower above
all particularized meaning that functions within the temporal world-coherence. From that standpoint I can then look out over the world-coherence with all the diversity of meaning enclosed within it. In other words, I must be able to occupy a standpoint that transcends all particular functions within which I am actually at work in the world coherence. If I can not occupy such a standpoint I would in the process of philosophic thought, lose myself within such particularized meaning. Only in transcending particularized meaning can I obtain an actual view of the totality of meaning that transcends such particularized meaning.

[WdW I, 10b] Study Notes #8

The Archimedean point of philosophy and the tendency towards the Origin in philosophic thought

We call this fixed point, from out of which alone in the course of philosophic thought we can form the Idea of totality of meaning, the Archimedean point of philosophy. But standing in this Archimedean point, our selfhood discovers that the view of the totality of meaning is itself not possible without the view of the Origin, the Arché of both the totality of meaning and particularized meaning.

The totality of meaning of our cosmos, in which our selfhood is understood to participate, must, as the actual fullness of meaning, transcend all particularized meaning in the coherence of its diversity. But this in turn still remains meaning that cannot exist in itself, but which supposes an Arché, an Origin that gives meaning.

All meaning is from, through and to an Origin, which itself cannot be meaning.

The genetic relativity, the non-self-sufficiency of meaning lies in its essential character, and since philosophic thought cannot be other than thought that is directed to the totality of meaning of our cosmos, then a direction to the Arché is also necessarily included in this tendency to totality.

All truly philosophic thought is therefore begun as thought that is directed to the Origin of our cosmos. Non-Christian philosophy seeks this Origin within temporal meaning, even if it gives such a starting point an elevated name. This is a point that I will temporarily let rest. I now only want to place in the forefront the genetic ground-tendency [grondtendenz] of philosophic thought, as thought that is from and towards the Origin.

A premature appeal to the critical motive [motief] of the limits of our knowledge might appear to banish this entire genetic ground tendency of philosophy thought as directed to a transcendent Origin; but such a verdict cannot be peremptory. It would be premature as long as it is not seen that the philosophical question: "What are the limits to our knowledge?" presupposes insight into the meaning of knowledge, in its necessary relationship to our I-ness.
The opposition between the so-called critical and genetic methods is terminologically confusing, since their sense is not clearly defined.

For the ground-tendency mentioned above is so essential to philosophy that it is itself revealed in the heart of all epistemological questions. The critical question: How is universal knowledge of our cosmos possible? may in its emphasis on the a priori conditions of all human knowledge be sharply distinguished from all questions regarding the non-a priori moments of our knowledge. Nevertheless it is highly confusing to speak of a critical manner of thinking in opposition to a genetic manner, as is common in certain currents of Kantian philosophy.

After certain reflection, the critical question necessarily leads to the genetic: What is the origin of our knowledge and the knowable reality? Everything depends on the meaning of the genetic question, and one need only ask this question of meaning in order to see that therein the possibility of epistemology itself is made into a problem.

As we have said, meaning always refers outside and above itself to an origin, which no longer is meaning. Meaning remains in the relative. In contrast, the true Origin is absolute, self-sufficient!

If from the outset we theoretically regard one or more of our cognitive functions in their a priori structure as being in themselves, that is regarded apart from all further possible determinedness (as is done in certain idealistic attitudes of philosophic thought, improperly referred to as ‘critical’ thought), then they will necessarily be elevated to the a priori origin of our knowable cosmos.

If philosophic thought stops with this supposed Arché, then we have precluded the question of the meaning of our knowledge itself. Because the Arché is always transcendent to all meaning. But in this case where there is a supposed origin, the knowable cosmos rather derives all its meaning from the self-sufficient a priori structure of the cognitive functions. At this stage of the preliminary fundamental questions relating to the foundation of philosophy, philosophic thought has thus come to rest in its pretended origin of all knowable meaning.

So for example, from the neo-Kantian standpoint of the so-called Marburg school, it has no more meaning to ask as to the origin of the transcendental-logical meaning, in which they believe to be able to understand the entire cosmic reality. According to them, the origin of our knowable world is always of a transcendental-logical nature. From this standpoint, the cosmos obtains all its possible meaning from transcendental-logical thought!

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4 The critical Marburg school speaks of the origin of reality in a transcendental-logical sense! “Nur das Denken kann erzeugen, was als Sein gelten darf” (Cohen). [“Only thinking can produce that which can count as Being”].
But if the thinker finds no rest in logical meaning, then he is necessarily driven further into preliminary philosophical questions. The pretended *Arché* then appears not to be the true origin, but itself to exist only as meaning, which points towards its true origin.

Thinking does not come to rest in these preliminary philosophical questions, at least as long as the *Arché* is not discovered, which first gives *meaning* to philosophic thinking itself, and first gives creaturely determined being [*aanzijn*].

Philosophic thought cannot withdraw itself from this tendency towards the origin.

It is its immanent conformity to law for philosophic thought, to find no rest in *meaning*, but rather for it to think from and to the *origin*, in which meaning finds its ground and determined being [*aanzijn*]. Only where the *meaning* of questions ceases does philosophic thought come to its origin and is it set at rest.

[WdW I, 13] Study Notes #10
The restlessness of meaning in the tendency towards the origin of philosophic thought

This restlessness, which reveals itself in the tendency towards the origin of philosophic thought, is essentially the unrest of our selfhood, which is actually at work in our philosophic thought. This restlessness comes from out of our own I-ness, out of the root of our existence, and it is transmitted in all the temporal functions in which this I-ness is actually at work:

> Inquietum est cor nostrum et mundus in corde nostro!

[Our heart is restless and the world is restless in our heart!]

Our selfhood is actually at work in our philosophic thinking. And just as it is certain that philosophic thought in philosophical self-reflection does not exist without the direction to the selfhood, so it is also certain that it requires a direction to the *Arché* of our selfhood and to the totality of meaning. Our I-ness must participate in this totality of meaning if a genuine thinking of totality is to be possible.

Philosophic thought as such acquires the actuality of its meaning from the selfhood, which restlessly seeks its origin in order to understand its own meaning and in its own meaning to understand the meaning of our whole cosmos!

And it is just in this tendency towards the origin that our selfhood reveals its subjective subjected-ness [*onderworpenheid*] to a law. This law obtains the meaning-fullness of its validity from out of the Origin of all things, *and it limits and determines our selfhood*.

With this we have already discovered at the outset the twofold presupposition of philosophic thought: 1. an *Archimedean point* for the thinker, from out of which our selfhood can direct a view of totality over our cosmos and 2. a choice of position in the Archimedean point over against the *Arché*, which *transcends all meaning* and in which our selfhood comes to rest in its philosophic thought. If it tries to go beyond this *Arché*, there is no meaning in the asking of any further questions.
And the Archimedean point must satisfy these three conditions:

1. It may not be separate from our own subjective selfhood, for it is this selfhood that is actually at work in philosophic thought and in which alone we can transcend the diversity of meaning.

2. It may not be separate from the law, for without the law the subject sinks into chaos, or rather into nothingness, because it is only limited and determined through the law.

3. It must transcend all diversity of meaning and be located in the totality of meaning of the cosmos, in which our selfhood must participate if it can have an Idea of totality in its philosophic thought.

The prevailing philosophy views the self-sufficiency of philosophic thought as the alpha and omega of philosophic insight for accomplishing its task, as opposed to accepting any divine revelation. It will certainly admit the necessity of an Archimedean point. Since Descartes in his “cogito ergo sum” believed he had discovered the one fixed point as against the universal methodical skepticism with respect to all reality that offers itself to experience, the necessity of an Archimedean point has been generally acknowledged, at least insofar as philosophy sees the necessity of a critical self-reflection. But it will have to rise with all its might against the position defended here, that this Archimedean point cannot be found in philosophic thinking itself (whether or not in its coherence with other functions of consciousness). It must with respect to the Archimedean point of philosophy hold fast to the immanence standpoint, which rejects any support of thought in that which transcends the immanent boundaries of the functions as such of consciousness.\footnote{Transcendental philosophy, which seeks its Archimedean point in a transcendentally conceived “cogito,” shall certainly hesitate to speak of the a priori transcendental unity of thinking or of a function of consciousness. In transcendental philosophy, the immanent transcendental pole of thought is always elevated above all functions of consciousness, since these receive all their theoretical determinedness from transcendental thought. Seen from the Christian transcendent standpoint, the immanent a priori structure of thought remains functional, and transcendental thought remains a function of consciousness of our transcendent selfhood.}

Every attack on this immanence standpoint will mean for immanence philosophy an attack upon the scientific character of philosophy itself.
The immanence standpoint does not itself exclude the so-called metaphysical way to what transcends human thinking. If the immanence standpoint is accepted, this certainly does not thereby exclude the so-called metaphysical way to what transcends human thinking. Classical immanence philosophy was itself founded wholly in a metaphysical prima philosophia [first philosophy].

This metaphysical way to totality of meaning and the Arché, at least in the rationalistic currents of thought, necessarily involves the attempt to exceed the creaturely boundaries of philosophic thinking in the Idea of an absolute deified thought which comprises in itself the fullness of being. It is the noesis noeseos, the “intellectus archetypus” [archetypal intellect].

The rationalistic-metaphysical way from out of the immanence standpoint to an Arché transcending human thought is in other words the way of absolutization of the [logical] function of thought.

Deified thought, the noesis noeseos, becomes the Arché; human thought, in its supposed participation in divine reason, is understood as the Archimedean point; the totality of meaning is sought in the system of Ideas of immanent thought.

The immanence standpoint does not necessarily imply a belief in the self-sufficiency of human thought as against the rest of the immanent functions of consciousness. It shows rather the most divergent positions from metaphysical rationalism to modern irrationalistic life-philosophy. It also reveals itself in the form of the modern so-called existentialism, which has broken with the Cartesian (rationalistic) “cogito” as an Archimedean point, and supposes to have replaced it with life (vivo), as Dilthey does.

‘Immanence philosophy’ is used in the widest possible sense

We therefore take the term “immanence philosophy” not in the commonly used narrow meaning of philosophy, which posits all reality as immanent to consciousness and that has broken every bridge between human functions of consciousness and an “extra-mental reality,” but rather in the broader meaning of all philosophy that seeks its Archimedean point immanently in philosophic thought itself. We do this regardless of how this philosophic thought is then more precisely viewed, whether it be in a rationalistic, or an irrationalistic, or a metaphysical, or a transcendental-logical, or in a psychological, or in a historical sense.

From the immanence standpoint, the task of philosophy can be viewed broadly or more narrowly. So in the modern immanence philosophy there is a strong current that has emphasized the theoretical character of philosophical research, and that denies that the
theoretical is just one of the many points of view by which we can view the cosmos, although it is the only one in which we can really grasp it in the view of totality.

Next to the theoretical cosmos, immanence philosophy acknowledges the religious, the aesthetic, the moralistic and other a-theoretical “worlds,” and philosophy is then expressly denied the right to claim a monopoly of value for its theoretical cosmos. Through this philosophical direction the self-sufficiency of “transcendental” theoretical thought as Archimedean point for philosophy and Arché of the “theoretical cosmos” is even more powerfully brought to the fore.

On this standpoint, the theoretical cosmos is in fact that “creation” of philosophic thought. Theoretic thought must first methodically demolish all the atheoretical to a chaotic material of consciousness, which is then to be ordered to a cosmos in the creative forming of philosophic thought (Rickert).

The immanence philosopher in this conception of philosophy has the honest conviction that only in this way can the scientific character of philosophic thought be maintained. What would become of the “objectivity,” of the “universal validity,” of the controllability of philosophic thought if philosophy would bind itself to pre-suppositions that transcended its immanent boundaries? Religious and “weltanschauliche” convictions may be highly worthy of honour. Yes, the philosophy that understands its limits will be careful about attacking these convictions. But within the domain of philosophy the claims of these convictions cannot be recognized. It is said that this does not concern believing in what exceeds “the limits of our ability to know,” but rather is it a matter of objective truth that is valid equally for anyone who wants to think theoretically.

The so-called neutrality postulate can be regarded in the same way. It is by no means inherently acknowledged by the immanence standpoint, but only [expressly] accepted by those currents in immanence philosophy that do not acknowledge to philosophy any dominion over our personal life. All the shrewdness possessed by representatives of this standpoint is directed to demonstrating the correctness of the neutrality postulate. Two of the most discerning pleas for this have been made by Heinrich Rickert and Theodor Litt, which we will later examine, when we later deal in a more particular way with the relation between philosophy and life-and-world views.

[WdW I, 18] Study Notes #15
The inner problematic of the immanence standpoint

In this Introduction it is sufficient for us to bring to the fore the inner problematic of the immanence standpoint, and to demonstrate how the choice of this standpoint is not possible without an actual transcendence above philosophic thought and above all immanent functions of consciousness in the diversity of meaning.

In this connection we proceed from that which we earlier learned was essential for the Archimedean point of philosophy. We argued that this Archimedean point must be elevated above the diversity of meaning if it is really to offer to us a fixed point. Were the Archimedean point to itself lie in the diversity of meaning, then it would be per se
unsuitable as a point of departure from which a view of totality over the diversity of meaning could be directed.

The Archimedean point must also transcend the meaning coherence within the diversity of the meaning-sides. Of this we shall now give a further account.

[WdW I, 19] Study Notes #16

Why the totality of meaning cannot lie in the coherence of the diversity of meaning

The totality of meaning can also not lie in the immanent coherence in the diversity of meaning of the arithmetical side, the spatial side, the movement side, the side of organic life, the psychical side, logical, historical etc. sides of cosmic reality. The immanent coherence among all particular meaning-sides of our cosmos lacks in itself the inner concentration point in which all particular functions of meaning come together in the fullness of meaning. This truth is immediately revealed to us in self-reflection.

We began in this Introduction to observe that our selfhood expresses itself in all particular meaning-sides of our existence. This is only possible because all of these particular meaning functions find their transcendent concentration point in the selfhood, in the I-ness, elevated above the diversity of meaning. But our selfhood is not congruent with the mutual coherence between all the functions that we possess in the cosmos.

The diversity of meaning exists only in the mutual coherence of all particularized meaning, but this is the expression of a fullness of meaning that particularizes (verbijzondert) itself in the diversity of meaning.

As the fullness of meaning, the totality of meaning is the necessary transcendent center, where all particular meaning functions in their mutual coherence coincide in the unity of direction to the Origin, to the Arché, of all meaning.

[WdW I, 20]

The Archimedean point as concentration point for philosophic thought

In relation to the foregoing, the Archimedean point for philosophy must therefore be the concentration point for philosophic thought, and as such must also transcend the diversity of meaning in its coherence. Now can this concentration point itself be immanent to philosophic thought? In other words can we find anywhere in thought a point that really transcends the diversity of meaning?
Does the so-called transcendental subject of thought satisfy the demands of the Archimedean point?

With all sorts of terms that have not been properly analyzed as to their meaning, men try to suggest that we possess such a unity above the diversity of meaning in our philosophic thought: the “transcendental consciousness,” the “transcendental cogito,” the “phenomenologically purified consciousness” (as the absolute, meaning-giving consciousness) etc. etc. are conceived as the subjective pole of thought against which stands all the knowable in the counter-pole of objectivity.

This immanent subjective pole of thought, which we have already learned to know as the product of a theoretical abstraction, is then supposed to transcend as Archimedean point all coherence of the particular meaning sides of our cosmos.

And in fact, does not thought already elevate itself in its subjective pole above all meaning coherence in the diversity of meaning in that I have to think about such a meaning coherence if I want to speak about it?

But this argument rests on a serious misunderstanding, that is caused by the pitfall that lies hidden in the conception of the so-called “transcendental cogito” itself.

Although it is true that I myself transcend the coherence of all particular meaning-sides of cosmic reality, the same does not hold true for my [logical] function of thought in its subjective actuality that can never be made a “Gegenstand” of my thought.

In place of the cogito, place credo [faith]. In the place of the “I think”, place “I believe.”

It would have to be admitted that I can direct not only my thought, but also my function of belief on the coherence among the particular meaning-sides of our cosmos. If this meaning coherence of my functions in the cosmos is now transcended in my function of belief is there in other words also an actual immanent faith pole in which the diversity of meaning in its coherence is transcended?

But believing and thinking are distinguished in their functional meaning and I cannot transcend this cosmic diversity of meaning in my thinking itself, much less in my immanent function of belief.

But, someone may object, the diversity of meaning that you refer to is itself a state of affairs that first has meaning for our distinguishing thought? They may say, although it may be true that the [logical] function of thought, insofar as it is itself thought of as a side of the experienceable reality, is caught in the diversity of meaning, that does not show that the transcendental subject of thought, as subjective pole of thought could not transcend the coherence of the meaning-sides. And they will say, does it not just appear here that all diversity of meaning is unavoidably dependent on this transcendental subject of thought, so that we can indeed speak of the subjective pole of thought as a “Transcendenz in der Immanenz?” [Transcendence within Immanence]. We have here come to a very key point in our discussion with the adherents of the so-called “transcendental” immanence standpoint.
In the last objection a new pitfall is hidden, which we must carefully lay bare if it is not to repeatedly capture us. In the subjective pole of thought of which we here continually speak, there resides logical meaning as the pole of thought. As the subjective pole of philosophic thinking this is theoretical-logical meaning.

Just as we shall later demonstrate more fully, in our theoretical thinking we are always active in the placing over-against [tegen-overstelling] of the non-logical to the immanent-logical meaning of thought, and it is just in this opposition that the theoretical problem is born.

[WdW I, 22] Study Notes #18
The theoretical joining of meaning [synthesis] presupposes the diversified meaning of the logical. The non-logical that is set over-against it

In this theoretical, over-against thinking rests all correct concept formation and distinctions of the meaning sides of the cosmos, and upon a joining [verbinding] or synthesis of the logical meaning of thinking with the opposed non-logical meaning, which synthesis in itself is a fundamental problem [grondprobleem] of philosophy.

This joining of meaning or synthesis of meaning, by which, as we shall later see, theoretical thought distinguishes itself from all non-theoretical thought, already presupposes the meaning coherence in the diversity of meaning of logical and non-logical meaning.

Therefore, the logical meaning of the subjective pole of thought is as logical meaning distinguished from all non-logical meaning functions, but at the same time it is fitted [gevoegd] with them in an unbreakable coherence of meaning.

There is now a logical diversity, which is immanent to the logical meaning of thought, but which could not exist without a cosmic diversity of meaning, within which the logical itself functions.

[WdW I, 22] Study notes #18
The pitfall in the conception of the so-called transcendental subject of thought as Archimedean point: cosmic diversity of meaning and diversity within particularized logical meaning

The pitfall that is hidden in the last objection from the adherent of the so-called transcendental immanence standpoint consists in the identification of the cosmic diversity of meaning with the diversity [distinctions] within particularized logical meaning.

The adherent of this standpoint will continue to refuse to acknowledge the particularized meaning of his concept of the transcendental thinking subject. The transcendental-logical pole of thought remains for him the self, determined by nothing, but determining
everything else; it is for him the origin of all diversity of meaning. The diversity of meaning can for him only be constituted through the *a priori categories of thought*.

How can the essential diversity of meaning, in which the logical meaning necessarily remains bound, itself be of a *logical* origin? If this thought is taken seriously, then already at the outset it would dissolve in the following antinomy: "The proclamation of *logical* meaning as the origin of *cosmic* diversity of meaning is the same as the *giving up* of diversity of meaning and thereby the abandonment of theoretical thought itself, which is only possible in the distinguishing and joining of meaning." This is a conclusion that was already made by the sophists from the logicism of Parmenides.

The so-called transcendental subject of thought can only be maintained if from the outset the *a priori joining of meaning* is included in transcendental thought [regarded in a purely logical sense]. As soon as this happens, the “transcendental subject of thought” is thrown back into the middle of cosmic diversity of meaning. Because the synthesis of meaning presupposes the diversity of meaning of the logical and of the non-logical sides of the cosmos, and their mutual coherence. How then can my Archimedean point remain *within* theoretical thought?

[WdW I, 23] Study Notes #18
Misunderstanding of cosmological joining of meaning as a transcendental-logical one

This transcendental logicism can only appear to be maintained by a peculiar *shift of meaning*, which interprets the truly cosmological *a priori* joining of meaning and distinguishing of meaning in a so-called transcendental-logical synthesis, as an act of the pretended self-sufficient transcendental subject of thought.

What is really happening in this first choice of position is that the distinguishing and joining of thinking has been absolutized (because it declares it self-sufficient) in a transcendental-logical meaning, whereby *Arché*, and Archimedean point coincide.

In rationalistic metaphysics, where *Arché* and Archimedean point remained distinguished, the actual [logical aspect] of thinking was absolutized only in the *Arché*, as *intellectus archetypus*.

[WdW I, 24] Study Notes #19
The necessary religious transcending in the choice of the immanence standpoint

This first choice of position, in which the attempt is made to elevate the [logical function] of theoretical thought from the cosmic coherence of meaning and to treat it as independent, *is not the act of a “transcendental thinking subject,” which is only an abstract concept, but much rather the act of the full I-ness that transcends thinking*. This is the case whether the logical aspect is elevated in this way to the *Arché* alone, or in both the *Arché* and the Archimedean point together.
And it is a religious act, just because it is a choice of position in the concentration point of our existence as against the Origin of meaning. In this reflexive choice of the immanence position, I myself elevate philosophic thought whether in the transcendental-logical, whether in the metaphysical logical sense to the Arché of the cosmos. This Arché stands as origin, above which it is no longer meaningful to ask questions, and in my view it no longer stands in the heteronomous mode of being that is meaning. In immanence philosophy, it is supposed to exist by and through itself.

This choice of position with respect to the Arché transcends philosophic thought, although it certainly does not occur without philosophic thought. It takes possession of the fullness of the selfhood, the fullness of the heart, and it is the first concentration of philosophic thought in a unity of direction. It is a religious choice of position in an idolatrous sense and it is therefore an act that falsifies meaning, that subtracts all philosophic thought from the fullness of Truth.

The proclamation of the self-sufficiency of philosophic thought, even with the addition “in its own domain,” is an absolutizing of meaning kai exochen [par excellence]. It loses none of its idolatrous character merely because the thinker is prepared to acknowledge that the absolutizing that he carries out in the theoretical domain is not the only proper one, and that philosophy should also give religious, aesthetic and moralistic man the full freedom to serve other gods outside of the theoretical domain.

The philosopher who grants this freedom to the non-theoretician is, so to say, a theoretical polytheist. He is shy of proclaiming the theoretical god to the one true god. But within the temple of his god, there shall be no others worshipped!

Even on the immanence standpoint the choice of Archimedean point is therefore not a purely theoretical act that prejudices nothing in a religious sense.

In truth, the selfhood is the religious root of existence, the player on the instrument of philosophic thought. From the immanence standpoint this player is invisible.

Philosophic thought shows us the true state of affairs—that in itself it is no Archimedean point, since it can only function in the cosmic coherence of meaning and nowhere transcends this coherence of meaning.

The immanent Ideas of the coherence of meaning and the totality of meaning are limiting concepts. They reveal the fact that theoretical thought is not self-sufficient in the individual domain of philosophy. This is a point that we shall come back to in more detail.

There is no other possibility to transcend the coherence of cosmic diversity of meaning than in the religious root of existence out of which philosophic thought also proceeds.

[WdW I, 25] Study Notes #20

The fall of our selfhood from the Arché, and the totality of meaning, and the consequences for philosophic thought

In the fall from the totality of meaning of our whole cosmos, our selfhood has lost its standpoint in that Archimedean point, apart from which it is not possible to have true self-knowledge, no true insight into the totality of meaning and the Origin of all meaning.
Apostate humanity has lost the concentration in the focus of its existence, the true service of God. Man’s self-consciousness is in full rebellion against God, dispersed in the diversity of meaning of our temporal cosmos.

The concentration of existence in the selfhood became in the fall a concentration in the absolutizing of creaturely meaning. And the confusing diversity within immanence philosophy is the theoretical consequence of this fallen relation in the religious root of humanity.

The a priori religious choice of position, in which the Archimedean point of philosophy is determined, must influence the whole direction of philosophic thought, in its view of the coherence of meaning among the diverse sides of cosmic reality, in its view of law and subject, in its view of truth, in its view of the conditions for the possibility of knowledge, etc.

[WdW I, 26] Study Notes #21

The dispersal of the fallen self-consciousness in the cosmic diversity of meaning and the beginnings of the –isms in immanence philosophy, even in its so-called transcendental directions

And the fact that the fallen self-consciousness has dispersed itself in the diversity of meaning and that it finds its concentration point only by way of absolutization, also explains the countless –isms in the systems of immanence philosophy.

The synthesis of meaning, without which no theoretic thought is possible, is always a joining together of meaning of the distinctions in particularized meaning. This synthesis can only be realized by an I-ness that transcends all diversity of meaning. If I do not know my self any longer, how shall I direct my philosophic thought to the totality of meaning of our cosmos?

The theoretical distinction and joining of meaning thus comprises particularized meaning. [If I do not know my self], particularized meaning provokes its own absolutization. And even the transcendental direction in immanence philosophy, which in its search for the a priori structure of “Vernunft” believes is has found the way of critical self-reflection, cannot give any protection against such absolutization.

Along with transcendental logicism, immanence philosophy knows transcendental psychologism, a transcendental moralism and aestheticism, and even further –isms, of which it cannot give account because it has not critically reflected on its Archimedean point. And ever since Dilthey broke with the rationalistic notion of the “cogito” as an Archimedean point, and in a “Critique of Historical Reason” supposed he could elevate the dynamic “vivo” to such Archimedean point, we can speak of an irrationalistic transcendental historicism, which has taken up the battle against the whole earlier transcendental philosophy. With this step, modern immanence philosophy has arrived at a phase that is marked by a decline of its earlier self certainty, and there is a renewed search for an Archimedean point for philosophic thought.

We will return in greater detail to this important phenomenon in the second volume.
Already in the present context we must however remark that the foundation of such an irrationalistic transcendental life-philosophy involves a primary absolutization of the theoretical synthesis of meaning, as will later be shown in more detail.

The immanence philosopher shall always convince himself that he has avoided the cliff of these –isms. The idealist, who absolutizes the normative meaning sides of reality, with help of meaning-synthesis thought, blames the naturalist for an absolutizing of the domain of the natural sciences. The naturalist has fallen into a more primitive absolutizing of the natural sides of reality, without being philosophically aware in a meaning-synthesis that such an absolutizing lies at its foundation. But the idealist will with indignation try to reject blame for the fact that he has fallen into a primary absolutizing of the theoretical synthesis of meaning.

The logicist who supposes that the synthesis of meaning has a “purely” logical character and that the cosmos and logos are identical, will accuse the psychologist of absolutizing a specific area of thought that has not been understood in its supposed logical origin. But the logicist will himself be of the opinion that he has fallen into no single –ism, since he always acknowledges the various “domains of thought” as “autonomous” with respect to each other!

The irrationalistic life-philosophy falsifies reality by proclaiming all regularity to be a construction of thought. This kind of philosopher believes that by setting himself in the subjective psychical or historical “stream of life” he is adequately able to contain true reality. He is also convinced that only by this attitude of philosophic thought is the full reality unveiled. Irrationalistic life-philosophy will not be convinced that its own standpoint is rooted in an absolutization of the synthesis of abstracted particularized meaning.

The modal diversity of meaning within our world coherence, in its a priori structure (which we will later study), as well as in its law-sides and subject-sides, offers numerous possibilities for our fallen self-consciousness to absolutize in its synthesis of meaning in philosophic thought. In this absolutization, first one meaning-side, then a different meaning-side of reality is elevated as the basic common denominator for all others. This fact—that the root of all such –isms is to be found in the fallen selfhood—remains hidden in the philosophic immanence standpoint.

[WdW I, 28] Study Notes #22
King Midas and immanence philosophy

The rich meaning of King Midas can offer us a symbol of these –isms in philosophy.

Everything that immanence philosophy touches with its wand of absolutized particularized meaning, changes as if by magic into a modality of this particular meaning. For the logicist, the cosmos becomes logos. For the psychologist all meaning sides of reality become modalities of the psychical. For the historicist the whole cosmos offers itself under the basic aspect of historical development. For the moralist the whole natural reality becomes the sensible material of our moral duty, etc. etc.
But, just as Midas lost himself in his wish to change the world into gold, so in the immanence standpoint, the thinker loses himself to the absolutization of theoretical abstraction.

Philosophic thinking, if it is explained as self-sufficient, necessarily loses its direction to the totality of meaning. From the immanence standpoint, the thinker gives the idea of totality of meaning a false content and can then no longer see the true structure of our cosmos, its particularized meaning and the coherence of meaning.

To summarize, we may say that the first pitfall of all immanence philosophy, in the wide meaning that we give to it, is: Supposing it can naively maintain the immanence standpoint and therein the self-sufficiency of philosophic thought as against divine revelation, it misunderstands the religious transcendence that is necessarily hidden in its attitude, and this misunderstanding comes out of a lack of radical-critical self-reflection in philosophic thought.

[WdW I, 29] Study Notes #22

The Christian standpoint of transcendence as a radical revolution in the attitude of philosophic thought

It is the radical meaning of Christianity for philosophy that it has again unveiled for us the transcendent religious root of human existence in all its functions, and has laid open the proton pseudos of immanence philosophy. The Biblical proverb, “Out of the heart are the issues of life,” must when it is properly understood bring a radical revolution in the attitude of philosophic thought. Greek metaphysics (with which Christian thought sought a compromise in the Middle Ages), never was able to extricate itself from the hypostasis of theoretical thought and also its conception of the essence of man as “rational-moral” being and of the immortal soul, which was grounded wholly in this absolutizing. In Platonic-Aristotelian metaphysical psychology, only the “reasonable,” the thinking part of the soul (logistikon) possesses immortality, because at the outset theoretical thought was hypostatized as the origin of reality, an origin that transcends the temporal world coherence. Human thought was distinguished from the Divine as noesis noeseos in that it was still bound to the lower part of the soul and therein bound to the material.

Neo-Platonism arrived at the insight that in the nous as theoretical thought itself there is still hidden a diversity and joining of meaning, and the Arché therefore must transcend the nous, but this insight did not in any way lead the thinkers of this school to a break with immanence philosophy as such, but only to a negative metaphysical conception of the divine--divine unity as the avoidance of all diversity of meaning.

The idealistic metaphysics of ancient Greece clearly expresses the immanence standpoint. It tore apart the immanent cosmic meaning-coherence into a noumenon and a phenomenon. The noumenon was conceived as supra-temporal reasonable form, and the phenomenon as matter that is immanent in time. Finally the form, as pure form or actus purus, was deifiedas the Arché.

Man seeks the transcendence of truth in the immanence of theoretic thought.
The Christian religion is in an irreconcilable conflict with this whole attitude of philosophic thought, because it unveils the fallen religious root of this philosophic immanence standpoint, out of which this attitude of thought springs.

The heart, as the religious concentration point of all human existence, is in fact the full selfhood, and also the religious root of philosophic thought.

The heart is truly the transcendent root of human existence, the one point in which we transcend the temporal diversity of meaning in the coherence of time. Just as the Scriptures say: "Eternity is set in the heart of man." The heart is the fullness of our selfhood, the true transcendent concentration point of our existence, in which all temporal meaning functions meet together. As such, the heart is also the point of departure for philosophic thought, a point that truly cannot be disconnected, since in all theoretical abstraction our selfhood is at work in thought. And the fullness of our selfhood consists in the religious center of our creaturely existence, where the direction of all of life is determined in relation to that which is Truth in its fullness, the absolute Origin of all things. Christ has said: "Where your treasure is, there shall your heart be also."

This basic truth [of the heart], which humanity has lost sight of in its fall from God and from the totality of meaning and from itself, is not the result of mere theoretical discussion, since it transcends theoretic thought in the fullness of its meaning.

The adherent of the immanence standpoint may now say, "Therefore free philosophy from it."

But what do we say if this basic truth embodies a necessary a priori condition for the possibility of philosophic thought? Then it would be internally contradictory to suppose that philosophic thought could abstract from it, in order to withdraw in self-sufficiency back into a merely theoretical cosmos.

For the acceptance of the possibility of a merely theoretical cosmos presupposes a truly religious proclamation of the absoluteness of philosophic thought (because of its self-sufficiency).

The immanence standpoint as a crypto-religious attitude of philosophic thought

It is the Christian religion that has unmasked the immanence standpoint in philosophy as a crypto-religious choice of position and thereby has discovered this standpoint as a standpoint in the fall from the true Arché and therefore also from our true selfhood.

The basic truth [grond-waarheid], that lies in our heart as religious concentration point, the transcendent root of our creaturely existence. It does not lie in theoretic thought, in our feeling function, in our aesthetic function, nor in our rational-moral functions. This
basic truth first acquires its full rich meaning in the revelation of the fall of the human race as a fall in the religious root of the cosmos, and in the revelation of the only possible salvation in Jesus Christ as the New Root of the reborn cosmos.

[WdW I, 32] Study Notes #22
The irreconcilable antithesis between immanence philosophy and true Christian philosophic thought

There is therefore an irreconcilable antithesis between the necessary religious a priori of immanence philosophy and of a philosophy that truly set itself within [instelt] in the Christian transcendence standpoint.

And this radically different attitude must influence the whole immanent course of philosophic thought, just as we shall demonstrate in more detail. For there is no greater error in philosophy than when one takes the position that the religious attitude of philosophic thought is of no importance for the immanent course of philosophic research.

We can make no greater error than that made by certain Christians in the late Middle Ages, who supposed that in philosophy the ‘naturalis ratio’ [natural reason] could be emancipated from the divine revelation of sin and grace, and that in grace they would merely find her higher “fulfillment” that extended beyond the limits of nature.

The truth is that philosophy needs an Archimedean point, and that the choice of this Archimedean point is a religious act that is all-determining for the whole direction in which philosophic thought chooses to go.

Unless our heart is enlightened by Divine Revelation, no true self-knowledge is possible.

And now at the close of our introduction, we must set aside another misunderstanding.

[WdW I, 33] Study Notes #22
Divine Revelation does not drop in the lap of Christian thought an authoritarian solution to the problems of immanence philosophy

The Divine Revelation that is fulfilled in Christ, that is directed to the religious root of our whole existence, and therefore also to the root of philosophic thought, does not solve a single essential immanent philosophic problem for us. This is because it transcends philosophic thought in its religious fullness.

But this revelation gives our philosophic thought a fixed direction towards the true totality of meaning and the Arché, a direction that this thought could never discover by itself, but which it needs as philosophic thought in order to fulfill its task. The Christian religion does not force itself externally into philosophic thought like a “Deus ex machina” in order to drop in our laps an authoritarian solution by way of Revelation. Rather, it brings our thought, which through sin has been diminished from its fullness of meaning, to a new and joyful life, to a new unfolding in harmony with all our other activities in the cosmos.
The direction to the totality of meaning and to the Arché, which revelation shows to philosophic thought, must permeate this thought in an inner way and in all its dimensions: in the formulation of problems, in the views of subjectivity and law, in the method of forming concepts, in the view of the structure of reality, in the understanding of meaning [zin-duiding] of naïve experience and of theoretical synthesis, in the philosophic view of the problem of time, etc. etc.

A truly Christian philosophy can not be an immanence philosophy with an external decoration of Biblical texts. Even less can it be a theology in the sense of a special science. It is not possible except in a radical reformation of philosophic thought itself, in a Reformation of Philosophy, just as my colleague Vollenhoven has so concisely expressed.⁶

§1 The Philosophic Ground-Idea [Grondidee]

[WdW I, 34] Study Notes #23

In the Introduction we argued that without a transcendent point of departure, without an Archimedean point, no philosophic thought is possible and that a philosophy that supposes to be able to find this point within philosophic thinking itself, in spite of all its arguments to the contrary, must exceed the limits of this thought in order to discover its Archimedean point.⁷ The choice of this Archimedean point is thereby characterized as itself transcending philosophy. Philosophy is not the final, all-inclusive attitude to the questions of life and world. It has a necessary a priori, a necessary presupposition,

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⁶ See his work Het Calvinisme en de Reformatie van de Wijsbegeerte (Paris: Amsterdam, 1933).
⁷ Rickert (System der Philosophie, p. 241) remarks: “Gewisz zeigt das heterologische Prinzip (in our train of thought: the demand that the diversity of meaning be distinguished in an articulated manner) bei der Frage nach der letzten Welteinheit die Grenze unseres Denkens, aber gerade dadurch eröffnet es uns zugleich di Möglichkeit, uns von seinen Fesseln zu befreien. Sind wir imstande, durch Denken die Grenze des Denkens fest zu stellen, so müssen wir auch imstande sein, dies Grenze zu überschreiten.”

On the immanence standpoint itself, this conclusion contains an overt contradiction: Thought sets its own fixed limits and is thereby in a position to exceed these limits! En how then can transcendental thinking remain pure? It is no use to make a distinction between a merely heterological and a heterological-monological thought, where the latter merely exceeds the limits of the former. Where this kind of monological thinking wants to entirely autonomously think of the unity of the cosmos in the joining sese, it exceeds the immanent limits of the activity of thinking as such and involves itself a limine in the antimony, which Rickert himself honestly lays bare in his pronouncement (op. cit., p. 260): “So bringen wir das in einem Begriff, was wir streng genommen in einem Begriff nicht fassen können.”
without which it can take no step towards fulfilling its task: in theoretical self-reflection to direct the view of totality to our world coherence.

And this a priori transcends the immanent a priori structure of philosophic thought. The choice of the Archimedean point necessarily has a religious, transcendent character.

Philosophy is not itself religion, but it is grounded in religion. Philosophic thought is not possible without the activating of the religious root of our personality, our selfhood; it can only be understood as religious activity of the self in the temporal theoretical domain. This religious activity of the self intensifies itself in philosophic thought, but it definitely transcends thought in its religious fullness.

[WdW I, 35] Study Notes #23

Rickert’s conception of the self-limitation of thought

Rickert believes that we can never be aware of the limits of thought by taking a stand outside of thought and from there looking back on thought in order to know its limitedness: “As soon as we are beyond thought, we can know nothing.”\(^8\) This is certainly true. We can even go further and say: It is entirely impossible that we in the actuality of our self-consciousness could stand outside our thought, because without thought our human selfhood cannot reveal itself in the temporal coherence of our world. But Rickert falls back into the immanence standpoint in a misunderstanding of the transcendence of our selfhood that can never be eliminated with respect to thought.\(^9\)

If we want to learn the limits of our thought, we must, while thinking, come to a subjective concept of the limits, but Rickert is wrong that these limits are set by thought.

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\(^8\) System der Phil., p. 247. “Sobald wir ausserhalb des Denkens sind, erkennen wir nichts.”

\(^9\) See also his essay: "Wissenschaftliche Philosophie und Weltanschauung" in Logos, Vol. I (1933), pp. 56-57: “We das, was eer als theoretische Erkenntis der Welt in ihrer Ganzheit nicht nur logisch zwingend zu begründen vermag, sondern es zugleich abszugrenzen gelernt hat gegen die Lebensüberzeugungen, die senie ausserwissenschaftliche Weltanschauung formern, der wird auf Grund seiner universalen Erkenntnis, die als Philosophie notwendig auch den ganzen Menschen mit zum “Gegenstande” macht (sic!), indem sie sich über ihn stellt, zugleich am besten einsehen, weshalb die ausserwissenschaftliche Stellungnahme zur Welt, so lange sie night, weie die theoretische Wahrheit den Anspruch auf Geltung für alle erhebt, neben der wissenschaftlichen Philosophie unangefochtten bestehen bleiben kann.” [Anyone who is able not only to establish stringently on a logical foundation that which he has learnt as theoretical knowledge of the world in its totality, but also to delimit it at the same time from those views of life that form his non-scientific view of the world, will be best in a position to understand, why the non-scientific attitude towards the world, so long as it does not claim universal validity for all, like theoretical truth, can hold its own by the side of scientific philosophy. For his universal knowledge which as philosophy necessarily makes the entire man also its object, transcends man himself.]
And they could not be known by a thinking that is abstracted [afgetrokken] from its religious root and the coherence of meaning.

Since we have therefore shown the necessity of transcendent, we will go a step further.

Philosophy wants us to theoretically recognize our [temporal] world coherence as the coherence of meaning. But philosophic thought is itself bound to this coherence of meaning; only within the coherence of meaning does philosophy’s immanent content have any meaning. It finds its fullness of meaning in the religious root of the human race, and in which we participate in our selfhood. The temporal world coherence, in its meaning as concentrated in man, may not be absolutized, and philosophic thinking may not be absolutized in this temporal world coherence.

Man transcends the temporal world coherence in his selfhood, but he moves within the temporal coherence in the status of being-universally-bound-to time. Man shares this status within time with all creatures who are fitted with him in the same temporal world coherence.

Within the temporal world coherence, reality displays a large diversity of meaning-sides, as we already noted in the Introduction. These aspects are only articulately distinguished by scientific thought: the aspects of number, space, movement, organic life, feeling, logical analysis, historical development, language, social association, economic valuation, beautiful harmony, law, morality, faith.

This is a preliminary and very rough schema of the distinguished meaning-sides in which the full temporal reality displays itself to the theoretical eye. This schema will later be subject to a more precise analysis of meaning. It is a schema that temporarily gives us an orientation in the diversity of meaning of our temporal cosmos.

Within cosmic time, which spans over all temporal aspects, these meaning-sides of reality are interwoven in a universal temporal coherence of meaning, and in each of these aspects, the full temporal reality has a law-side and a subject-side.

Nowhere else do we in fact transcend cosmic time except in the religious root of our existence. We do not transcend it in our thinking, nor in our concept, and not even in the philosophical transcendental Idea as a limiting concept qua talis [as such.]

Already in the orientation to the diversity of meaning in our cosmos we see ourselves forced to contrast this idea of time against the metaphysical immanence philosophy, which elevates the “noumenon” above the temporal cosmos (which it sees as the “world of things”).
The problem of time will receive our special attention in the fourth volume of this work. In the present context we must be content with a few orientating remarks.

[WdW I, 37b] Study Notes #37
Time’s all-sidedness of meaning, and time in particularized meaning

The prevailing view [of time] identifies it with time in particularized meaning of natural movement. Only recently has the philosophical question been asked whether this concept of time taken from the natural sciences, in which time and space flow together, can really contain the true meaning of time. Bergson believed that the true time is durée in the sense of an actual psychical stream of consciousness, in which all moments permeate each other qualitatively and which knows no mathematical similarity. Others sought true time in historical meaning.

The view that we shall defend in this work, that cosmic time is not to be understood in any single particular of meaning, but that it extends equally through all meaning-sides of reality. This may be regarded as a new idea.

Others will admit that our (supposed) "actual psychical activity" is within time. But they will regard as absurd the position that the concept of time is also temporal in its meaning. They will say that this drives us straight into the arms of "relativism."

[WdW I, 38] Study Notes #25
Concepts are immanent in time

What now? The tree comes form the seed, grows and disappears within time. But is the concept of a tree in its remaining objective sense then really bound to time?

Why does the appearance [schijn] of absurdity arise here? Because we wrongly consider it as self-evident that time should be identified with “natural time,” and more precisely, we identify time with the mathematically founded sense of movement that is one particular meaning-side of time. It is beyond dispute that concepts cannot be subject to a natural time.

But within the logical aspect time itself has a particular logical meaning. The logical prius and posterius is an order of time in the particular meaning of logical analysis. The forming of concepts is itself subjected to this logical order of time. Whoever objects that logical time is not real time, displays only the prejudice of his view of reality, which tries to enclose the full temporal reality within its physical-psychical natural sides. Full cosmic time has in fact many more meaning-sides than we usually suppose. It is represented in all meaning-sides in particularized meaning, just as shall be shown in a more detailed analysis of meaning in the discussion of the problem of time.

Nevertheless the full cosmic time is not exhausted in all meaning-sides of reality taken together, because all these aspects possess their particularized meaning only in the continuous meaning coherence.
Focus of the religious a priori on the theoretical task of philosophy. The philosophic Ground-Idea and the preliminary questions

This temporal cosmos offers a diversity of meaning-sides and its meaning coherence to our distinguishing theoretical viewpoint. The religious a priori, which we discussed in the Introduction, must now be focused on the a priori Ground-Idea, which gives philosophic thought its first direction, and without which the thinker cannot meaningfully pose any philosophic problem.

Such a Ground-Idea lies at the foundation of each philosophic system in either an acknowledged or a hidden way. It obtains its content from an actual unavoidable choice of position of our selfhood in the following preliminary questions:

What is the Origin and what is the totality of meaning of our cosmos, and how are we to understand the mutual relation and coherence of its meaning-sides in the diversity of meaning according to its law-sides and subject-sides?

It cannot be doubted that such a Ground-Idea contains in nuce [in a nutshell] an a priori that binds the whole of philosophic thought. How does immanence philosophy gain in trying to withdraw from self-reflection on this Ground-Idea, if in fact, as we shall show, this Ground-Idea makes its a priori influence evident in all philosophic questioning?

Each philosophic thinker must himself first of all be willing to give an account of the meaning of his questioning. And how one in fact gives an account of this necessarily rests on the Ground-Idea of meaning and its origin.

Concept of totality and Idea of totality of meaning

Without an idea of the totality of meaning, its origin and its relation to the diversity of meaning, how can we begin with the thought of totality required by philosophy? Some people think so. They say that our thinking has an immanent and religiously neutral concept of totality, as of a whole that is more than the sum of its parts. Granted, but in what sense is this concept understood? Does not the whole problem of the relation of particularized meaning to the totality of meaning hide in this concept of whole/part? The concept of totality as whole/part clearly betrays its origin from biological thought, which has as its “Gegenstand” a particular aspect of temporal reality, the organic biotic aspect.10

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10 In other words, I believe that this concept of totality has been first obtained in biological thought and thereafter has been metaphysically absolutized. In fact the concept of totality is mathematically founded, as we shall show in Volume II. The concept of totality is used with a particularized meaning in each of the various special sciences in accordance with the functional aspect of reality that they research.
If at the outset I do not want to lead my philosophic thinking in a biological path, then I cannot use this idea of totality. The totality of meaning in its relation to the diversity of meaning cannot be approximated with this concept of part/whole that is bound to particularized meaning and that is in fact from a special science.

Only the **philosophic Idea** as *limiting concept* can point above particularized meaning to the universal coherence of meaning and to the totality of meaning. But such an Idea must have a content, and philosophic thought cannot obtain this content from out of itself.

In critical self-reflection, the defining of the meaning of philosophical problems necessarily unveils the philosophic Ground-Idea concerning the totality of meaning and its Origin and the relation of this totality of meaning to the diversity of meaning and its temporal coherence.

[WdW I, 40] Study Notes #27

Necessity of critical self-reflection on the philosophical Ground-Idea. The meaning of philosophic problems. The principle of origin and the continuity principle in Cohen’s philosophy

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Cohen, the founder of the Marburg school, begins by declaring philosophic thought (‘Vernunft’) to be self-sufficient and he gives to this thought as *originary* thought the task to let the whole cosmos to rise scientifically from this origin in a transcendental-logical creation process according to the law of continuity. But truly critical philosophic reflection must immediately throw back the question: *Where* do you really find your Archimedean point in Vernunft, which you yourself allow to *refract* into the *diversity of meaning* of logical, ethical and aesthetic reason?¹¹ What meaning do you place in the principles of *origin* and *continuity* by which you plan to bridge this diversity of meaning? And what is for you the *totality of meaning*, in which the deeper unity of our cosmos lies enclosed?

These questions should not be evaded in philosophic thought!

Cohen’s system in "Grundsatz der Wahrheit" suggests to us a *continuous* coherence between logos and ethos. He wants to distinguish thinking and willing, but he is not helped in this by attempting to *bring over* the principle of the origin of continuity from the “Logic of Pure Knowledge” to the “Ethics of Pure Will.” The *coherence* in the *diversity of meaning* cannot be sought in *particularized meaning*. Of course one can

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¹¹ Cohen acknowledges this question as a *special* problem of philosophy. See his *Logik der reinen Erkenntnis*, 3rd ed., p. 17. In fact it is rather the ground problem of his philosophy which could have been seen by critical self-reflection on his logicistic law-Idea. For we cannot have a view of the unity of consciousness without a philosophic ground-Idea.
try to strike on the anvil of the “unity of Reason [Vernunft]” but so long as it does not demonstrate to us a unity in a totality of meaning above the diversity of meaning, such a “unity of Reason” remains an asylum ignorantiae. And so long as the principle of continuity is not itself brought back to its origin, it remains a principle of particularized meaning that gives no account of the coherence in the diversity of meaning!

Thought that seeks a synthesis of meaning [theoretical thought] remains caught in the diversity of meaning if it is not directed by an idea of the totality of meaning. It thus does not become truly philosophic thought.

[WdW I, 42] Study Notes #28

Being and validity and the critical preliminary question as to the meaning of these concepts

The so-called Southwest German school in Neo-Kantian philosophy opposes being and validity, reality and value. If this is introduced into philosophy, these oppositions again raise the question of the relation between particularized meaning, the coherence of meaning, and the totality of meaning. The question immediately arises: In what sense do you intend the words ‘being’ and ‘validity’? Are they intended as fundamental categories of thought, as Ground-categories? If so, is the thought category in its supposed transcendental-logical meaning as such itself of particularized meaning, or does it possess totality of meaning?

12 Remarkably we find this in the strongest degree in Kant, who in his critical attitude has contributed the most to the dissolution of this hoped for unity by the dualism he proposed between theoretical and practical reason, a dualism that he never was able to bridge.

In the Preface of the Kritiek der Reinen Vernunft, 1st ed., he writes: “In der Tat ist auch reine Vernunft eine so volkommene Einheit, dasz, wenn das Prinzip derselben auch nur zu einer einzigen aller der Fragen, die ihr durch ihre eigene Natur afgegeben sind, unzureichend wäre, man dieses immerhin nur wegwerfen könnte, weil es alsdann auch keiner der übrigen mit voller Zuverlässigkeit gewachsen sein würde.” [“Indeed, pure reason is a perfect unity to such an extent, that, if the principle presented by it should prove to be insufficient for the solution of even a single one of those questions to which the very nature of reason gives birth, we must reject it, as we could not be perfectly certain of its sufficiency in the case of the other.”]

In the Preface (p. 19) of his Grundl. zur Metaphysik der Sitten he says “am Ende nur eine und dieselbe Vernunft, die blosz in der Anwendung unterschieden sein mag.” [“ultimately it is one and the same Reason that may show diversity only in its application”].

13 As Cohen says, “Das Denken, das die Bewegung mit sich führt, verwandelt sich selbst in Wollen und Handlung.” [Thinking in which movement is inherent, transforms itself into will and action.] Ethik des reinen Wollens (4th ed.), p. 110. Cohen seeks the deeper unity in the Methode der Reinheit, but it is only for a logicistic attitude that this method can bridge the fundamental meaning diversity.

14 Borrowed of course from the mathematical infinitesimal calculus!
If the words ‘being’ and ‘validity’ do not possess totality of meaning, what then is their relation to the totality of meaning and to the coherence of temporal aspects? To merely say that the “categories of thought” have a general meaning does not advance us one step.

 Levelling of the diversity of meaning in the general concept rests on an uncritical misunderstanding of the particularized meaning of the logical aspect of thought and that of the aspects of reality that are set over-against it already implies a choice of position with respect to the relation between the totality of meaning and particularized meaning in the coherence of diversified meaning! For in such a generic concept, I try to ascribe to the logical particularity of meaning the power to bridge over the fundamental diversity of meaning within our cosmos.

Theodor Litt thinks he has found the Archimedean point of his philosophic thinking in the “pure reflection” of thought as its own activity. In the course of his research he introduces a dialectical identity of the “thinking ego” (“pure thought in its self-reflection”) and the “concrete ego” (the ego as an actual individual (pseudo) totality of all its temporal, actual meaning-functions). But critical reflection on Litt’s position immediately must ask the question: In what sense do you understand this ‘dialectical identity’ and in what sense do you understand the totality of the ‘concrete ego’? Then it appears right away that the ‘dialectical identity’ is intended in a logical particularized meaning, whereby therefore, following this reasoning to its conclusion, the diversity of meaning between “pure thought” and the non-logical functions of our I-ness is logically sublated [cancelled out]. For, following Hegel, Litt says that “in the unity of the thinking ego and the concrete ego, the thinking ego gains the ‘overreaching power.’”

Only in “pure thought” does the concrete ego come to self-knowledge: the concrete

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15 “In der Einheit von denkendem und konkretem Ich eignet dem ersteren die übergreifende Macht.”
ego in the process of knowledge is still not transcendent to “pure thought.” The relation is the reverse:

The standpoint of possible self-assurance for it [the concrete ego] is absolutely beyond itself and is thus absolutely not overreaching [that is, capable to conceive the transcendental ego].\(^{16}\)

But in the [true] Archimedean point, the diversity of meaning, which is originally confusing, must already be overcome. In other words, the real or pretended deeper unity of meaning in our cosmos must in principle already be understood, for from out of this point our selfhood, while thinking philosophically, must direct our theoretical view of totality over the diversity of meaning.

[WdW I, 44] Study Notes #28

Diversity of meaning and the [radical] identity of the aspects in their transcedent fulfillment of meaning. Mere logical identity is identity in particularized meaning. Parmenides.

All diversity of meaning in our temporal cosmos presupposes a deeper identity of meaning. For if no common denominator existed under which all aspects of reality can be brought, how could I know their mutual diversity?

Unity-identity in a logical sense is not the unity-identity to which the Ground-Idea of philosophy can direct itself.

The logical-analytical unity-identity on which Parmenides thought he could build his whole system is not the unity-identity that is sought above the multiplicity-diversity of meaning, but it is rather rather just a temporal particularized meaning.

The philosophical act of knowing is a knowledge that is a distinguishing and joining of meaning while directed to the totality—this is in any event more than logical thought. Therefore this act of philosophic knowing cannot remain stuck in the logical particularized meaning. Rather the logical must itself be placed by philosophy within the problematics of particularized meaning, diversity of meaning, coherence of meaning and totality of meaning. Whoever does not want to fall into the error of logicism must acknowledge that the logical aspect of the temporal cosmos is itself placed within the diversity of meaning, and as such has no philosophic advantage over the other, non-logical aspects of our cosmos.

The philosophic Ground-Idea is directed towards unity-identity in the sense of the totality of meaning or the fullness of meaning, in which all temporal aspects find their fulfillment of meaning.

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\(^{16}\) Einleitung in die Philosophie (1933), p. 162: “Es hat den Standort möglicher Selbstvergewisserung durchaus jenseits seiner selbst, ist also durchaus nicht übergreifend.”
This unity cannot and may not be an abstraction; it can also not be a merely negative “Indifferenz.” It must rather be the fullness of the meaning of our cosmos itself, or else it is not what it pretends to be.

The totality of meaning is necessarily the root of the diversity of meaning. The distinguished aspects of our cosmos cannot rise up out of each other, if we are to maintain the diversity of meaning. Once they are elevated to the transcendent fullness of meaning, the temporal aspects show their common root. Each of them in themselves and all of them together, as particularized meaning, point towards this common root.

[WdW I, 45] Study Notes #29

The philosophic Ground-Idea as hypothesis of philosophy

Only when our selfhood, while thinking philosophically, chooses its Archimedean point in the true totality of meaning does our philosophic thought obtain in its Ground-Idea to the hypothesis which preserves [voorbehouden] this selfhood from the fall from the totality of meaning and therefore also from the fall of the selfhood.

§2 The Philosophic Ground-Idea as Transcendental Foundation for Philosophy

[WdW I, 45b]

The theoretical character of the Ground-Idea and naïve experience

The Ground-Idea of philosophy is the religious a priori for our temporal world coherence. It may now be asked why I find the focus of this Ground-Idea to be determined by the relation of totality of meaning, and particularized meaning in the coherence of the diversity of meaning in its law-sides and subject sides. Is this not way too abstract a conception of the Ground-Idea?

Naïve experience, which has not yet been affected by the distinguishing of meaning of scientific analysis, understands the reality of our world coherence not as articulated in abstracted aspects, but rather in the concrete, individual unity of things and societal relations, and their mutual relations: in the structure of mountains and rivers, trees and animals, houses and streets, tables and chairs, humans in family and town, trade and church relations, etc. etc.

In its experience of reality, naïve experience also has its religious a priori. It also has (whether or not it is hidden) an Archimedean point and a choice of position with respect to the Arché. Naïve experience is also not religious neutral, because all human experience of reality has its origin from the heart of human existence.
And further still: the naïve experience understands things in various coherences with very complicated connected relationships (the trees in the wood, the wood in the landscape, etc. etc.). This naïve experience should not at all be a “quantité négligeable” for philosophy. Rather, as we shall later demonstrate in detail, it is the only manner of experience in which temporal reality truly is given just as it is in the coherence of temporal individuality structures. That is to say, it is given in an unbreakable concrete coherence of all its aspects in the structure of concrete things and relationships of things. But naïve experience is not in a position to understand these aspects and their functional laws in that kind of thought that seeks a synthesis of meaning.

[WdW I, 46] Study Notes #29
The given of naïve experience as philosophical task

Philosophy finds the given, that which it has the task to make into philosophy, in the concrete reality. This concrete reality is offered in naïve experience. It has not been abstracted in the dis-stasis of its meaning-sides. Why then is the Ground-Idea of philosophy not centered on the naïve experience of reality? This is why. If philosophy itself continued to be based in the naïve attitude of experience, it would never be able to give a philosophic account of this naïve experience. Philosophic knowledge is a scientific knowledge, and scientific knowledge is only obtained in the distinguishing and joining of the meaning-sides or aspects of reality.

Philosophy, no more than the special sciences, cannot begin with the thing structure of reality as a given temporal unity. As against the totality of meaning, which it has understood in its religious a priori, or believed it has understood, the fundamental diversity of meaning necessarily surfaces as the object of scientific analysis, as this diversity reveals itself in the aspects of reality.

[WdW I, 47] Study Notes #29
Naïve concept of a thing and the concept of function in the special sciences. Breaking through the naïve concept of a thing

The type of thinking in the special sciences begins to scientifically break apart the naïve concept of a thing into functional concepts, in order to obtain for itself knowledge of the distinguished sides of temporal reality.

Special sciences begin by setting thought over-against the particular non-logical sides of reality, such as number, space, movement, organic life, etc. etc. The special sciences make these aspects, in their particular functional regularities of law, into a “Gegenstand” of scientific systematic analysis. This is an attitude of thought which, as we shall show in our discussion of epistemology, is totally foreign to naïve, pre-theoretical thought.

The gain from this philosophically founded attitude of the special sciences, in opposition to the naïve attitude, has been enormous. By this penetrating scientific analysis and synthesis, the aspects of temporal reality, especially the non-normative, so-called natural sides, have bit by bit disclosed the secrets of their immanent functional law
regularity. But the deeper this special scientific thinking penetrated into its “Gegenstand,” the abstracted meaning-side of reality, so much the sharper has it revealed its fundamental lack in comparison with naïve experience.

[WdW I, 48] Study Notes #30
The particularizing meaning of thought in the special sciences

For by the particularizing meaning of this over-against thinking, the special sciences miss as such the view of totality over reality. In fact they lose from their grasp the experience of reality itself. For the full temporal reality does not give itself through mere joining together of abstracted aspects; it does not give itself “gegenständlich.”

The attitude of thought in the special sciences is never in a position to give account of the naïve experience of things, because scientific thought as such remains stuck in the research of the functional coherences within the abstracted particularized meaning of the aspects. The special sciences can also not give an account of their own possibility. We shall later demonstrate that self-sufficient thinking is not possible. That is, thinking cannot be entirely enclosed within the limits of a theoretically understood aspect or meaning-side of reality.

Naïve experience and our naïve formation of concepts are enstatically [ingesteld] within the full temporal reality in the concrete coherence of all its aspects or sides of meaning. It therefore understands temporal reality in an all-sided or integral way. It lacks the articulated or explicated knowledge of the aspects. Insofar as naïve experience in its religious attitude [instelling] views temporal reality in the light of God’s Word, and within its relation of creation by God, it has in fact a view of totality, but not in the theoretical focusing that is required by the Ground-Idea of philosophy.

Naïve experience has an intuitive knowledge [weet] of the all-sidedness of things. Although it may not be able to give theoretical reasons, naïve experience will for example stubbornly set itself against any attempt to rob it of certain aspects of its experience of “thing-reality” by those special sciences that misunderstand their limits.

On the other hand, because it experiences the concrete unity of a thing and the given mutual relation among things, and because it does not have the explicated scientific knowledge of the aspects of reality, the concrete unity of things is not a problem for naïve experience.

[WdW I, 49] Study Notes #31
Philosophy, special science and naïve experience

It is philosophy that has must understand the distinguished aspects of our cosmos, which have been explicated in their coherence, in the view of totality. In this way philosophy must give an account of naïve experience as well as scientific, functional thought.

But where philosophy makes naïve experience into a problem, it must be led by its Ground-Idea in its theoretical focus. The unity of things remains for philosophy the problem of the temporal concrete unity in the diversity of meaning.
Methodically the philosophic research of the abstract aspects must precede the philosophic analysis of the structure of concrete things.

In this inquiry we see as a matter of course the *philosophical problem* of how the *over-against* attitude [tegenoverstellende denkhouding] of the special sciences and is opposed to the attitude in naïve experience of mere *enstasis* [instellende denkhouding] in reality.

The unavoidable question arises, how is this over-against attitude possible, and what does it abstract from the full temporal reality? And when we ask that question, the possibility of philosophic thought itself becomes a problem, since it is this kind of oppositional thought.

There is a current in immanence philosophy that sees philosophic thinking as reflexive, turned inwards to the act of thinking itself. This kind of philosophic thinking is then contrasted to all “gegenständliches Denken” of the special sciences. It is said that these sciences lose themselves in objects without reflecting on that which can never be made into ‘Gegenstand’—the act of thinking itself. But it is not right that philosophy can or even could give up this kind of oppositional or ‘Gegenständlich’ thinking. To believe otherwise is to accept a philosophic *Ground-Idea* that is diametrically opposed to the Ground-Idea that we ourselves shall lay as the foundation for our philosophic system.

The main point is this, that these immanence philosophers, because of their standpoint, can not give an account of the nature of the synthesis of meaning, which remains inherent in philosophy. In our discussion of *epistemology*, we shall see that for any synthesis of meaning, an over-against [‘Gegenständlich’] attitude of thought is essential. Immanence philosophy does not recognize this because as we shall later discuss in detail, they make a fatal confusion between *object* and *Gegenstand*.

If *objectifying* were really identical to *placing over-against thought*, then there would already be an over-against attitude inherent in naïve experience, for already in the simple perception of a tree I *objectify* it. I objectify the thing’s actual subjective reality-functions within the psychical perceptual representation of my senses.

But immanence philosophy supposes that naïve experience is caught in the same over-against attitude of thought as are the special sciences. As we shall see, this is the greatest possible misunderstanding of the nature of naïve experience. It also shows that
immanence philosophy, by the choice of its Archimedean point, is not really able to give an account of naïve experience.

Philosophic thinking differs from the special sciences not in that it is no longer an over-against attitude, but much rather in its direction to the totality of meaning. In this the philosopher is driven to critical turning inwards of the self [not a turning inwards of thought]. In this turning inwards to self, the philosopher gives an account of the non-self-sufficiency of everything that, as particularized meaning, is bound to the coherence of meaning.

[WdW I, 51] Study Notes #33
The philosophic Ground-Idea as the transcendental foundation of philosophy

It is a truly uncritical attitude of thought to suppose that philosophy must hold itself back from giving an account of that which makes it possible in the first place. For philosophy itself needs to start with its true transcendental foundation, its hypothesis. We become involved in a vicious circle if we make the thinking in the special sciences a philosophic problem but withdraw from critical reflection on the possibility of philosophic thought itself. For the problem that always arise in considering the thought of the special sciences—i.e. the possibility of a priori distinctions and joining of meanings [analytic and synthetic a priori]—is even more of a problem in philosophic thought.

Because the immanent a priori structure of philosophic thought cannot become its own ‘Gegenstand’, philosophy runs up against the critical basic question of its own possibility. It is limited within cosmic time, and only in truly critical self-reflection can an account be given of these limits.

Truly ‘reflective’ thought is marked by critical self-reflection on the philosophic Ground-Idea in which philosophic thinking points outside and above itself to its own a priori conditions in and above cosmic time. Only in this Ground-Idea is philosophy driven out towards its a priori limits, which it cannot itself exceed. These limits give philosophic thought its final determinateness in the universal cosmic coherence of meaning. Philosophic thought cannot in supposed self-sufficiency determine its a priori conditions. It is rather the other way around. Philosophic thought is determined by the a priori structure of the religious cosmic self-consciousness.

The philosophic Ground-Idea in which, while thinking, we reflect on the limits of our philosophic thought, is thus in the full sense of these words a limiting concept par excellence. It is the final transcendental foundation or hypothesis of philosophy, in which while thinking we turn in to our selves. For we can only critically reflect on the limits of our philosophic thought because we in our selfhood transcend them as limits of philosophical thinking. The pre-conditions of philosophy, to which the philosophic Ground-Idea points, are themselves infinitely more than mere Idea. Idealism elevates the Idea itself to the totality of meaning and to the Arché; but idealism is possible only from the immanence standpoint. The transcendental foundation of idealism, its philosophic Ground-Idea points above the Idea to that which exceeds the transcendental limits of philosophy because it is that which first makes philosophic thought
possible. The immanence standpoint prevents philosophic thought to reach this last step of critical self-reflection.

[WdW I, 52] Study Notes #33

The relation between transcendental and transcendental attitudes in philosophy and the original meaning of the transcendental motive

We can provisionally summarize our standpoint with respect to the limits of philosophy as follows:

The philosophic Ground-Idea, as transcendental foundation of philosophy, is directed in its content towards the transcendent religious a priori of philosophy. Philosophic thought is of a transcendental character, pointing to this religious a priori. The religious a priori itself is transcendent. Our choice of Archimedean point necessarily exceeds the limits of our temporal world-coherence. Philosophy itself, although directed by its Ground-Idea, remains within these limits, because it is first made possible by the temporal world order. Understood in this way, the words ‘transcendent’ and ‘transcendental’ are therefore not an “Either/Or.” The transcendent, immanent a priori limits of philosophy imply the dependence of philosophic thought on a religious-cosmological a priori, of which the thinker in his philosophic Ground-Idea must give an account.

A truly radical transcendental philosophic thought is first made possible by giving up the postulate of its self-sufficiency.

Only in this understanding—the relation of transcendent and transcendental attitudes of philosophy—is the original meaning of transcendental thought given its due. We see this meaning in the philosophic self-reflection on the immanent limits of philosophic thought and their necessary pre-conditions.[voor-onderstelden].

[WdW I, 53] Study Notes #34

Kant’s use of transcendental thought contrasted with Idea as hypothesis

In Kant’s understanding of the Idea of freedom as a theoretical limiting idea, philosophic thought in fact acquires a transcendental turn in the direction of the selfhood in its religious relation to the Arché. At least this is so insofar as this theoretical Idea points towards the religious a priori of Kant’s whole philosophic thought. But Kant’s apostate direction in this critical self-reflection is shown in the way he absolutizes the Idea. He uses it in a transcending sense when he in practice realizes this theoretical Idea of freedom in the a priori belief in the autonomous ‘homo noumenon.’ Only by elevating this rational Idea to philosophic Ground-Idea can Kant’s philosophy be maintained as a transcendental Idealism.

We do not understand anything of transcendental thought whenever we forget the foundational function of Idea in Kant’s critique of knowledge, or when we forget that the whole transcendental direction in Kant’s thought is given up, or whenever the Idea of
the “homo noumenon” is misunderstood as the hypothesis of the whole of Kant’s inquiry as to the conditions of knowledge.

[WdW I, 54] Study Notes #35
The trivializing [vervlakking] of the transcendental motive in methodological logicism

When the transcendental limiting concept is cut loose from the true or supposed transcendence of the selfhood, transcendental thinking as to its limits is then abstracted [afgetrokken] from its direction to the selfhood. Then the transcendental motive is trivialized in the so-called critical logical positivism to the mere derivation of the categories. The transcendental motive is then wrongly understood as deriving from a supposed purely logical origin, the “objective universally valid conditions of knowledge.” The tendency towards the origin of philosophic thought does not lead here to a truly critical self-consciousness. For the philosophic Ground-Idea requires for its transcendental foundation a direction to the transcendental selfhood and the religious root of the cosmos, in which the selfhood participates, whether it is the fallenroot or that which is in Christ again directed to God.

[WdW I, 54b] Study Notes #35
The philosophic Ground-Idea remains hypothesis.
Relativism and the criterion of truth

In all of this, the philosophic Ground-Idea of philosophy remains hypothesis. This hypothesis cannot rule in a relativistic way over truth. It is rather the other way round—the truth of its contents is subjected to the forum of a [higher] objective judge.

In the inquiry of the truly universally valid criterion of truth we shall have to strike the decisive blow against those currents in immanence philosophy who believe that only the immanence standpoint offers a guarantee for a universally valid criterion of truth. In immanent critique of this position, if we succeed in proving that it is in fact the immanence standpoint that leads to a complete relativizing of the criterion of truth, then these currents in immanence philosophy are thrown out of their position of guardian of objective truth. But this inquiry belongs in a later discussion.

In the present discussion about the necessary a priori function of the philosophic Ground-Idea, we only want to cut off at the outset that misunderstanding that the Philosophy of the Law-Idea leads to relativism.

[WdW I, 55] Study Notes #36
The transcendental limits of philosophy and the criterion of speculative metaphysics

Philosophic thought, in its transcendental direction to the totality of meaning, remains bound to and within cosmic time, which first makes it possible. And as we shall later see, it is bound within time to the cosmic law order.
As we have said, philosophy itself cannot exceed this limit of time of our cosmos. It can only by its Ideas point towards that which does transcend this limit of time, just as it can only point to cosmic time itself in a limiting concept.

Each philosophy that misunderstands this temporal limit necessarily falls into a *speculative metaphysics* that in all its variations is characterized by the seeking of the absolute and supratemporal *within* the cosmic limits of time, by absolutizing particularized meaning.

Metaphysics is thus certainly not limited to the hypostatizing of the rational Ideas to “substantial being” in the line of Plato’s Ideas, Leibniz’s ‘monads’ or Kant’s “Ding an sich” [“thing in itself”]. Metaphysics rather takes on all possible nuances of immanence philosophy.

Speculative metaphysical philosophy in this sense includes each form of absolutizing of the *nous*. It is also speculative and metaphysical to say that the laws of the particular aspects of our cosmos, such as laws of number and space, the laws of logical thought, morality, justice or beauty are have absolute universal validity, and that they are binding even on God. This kind of absoluteness is grounded in the absolutization of ‘Reason.” The following are also all speculative and metaphysical: the ancient idealistic teaching of Ideas, the modern philosophy of values, the teaching of “Truths in themselves” and “Sätze an sich,” the teaching of “adequate intuition of essence” [Husserl], the traditional metaphysical teaching of the immortal soul (which is conceived as a complex of temporal functions!). The modern hypostatization of “spirit” in the present temporal logical and post-logical functions of consciousness. This is whether or not this hypostasis reveals itself in a rationalistic or in an irrationalistic way.

All such speculative theories rest on an absolutization of aspects that have been abstracted by theoretical thought from out of the temporal world coherence. They are therefore uncritical and therefore fail to appreciate the limits of philosophic thought. They disturb [the absolutized] meaning by ascribing to it the mode of being of the *Arché*, regardless of whether this mode of being is thought of as "being" or as "validity," and regardless of whether such absolutizing relates to the actual-individual subject-side or the law-side of the area of meaning in question.

[WdW I, 56] Study Notes #37

Calvin’s verdict against this metaphysics

Calvin stated, “*Deus legibus solutus est,*(God is not subject to the law”). Calvin’s judgment touches the foundations of all speculative philosophy. It directs human reason back within the limits that are set for it [gesteld] by God in his temporal world order, and it is the alpha and omega of all philosophy that strives to take a critical attitude not only in name but in fact.

In order to cut off at its root this mixture of speculative philosophy in the affairs of Christian religion, I want to emphasize the transcendental nature of all truly philosophic activity. It is bound under the limiting line of the cosmic law, and it only has
Philosophy is limited or subjected on all sides by the temporal world order. Its task is great, and worthy of God’s creation of humans, but it is also modest; it does not elevate human reason to the throne of God. The activity of philosophy remains bound to the law of time. Philosophy is not sovereign reason that is not responsible to anything or on anyone, as a modern humanist supposes to qualify that part of philosophy known as epistemology. Rather, philosophy is the servant, not of theology, but of God the Sovereign. To serve God is philosophy’s position of honour; to deny God is its sentence of doom.

§3 The Philosophical Ground-Idea as Law-Idea. Origin of this Terminology

I have at the outset used the term Law-Idea for the philosophic Ground-Idea, with its religious-cosmically determined a priori attitude with respect to the understanding of the Arché, of the totality of meaning, of the diversity of meaning, and of the temporal coherence of our cosmos in its law-side and subject-side.

In this Idea of the law, in which the idea of subjectivity was included, there was in fact an a priori position chosen with respect to the central preliminary questions of philosophic thought: What is the deepest origin, the supratemporal unity-totality and the mutual relation and coherence of all particular laws that rule the various meaning-sides of the reality of our world, and how does subjectivity relate to the law in origin, supratemporal unity and diversity of functions?

In the systems of philosophy I have referred to, this law-Idea was usually conceived of in a large measure in a rationalistic-metaphysical manner. It was therefore a very attractive task to demonstrate that in fact each authentic system of philosophy must be grounded in a law-Idea of this or that type. This is so even where that philosophy itself gives no account of such a law-Idea. And the carrying out of this task must succeed. It is certainly impossible that philosophic thought, which must itself follow a regular course, is not itself burdened by an a priori understanding of origin and totality of meaning of the law, and the subjectivity correlated to the law, and the mutual relation and coherence of the distinguished aspects in which law and subjectivity reveal themselves.

It then came about that Calvinism, which I acknowledge as my Christian life and worldview, in accordance with Scriptures, has from the outset placed all emphasis on the law as the boundary between Creator and creation, a boundary that cannot be overcome. And without falling into an absolutizing of the law, Calvinism’s central-religious view of the Sovereignty of God over all of creation has been concisely carried out in its view of the law.
Objections against the term ‘law-idea’ and why I maintain this term

Yet it is not to be denied that the choice of the term ‘law-Idea’ as the Ground-Idea for philosophy has the possibility of being misunderstood as being only an a priori conception of the meaning of ‘law.’ That was the opinion of Prof. Dr. H.G. Stoker in his noteworthy work *The New Philosophy at the Free University* (1933) and *The Philosophy of the Idea of Creation* (1933). Stoker thought that law-Idea was a narrower Ground-Idea than the Idea of creation (which he saw as all-embracing).

But I have my particular reasons for maintaining the term ‘law-Idea.’ First, in pointing to the *preliminary questions* of philosophic thought, the Ground-Idea of philosophy must be framed in such a way that it in fact catches the eye as the necessary condition *for each philosophic system*. To define this Ground-Idea in terms of the Christian-religious choice of position respecting our cosmos, or in other words, to determine the content of the Ground-idea, is a later step.

A law-Idea does in fact lie at the foundation of each philosophic system. An Idea of creation on the other hand would be rejected as the Ground-Idea of philosophy by each thinker that denies creation or who otherwise supposes that the creation must not be brought into play in philosophic thought.

Second, the term ‘law-Idea’ has the advantage that at the outset it gives expression to the limiting character of the philosophic Ground-Idea, in its focus on the origin and the meaning of the law and its relation to subjectivity.

For the law is *ex origine* the limit-ation of a subject.

Reflection on the law-Idea means reflection on the limits of philosophy, regardless of whether a self-limitation of philosophic thought is intended or whether one acknowledges the God of revelation as the origin of all limitation in accordance with law.

Seen in this way, the law-Idea, by its critical focus on the preliminary questions concerning meaning (including origin, totality and particularity in the diversity) in the relation of law and subject, is in fact the central criterion for the distinguishing in principle of the various standpoints and currents in philosophy. The law-Idea gives a boundary between immanence philosophy in all its variations, and the Christian standpoint of transcendence in philosophy. Here is the criterion to distinguish the truly *transcendental* philosophy (which acknowledges its immanent limitations of law), and speculative metaphysics (which supposes that it can exceed these limits). Here is the criterion to distinguish within immanence philosophy between rationalism (which absolutizes the law at the cost of individual subjectivity) and irrationalist (that conversely tries to derive the law as a non-self-sufficient function of the individual creative subjectivity.

Third, there is no dimension of philosophic thought in which the law-Idea does not make valid its central a priori influence: By its focus on the *universal-scientific* task of philosophy, it keeps philosophy from gliding off in the path of a special science stuck within particularized meaning, even the particularized meaning of theological thought. It
guards philosophy from falling back into the mere pre-scientific thought of naïve experience. Stoker may be correct that philosophy also has the task to take into account the intrinsic unity of things that do not dissolve into their meaning sides into law-side and subject-side. But as I have already argued, philosophy cannot fall back into the attitude of naïve experience which accepts things as given in their indivisible unity of creation without an explicated distinguishing of their aspects.

There is also no [other] philosophic system that in fact does this. But metaphysics, which supposes that within its philosophic limiting concepts that it is able to conceive of the supratemporal essence of things, again and again tries to find a “remaining substance” behind things, just as they are experienced as indivisible individuality unites within the naïve attitude in temporal reality. By the test of the law-Idea, it appears that the metaphysical idea of substance rests on an absolutizing of abstracted meaning, and that metaphysics does not do justice to the experience of unity of the naïve, pre-theoretical attitude.

For philosophic thought, the temporal unity of things is the given of naïve experience, which must become a philosophical task in the direction determined by the law-Idea. Only then do we see the transcendental limit of philosophy as over against naïve experience, and at the same time we see the irreplaceable value of naïve experience. The value of naïve experience is that all scientific thought in the last instance must again appeal to naïve experience. Only then can we see, as shall later be demonstrated in more detail, that theoretical, and philosophic thought finally has its proper ground only in an unfolding of meaning, a deepening of meaning of the pre-theoretical, naïve thought and its enstasis [instelling] within full temporal reality. Any philosophy that cannot give an account of naïve experience, and thinks that it can shove it aside with a haughty gesture, pronounces judgment against itself.

And finally I want to cut off the misunderstanding over the meaning of ‘law-Idea’ by giving it more precision. Although the word ‘law-Idea’ appears to refer only to the basic relation between totality of meaning, diversity of meaning and coherence of meaning in the law-side of reality, in fact it also does so with respect to the subject-side of reality in all its individuality. For the law only has meaning in its unbreakable correlation to the subject. The law-Idea implies the subject-Idea, which refers to the Ground-relation between totality of meaning, diversity of meaning, and coherence of meaning of the subject-side.

There is no objection to choosing another term for the Ground-Idea of philosophy which would include the law-and subject-sides of reality. The terms ‘meaning-Idea,’ cosmos-Idea,’ or ‘world-Idea’ might perhaps deserve attention here. But on the other hand, these terms miss the critical sharpness that forces the thinker in philosophic thought to self-reflection about his enstasis [instelling] in relation to the totality of meaning and the diversity of meaning of our world according to its law-and subject-sides. And these other words also miss the incisive focus on the limits of philosophic thought.

For all these reasons, I give the preference to my first term, which also has the advantage that it has gradually become in common use in referring to this philosophy.

But there remains the question posed by Stoker (who has in other respects and to my joy accepted the philosophy of the law-Idea) whether reality is not more than meaning.
Here there is the threat of misunderstanding the Philosophy of the law-Idea, insofar as it is focused wholly on the problem of meaning, has not drifted into the waters of a meaning-ism, an ‘idealism’ (Stoker). I am not yet able to cut off this serious misunderstanding by the roots. It is first necessary to confront our understanding of ‘meaning’ with that of immanence philosophy.

At the outset, our inquiries should make clear the finite character of meaning as the mode of being reality under the law in which reality finds no rest in itself. Meaning idealism, as we have been able to note it in Husserl and Rickert, starts from a distinction between meaning that is ascribed to reality and a reality that is in itself meaningless. On this view, meaning is only ascribed subjectively to reality by the absolutized transcendental consciousness. In fact, these thinkers of ‘reality’ refer only to the abstracted meaning of the psychical-physical natural sides of reality. In contrast to their views, our view is that meaning is universal to all created reality as its restless mode of being, because all meaning refers reality to its Origin, the Creator, without Whom the creature sinks back into nothingness.

Now it may be objected that meaning itself cannot live, act, or move. But does not this life, this action, and this movement refer above themselves, in the sense of not coming to rest in themselves, all in accordance with the mode of being of creaturely reality? Only God’s mode of being is not meaning, because only He exists by Himself and through Himself. Meaning is the mode of being of all creaturely being!

From this it is also clear that philosophic thought also has its correlate in the transcendent totality of meaning in the Being of the Arché, and that each Law-Idea takes a position with respect to this Arché.

In fact, no one who speaks of number, spatial figures, movement, etc., or who speaks about concrete things, can do so except in their meaning, that is in their relative mode of being with respect of pointing to each other pointing towards the origin of all. If the natural [pre-logical] sides of temporal reality in their mode of being were not sides of meaning, which stand in a relation of meaning to the mode of being of thought [the logical aspect], then thought would not be able to form any concept of these natural sides of reality.

That is my preliminary justification of my terminology.
The concepts of law and subject depend on the law-Idea in its wide meaning, including the idea of subjectivity. Unlike the law-Idea, the concepts of law and subject do not in themselves point above the diversity of meaning to the transcendent fullness of meaning (the totality of meaning). Rather they are limited in nature to particularized meaning and to the diversity of meaning.

Whichever particular meaning the concept of law and subject may possess, depending on the aspect of reality that is comprehended by theoretical thought, it is always dependent on an a priori law-Idea.

Whenever rationalistic thought identifies “nature” with a system of natural laws formed by a transcendental consciousness, of which individual events are only an exemplary “instance,” or whenever the ideal subject, the “homo noumenon (the absolutized ethical function of human personality) is put forward as being itself the moral lawgiver—in those cases the moral law is dissolved, and the subject loses its own function as against or rather under the law. Kelsen’s view “reine Rechtslehre” [“pure theory of law”] reveals a rationalistic-idealistic concept of law. But behind this concept there is a law-Idea of a specific humanistic type. He dissolves the subject of the juridical aspect into a function of the juridical norm in a normative-logical way. And that is why Kelsen’s concept of law is completely objectionable by anyone who rejects the law-Idea that lies behind it.

§4 The Symbol of the Prism. The Cosmic Law Order and the Cosmological Principle of Sovereignty in its Own Sphere. The Aspects of Reality as Law-Spheres.

What is the positive content that the law-Idea receives from the Christian transcendence standpoint, when we have rejected each compromise with immanence philosophy?

The Archimedean point of philosophy is here chosen in the root of the human race that has been redeemed in Christ and in which we participate in the religiously time-transcending root of our individual person, in our re-born selfhood.
The law as boundary between the “Being” of God and the “meaning” of creation

The root of the re-born human race is the fullness of meaning, the totality of meaning of our whole cosmos is in Christ, with respect to His human nature, just as the Scriptures say. In Him the heart, out of which are the issues of life, confesses the absolute creational sovereignty of God over all of creation, and the heart bows under the law as the universal boundary that cannot be exceeded between the Being of God and the meaning of His creation. The law finds its origin in the Creator’s holy will. The transcendent totality of meaning of our cosmos exists only in the religious relation of dependence to the absolute Being of God. It is therefore no substance in the sense of speculative metaphysics, no being that exists in itself; it remains in the creaturely mode of being that refers, the mode of non-self-sufficient meaning.

Sin, the rebellion against the sovereign Arché, of our cosmos, is the fall away from the fullness of meaning, and the idolizing, the absolutizing of meaning to the being of God. In this way there arose in the religious root of the cosmos itself the absolute break between Civitas Dei and Civitas terrena [the City of God and the City of Earth], between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of darkness. Our temporal world, in its temporal diversity of meaning and coherence of meaning, is in the order of God’s creation bound to the religious root of the human race, and has without this root no meaning, and therefore no reality.

That is why the fall in the heart, in the religious root of creation, also meant the fall of the entire temporal creation.

Our cosmos fell in Adam. Everything created that has been fitted into our temporal world coherence was cursed in Adam. Look to the Scriptures!

The nature of the whole cosmos was dragged with man in the fall. In this way the break carried through into all meaning-sides of cosmic reality in time. There is nothing that is excepted from the fall. Neither the natural sides of temporal reality, nor the logical, nor the post-logical aspects.

Not the logos as an aspect of temporal meaning—as our logical function of thinking, it is under logical laws of thought, and it is no more than a side of meaning of our cosmos!

With great emphasis the Biblical understanding must be opposed to all attempts to exempt the logos from the fall into sin. For each attempt in this direction leaves open a wide door in Christian thought for the logos speculation and for immanence philosophy. We shall return to this subject.

According to Paul, the logos (nous) has as a result of the human fall become the "nous tes sarxos," the “mind of the flesh” [Col. 2:18]. This is because it does not exist apart from the fallen religious root of creation.
From the thereby explained Archimedean point, the law-Idea of our philosophy acquires the following content:

(1) To the central preliminary question: What is the Arché of the totality of meaning and diversity of meaning of our cosmos with respect to the law-side and the subject-side? it answers: the sovereign, holy creative will of God, Who has revealed Himself in Christ.

(2) To the second central preliminary question: what is the totality of meaning of the law, its supratemporal unity above all diversity of meaning? it answers: the demand grounded in God’s sovereignty to serve God with one’s whole heart.

(3) To the third preliminary question: What is the totality of meaning of our cosmos with respect to its subject-side? it answers: the religious root of the human race, re-born in Christ (in Whom nothing of our created reality can be lost) in subjection to the fullness of meaning of the divine law.

(4) To the fourth central preliminary question: What is the mutual relation among the aspects of temporal reality? It answers: sovereignty in its own sphere, but in the all-sided cosmic coherence of aspects, as this is regulated in God’s temporal world order, in a cosmic law order.

This understanding of the law-Idea, in its theoretic focus on the meaning-sides of our cosmos is a vision formed in the spirit of a radical Christianity (in this sense Calvinistic). I use a symbol in order to bring this vision closer to those not schooled in philosophy.

The light of the sun is refracted though a prism and appears to the eye as split up into the known seven colours of the spectrum. All colours of the spectrum are in themselves dependent refractions of the unrefracted light, and none of these colours may be regarded as integral to the differentiation of all of the colours. Further, not one of the seven colours exists outside of its coherence with the other colours of the spectrum. When the unrefracted light is intercepted, the whole play of colours vanishes into nothing.

The unrefracted light is the time-transcending totality of meaning of our cosmos in respect to its law and subject side. Just as this light has its origin in the source of light, so does the totality of meaning of our cosmos have its origin in its Arché, through Whom and to Whom it has been created.

The prism that breaks up the colours is cosmic time, by which the fullness of meaning is broken into its temporal aspects.

Just as the seven colours of the spectrum do not owe their origin to each other, so do each of these temporal aspects have, with respect to each other, sovereignty in their own sphere according to the meaning of each sphere.

In the religious fullness of meaning there is only one law of God, just as there is only one sin against God, just as there is only one creation that has sinned in Adam.
But under the boundary line of time the fullness of meaning breaks (just as white light breaks in a prism) into law and subject side in a rich variation of aspects that are sovereign in their own spheres. Each of these aspects displays the fullness of meaning in its own modality of meaning according to its temporal mode of being.

[WdW I, 67] Study Notes #44
The law spheres and the sovereignty in their own sphere of their particularized meaning

We shall in future name the aspects of temporal reality *law-spheres*, since the term 'law-sphere' sharply emphasizes the mutual irreducibility, the *enclosed functionality*, the “sovereignty in its own sphere.”

Furthermore, this term is clearly inspired by the term ‘law-Idea,’ and may just as little be understood in a one-sided focusing on the law-side of reality.

The philosophic principle of sovereignty in its own sphere therefore is inseparably bound to the choice of the Archimedean point in the transcendent root of reality, in Christ directed again to the *Arché*, and with the religious confession of the absolute sovereignty of God

[WdW I, 68] Study Notes #44
The immanence standpoint is not consistent with the Ground-Principle of sovereignty in its own sphere

The immanence standpoint is not consistent with the acceptance of the sovereignty in their own sphere of the law spheres in their particular meaning. This is not because immanence philosophy would not be able to acknowledge that the totality of meaning transcends the diversity of meaning and that the law-spheres, which it *allows to be in force as such*, cannot originate from each other. For each scientific thinker must necessarily always form a concept of the aspects, and to therefore be on guard against any mixing up of these aspects.

From the immanence standpoint, the Archimedean point is chosen in philosophic thinking itself, which is in the *fallen* selfhood. Because of this, the law-Idea of immanence philosophy must elevate this philosophic thinking out of the coherence of meaning of temporal reality (at least as to the a priori structure of this thinking, which can never be made into a “Gegenstand”). Thought is posited as in itself and it is elevated to the *Arché*, which transcends meaning. This occurs in immanence philosophy whether or not the thinker himself can give an account of it. As against this unlimited sovereignty of thought, the other aspects of our cosmos can have no valid “sovereignty in their own sphere.” They are brought under the common denominator of absolutized aspects of philosophic thought. In mathematical logicism, other aspects are allowed to be in force only as logical areas of thought with relative autonomy. In psychologism (whether or not it is understood as transcendental), other aspects allowed to be in force as psychological
areas that are not reducible to each other. In historicism, other aspects are allowed to be individual areas of historical development, etc. etc.

A dualistic system is also possible, whereby the meaning structure of full temporal reality is torn apart into phenomenon and noumenon (WdW I, 68). Aspects are brought together as ‘phenomenon’ under a different immanent common denominator than those that are brought together in the ‘noumenon.’ In the analysis of the meaning structure of the law spheres we shall demonstrate why the various absolutizations that immanence philosophy is forced to take, because of its choice of Archimedean point in cosmic time, allow themselves to appear to be carried out.

On the immanence standpoint it on the other hand may be objected that Christian transcendence philosophy is an absolutizing of religious meaning. But this objection, although it is at least thought through in a somewhat deeper manner, cannot be maintained.

In the first place, because religion is the fullness of meaning, it does not allow any absolutizing. It is religio, i.e. joining, a relation between creaturely meaning and the Being of the Arché. This meaning and the Being of the Arché are not to be brought on the same level.

Whoever wants to posit the religious totality of meaning in itself is guilty of a contradictio in terminis. And whoever has the insolence to assert that at least God is absolutized does not know what he says.

Second, the objection that there is an absolutization of religious meaning contains at its foundation an ambiguity, a confusion between the temporal meaning of belief that is itself in fact enclosed in a law-sphere, and that of the fullness of meaning of religion, which transcends the limit of cosmic time and which cannot possibly be enclosed in a law sphere.

Finally, it must be borne in mind that even unsuspected opponents of the Christian transcendence point in philosophy, such as Heinrich Rickert, acknowledge that religion in its fullness of meaning does not allow a coordination with areas of meaning such as law, morality, science, etc. But his understanding of religion as an “autonomous categorical area of thought” abolishes the meaning of religion. Immanence philosophy will have to demonstrate in a more stringent manner their statement that our acknowledgement of the religious connection of philosophic thought absolutizes religious meaning. Their

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17 See for example, the typical example of Hymans’ psycho-monisme with its working out in all areas of meaning of our cosmos: Einführung in die Metaphysik, p. 33ff and p. 334ff.

18 Cf. Spengler’s Untergang des Abendlandes.
religious confession of the self-sufficiency of philosophy is not sufficient. *Ipse-dixetisme* is not in much demand in the forum of scientific truth.

[Study Notes #46]

Sovereignty in its own sphere in the cosmic coherence of meaning. The Idea of a cosmic order of law.

As an a priori Ground-Principle in the Calvinistic Law-Idea, *sovereignty in its own sphere* thus stands in an unbreakable coherence with the choice of the Archimedean point. This principle stands just as much in unbreakable relation with the acceptance of a cosmic coherence of meaning among the law-spheres. This mutual coherence is not regulated by philosophic thought, but by the divinely given temporal world order. This world order of cosmic time we shall from now on call the *cosmic order of laws*.

In each separate law-sphere, in accordance with its separate meaning-structure, as a particular refraction of meaning from the transcendent totality of meaning, the coherence of meaning with all the other law spheres is reflected in a separate particularized meaning.

In the refraction of light, the colours of the spectrum are not found arbitrarily next to each other, but one colour is the *foundation* of the other in a fixed order of more or less refractedness. And in each colour of the spectrum, a relation to all the other colours is maintained. This is also the case in the temporal organism of the law spheres. In an order of increasing complexity, the sphere of the simpler meaning-structure is the foundation of the following of more complicated structures.

The coherence of meaning of the law spheres is an order of cosmic time. In our religious a priori we refer this back to divine predestination in the broadest sense of plan for the world. It is a law-order of a *horizontal* nature that spans particularized meaning, in contrast to the *vertical*, which comes to expression in particularized meaning by sovereignty in its own sphere.

All law spheres are founded in this order of cosmic time. Cosmic time refracts the totality of meaning into the particularized meaning of the law spheres. It therefore first makes possible the sovereignty in its own sphere, but it relativizes the particularized meaning in a *coherence of meaning* that streams through and spans across all separated boundaries of meaning.

[Study Notes #47]

Cosmic time and the refraction of meaning. Why can the fullness of meaning only temporally reveal itself in the coherence of the refraction of meaning?

Stoker has asked why we must say that it is cosmic time that refracts the totality of meaning into mutually cohering diversity of meaning. It is because, the fullness of meaning, as the totality of meaning, is not itself actually given in time and cannot be given in time. Yet all temporal meaning refers above itself to the supratemporal fulfillment of meaning. The meaning of cosmic time is just this successive refraction of
meaning in the coherence of meaning. But sovereignty in its own sphere, which applies to the particularized meaning, has no meaning in the totality of meaning.

In the religious fullness of meaning itself, there can be no sovereignty in each separate sphere. In the religious fullness of meaning, love, wisdom, justice, power, beauty, etc. are mutually congruent, of which we can have some understanding by the concentration of our heart on the cross of Christ. This coincidence of meaning is impossible in time as a relative refraction of meaning.

This is why temporal philosophic thought, which tries to dissolve this totality of meaning in the Idea of reason itself, always gets entangled in contradictions and antinomies in which the cosmic order avenges itself on thought that tries to exceed its limits.

[WdW I, 71b] Study Notes #48
The logos is not relative in a logical, but in a cosmic sense

Therefore the attempt to approximate cosmic time itself, otherwise than in a limiting concept, necessarily leads to antinomies. This is because concepts themselves presuppose cosmic time. We shall look at this in more detail later. A concept is necessarily discontinuous with its fundamental analytical aspect. It therefore cannot comprehend the continuity of time that streams through and spans over the boundaries of meaning of the law spheres. If thought tries to comprehend this it absolutizes itself. The logos is relative in its temporal particularized meaning, but this relativity of meaning is not itself of a logical but rather of a cosmological-temporal character. Whenever philosophy tries to interpret the cosmic coherence of meaning in a dialectical-logical way, then it improperly begins with the logical relativizing of the separate basic laws of thinking, and thereby it ends up by sanctioning antinomies.

[WdW I, 72] Study Notes #49
The immanence standpoint eliminates the cosmic order of law

Immanence philosophy hypostatizes human reason to a self-sufficient Archimedean point of philosophy, and supposes that it can lift the structure of philosophic thought from out of cosmic time. But in this way the cosmic order of time is eliminated from philosophic thought and in epistemology in particular. The critical basic question of all philosophy—how it is itself possible—is forced into the background. This elimination is also the source of all subjectivism, of which the history of philosophy gives such a confusing picture.

Kant’s so-called Copernican revolution in epistemology (or in ontology, if we take Heidegger’s interpretation of Kant, which I do not find convincing19) is the direct proof of the impossibility of a really critical critique of reason without an a priori choice of

19 Heidegger: Kant und das Problem der Metaphysik (1929).
position with respect to the cosmic law to which philosophic thought is subject. In his *Prolegomena to every Future Metaphysics*, the philosopher of Koningsberg [Kant] says of pure reason:

This work is difficult and requires a resolute reader to think his way gradually into a system, which sets at its foundation *nothing as given except reason itself* [my italics] and thus, without supporting itself upon any fact, seeks to develop knowledge from its original seeds.\(^\text{20}\)

What Kant here demands of his reader is to simply abdicate from the preliminary questions concerning critical thought. The “reason” that Kant lays as his foundation is a clear product of philosophic abstraction. But *in that abstraction I am myself actually at work in philosophic thought*. The question: How is philosophic thought itself possible? is thereby cut off. The cosmic order of law, which guarantees the relations of meaning for philosophic thought, is eliminated from the problem investigated, the possibility of knowledge. Theoretical reason is a complex of functions caught in the diversity of meaning. But Kant abstracts this and does not view it in its proper meaning-structure. Instead Kant understands it in terms of a priori forms of logical and psychical functions and consciousness and then sets this reason up by itself, disconnected from the temporal coherence of meaning and he then tries to come to a critical self-reflection about its activity! Even the cosmic coherence of meaning between psychical sensation and the logical activity of thought [two aspects of temporal reality] is not considered here by Kant. It remains hidden to Kant that in his understanding the thinker thereby eliminates from critical self-reflection his own activity of thought *(which is only actualized in the temporal coherence of meaning)*. This fact must remain hidden to immanence philosophy, even where it supposes that it has been able to come to an essential self-reflexive understanding of thought viewed as itself.

[WDW I, 73] Study Notes #50

The speculative metaphysical tendency in modern values philosophy

By the Archimedean point in which our law-Idea is rooted, any thought is eliminated of an “axiological” precedence of one of the law spheres above the other. A “values philosophy” in the modern sense of these words is only possible on the immanence standpoint.

Each law-sphere has its temporal particularized meaning only within the universal coherence of meaning of our cosmos. Shall the hand or the foot say to the eye: I am more important than you? All law spheres in their sovereignty in their own

\(^{20}\) *Prolegomena zu einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik* (§4 W.W. Cass. IV, p. 23). “Diese Arbeit ist schwer und erfordert einen entschlossenen Leser, sich nach und nach in ein System hineinzudenken, *was noch nichts als Gegeben zum Grunde legt, auszer die Vernunft selbst* [my italics], und also, ohne sich auf irgendein Faktum zu stützen, die Erkenntnis aus ihren ursprünglichen Keimen zu entwickeln sucht.”
spheres have equal value as refractions of meaning of the transcendent totality of meaning.

The whole so-called “objective” concept of values in modern philosophy rests on nothing else than an absolutizing of the normative aspects of meaning according to their law-side. The law (in modal particularized meaning), has thereby been separated on the one hand from its true Arché, and on the other hand it has been separated from its “subject” and from its relations of meaning in the temporal cosmic coherence (which first give it meaning). It then is supposed to be an abstract, timelessly valid, absolute value. In fact this speculative concept of value is carried by an open or a hidden hypostatization of the nous, an absolutizing of human reason, which the fallenroot of humanity believes to have found for its Archimedean point. Modern values philosophy is, in the domain of thought that is directed to the normative spheres of meaning, only the capstone of a philosophy that has allowed the pre-normative sides of reality to shrivel up into a mere object of consciousness.

§ 5 Concept of Law and Subject in their Dependence on the Law-Idea

[page 74] Study Notes #51

Concept of law and subject. Subject as ‘sujet’

We have set as the foundation of philosophic thought the law-Idea that is grounded in the Christian standpoint of transcendence. By this law-Idea the concepts of law and subject, which we will later consider in their particularized meaning, acquire their concise focus.

In the law-Idea the law is acknowledged as grounded in God’s holy sovereignty as Creator, and as being the absolute boundary between the Being of the Arché, and meaning of everything that has been created as that which is ‘sujet,’ sub-jected to the law. The concept of the subject must also be understood with reference to this meaning of being ‘sujet,’ a being sub-jected to the law in its temporal particularized meaning, diversity of meaning, and coherence of meaning.

[WdW I, 75] Study Notes #51

The disturbance of the meaning of the concepts of law and subject in immanence philosophy

In the humanistic immanence philosophy, in its rationalistic as well as in its irrationalistic, semi-rationalistic and semi-irrationalistic variations, this concept of the subject has been totally lost. and (to the incalculable damage for the philosophic analysis of meaning of reality), it must necessarily be lost in such an apo-static attitude of thought.

In immanence philosophy, the subject becomes sovereign, whether in the metaphysical sense of “substance” or “noumenon” or in the irrationalistic, transcendental-logical or phenomenological sense.
For example in Kant’s “theoretical” philosophy the subject is only subject in an epistemological sense, and as such it is regarded as the Arché of the form of theoretical laws of nature, as itself the lawgiver for nature in a transcendental-logical meaning.

After the destruction of the traditional metaphysics of nature, Kant could only maintain the pre-psychical aspects of reality as objects by theoretical reason’s a priori synthesis. He regarded the structural laws (that should be sovereign in their own sphere) as forms of theoretic reason which were then joined to a subjective psychical sensibility (aanschouwen).

Immanence philosophy cannot understand that numbers, spatial figures, energy functions, biotic organism can themselves be actual subjects, ‘sujet’ or subs-jected to their own spheres of law,.

In Kant’s so-called “practical” philosophy the subject became in the metaphysical sense of homo noumenon the autonomous lawgiver for moral actions.

Two features typify the concept of subject in immanence philosophy ever since it gave up on the previous metaphysics of nature:

1. ‘Subject’ is understood only in the particularized meaning of the rational functions of consciousness. The natural sides of reality [the pre-logical aspects] are only taken into consideration as the “object” of theoretic or practical thought. This was the necessary conclusion to the dissolution by theoretical thought of “empirical” reality into merely its logical and psychical aspects, which were abstracted from the coherence of meaning. This went together with the elimination of the cosmic law order and with the proclamation of the so-called critical “Satz des Bewusstseins,” to be discussed later. According to this view, our possible knowledge is limited to our subjective and objective contents of consciousness.

2. According to this view, the subject lacks its original meaning of being subjected, being ‘sujet’ to the law, which does not itself take its origin from the subject itself. It has received the crown of autonomous, self-sufficient law-giver. This is along the lines of the humanistic ideals of science and personality, which will be discussed later.

In close connection with this, the humanistic concept of law is understood in the sense of universally valid forms of thought—such as the practical idea of reason (the autonomous law of morality), or in its modern hypostasis of values that have validity in themselves.

The concept of subject has overall lost its transcendent foundation in the sovereign will of God the Creator.

[WdW I, 76] Study Notes #52
Rationalism as hypostasis of the law;
irrationalism as hypostasis of individual subjectivity

The rationalistic types of immanence philosophy thereby threatened to dissolve individuality subjectivity into universally valid conformity to law, whose origin and totality of meaning were referred back to sovereign reason.
The irrationalist types did not change the understanding of “law” as a product of thinking and reason. But they fell into the opposite pole. They found this “conformity to law” to be a falsification of the true reality, a creative subjective individuality. They saw creative subjectivity as being free from universally binding laws and they mocked all “concepts of thought.” In this way the absolutizing of the law by the rationalistic type was replaced by the absolutizing of the subject by the irrationalistic types of immanence philosophy.

Now do not suppose that the earlier currents of immanence philosophy had a better understanding of the concepts of law and subject. To choose one’s Archimedean point in the temporal rational functions must from the outset falsify the original meaning of law and subject.

[WdW I, 77] Study Notes #52
Subject as substance in the metaphysics of Thomas Aquinas

In the Thomistic-Aristotelian metaphysics, the “naturalis ratio” [natural reason] is declared to be self-sufficient in the domain of nature (which is here understood in the wide sense of that which stands opposite the “domain of grace”). The lex aeterna, the eternal law, is a law-Idea inspired by the hypostasis of nous. Human reason is elevated to divine reason. Reason thereby becomes the origin, Arché, of the content of the law in its totality of meaning and in its diversity of meaning. The good is not good because God commands it, but God must command the good, because “Goodness” is grounded in the divine “ratio” [“reason”]. As a compromise with the Christian confession of God’s Creative sovereignty, the binding force of the law (and especially the “natural moral law”) is then brought back to God’s “will.” The concept of the subject in this “realistic metaphysics” is then identified with the concept of substance, which is essentially a metaphysical rational concept. The notion of "natural" contains particularized law in itself as entelechia. This substantialized law of being of particularized meaning is not founded in a suprarational cosmic law, but in the “lex naturalis,” a metaphysical order in which each rational subject is himself a lawgiver, and participates in the “ratio divina.” This Divine Reason is embodied in the lex aeterna [“eternal law”]. Within natural law, non-rational subjects without moral reflection [i.e. non-humans] follow their nature. Even here in the final instance ratio is sovereign, although in the sense of a “metaphysical order of reason.”

[WdW I, 78] Study Notes #52
The concept of subjectivity in irrationalistic phenomenology

As a typical phenomenon in the philosophy of recent time we would point to the understanding of personality in the modern phenomenology, which is at least in part irrationalistic (Scheler, Heidegger and many others). These philosophers reproach Kant for still understanding the personal subject (as lawgiver) in a substantialized manner, and that he therefore did not penetrate to the pure actuality of the selfhood.

Just as Heidegger has expressed in his Being and Time,

“For the ontological concept of the subject does not characterize the selfhood of the Ego qua self, but the sameness and constancy of something already extant
To determine the Ego ontologically as Subject, means to estimate it as something already extant. The being of the Ego is understood as the reality of the *res cogitans* [thinking substance].

And Scheler has in his standard work, *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die Materiale Wertethik* (3rd ed., 1927, p. 397 ff) stated in a very clear way that personality should be qualified as “pure Actuality,” which as such is transcendent to the world of things, the “cosmos” (understood by him as dissolved into its abstracted natural sides of temporal reality). In this way, the motive of activity from Fichte’s personalistic philosophy is given a modern form.

We shall have an opportunity to discuss this understanding in more detail in the discussion of “The place of man in the cosmos.” It shall be seen that the ‘actuality’ that is brought so sharply to the fore by phenomenological thought, does not stand in opposition to *subjectivity*, but rather constitutes the kernel of each subject function as such. In other words, all the aspects of our cosmos (also in the aspects of the natural sides) only come to their *meaning* in the subject functions that function within these aspects. We shall demonstrate this in the discussion of the problem of the *individuality structures of temporal reality*. The whole view that temporal reality is a static givenness in its subject-side, a fixed “Vorhandenes” rests on a misunderstanding of the dynamic character of reality in the whole coherence of its aspects. This dynamism is rooted in the order of cosmic time and in the mode of being of reality as restless meaning.

From its view of the concept of subject and of the world of things in general, it is evident that modern phenomenology moves in the paths of immanence philosophy and that it has made the “sujet” sovereign in the “transcendently purified, actual consciousness.”

§1 The Antithesis in Philosophical Thought and the Postulate of a “Perennial Philosophy”

[WdW I, 80] Study Notes #53

The Philosophy of the Law-Idea, which demands a radical self-critique by practitioners of philosophy, must lead to the discovery of an antithesis in philosophic thought, which cannot be bridged by any compromise and whose dividing line is different than has been previously thought.

Now that critical self-reflection has disclosed the all-ruling meaning of the Archimedean point for philosophy, and has shown the non-self-sufficiency of philosophic thought in its

own domain, it can be understood how radical a break with immanence philosophy is necessarily brought by Christianity to philosophic thought.

The word from the Scriptures: “Out of the heart are the issues of life” touches the root of the whole of existence, and it discloses the one place that we can find the Archimedean point of philosophy, whether in an apo-static or in an ana-static sense, through which we discover our self to our self.]

[In contrast to this Christian view], how does it help to merely point to the universally valid conformity to law of our functions of knowledge? The law is the same for everyone, but our subjectivity, which is subjected to the law, is fallen from the fullness of meaning of the law, and now from out of itself it no longer understands the law in its temporal particularized meaning.

In answer to this the popular view of science usually answers, 2 X 2 = 4, whether or not a Christian or a heathen makes this judgment! But philosophically this argument is not worth much, whenever we for even a moment want to give an account of this mathematical judgment.

[WdW I, 81] Study notes #53
The non-self-sufficiency of partial truths.
All partial truth only becomes truth in the totality of meaning of truth

The judgment 2 X 2 = 4 is not true “in itself,” but only in the relative joining of meaning of the particularized meaning of the laws of number and of logic. This joining together of meaning is only possible in the all-sided coherence of meaning of all law-spheres, and presupposes a totality of meaning, of which the numerical sphere and the logical sphere are both only particular refractions of meaning. Partial truths that are in themselves self-sufficient do not exist.

The fall from the totality of meaning of truth makes us see the particularized meaning of the laws in a false light. Partial theoretical truth is only truth in the coherence of meaning of theoretical truths, and this relative coherence of meaning presupposes the fullness, the totality of meaning of truth.

In this way the Archimedean point of philosophic thought influences from the outset any philosophic view of the mutual relation of the meaning of number and of logic, and influences the meaning itself of number and logic. We shall show this in more detail.

What then remains for us of the ancient thought of a “perennial philosophy,” which is jealously maintained even in the relative isolation of modern Thomistic philosophy? Christian philosophy takes an antithetical attitude with respect to the whole immanence philosophy in its evolution from Greek philosophy and earlier up to recent time. Has it not thereby cut off all relation with the historical development of philosophic thought? If that were really so, then such a conclusion would at the same time pronounce a sentence of doom on the attempt that we take in this work to the reformation of philosophic thought from out of a Christian standpoint. Reformation is not creation out of nothing.
How is the idea of a “perennial philosophy” to be understood?
Philosophic thought and historical development

But whenever an appeal is made to the idea of a “perennial philosophy,” we need to know what is meant by this term. As postulated by our law-Idea itself, philosophic thought as such stands in relation with historical development, and no thinker can withdraw himself from the progressive evolution of philosophic thought. In this sense, our law-Idea itself demands the acknowledgement of the idea of a “perennial philosophy.” It rejects the arrogant thought that a thinker could start with a clean slate and separate himself from the development of centuries of philosophic reflection.

But we must never turn this postulate of the “perennial philosophy” against the religious a priori of philosophy with the intention of relativizing this in a historicistic way. For whoever does that, necessarily falls into a historicistic relativism with respect to truth, just as we see in a striking manner in Dilthey’s life- and world-view philosophy or in Oswald Spengler.

Whoever takes the trouble to immerse himself in the philosophical system developed in this book will soon see how it is attached with a thousand ties to the historical development of philosophical and scientific thought. At least this is so with respect to its immanent philosophic content, although we can nowhere follow such immanence philosophy.

The basic principle of sovereignty in its own sphere, which Calvinism puts in the foreground at the outset, could not have been worked out in this book without the whole preceding development of humanistic philosophy and its synthetic view of science—even though we have turned in principle against such a humanistic view of science on the basis of our philosophic Idea of sovereignty in its own sphere.

The philosophic working out of this system in its application of the law-Idea may be bound to historical development. Insight may grow in wealth of meaning of the cosmic law order, even through the work of directions of thought against which ours is set in an irreconcilable antithesis. Nevertheless, the religious starting point and with it the whole direction that philosophic thinking acquires through it, remains fixed and unmovable, grounded in the absolute truth. And it is necessary for both religion and philosophy that this starting point not be given up in any phase of Christian philosophic thought if it does not want to fall back in a standpoint of accommodation [with immanence philosophy].

Up to a certain point, each direction of thought works together towards the development of human knowledge, and no single one can be credited with a monopoly in this.
No single intellectual direction of thought, even if it has enmity towards God, appears in world history without its own task. In spite of itself, this task must work together towards the completion of the Divine Counsel’s plan in the unfolding of the powers that He also allows to keep working in the fallen creation. In the development of the basic features of our philosophy of history we will work out this point more precisely.

But the acceptance of “God’s direction in history” implies that whenever we enter the great confusing labyrinth of world culture, we must hold fast to the Augustinian Biblical thread in the history of the world, his insight into the continuing struggle between Civitas Dei [City of God] and the Civitas terrena [City of Earth]. The immanent historical meaning of God’s guidance must for now remain problematic until we have come to the philosophic analysis of the meaning of the historical aspect.

[WdW I, 84] Study Notes #55
The thought of the antithesis in immanence philosophy as “Weltanschaungslehre” [theory of life- and world-views]

Taken in itself, the thought of an antithesis is not in any way foreign to immanence philosophy, namely in its modern form of “Weltanschaungslehre” [theory of life- and world-views].

On the contrary, many antitheses are construed here. One of the oldest is that between idealism and naturalism. And it is noteworthy that “idealism” in all its variations always is of the opinion that this antithesis can be resolved (in favour of idealism) by the path of pure philosophic thought. In this view, no help is needed from the life- and world-view that transcends philosophy. Idealism believes that one only needs to reflect on the act of thinking itself in order to see immediately, that each attempted reduction of human rational functions to natural objects already presupposes actual thought as its own power over against all “natural reality.”

Furthermore, various modern thinkers have tried to neutralize within philosophic thought the struggle with respect to [life- and world-views] that are said to transcend philosophy by extending philosophy itself as a neutral life- and world-view, so that philosophy does not have to take a position with respect to the various antitheses.

In this way Dilthey22 arrived at the position that there are three recurring types of “philosophic worldviews” in historic development: 1. materialistic positivism (Democritus, Epicurus, Hobbes, the Encyclopedists, Comte, Avenarius); 2. objective idealism (Heraclitus, the Stoics, Spinoza, Leibniz, Shaftesbury, Goethe, Schelling, Schleiermacher, Hegel; 3. Freedom-idealism (Plato, Christian philosophy, Kant, Fichte, Maine de Biran).

Rickert’s classification is much more detailed, and is oriented to the typology of the possible “life- and world-views” in neo-Kantian philosophy of values.

He offers us a detailed outline in which the following types are analyzed from the standpoint of a philosophy of values: 1. intellectualism 2. aestheticism 3. mysticism 4. moralism 5. eudaemonism 6. eroticism 7. theism, polytheism.

What is typical of this and similar typologies of “life- and world-views” is that they, from out of their immanence standpoint, wipe out the only truly absolute antithesis, namely that between immanence and the Christian transcendence standpoint. Instead, they attempt to place the Christian starting point in philosophy under one of many –isms of immanence philosophy. At the same time, what are really only relative oppositions are proclaimed as absolute according to the immanence standpoint (at least insofar as the thinker who makes these classifications does not present himself as a complete relativist with respect to life- and world-views).

The first insight that we obtain by comparing the Philosophy of the Law-idea to the “Weltanschauungslehre” of immanence philosophy is that on the immanence standpoint, all oppositions based on a life- and world-view are completely relative.

Actually we should understand idealism and naturalism as a polar opposition based on the common root of the modern humanistic law-Idea. It is polar because from the outset the basic structure of this law-idea has a hidden inner antinomy between the ideals of science and personality [nature and freedom].

Aestheticism and moralism are not even polar oppositions. They remain wholly in the hypostasis of particular aspects of our cosmos (either law-sides or subject-sides).

Even in the so-called “theistic” type, the immanence standpoint is only apparently abandoned. This clearly appears from the fact that from the outset “theistic philosophy” is built on a metaphysical Idea of God, which found its origin in the hypostasis of the nous. Consider Aristotle’s theistic philosophy. The divine nous, as pure act, first transcendent cause, unmoved mover and final goal of the cosmos—these are all only theistic masks which hide the hypostasis of human reason. They are the idol-Ideas of immanence philosophy.

It is no different in the theistic philosophy of Descartes or of Leibniz.

What does such a philosophic “theism,” which is rooted in the proclamation of the sovereignty of reason, have in common with the radical Christian attitude in philosophic questions about life and world? All absolutizing of the relative, all absolutizing of meaning, is a fall from God and a rejection of His sovereignty.

The only possible antithesis in philosophy

In the light of the law-idea thee exists only one fundamental and absolute antithesis in philosophy—the antithesis between on the one hand absolutizing (deifying of meaning, in fall from God and thereby from the totality of meaning) and on the other hand the return of philosophic thinking to God in Christ, which leads to the insight into the complete relativity and lack of self-sufficiency of everything that exists in the creaturely mode of being of meaning, and to the acknowledgement of the radical influence of the fall on philosophic thinking.

If this antithesis is absolute and unbridgeable, then there is next to it no place for a fundamental antithesis of any other kind. At most there are polar tensions, already in principle in the basic structure itself of the philosophic Ground-Idea. For a philosophy that is rooted in the Christian transcendence point, there can then be no talk of idealism versus naturalism, moralism versus aestheticism, rationalism versus irrationalism, theism or mysticism. all such –isms can only be grounded in the immanence standpoint.

It therefore appears that such –isms, insofar as they may have obtained entry into Christian philosophic thought, are atavisms within the framework of the Christian law-idea. They are atavisms in the literal sense of this word—rudiments of pagan thought that cannot be in any way compatible with the Christian Ground-Attitude.

§ 2 The Distinction Between Philosophy and Life- and World Views, and the Criterion

Must then life- and world-views be mixed together with philosophic thought? Is the relation between philosophy and life-and world-view perhaps this, that philosophy is nothing other than a worked out life- and world-view, perhaps an “Anweisung zum seligen Leben” [a guide to the blessed life] under the mask of a philosophic theory? If it is accepted that the absolute antithesis that we have formulated above in fact is unavoidable for a life-and world-view, must then philosophy, which wants to maintain its theoretic character, therefore just for this reason refuse for making a choice of position if it does not want to completely wipe out the boundary between it and life- and world-views?

In these questions we find again the philosophic neutrality postulate, and these questions force us to give a more precise account of the relation between philosophy and life- and world-views.
It is very difficult to enter into discussions with immanence philosophy on this point because from its point of view there are strongly divergent opinions about the question: What do you really understand by life- and world-view and does it stand in opposition to philosophy? Heinrich Rickert for example wants to approach the nature of the life- and world-view in an axiological way, from out of his theoretical philosophy of values. He sees the essential in the personal a-theoretical choice of position with respect to the question: What is for you the highest value? Another defender of the neutrality postulate, Theodor Litt, reproaches Rickert for already exceeding the boundaries of philosophy in his theoretical philosophy of values. According to Litt, value is ex origine a-theoretical, and therefore, the attempt to find a foundation of the absolute validity of theoretical truth in a value of truth (as Rickert does) is already “of the Devil.” Litt seeks the criterion between philosophy and life- and world-view; he says that in philosophic thought, no single valuation may be one of the determining factors or even the decisive factor” [“mitbestimmend oder gar ausschlaggebend”]. For Litt, valuation is “conclusive evidence for the fact that the subject has not sacrificed his concrete-personal relation to the totality of reality for the sake of striving after pure knowledge.”

Measured by this criterion, the development of immanence philosophy throughout the centuries has been full of life- and world-views, and the purification process has really only just begun.

In Nietzsche’s philosophy of life, the task given to philosophy is just the reverse. It is the practical “ordering of values according to rank.” In his Genealogy of Morals (p. 38) philosophers are named “Befehlende und Gesetzgeber” [commanders and law-givers]. Philosophy then becomes the “art of living,” which has in common with the sciences only the fact that it expresses itself in concepts.

Modern existentialism was strongly influenced by Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. It wants to be a philosophy of the full existence of life. Its understanding of the relation between philosophy and life- and world-view follow the same line.

According to Karl Jaspers, philosophy at the outset was more than a mere “universal theory.”

It gave impulses, drew up tables of values, made human life meaningful and purposive, it gave him the world in which he felt safe; in a word it gave him : a view of life and the world.” In his opinion, o the “prophetic philosophy” that gives a worldview, in that it constructs tables of values as norms, deserves the name of philosophy.25

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24 Einleitung in die Philosophie (1933), p. 261
Theoretical and non-theoretical judgments.

The latter are never a-logical, but merely "non-gegenständlich.”

As we shall show in the discussion of epistemology, the situation is this: Theoretical judgments are scientific judgments that distinguish and then join together meaning. They embody scientific knowledge, which stands in a synthesis of meaning between logical thought and the meaning of a non-logical law-sphere that has been made into a “Gegenstand.” These judgments are subjected to the norm of theoretical truth, which holds for scientific knowledge.

The non-theoretical, so-called “practical” judgments are not a-logical—no judgment at all can be a-logical—but merely “non-Gegenständlich.” In other words, they are not grounded in the theoretical, logical attitude of thought that sets logical thought over-against an abstracted a-logical aspect of reality.

Non-theoretical judgments are subjected to the norm of pre-theoretical truth, which holds for pre-scientific knowledge, but also possesses universal validity as the norm for theoretical truth.

Whereas all temporal truth is founded in the temporal coherence of meaning of the logical and the non-logical aspects of reality, this temporal truth refers above itself towards the fullness of meaning of truth, which is only given in the religious totality of meaning of our cosmos.

Each judgment appeals for its meaning to the fullness of truth, in which no temporal restriction has any more meaning. For [full] truth does not allow any limitation as to its fullness of meaning.

Whoever relativizes truth to a supposed “pure” theoretical thought (i.e. thought that is merely determined by oneself), and at the same time acknowledges that the theoretical, scientific judgments do not exhaust the domain of judgments, falls into the logical self-refutation of skepticism. For such a person denies the fullness of truth, and relativizes truth to the particularized meaning of the theoretical as contrasted with the non-theoretical, but at the same time demands for his understanding full validity of truth without any restriction.

26 In the discussion of epistemology we shall demonstrate that theoretical truth cannot stand dualistically next to pre-theoretical, but that they appeal to each other in a deepening of meaning.

27 This antinomy results from a basic antinomy in the law-idea of this thinker. For on the one hand, he cannot place the fullness of meaning in the theoretical, since this would endanger the personality-ideal with it’s a-theoretical “values.” On the other hand, he...
Litt makes a sharp distinction between truth in its proper sense of theoretical, universally valid truth, and the “so-called” Weltanschauliche truth, or truth of a life – and world-view. This distinction in itself might have a good sense if it were not that Litt actually denies each truth of a life – and world-view.”

For when it is used in the sense of a life – and world-view,” Litt says that the word ‘truth’ should be used only as a predicate that is applied in assertions from a world- and life-view, in order to express:

“the unmutilated integrity with which a thinker makes confession of his interpretation of life to himself and to others, the inner consistency with which he develops it, the convincing force, with which he knows how to represent and support it and…the agreement between it and his actual behaviour in life.”

As soon as we seriously try to carry out Litt’s assertion, it appears to dissolve itself in an inner contradiction. If the judgments given in our life-and world view are not subjected to a norm of universally valid truth, they lose all meaning. And if they are really not judgments, they cannot contain any individual Lebensdeutung [interpretation of life].

A subjective “interpretation of life,” which is asserted in a series of judgments, only makes sense if the temporal cosmos in which we live in fact exists as a coherence of meaning. If that is so, then the judgments in which our subjective interpretations of life” are given must be necessarily subjected to a universally valid norm of truth. This norm of truth requires that my subjective interpretation of meaning must agree with the true state of affairs, in other words if it agrees with the meaning of our cosmos. But if there is no universally valid truth concerning the truth of our cosmos, then I can also give no subjective “interpretation of life,” because I can only interpret that which I can judge as to its truth, that it has a meaning, even if I personally leave undecided the truth of my personal interpretation of meaning.

Litt supposes that he can evade these destructive consequences of his standpoint in that he makes theoretical truth in its universal validity to the judge as to essence, meaning and the limits of the so-called “life- and world-view truth.” In this way the judgments of our life- and world-view appear again to be subjected to the mysterious “theoretical universally valid truth”–but only to find them immediately dissolve from any norm of truth! For the universally valid truth is then that the judgments of a life- and world-view,

claims to find his Archimedean point in theoretical thought. As we shall later see, a merely logical antinomy does not exist.
as assertions of a merely individual impression of live, lie “jenseits von Wahrheit und Falschheit” [beyond truth and falsity].

Because of the law-Idea of his philosophical system, Litt is much more adverse to an intellectualistic philosophy than Rickert. “Truth” must be restricted to the theoretical particularized meaning if theoretic thought is not to rule in the old intellectualistic way over the life- and world-views of the sovereign personality.

But if he persists in the view that for example the judgments, “God is the Creator of our cosmos, which He has made to His glory” or “Religion must give way to science” lie “beyond truth and falsity” because they comprise merely individualistic interpretations of life, then there can no longer be any universally valid truth regarding the totality of meaning of our cosmos and its relation to the diversity of meaning. Even Litt himself acknowledges that the totality must be more than mere theoretic meaning.

And if this conclusion [that there is no universally valid truth] is also accepted, then we have denied the meaning of a life- and world-view as well as the meaning of philosophic theoretical thought and the meaning of “theoretical truth.” Theoretic thought has then by means of “universally valid truth” destroyed its own foundations.

Philosophic thought is always directed to the totality of meaning. It is distinguishing and joining together of meaning. If there is no universally valid truth concerning the relation of totality of meaning, particularized meaning and coherence of meaning, then philosophic thought also has no norm of truth by which it can be tested.

The pole of absolute skepticism is in this way reached and with it the pole of absolute self-refutation. The concept of an “absolute merely theoretical truth” dissolves itself in an inner contradiction. And the critique of the law-Idea forces its way behind the logical contradictions in which the teaching of the self-sufficiency of the “pure theoretical truth” is entangled, and to the root of this immanence philosophy. It lays bare the relativistic bottom on which it builds its theoretic system. Only this relativistic Ground-Attitude explains the emphasis that this direction of modern thought makes in trying to protect theoretical truth from the relativism that has long since undermined its life- and world-view.

Christian philosophy does not have to learn from the humanistic Ideal of personality that theoretic thought cannot rule over religion and life- and world-views. But humanistic philosophy can certainly learn from Christian philosophy that philosophic thought is dependent on the religious attitude.

§ 6 More Precise Determination of the Relation Between Philosophy and Life- and World-View

[WdW I, 125] Study Notes #59

In what sense must philosophy give an account of life- and world-views? It must bring the life- and world-view to the clarity of theoretical thought, through the distinguishing and joining together of meaning and in the light of the law-Idea. Insofar as it includes other life- and world-views that have a different religious
foundation than what is expressed in its own law-Idea, it must try to specify the Ground-Idea that is the foundation of these different views. This means a theoretical illumination of these other life- and world-views. This is the only way in which it is really possible to do justice to the various types of life- and world-views.

[WdW I, 125b] Study Notes #60
A life- and world-view is not a system and cannot be made into a system without affecting its essence

Here the problem necessarily comes to the fore, why can philosophy never been in a position to replace the life- and world-view? The reason it cannot do this is that it cannot replace naive experience by a knowledge involving the synthesis of [differentiated and particularized] meaning. There remains a residue of living immediacy in each life- and world-view that must necessarily escape theoretical concepts.

A true life- and world-view is never a system. This is not because a life-and world view would be lost in belief or in feeling, but because in it, thought must remain in enstasis [ingesteld] in the full concrete reality, and this cannot be done by a theoretic, systematic thought.

As soon as we try to make a system of a life-and world-view, it will lose its own universality. It will not be able to speak to us any more out of the full reality, but rather from out of the distance. Scientific abstraction keeps this distance from life in order to furnish us with theoretical knowledge.

A radical Christian view of science also undoubtedly belongs to the Calvinistic life- and world-view. How is such a view of science born? It is not born out of a tendency to systematic philosophy, but it is born in the middle of a concrete situation of life. Already at the time of the Renaissance the pressure of the scholastic notion of science on the one hand and the necessity to oppose the coming humanistic view of science on the other stimulated Calvinism to its religious calling in the domain of science.

When Christianity was still being persecuted by fire and sword in the Roman Empire, its relation with respect to politics and worldly culture was generally a negative one. A positive choice of position with respect to the Christian task could only come when the possibility of practicing influence in these domains had been created.

Without the concrete idea of the “Enlightenment” Idea on all life, the reaction of the personality Ideal would never have revealed itself in humanistic circles. This was to bring an important turning point in the humanistic life- and world-view. Without it there would never have been the requirement for the neutrality of science over against the personal choice of position in a life-and world-view.

And we can continue giving examples. We repeatedly find the development of a life- and world-view in immediate contact with concrete situations in full life. And it shall remain so, since the immediacy of life is essential to a life- and world-view.

Therefore it is incorrect to assert that a Christian philosophy is nothing more than a scientific working out of a Christian life- and world view. A life- and world-view does not allow itself to be philosophically “worked out.” It works itself out in the series of
immediate life- and world-situations. Is a life- and world-view then prevented from making any claim to “universal validity” because it belongs to concrete individuality?

[WdW I, 127] Study Notes #61
What is the meaning of the concept “universal validity?”
The Kantian understanding is determined by the critical immanence standpoint.

In order to satisfactorily answer the question just posed, it is first necessary to give an account of the correct meaning of the concept “universal validity.” Until now we have learned to know this concept only in the framework of speculative thought, of “unconditioned pure thought” in which it took the place of a concept of law.

As is known, Kant was the first to give to the concept an a priori epistemological meaning. For him, “universally valid” means: independent from all “empirical subjectivity.” It is valid for the “transcendental consciousness,” the “transcendental cogito,” which is itself in its a priori synthesis the origin of all universal validity. ‘Universally valid’ in this sense is the synthetic a priori of all experience, which first makes experience possible.

In contrast to the synthetic a priori, Kant views perception as having merely “subjective validity,” because it is dependent on subjective sensory impressions, in which no objective, necessary validity can be grounded.

Kant has expressed this opposition in the judgments by distinguishing between mere judgments of perception and judgments of experience:

*Insofar as empirical judgments have objective validity*, they are judgments of experience. Those however, which are only subjectively valid, I call mere judgments of perception. The latter require no pure concept of the understanding, but only the logical connection of perceptions in a thinking subject. the former, however, at all times require, in addition to the representations of the sensory intuition, special concepts *originally produced in the understanding*, which bring it about, that the judgment of experience is *objectively valid*.28

Kant illustrated this distinction in the following examples. The judgment, “The room is warm, sugar is sweet, wormwood is revolting” and “The sun warms the stone” are mere

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28 Prolegomena zur einer jeden künftigen Metaphysik (Prolegomena to any future metaphysics) (Werke, Grossherzog Wilhelm Ernst, 4th ed., p. 422):
Empirische Urteile, insofern sie objektive Gültigkeit haben, sind Erfahrungsurteile; die aber, so nur subjectiv gültig sind, nenne ich bloße Wahrnehmungsurteile: Die letzteren bedürfen keines reinen Verstandesbegriffs, sondern nur der logischen Verknüpfung der Wahrnehmungen in einem denkenden Subjekt. Die ersteren aber erfordern jederzeit über die Vorstellungen der sinnlichen Anschauung noch besondere, im Verstande ursprünglich erzeugte Begriffe, welche es eben machen, dass das Erfahrungsurteil objektiv gültig ist.
subjectively valid judgments of perception. However, the last judgment referred to becomes a judgment of experience, with a genuine claim to universal validity, whenever I say, “the sun causes the heat of the stone,” for here,

to perception is added the concept of the understanding, i.e. causality, which necessarily connects the concept of the sunshine with that of heat, and the synthetic judgment becomes necessarily universally valid, consequently objective, and is transformed from a perception into experience.

This whole understanding of universal validity stands and falls with the critical immanence standpoint and its view of the structure of experience and of temporal reality. A break with this immanence standpoint necessarily means a break with this understanding of universal validity. In the light of our Christian law-Idea the claim of universal validity claimed by a judgment can only be understood in the sense of agreement of the judgment with the religious cosmic law that is elevated above all arbitrariness. That is, it is agreement with the divine law for the cosmos in its particularized meaning, coherence of meaning and fullness of meaning, without which no judgment could have validity.

[Wnd I, 129] Study Notes #62

The possibility of universally valid judgments depends on the universal supra-subjective validity of the structural laws of human experience.

The possibility of universally valid judgments rests only and exclusively on the universal (elevated above all individual subjectivity) validity of the structural laws of human experience.

“Universal validity” is a normative qualification, which presupposes the subjectedness of the judging subject to the law, which can never take its origin from this subject itself. The judging subject can in fact come into conflict with this law. As such it is very closely connected with the structure of truth.

We can therefore only discuss the problem of universal validity in the more particular discussion of epistemology, and in the present context we must be content with introductory remarks.

First we notice that universal validity can not be limited to the judgments of theoretic thought. This is because the laws of theoretic thought are not valid “an sich” [“in

29 Ibid., p. 423, note p. 426.
30 Note 426.
themselves’], but only in the cosmic coherence of meaning and in the dependence on the religious root unity of the divine law.

Universal validity applies to each judgment that each judging subject ought to agree with. It does not apply to a judgment that has meaning only for an individual subject that is judging. The judgments “I do not believe in God,” or “I do not find Rembrandt’s Night Watch beautiful” can never have universal validity, because they only express a subjective opinion, which remains limited to the individual ego [ik] in the subjective function of judgment itself.

In contrast to this, for a universally valid judgment it does not matter whether it is an assertion about a concrete, individual state of affairs outside of the subjective function of judgment, or about abstract theoretical states of affairs.

The judgment of naïve experience, “This rose, which stands on my table, is red,” if it is to be taken seriously, makes an appeal to concrete truth and universal validity for each possible perceiving subject at this moment, since it is not limited to the subjective function of judgment of the individual ego. Its universal validity depends on the structural laws of pre-theoretical experience, in which thinking is still wholly enstatic [ingesteld] within the temporal reality.

Undoubtedly there are structural differences in the universal validity of judgments. In the first place, there are differences of structure between theoretical and pre-theoretical judgments.

[Wnd I, 130] Study Notes #62
The universal validity of a correct judgment of perception

The validity of a judgment of perception, as we have formulated it, does not depend on the concrete hic et nunc [here and now] of the subjective-sensory aspect of perception. If that were so, then Kant would be correct that a judgment of perception would have mere subjective validity and that it could make no claim to universal validity. But as already pointed out, it is really the structural laws of naive experience that guarantee the universal validity of a correct judgment of perception. As we shall see in our discussion of epistemology, these laws are at the same time the structural laws of cosmic reality itself.

The structural laws also regulate the subject-object relations in naïve experience (which we will later examine). They also guarantee the plastic structure of the experience of things both with respect to their subjective-objective sensory and logical aspects. And these laws first make possible the universally validity of a concrete judgment of perception.

The reason that Kant can acknowledge only subjective validity to these judgments is due to his construction of experienceable reality as a chaotic sensory material that must first be formed by a transcendental consciousness into a cosmic reality (a reality ordered in a universally valid way). Kant’s view is also grounded in the old metaphysical prejudice that the so-called secondary qualities of things (i.e. the sensory qualities) have only a subjective character and do not belong to the full reality of things. [10] And above all the reason for Kant’s view is the circumstance that from his critical immanence standpoint he
has totally wiped out the structural differences between theoretical knowledge and naïve experience.

All these points will be elaborated in more detail later.

[WdW I, 131] Study Notes #62

The universal validity of a religious judgment and the unconditional validity of the religious law of concentration of human experience.

In the second place there is a fundamental structural difference between a supra-theoretical religious judgment such as “God is the Creator of the world,” or “All laws are grounded in absolute Reason” on the one hand, and judgments that make assertions about cosmic or cosmological states of affairs within the temporal boundary of the cosmos on the other hand.

The universal validity claimed by the first kind of assertions depends on whether or not they agree with the religious root unity of the structural laws of human experience, to which the judging selfhood in the heart of its existence is subjected, as to the religious concentration law of its temporal experience.

All universal validity claimed by a judgment depends in the final instance upon the universal, unconditional validity of this religious concentration-law. No single particular law, even the cosmic law order itself (which maintains the coherence of meaning among the law-spheres) is self-sufficient to guarantee the universal validity of any human judgment. This is because the universal validity of these laws has creaturely-character. Law that is not connected with its Origin is nothing. In the light of the Christian law-Idea it should therefore be clear that the universal validity of a religious judgment of the Christian life- and world-view is not dependent on the larger or smaller circle of those who affirm it. Nor can it be detracted from by the circumstance that because of the fall into sin human thought has been withdrawn subjectively from the fullness of meaning of truth, and that man is not in himself capable of directing his thought to the fullness of meaning.

[WdW I, 132] Study Notes #62

The so-called “transcendental consciousness” as hypostasis of human thought in its universal apostasy from the fullness of meaning of truth.

By the hypostasis of the so-called “transcendental consciousness” to the Arché [Origin] of universal validity, the foundation for the validity of truth is undermined. For in this hypostasis, truth is made dependent on the really universal fall of thought.

It is not the laws of human thought that take the subjective act of knowing away from the fullness of meaning of truth. It is the fallen self-hood, who tries to take these laws out of their coherence of meaning and out of their religious root. Through this the fallen
selfhood subjectively falsifies the particularized meaning of these laws in judgments. The concept “normal consciousness” is not identical with the “norm of consciousness!” And the truth and universal validity of a judgment do not find their criterion in a fallen “normal consciousness.”

Litt says that the fact that there are so many life- and world-views is an indication that they are particular impressions of life, and that they are not subjected to the universally valid norm of truth. Whoever uses his arguments and takes this path in fact is not doing a service to the view that only judgments of theoretic thought can claim universally valid truth. A simple reference to the divisions among philosophical and even of special scientific theories should give a sufficient incentive to leave this bypath rather speedily!

[WdW I, 133] Study Notes #63
The opposition between “universal validity” and individuality is not a pure contradictory opposition.

In our discussion of *epistemology*, we shall demonstrate that the opposition: universal validity in theoretic thought versus concrete individuality in life- and world-view is not a pure opposition. For in the subjectivity of theoretic thought, the individuality of the thinker cannot be disconnected in any way. The notion that theoretic thought has no place for the individual is a remnant of the rationalistic understanding of science from the Enlightenment, which tried to separate the subject-side from the logical law-sphere.

We have shown how a life- and world-view in its development cannot follow any systematic tendency, but that it must remain in immediate proximity to the concrete situations of life, even though it correctly gives a universal formulation to its judgments. Enstatically within the full temporal reality, such a worldview (or rather its adherent) directs the religious view of totality onto the reality of life in its concrete structure. Historical development, whose tempo it must follow in its thinking, is not understood in a scientific way, but rather in its continuous inter-wovenness through all of temporal reality, as a not yet explicitly distinguished component of reality in which the adherents of this world-view are enstatically placed, with the full actuality of their thinking and belief, and which they in this enstasis live to the fullest.

With this, Litt’s thesis as to the unscientific character of a life- and world-view is reduced to its proper proportions.

What is the case with his view that a life- and world-view, in distinction from philosophy, lives in a sphere of communal convictions?

[WdW I, 134] Study Notes #64
Neither a life- and world-view, neither philosophy should be understood individualistically.

A life- and world-view is in its origin not individualistic, but in fact social [*samenbindend*]. It is *ex origine* a communal conviction, subjected to the norm of the full truth, of a human community in its antithetical religious roots.
In the religious ground of the matter, there exist only two life- and world-views, which fight with each other in an irreconcilable struggle. Within the framework of each these, we find individual, often strongly divergent variations, which join together temporal relations under the leading of personalities, and which are subjected to historical development.

Philosophic thought is also bound to this historical development within the coherence of meaning. And as we shall demonstrate in the discussion of epistemology, it is not individualistic thought, but rather relational-thought, a communal thought, where leading thinkers predominate. And by reason of the religious cosmic coherence of philosophy and life- and world-view, it is impossible that they would not mutually influence each other.

Philosophic thought should find in life- and world-views a continual and actual stimulus towards religious self-reflection. And on the other hand, life –and world-views should find in philosophic thought a stimulus to come to theoretical clarity.

But just as philosophy may not with impunity fall into the concrete tone of a life- and world view, as little may a life- and world-view accept with impunity the distance from the full reality, which is suitable to theoretic thought.

One in their root, and reciprocally appealing to each other and influenced by each other, they nevertheless need to be sharply distinguished, each with its own task and essential character.
Volume II: The Functional Meaning Structure of Temporal Reality and the Problem of Knowledge

Part II: The Problem of Knowledge in the Light of the Law-Idea

Chapter II: The Structure of the Synthesis of Meaning and its Transcendental and Transcendent Conditions

§1 The Theoretical Character of the ‘Gegenstand’ in Knowledge

[WdW II, 399] Study Notes #65

We have in the preceding chapter formulated the basic problem of epistemology as follows: How is theoretical synthesis of meaning possible?" From this question is born the problem, "what is it that is set-over-against [the logical aspect]?” As we have said, this essential and primary basic problem cannot be asked by immanence philosophy, even when behind Kant’s critical inquiry the attempt is made to found epistemology in a metaphysics, on a “critical ontology” or a modern phenomenology.

The phenomenologist presumes that there is no problem of a ‘Gegenstand,’ since he supposed that he discovers it by his intentional consciousness in the “strict givenness” of that which is purified by the phenomenological reduction. According to phenomenology, the world is only given to us as an “intended Gegenstand!”

In the metaphysically founded epistemology, the anticheimenon is regarded as identical with the subjective reality of a substance. They suppose that this substance is independent of our subjective-logical aspect.

And for Kant, the ‘Gegenstand’ is identical with what is universally valid and “objective” in our experience. He, too, does not see the real problem of the possibility of the isolating abstraction of that which is opposed to [the logical aspect]. Because of this, the multivocal concept of ‘Gegenstand’ as it is used in immanence philosophy is totally useless for us.

If we want to examine more closely this primary basic problem of epistemology, we must first obtain clarity about the true character of the ‘Gegenstand’ and about the structure of theoretic synthesis of meaning.

[WdW II, 400] Study Notes #66

Is it possible to speak of a ‘Gegenstand’ of knowledge?

Usually we speak without suspicion about the ‘Gegenstand’ of knowledge; this follows from the assumption that the ‘Gegenstand’ is opposed to our knowledge. But over-against what in our knowledge can the ‘Gegenstand’ be opposed? If we answer, "Over-against the knowing subject," then this answer is problematic in every respect. It does not
become less problematic to define the “knowing subject” more precisely as the “transcendental consciousness,” the transcendentally reduced “I think.”

Is it then intended that the ‘Gegenstand’ of knowledge is set over-against our knowing selfhood?

The epistemological ‘Gegenstand’ first arises through the theoretical dis-stasis [uiteenstelling] of the cosmic temporal meaning systasis. Our “selfhood” is not to be found in this temporal systasis of meaning, as we demonstrated in the Prolegomena. The correlate to the ‘Gegenstand’ must therefore be sought immanently, in the temporal coherence of meaning.

The resistance [tegenstand] arises as such through the setting-over-against [tegenoverstellen] and this setting-over-against is in essence the (theoretic) dis-stasis [uiteen-stellen] of the cosmic systasis of meaning. This dis-stasis is now only possible by means of the analytical aspect, and the ‘Gegenstand’ therefore must stand in a particular indissoluble relation with that aspect.

[WdW II, 401] Study Notes #67
The enstatic attitude and the setting-over-against attitude of thought

The modal function of feeling does not have a resistance [tegenstand] in an epistemological sense: its immanent subject-object relation can never be referred to in this sense of an essentially inter-modal setting-over-against (in a theoretic dis-stasis).

But, as we have repeatedly stated, the analytical function itself has no theoretical ‘Gegenstand” so long as it remains merely enstatically placed within temporal reality. The analytical aspect is fitted [ingevoegd] into the cosmic systasis of meaning as a necessary meaning-side of temporal reality in which all post-logical aspects are founded.

In naïve experience, the analytical function of thought is in this way enstatically fitted within [ingesteld] temporal reality; it is en-statically active in the cosmic coherence of meaning. For this reason, naïve experience knows of no epistemological problem. Naïve experience has no resistance and it is not active in synthesis of meaning, but in the en-stasis of full temporal reality. In naïve experience the analytical function of thought is merely inner thought [indenken]. Naïve experience is the concrete experience of things in their relations in the full individual temporal reality that has not been subjected to dis-stasis. Also in naïve experience, the analytical subject-object relation has only a mere en-static character. Whoever sees this relation in naïve experience as a ‘Gegenstand’ (as Kant does) has cut off at the outset of a way of giving an account of naïve experience.
Only in the deepened theoretic thought does the mere en-static attitude of thought give place to the over-against and dis-static attitude. The deepened analysis first executes \[\text{voltrekt zich}\] an inter-modal synthesis of meaning, in which the non-analytic meaning is made into a ‘Gegenstand’ of the analytic aspect. A ‘Gegenstand’ arises only in theoretic knowledge, in the synthesis of meaning and over against the deepened analysis. With this it is established that the ‘Gegenstand’ in theoretical knowledge, as ‘Gegenstand’ of the theoretic analytical aspect, \textit{can never be the full temporal reality itself}, nor can it be the “thing” in its cosmic systasis of meaning in reality. \textit{As long as we merely systatically grasp the “thing” of naïve experience, we have no resistance of analysis.} As soon as the resistance appears, we have given up the naïve attitude of pre-theoretical thought, which is only en-static [\textit{instellende}].

\textbf{[WdW II, 402] Study Notes #69}

The problem of synthesis of meaning is rooted in the problem of cosmic time, in the problem of the \textit{epoché}\textsuperscript{31}, and of the continuity of the temporal, cosmic coherence of meaning.

The epistemological ‘Gegenstand’ can therefore not be cosmic reality itself, since the analytical function, even in its theoretical deepening of meaning, cannot break the bonds of its \textit{immanence} within temporal reality. The analytical function cannot \textit{transcend} cosmic time in order to set itself over against the cosmos. As we know from the \textit{Prolegomena}, only in the religious, transcendent root of his personality does man go beyond the temporal diversity of meaning and only there is he able choose a position over against the cosmos. But this religious “over-against” may never be confused with the ‘Gegenstand’ in the theoretical synthesis of meaning, which is a product of theoretical abstraction.

The ‘Gegenstand,’ which is set over against the analytical function of meaning in the still-problematic synthesis of meaning, is the product of a willed reduction [\textit{aftrekking}] from out of the full temporal reality.

\textsuperscript{31} This term, which has such a central function in Husserl's phenomenology, in fact does not derive from Husserl, but from Greek philosophy. It therefore does not make sense to seek for Husserlian motives behind my understanding of the epoché. I use the term exclusively in the sense of an abstraction from the temporal continuity of the cosmic coherence of meaning.
We have repeatedly noted that this over-against attitude of theoretical thought must first abstract from nothing other than the continuity of cosmic time. Therefore it appears that the basic problem of the epistemological synthesis of meaning is essentially rooted in the problem of cosmic time—that is, in the possibility of a theoretical epoché [refraining from] the temporal continuity of the cosmic coherence of meaning.

[WdW II, 403] Study Notes #70
Varieties of ‘Gegenstände’

In this primary analytical epoché, the ‘Gegenstand’ may be conceived in a larger or lesser degree of abstraction.

The absolute boundary of ‘gegenständliche’ abstraction lies in the a priori basic structure of the temporal aspects. An entire law sphere with its internal modality of meaning can function as a ‘Gegenstand.’ But within such an abstracted law sphere a whole field of mutually cohering particular ‘Gegenstände’ reveal themselves.

Finally, a structural ‘Gegenstand’ can be abstracted from the things of naïve experience, and out of the real human social structures. This abstracted structure is then not merely modal or functional, but in the analytical epoché it shows the typical structural coherences of an inter-modal character. This last sort of ‘Gegenstände’ forms the field of investigation in Volume III.

§ 2 The Relation Between Synthesis of Meaning and Deepened Analysis.
The Objective-Analytical Dis-Stasis and the Analytical Character of the Epoché

[WdW II, 403b] Study Notes #71

We now want to first give an account of the question why the deepening of meaning of analysis can only be done in thought that seeks a synthesis of meaning. This question deserves our special attention. Why cannot the deepening of meaning in the mode of the analytical aspect not remain at rest in the cosmic systasis of meaning? Why must the unfolding meaning of analysis abstract its ‘Gegenstand’ from out of full temporal reality?

The answer must be: because in the modal sense of analysis itself, according to its “universality in its own sphere,” the demand is given to find no rest in the mere systasis of meaning of cosmic reality. The universality in its own sphere of the logical aspect can only reveal itself in a deepening of meaning of analysis, in which the modal structures of meaning of the law spheres themselves, which are only given in the continuity of the cosmic coherence of meaning, are split apart [uiteen-gesteld, dis-stasis] in logical discontinuity.
The logical law sphere in its mere enstatic function can never approximate the totality of meaning in its own aspect of analytical meaning. In enstasis, it only is able to analytically distinguish things and relations between things by their sensorily founded characteristics.

[WDW II, 404] Study Notes #72

Why the naïve concept of a thing can not be based on a synthesis of meaning.

[The fact that naïve analysis distinguishes things on the basis of sensory characteristics] does not mean that the naïve concept of a thing is based on a synthesis of meaning of the analytical and psychical aspects. That would imply that naïve, pre-theoretical thought could be in a position to analyze the psychical modal function of meaning by taking it from out of full temporal reality and making it its ‘Gegenstand!’

The truth is that the naïve concept of a thing remains inert [traag], [enstatically] fitted within the full temporal systasis of meaning of naïve experience, of which it makes an inseparable subjective component. Because of this, pre-theoretical thought is not in a position to make an analysis of the modal aspects of the reality of a thing.

Naïve analysis does not penetrate behind the objective perceptual appearance [oogenschijn] and can therefore not comprehend in a meaning-synthetic sense the functional laws of the law spheres. It makes do with pre-theoretical, practically oriented distinctions, which find their touchstone in the sensory aspect of experience and are not ordered from out of a systematic-methodical viewpoint.

But it is just the analytical meaning that now requires the Idea of its completion of meaning in the analytical comprehension of the totality of the modal functions of meaning themselves with their [modal] conformity to law.

In this Idea of analysis, the cosmic given is not left in rest. Rather the functions of its own substratum [the pre-logical], and the modal analytical aspect itself, which is abstracted in the synthesis of meaning is split apart in dis-stasis.

[WDW II, 405] Study Notes #73

The analytical character of the epoché

Analysis that has been deepened in the synthesis of meaning thus performs an analytical epoché from out of the continuity of the temporal coherence of meaning of reality.

Naturally, the continuity of cosmic time does not allow itself realiter [in actuality] to break through this analysis. As we know, such a breaking through would mean the end of the possibility of analysis itself. The analytical epoché moves in principle within the continuous temporal coherence of meaning.

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

[WdW II, 405b] Study Notes #74
Unfolding of the logical anticipatory sphere in the pre-logical ‘Gegenstand.’

This deepened analytical aspect may make the pre-logical law spheres into its ‘Gegenstand.’ Thereby the concentration on a particular ‘Gegenstand’ (e.g. the numerical, kinetic, biotic or psychical law spheres) always proceeds from an actual directing of theoretical attention that cannot be explained from the analytical aspect alone. The pre-logical spheres that are made into a ‘Gegenstand’ then unfold their meaning under the functional leading of their anticipatory logical sphere. This is a state of affairs that we have already given our attention to in the General Theory of the law spheres [Part I of Volume II].

The numerical, spatial, kinetic aspects, etc., sovereign in their own sphere with their own law-conformities, follow the leading of the systematic analysis, and reveal their coherence of meaning with the logical aspect.

In the pre-logical aspects, abstracted into a ‘Gegenstand’ by the theoretical analysis, the law spheres unveil themselves as “having the predisposition” towards the systematic tendency of theoretic thought. There is an anticipatory call for systematic analysis.

[WdW II, 406] Study notes #75
Deepening of the logical object-side of reality in theoretical thought.

The objective-analytical dis-stasis

At the same time, the logical object-side of reality is deepened in the subject-object relation. It changes from merely being fitted into temporal reality as an objective-logical systasis to an objective-logical setting apart, to an objective dis-stasis of a functional multiplicity in the analytical aspect.

In theoretic scientific thought the logical object-side is opened in the concept of function.

No longer is analysis content with the sensorily founded distinction of things whose aspects have not been analyzed. Rather, analysis penetrates to the setting apart of the aspects themselves. Only now are the pre-logical aspects analytically distinctly articulated and objectified. But this objective-analytical dis-stasis is no more a subjective creation of theoretic thought than is the objective-analytical systasis a creation of pre-theoretical thought. Rather, it belongs to the deepened objective-logical aspect of the full temporal reality, and it is only unveiled by theoretical analysis.

In being directed to the pre-logical law-spheres, theoretical analysis is bound to the objective-analytical dis-stasis of temporal reality. It is just in this inner being bound to reality that the analytical aspect finds the full weight of its non-analytical "Gegenstand."
The epoché, which is characteristic of theoretic thought, therefore completes itself in the deepened analysis itself. It functions within the logical law-sphere, but it is the theoretical synthesis of meaning that relates the analytical aspect to its "Gegenstand."

Now that the modal meaning of the theoretical epoché has been cleared up, the question of the possibility of the synthesis of meaning demands our attention.

From the already theoretically abstracted analytical aspect this possibility can never be explained. Much rather, this theoretical abstraction itself presupposes, as we have seen, the synthesis of meaning.

§ 3 Intuition in the Continuity of Cosmic Time and the Refraction of Meaning by Cosmic Time

[WdW II, 407] Study Notes #76

The synthesis of meaning is a subjective cognitive act, whose supra-individual universal validity depends on the cosmic law order that first makes it possible. As an actus [act] it presupposes the I-ness or selfhood that transcends time, and in accordance with the Archimedean point of our law-Idea, participates in the religious root of the whole temporal reality. In the direction of the synthesis of meaning to the selfhood, which is only possible in the transcendental direction of cosmic time, we discover the transcendent conditions of the cognitive synthesis of meaning. This is discovered in the selfhood, as religious root of all cognitive activity.

When our theoretic reflection on the possibility of synthesis of meaning chooses the transcendental direction, our attention is again drawn to the relation between the deepened theoretic analysis, in which we can perform the analytical epoché, and cosmic time, upon whose continuity this epoché is performed.

The theoretical concept of the analytical aspect is itself the product of a theoretical abstraction. That from which abstraction takes place in order to comprehend the analytical aspect in a synthesis of meaning, is primarily the continuity of cosmic time in the syntasis of meaning of temporal reality.

[WdW II, 408] Study Notes #76

Actual analysis is cosmically more than, and above the law sphere of the analytical aspect.

If this is so, the actual analysis must be more than the analytical aspect that is itself only the product of abstraction in the synthesis of meaning.

The excess hides in that which cannot be theoretically isolated by the analytical aspect, because it is the transcendental condition of all theoretical isolation. It is the temporal bottom layer [dieptelaag] reality of our activity of thinking. By this our analytical function of thinking is itself fitted enstatically [ingesteld] within cosmic time,
and through it this function of thinking remains in continuous temporal contact with all other aspects that our selfhood has as its own within time.

The temporal bottom layer of actual analysis is intuition. All epistemologies that seek to reach greater depths, from Plato onwards, have tried to spread clarity on this intuition. But its true nature must escape immanence philosophy, because such philosophy has an a priori disconnected cosmic time from its epistemology.

Intuition cannot be theoretically isolated, just because of its continuous temporal character. The continuous coherence of meaning in the temporal refraction of meaning is grasped immediately by intuition behind all theoretical conceptual limits. Intuition is a cosmic intuition of time. Whoever tries to isolate it theoretically makes a theoretical concept of it in the synthesis of meaning. This disconnects exactly that which is the essence of intuition, its being embedded in the temporal continuity of the cosmic coherence of meaning.

In its temporal actuality, intuition is nothing without the selfhood that transcends time.

In the transcendental direction of theoretical intuition, by the transcendental leading of faith, our selfhood, in its transcendent unity as the religious root of our whole temporal existence, becomes cosmologically conscious of itself within the temporal coherence and temporal diversity of meaning of all its aspects.

It is the human personality itself, in the unity of its religious root, which is actually operating in cognitive acts, and not one or more of its modal functions. This is whether or not cosmic self-consciousness in the cognitive act is directed in Christ to the true Origin of all things, to the sovereign Creator and Father in Heaven, or whether in the fall into sin one’s self and one’s origin is sought within the temporal.

[WdW II, 409] Study Notes #77
Self-reflection on the functions as being our own.

The modalities of meaning of the law spheres are not foreign to the human selfhood, in the sense of being transcendent to it. They are cosmically the selfhood’s own. Apart from the religious root in which our creation finds its totality of meaning, and in which our selfhood participates, these modalities have no meaning, and no existence [aanzijn].

In the intuitive self-reflection on the modal functions as our own in cosmic time, the possibility of a cognitive synthesis of meaning of the law spheres unveils itself.

In intuition, the analytical and non-analytical functions, which are all divided from each other by their modal meaning, actually come together in a relation of harmony.

In cosmological intuition, our selfhood experiences the temporal coherence of meaning between the modal aspects of reality. Their deeper identity in creation’s religious fullness of meaning is experienced in the unity of the selfhood that transcends all diversity of meaning.

So long as the analytical aspect has not deepened itself in the transcendental direction of time, and so long as it remains resting inertly in the foundational direction of cosmic
time, intuition can also not come to a free synthesis of meaning, but remains resting in the given systasis of meaning.

Or rather the other way round: it is by means of intuition that our modal analytical function of meaning enters the continuity of cosmic time. So long as intuition remains resting in the foundational direction of the cosmic order of time, the modal analytic meaning cannot unfold and arrive at a deepening of meaning. We are then not actually operating in the transcendental freedom of theoretic thought that follows the path of synthesis of meaning.

An intuition that remains merely resting in the cosmic systasis of meaning is typical of the attitude of naïve experience. All of us, whether or not we are practitioners of science, necessarily adopt the naïve attitude as soon as we are not engaged in theory. In our resting, pre-theoretical intuition we have an enstatic consciously knowing 'Hineinleben' ['beleven'] or living within [in-leven] full temporal reality, as it gives itself in the individuality structure of things and their relations. This knowing [wetend] living within is first unfolded in the full temporal experience of reality, to which every theoretical synthesis of meaning is still foreign. It is an experience of reality that should not be mis-characterized in any way in reference to the functionalistic viewpoints of immanence philosophy (e.g. as mere sensory functions or as a synthetic logical ordering of sensory impressions).

But this knowing [wetend] living-within, which is in no way separated from our analytical function of thought, still lacks theoretic in-sight into the modalities of meaning of our experience. But theoretic in-sight, which first arises in the over-against attitude of thought, and which sees-through [doorschouwt], as its ‘Gegenstand,’ the aspects that are now dis-closed and laid open, cannot in itself make us experience the aspects as our own.

That which is really self-given is never that which is merely theoretically seen-through [door-schouwde].

Theoretic in-sight is possible only as a disclosing, laying open, and theoretical deepening of that which is self-given in the pre-theoretical conscious ‘Hineinleben’ [beleving]. Conscious knowing [wetend] 'Hineinleben' is the temporal foundational layer [grondlaag] of all knowing [kennen].

[WdW II, 411] Study Notes #77
The misunderstanding with respect to the possibility of a non-intuitive knowledge. All theoretical knowledge [kennen] rests on knowing [wetend] in-sight.

It is a misunderstanding to suppose that the actual synthesis of meaning could be possible without intuitive insight.

Already the analytical conformity to law of thought must itself be known intuitively if analysis is to be possible. And an intuitive insight into the ‘Gegenstand’ is a fortiori necessary as a condition of scientific knowledge. All actual knowledge, whether it is pre-theoretical or theoretical is a knowing. And all knowing is determined by our Hineinleben
[‘believing’], whether or not that knowing has been deepened to theoretical insight. This also applies to what is called discursive knowledge.

As soon as my intuition stops operating, I do not know anything at all.

Without theoretic intuition, neither the modal subjective-psychical nor subjective-logical functions can give us conscious insight into the sensory impressions or analytical coherences that reveal themselves in them.

[WdW II, 411b] Study Notes #78
Volkelt’s incorrect contrast of logical necessity and intuitive certainty

According to Johannes Volkelt, the “logical necessity of thought” does not refer to intuition as its source. He means to say that the knowledge of logical necessity is not objectively founded in intuition, and he gives the following grounds for this proposition:

I am certain of logical necessity as of something purely objective, supra-personal, something that shows the inner coherence of ground and consequence; hence something that forms a complete contrast with all intuitive necessity. When asked why I admit some logically necessary proposition, I do not answer, “Because I am intuitively certain of this statement,” but “because this proposition is objectively founded, because it follows from objective considerations, because it rests on proof.”

Volkelt shows here that he has not understood the transcendental meaning of intuition in thinking that joins and distinguishes meaning. This is also evident in a note where he says that intuition can be comprehended by psychological analysis. According to him, intuitive certainty when seen from the perspective of the logical is only “the subjective form, in which the objective force of the logical makes itself known.”

Unfortunately he argues further in a manner that can scarcely be taken seriously:

Intuitive certainty is, therefore, not the creator of logical truth, but only the way and character in which I become aware of the self-supporting truth. consequently [!] we are not concerned here with a type of intuitive certainty that could be put on a level with moral, religious and aesthetic intuition.


33 “Die intuitive Gewissheit ist also nicht die Erzeugerin der logischen Wahrheit, sondern nur die subjektive Art und Weise, wie mir die sich selbst tragende logische Wahrheit zu
It is of course not a rational hypothesis that intuition could create logical truth. But does Volkelt’s view imply that the moral, aesthetic or “religious” intuition does create that in which it acquires insight? And is intuition insofar as it is directed not to the pre-logical but to the logical and post-logical law spheres, or even as pre-theoretical intuition places itself enstatically within certain individual structures and coherences of the full temporal reality, suddenly become something other than a subjective fallible insight into states of affairs that are not created by our intuition, but which only reveal themselves to it?

Volkelt’s meaning is clearer in an earlier context, where he contrasts two kinds of certainty (1) intuitive certainty (by which the “necessity of thought” is forced to our attention) and (2) the immediate certainty derived from the intelligible moral law. He says that the moral law does not rest on any foundation other than our intuitive certainty, while logical truth is founded in the “coherence of the understanding,” which only leaves subjective “traces” in our intuition.

[WdW II, 412] Study notes #79

Even sensory impressions can only be related to my self and to things by conscious intuition.

What then does Volkelt understand by ‘intuition?’ "The immediate being certain of something that transcends experience!" And what does he understand by ‘experience?’ "The sensory-psychical (aspect) of experience!" This explains his assertion:

When I am immediately certain of the sensation of sweetness, this is not an intuitive certainty; when, however, according to Kant, we are certain of the moral law that is alive in our intelligible I, we have to deal with intuitive certainty. 34

With this Volkelt has accepted in principle immanence philosophy’s (literally sense-less) concept of experience. And he shows that he proceeds from the same law-Idea that lies at the foundation of Kant’s dualistic conception of a realm of sensory reality and the supersensory noumena. This serves to unmask Volkelt’s demand for an epistemology with absolutely no presuppositions.

In fact, Volkelt’s whole argument loses its foundation when we see that the limitation of experience to the sensory impressions [Empfindungen] amounts to the cancelling of the possibility of experience. For the psychical only exists in the temporal coherence with all other aspects of reality, whereas on the other hand we can have no intuitive certainty of Bewusstsein kommt. Es handelt sich hier also [!] keineswegs um einen typus der intuitiven Gewissheit, welcher der moralischen, religiösen und ästhetischen Intuition an die Seite gestellt werden könnte.”

34 op. cit., p. 224. “Wenn ich der Empfindung des Süsses unmittelbar gewiss bin, so its dies kein intuitives Geiszsein; wenn wir dagegen nach Kant der in unsererm intelligibelen Ich lebenden Sittengesetzes unmittelbar gewisz werden, so liegt intuitive Gewiszheit vor.”
that which is in principle not experienceable. How then can I truly have knowledge of a sweet taste if I cannot relate this sensory impression to my self in my intuition, which enters the cosmic stream of time? I do not experience this sensory impression without some awareness of its objective or non-objective character. But only in the supra-modal intuition do I experience the coherence of meaning of the psychical impression with the pre-psychical sides of reality. By this I truly know for certain that my sensory impression is objective, since it is an impression that each person with normally developed feeling of taste must receive from the matter tasted, since in its psychical object-function sweetness belongs to the full reality of the matter tasted.

Human experience of the sensory side of reality is never separate from logical distinction. Only in intuition does our logical subject function come into actual temporal contact with the other aspects of reality.

The supposed “pure sensation” is a theoretical abstraction, which entangles itself in contradictions, since it is always product of the analytical epoché, and as such already cannot be “purely sensory." Only in theoretical intuition can I complete the synthesis of meaning, in which the epoché itself first becomes possible.

[WdW II, 413] Study Notes #80
Synthesis of meaning is only possible by the theoretical intuition of time

The meaning-synthesis thus appears to be possible only through theoretical intuition, in its necessary relationship to the transcendent selfhood. I cannot understand the modal sense of a law sphere in an articulated theoretical concept if I lack the temporal theoretic in-sight into the aspect that has been set over against analysis. In the to and fro of my behaving [schouwende] intuition, I become aware of my theoretic freedom of thought. In this movement of my intuition, the deepened theoretical analysis and its ‘Gegenstand’ come into actual cognitive contact in the actual synthesis of meaning. This synthesis can never be explained from out of an isolated function of consciousness.

Only because this theoretical intuition is itself operative in the deepened analysis is it possible for theoretic thought to analyze its ‘Gegenstand’ in a meaning-synthesis. Theoretic distinction of meaning is in fact only possible in the intuitive theoretic joining of meaning. And in intuition I relate the meaning-synthesis to the transcendent identity of the modal functions, which I experience in the religious root of my existence.

Theoretic intuition, in its subjective subjected-ness to the cosmic law-order, is the absolute transcendental condition for the obtaining of knowledge by meaning-synthesis.

As such, theoretic intuition is never to be theoretically understood in a category or concept, but only approximated in the transcendental Idea. In this transcendental Idea, theoretic thought, in its leading by faith (as the boundary function in the transcendental direction of time), turns itself back to cosmic time in which it is embedded. In this transcendental Idea, our selfhood also becomes cosmo-logically conscious of itself in intuitive reflection.
Relation between theoretical and pre-theoretical intuition. Cosmic and cosmo-logical self-consciousness.

Theoretic intuition, which is actualized in meaning-synthetic thought [in theory] does not exist apart from pre-theoretical intuition, which is operative in en-static thought. And just as little can the foundational direction in the cosmic order of time be detached from the transcendental direction.

Theoretic intuition is [actualized as] insight, operating in the actual deepened analysis, the joining and distinguishing of meaning. Theoretic intuition is only to be understood as a deepening of the pre-theoretical intuition, to which it must always appeal in the foundational direction of time.

In the resting pre-theoretical intuition I, while thinking, experience the temporal reality as my own. In pre-theoretical intuition the transcendent root of our personality thinks inwardly [in-denken] en-statically in the cosmic temporal coherence of reality, and it consciously experiences the diversity of meaning, but without the articulated knowledge of the aspects. In contrast to theoretical self-consciousness we can speak here of a pre-theoretical cosmic self-consciousness.

In accordance with the cosmic law order, our theoretical self-consciousness remains founded in this pre-theoretical self-consciousness. At their foundation, there is an experience in identity [be-leving in identiteit] between all theoretical thought about the meaning-sides of reality and all intuitive in-sight. This identity can only be deepened in the theoretical-intuitive in-sight, but never sublated [opgeheven].

In the cosmos, only humans can possess cosmic and cosmo-logical self-consciousness. Only the human cosmic structure is grounded in a time transcending religious root, in a selfhood, and only this selfhood, by its intuition of time in the cosmos, can think within [in-denken] and theoretically understand its modal aspects as split apart and joined together.

In contrast to those creatures who do not possess a self-consciousness and who are ex-statically absorbed in the temporal cosmos, the human religious personality is able to enter en-statically in the cosmos.

Rejection of a division between intuition and the analytical

Although intuition transcends concepts made by the analytical function, we have approached intuition as the temporal bottom layer of this modal analytical function of meaning. This implies that we must reject each attempt to separate intuition from the analytical aspect, or to make it a mysterious metaphysical capability that is set over against all analyzing thought. Such attempts, by their depreciation of methodical theoretical conceptual thinking will always call up the one-sided reaction of those who believe that any such view of intuitive insight should once and for all be banned from epistemology as an “asylum of the ignorant.” A method of speculative thought regarding genius, in the line of Schelling’s romanticism, which tries to set an “intellectual intuition”
above the primary principles of thought, is intrinsically internally contradictory. Not only because a “method of genius” in itself contains a contradiction, but above all because Schelling’s “intellectual intuition” carries a completely theoretical character, and rests on a theoretic abstraction which cannot exist without the analytical epoché.

[WdW II, 416] Study Notes #83
Metaphysical psychologizing of intuition by H. Bergson

In recent times, Henri Bergson has again introduced intuition as a metaphysical cognitive organ, which stands diametrically opposed to logical analysis. In a pragmatic naturalistic way, he ascribes [the origin] of scientific thought as a mere biological adaptation to matter. He says that science’s analyzing and setting apart with delimiting concepts has a technical use for human actions.

In contrast to such scientific thought is intuition, which according to him as an immediate subjective psychical ‘empathy.’ With “intellectual sympathy” such intuition penetrates into the “durée” (the creative and qualitative vital stream of time). Only this intuition can give us “metaphysical knowledge of absolute reality.”

Already in Part 2 of Volume I we have referred to the lack of critical reflection in this irrationalistic-psychologistic metaphysics, which loses from view the fact that the isolation of an actual psychical “intuition” and “durée,” by “purifying” them of all relations with the remaining aspects of reality, must itself be the product of a theoretical analysis and meaning-synthesis (albeit an incorrect analysis). And we have seen that each attempt to theoretically isolate an intuition involves an elevation[of the temporal].

In spite of himself, Bergson sees a necessity to link intuition to concepts.35 But he does this in an internally contradictory way by taking away all conceptual delimitation from the intuitively founded concept. He regards intuitive concepts as fluid expressions of “psychical empathy,” This he says is lacking in the analytical epoché, which is essential to theoretical thought. He says that philosophy cannot be genuine

...unless it surpasses the conceptual, or at least unless it frees itself from rigid, ready-made concepts, and creates notions entirely different from those we habitually handle; I would say supple, mobile, almost fluid concepts, always ready to mould themselves in accordance with the fugitive forms of intuition.36

35 Introduction à la Métaphysique (now included in La Pensée et la Mouvant, 2d ed., 1934, p. 213): “Certesl, les concepts lui sont indispensable, car toutes les autres sciences travaillent le plus ordinairemement sur des concepts, et la métaphysique ne saurait se passer des autres sciences.” [Certainly, concepts are indispensable to it, for all the other sciences mostly work with concepts, and metaphysics could not do without the other sciences].
36 op. cit., pp. 213, 214.“Elle (i.e. “la philosophie”) n’est proprement elle même que lorsqu’elle dépasse le concept ou du moins lorsqu’elle s'affranchit des concepts raides tout faits pour créer des concepts bien différent de ceux que nous manion d'habitude, je
In the same work he says,

If metaphysics is possible, it can only be an awkward effort, even painful (!), immediately to place itself with a kind of intellectual dilation in the object that one studies, to pass from reality to the concepts and no longer from the concepts to reality.\(^{37}\)

The correct state of affairs is as follows: If the analytical epoché from out of the continuity of cosmic time—which Bergson functionalistically identifies with the psychical duration of feeling—is cancelled [opgeheven], we necessarily fall back into the mere en-static intuitive attitude of thought. It is exactly from this intuitive attitude of thought that Bergson wants to completely withdraw in his attempt to theoretically isolate intuition from analysis. With respect to human knowledge, there is then no third possibility between theoretical meaning-synthesis and pre-theoretical naïve experience.

In Bergson’s idea of “pure duration,” the meaning-synthesis with its analytical epoché is clearly demonstrated, although in a false irrationalistic turn. For this “durée” is won by him by theoretical abstraction from out of the full temporal reality. And [inconsistently in his thought], that is done with the aid of an intuitively founded analysis! Bergson does not see this, because he proceeds from a metaphysical prejudice that the full, absolute reality is in the actual psychical stream of time. From this point of view, the other aspects of reality can only be modi of this psychical stream of time.

In other words, Bergson proceeds from a metaphysical absolutization, in which the primary analysis and synthesis of meaning remain hidden to him. His lack of a truly critical-transcendental self-reflection is strongly revealed in his optimistic belief that if his intuitive-metaphysical method were to be generally accepted by philosophy, then the strife among the different philosophical currents would cease. For he wants to explain this strife from the circumstance that we have improperly forced philosophy to adopt methods of technical scientific thinking.\(^{38}\)

\(^{37}\) S. cit., pp. 21-222. “si la métaphysique est possible, elle ne peut être qu’un effort pénible, douloureux même (!) pour se placer tout de suite, par une espèce de litation intellectuelle, dans la chose qu’on étudie, enfin pour aller de la réalité aux concepts et non plus des concepts à la réalité.”

\(^{38}\) S. cit. p. 240: “Les difficultés inhérentes à la métaphysique, les antinomies qu’elle soulève, les contradictions où elle tombe, la disjonction en écoles antagoniste et les oppositions irreductibles entre systèmes, viennent en grande partie de ce que nous appliquons à la connaissance désintéressée du réel les procédés don’t nous nous servons couramment dans un but d’utilité pratique. Elles viennent principalement de ce que nous nous installons dans l’immobile pour guetter le mouvant au passage, au lieu de nous replacer dans le mouvant pour traverser avec lui les positions immobiles…” [The difficulties inherent in metaphysics, the antinomies it evokes, the contradictions into which it gets involved, the division into antagonistic schools and the irreducible
Why theoretical intuition can never be operative apart from the analytical function. Intuition and instinct.

Intuition does not allow itself to be isolated from analysis! Conversely, as we have earlier emphasized, analysis can never function without intuitive insight. This has been convincingly demonstrated by Henri Poincaré in his *La Valeur de la Science* and his *Science et Hypothèse*, in contrast to the supposed “pure analysis” in the mathematical sciences.

How does this fit with the irrefutable fact that truly inventive and original thinkers with their theoretical intuition can sometimes understand a theoretical state of affairs in one glance before the details are theoretically analyzed? Is there then not something like an actual intuition that can do without the modal analytical function? Does there not exist an immediate beholding [*schouwende*] intuition of genius that is separate from all logical activity of thought? There is nothing easier than to interpret the facts in this way, but nothing is more confusing.

But a simple consideration must convince us of the opposite. The intuition of genius as a subjective intuitive activity is in no way infallible but can in fact go off on the wrong track. It can only obtain true theoretic insight whenever it logically distinguishes and logically identifies. Where this subjective modal analytical function is lacking, then at the most is operative an animal instinct, but not a theoretical intuition.

Now it is certainly possible that theoretical intuition, in the free turning of its theoretical attention, understands certain modal conformities to law in a synthesis of meaning,

oppositions between the systems, are for a large part due to the circumstance that we apply to the disinterested knowledge of reality, the methods we usually employ for a practical purpose. They originate chiefly from our taking up a position in what is immobile in order to watch the moving in its passage, instead of placing ourselves in the moving in order to traverse the immobile positions with it].

39 This *free* turning of (theoretical) attention is typical of theoretical intuition in distinction from the pre-theoretical, which in in the turning of its attention remains rigidly fixed to *psychical* factors.

See in this regard August Mesmer’s *Psychologie* (5th ed., 1934), p. 282 ff. “Natürlich entstehen für uns durch unsere Aufmerksamheit nicht bloß die Objekte (!) unseres Fühlens, Wertschätzens, Strebens und Wollens. Ja, diese atheoretischen Kräfte in uns sind die wichtigsten Ursachen des Aufmerkens,” This shows that Mesmer has not seen the characteristic difference between the free (meaning-synthetic) direction of theoretical attention and the pre-theoretical consciousness. Similarly, his attempt to *psychologically explain* attention shows a lack of insight into its *supra-functional intuitive depth* [dieptelaag]. Other interesting explanations by him about the relation between *attention* and *theoretical analysis* suffer from the same lack.
without having first analyzed in a meaning-synthesis the law-conformity of the founding modal substratum spheres.

In this respect the so-called arithmetization of geometry is instructive. The general theory of functions, as it was arithmetically founded by Weierstrasz, is (as Poincaré correctly clarifies) not discovered in a completely “purely analytical” way. Poincaré demonstrates that it was discovered by intuitive insight into arithmetical regularities [law-conformities]. We may add to this statement that the discovery was made under the guidance of the intuitive hypothesis of an a priori modal sense of movement, without which hypothesis insight into the arithmetical transformation of series.

Riemann on the other hand (the second founder of the general theory of mathematical functions) directed his intuitive theoretical attention much more on the modal sense of space. He was much more a geometrically than an arithmetically-minded thinker.

If we now identify analysis with arithmetical analysis, then we would name Riemann an “intuitive” and Weierstrasz an “analytical” thinker. This would introduce a false opposition between intuition and analysis. The true state of affairs has here been misinterpreted.

[WyD II, 419]

Even pre-theoretical intuition can not function without logical distinctions.

Great confusion is also caused whenever we want to relate theoretical intuition (with its various directions of theoretical attention) to the analytical function and to contrast this with a totally separate pre-theoretical intuition. For even the pre-theoretical intuition can not dispense with analytical distinction in the knowledge it gives of pre-theoretical states of affairs. What it lacks is the actual meaning-synthesis, in which analysis is deepened to scientific analysis.

§§ 4 The Limits of Concepts and of Definitions, and the So-Called Phenomenological “Attitude”

[WyD II, 420] Study Notes #85

The view of theoretical meaning-synthesis that we have defended implies that no modal aspects that are set over-against the logical aspect, and not even the logical law sphere itself, may be logicized (that is, understood in a “purely logical” way).

If it were possible to logicize the ‘Gegenstand,’ this would mean the impossibility of all theoretical knowledge—however paradoxical this assertion may seem to the logicist. From this we can infer the limits of concepts and definitions of the modal meaning-structure. Whenever the modal kernel of meaning—the modal analogies [retrocipations] and anticipations of a law sphere—are properly understood in the theoretical meaning-synthesis, it is meaningless to ask for a more precise “conceptual determination” of the kernels of the aspects that are set over-against the logical in this process of analysis.
In the actualized theoretical analysis they are by the theoretical seeing-through [door-schouwing] they are disclosed, laid open. It is the task of theoretical thought in concepts that have been deepened into Ideas to encompass the original modal kernels of meaning with their expression in the surrounding analogical and anticipating aspects. In the actual analysis they can be grasped only in an articulated seeing-through [door-schouwing] as to their subject side and law side and in their indissoluble correlation of subject and law sides.

In this theoretical laying open of modal meaning we do not view a rigid eidos, an “eternal essential structure,” a “thing in itself,” as modern phenomenology attempts to do in its intuition of essences. The theoretical Idea of the modal meaning-structure never comes to complete static clarity in theoretical insight [inzicht], to the fulfillment of what is subjectively intended in this Idea. That is excluded by the temporal structure of modal meaning itself. In the Idea of number, space, life, feeling, retribution, love, symbolic representation etc etc., true theoretical insight remains caught in the full movement of the unfolding process.

In this unfolding process, a truly Christian philosophy arrives more and more to the insight that the fulfillment of meaning which has been broken into modalities by cosmic time, does not give itself in an eidetic intuition, but only in the religious self-reflection of our participation in Christ.

The meaning-synthetic Idea of a modality of meaning is the theoretical approach to the transcendental limits of this modality in the articulated process of seeing-through. But it can never itself give us the fulfillment of the modality of meaning.

The Idea is the deepened concept. The concept is bound to the foundational direction of time; as such it always precedes the Idea. The deepened concept is a guarantee that the theoretical Idea cannot remove the analytical epoché from the continuity of cosmic time. In the Idea of a modality of meaning we understand by means of the seeing-through of theoretical insight the particularized meaning that has been conceptually analyzed, but this particularized meaning is understood in the all-sided coherence of meaning of cosmic time. The Idea remains a limiting concept, although in a different sense than intended by Kant. The Idea remains determined by the law-Idea, as the hypothesis of philosophic thought.

[WdW II, 421] Study Notes #86
The inner antinomy in the idea of an adequate intuition of essence [‘Wesensschau’]

If the Idea of a modality of meaning could be truly fulfilled in theoretical insight, then it would be possible to have an adequate “Wesens-schau” [intuition of essence]. The Idea would then be eidos. Then theoretical insight would be able to adequately understand fullness of meaning, and the totality of meaning. It would then not have to merely intend the transcendent direction and merely have to point towards the transcendent root of all temporal meaning. But if this could be done, then all modality of meaning as such would be sublated [opgeheven]. For it is only fulfilled in
the transcendent identity of all temporal modal meaning. But the identity that is intended by phenomenology in its “adequate intuition of essences” remains in the horizon of particularized meaning and caught within its coherence of meaning that cannot be closed off. Phenomenology’s idea of identity is theoretical and philosophical. It must of necessity then only be an identity in the analytical epoché of theoretical meaning-synthesis.⁴⁰

For this reason, theoretical insight into the transcendental coherence of meaning of the aspects, which is intended [vermeend] by us in the modal Idea, must itself be intentional. For the modal ‘Gegenstand’ as well as the modal analytical aspect, in its restless, temporal, not closed up in itself mode of being, are themselves of an intending character!

I regard if of the greatest importance that my readers should give an account of this state of affairs in its deepest ground.

[WdW II, 422] Study Notes #87

Phenomenology is a more dangerous adversary of Christian philosophy than any other variation of immanence philosophy

I openly admit that modern phenomenology is a much more dangerous opponent for Christian philosophy than is classical humanistic idealism or naturalism. The reason is that in its problematic it has penetrated to an a priori layer of philosophic thought that had not been seen so sharply in previous humanistic views. Therefore the appearance of its “lack of presuppositions” is here so much stronger and deceptive.

Phenomenological “positivism” says that it does not want to fix itself in any directions, that it only demands of the philosophical researcher a phenomenological “attitude” to “the things,” to the “essence,” to the “purely given.” It wants to include the religious “Tatsachen des Bewusstseins” [facts of consciousness] along with the other attitudes—the pre-theoretical, the special sciences and the epistemological—that are intended [vermeend] in the “Act of Consciousness.” It says that it only requires the philosophical researcher to use any “Tatsache” [matter of fact] in the phenomenological reduction⁴¹ in order to bring the eidos the essence of this matter of fact to full intuitive insight (in its intentional noetic as well as its supposes noematic side).

The phenomenologist will also promptly acknowledge that concepts and definitions are bound to limits, although his meaning will be totally different than ours.

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⁴⁰ Husserl says that the phenomenological ‘Wesensschau’ always moves in acts of reflection [durchaus in Akten der Reflexion bewegt; Ideen I, p. 144]. But w. Ehrlich in his study Kant und Husserl (1923) p. 96 ff. has proved that such a Wesensschau cannot adequately grasp the essence of the "immediately experienced" ("schlechthin erlebte"). Husserl himself speaks of "modifications of experience through reflexion" ("Erlebnismodifikationen durch Reflexion").

⁴¹ i.e. the disconnection of the entire natural “Weltansicht” [view of the world] from all normative values and from the whole selfhood of the researcher.
But the phenomenologist would qualify as internally contradictory assertion the view that the “intuition of essence” cannot adequately give the “essence” of what is intended. If the essence of a matter of fact has been intuited, what remains that has not be understood in this insight?\textsuperscript{42}

\textit{Immanent critique} of the “phenomenological attitude” is extremely difficult because phenomenology in fact diverges in various very different directions. We need only compare Husserl, Pfänder, Scheler, Heidegger, Hoffman). These proceed from mutually differing types of law-Ideas. I am content here just to clarify that the “phenomenological attitude” is a certain type of the \textit{immanence standpoint}.

The phenomenological “intuition of essence” is founded on something that is not itself accounted for by phenomenology, a deeper level of the a priori\textsuperscript{43} than the merely \textit{transcendentally} rooted [immanent] level. It must be ultimately founded on a view of meaning as the mode of creaturely being. Whoever in the Biblical spirit confesses the non-self-sufficiency, the non-closed up nature of all meaning, cannot accept the phenomenological “attitude” because it is in conflict with the Truth.

In principle, the phenomenological attitude lacks the transcendental self-consciousness. This lack has already been expressed in its demand that the “phenomenological reduction” must include the investigator’s own selfhood.

Whoever has attained to true \textit{self-knowledge} also sees the transcendental impossibility of the existence of a “pure essence” in the phenomenological sense, as well as the impossibility of equating the fullness of meaning from what is possible in a the analytic \textit{epoché} of theoretical intuition.

As to the modal aspects, the synthesis of meaning, and the actual theoretical in-sight into them, their essence lies non-closed-up in the complete relativity of the temporal coherence of meaning. Even the coherence of meaning has no “absolute essence,” but refers above itself towards the fullness of meaning, which transcends all

\textsuperscript{42} See Scheler in his \textit{Phänomenologie und Erkenntnistheorie} (\textit{Schriften aus dem Nachlass}, Vol. I, 1933), p. 288 (treatise written after his chief work). “Absoluter Maszstab jeder “Erkenntnis” ist und bleibt die Selbstgegebenheit des Tatbestandes, gegeben in der evidenten Deckungseinheit des gemeinten und des genau so wie gemeint auch im Erleben (erschauen) Gegebenen. Etwas das so gegeben ist, ist zugleich absolutees Sein, und der Gegenstand der nur Gegenstand eines solches Seins ist, eines solchen puren Wesens, ist in idealem Masze adäquat gegeben.” [The absolute criterion of every cognition is and remains the state of affairs as it presents itself, given in the evidence coalescence of what has been intended and of what has been given in immediate experience (contemplation) exactly as it has been intended. Something given like that is at the same time an absolute being, and the Gegenstand which is merely the Gegenstand of such a being, of such a pure essence, is given adequately to an ideal degree].

The reader should notice the incorrect identification of “Erleben’ and ‘Erschauen’ [experience and intuition].

\textsuperscript{43} We will discuss in more detail these “levels of the a priori.” Part II, chapter IV of this volume.
transcendental limits of experience. Only in Christ is meaning fulfilled in an adequate manner, since in Him meaning is completely directed towards God, that is, in the absolute non-self-sufficiency that is proper to meaning.

[Note: the next excerpt is from a later part of Volume II]

Chapter IV: The Structural Horizon of Human Experience and of Creaturely Reality

§ 2 The Structure of the Horizon of Human Experience and the Levels of the A priori

[WdW II, 482] Study Notes #88
The transcendent dimension of the horizon of experience. The religious a priori.

The horizon in which all human experience is enclosed is, in a transcendent sense, formed by the creaturely structure of the religious root of human existence. Our selfhood, which experiences, is under the law, sujet, and in this sense limited and determined by the law. It is because of the creaturely character of our selfhood that it is impossible to separate human experience from the religious attitude [instelling] of the selfhood.

All human experience is religiously determined in its deepest ground by divine ordinances of creation, whether this experience is directed towards God or in the apostate direction. In this sense we can speak of the necessary structural and subjective religious a priori of all human experience. This transcendent dimension of our horizon of experience is certainly not acknowledged on the immanence standpoint: it plays no recognized role in cosmology and epistemology.

[WdW II, 482b] Study Notes #89
The transcendental dimensions of the horizon of experience. The a priori of the temporal coherence of meaning.

Whenever we now descend to the transcendental dimensions of the horizon of human experience, we first come upon cosmic time. By ‘cosmic’ I mean all our experience of reality that is bound to time in accordance with the divine ordinances of creation. I do not mean ‘time’ in a specific (theoretically isolated) aspect of meaning, but rather time in its cosmic all-sidedness of meaning, which is the foundation of all the law spheres, and maintains them in a continuous coherence of meaning.

Time is in the cosmological sense the absolute transcendental a priori of all human experience.
Even this dimension of the horizon of human experience can certainly not be acknowledged on the immanence standpoint. The immanence standpoint is bound to fail to appreciate the universal temporal coherence of meaning of the cosmos.

So in order to establish contact in however limited a way with what immanence philosophy calls the a priori, we have to descend to a still lower structure of human experience [than this level of cosmic time]. When we do this, then first the law-confirming structure of the aspects comes to our attention. These can also not be understood as such by immanence philosophy, since for such understanding, insight is needed into the cosmic order of time, and the acceptance of the Christian religious a priori.

[Wnd II, 483] Study Notes #90
The horizon of the a priori modal structures of human experience

The meaning modalities, which guarantee sovereignty in their own sphere to the law spheres, in fact determine all individuality of meaning within these law spheres.

An original individual spatial figure is only possible within the structural horizon of the spatial aspect. An individual objective representation of sensory perception (e.g. a representation of the apple tree in blossom in my garden here) is only possible within the structural horizon of the psychical aspect. A servitude of prospect [the juridical right to an unobscured view] vested in an individual building, only exists [bestaanbaar] within the structural horizon of the juridical aspect, etc. etc.

In their functional structure, the aspects are therefore the determining, necessary conditions for all modal individuality, in which temporal reality reveals itself within the law-spheres concerned. For this reason they may be called the modal a prioris of all individuality of meaning.

This is a cosmic state of affairs, grounded in the temporal world order, which also determines the possibility of our experience.

We can experience the aspects, both in the pre-theoretical as well as in the theoretical attitude, but only in their temporal coherence of meaning in the foundational and transcendental directions of time. Yet within the cosmic coherence of meaning the aspects are (by their structure) the a priori conditions for all experience of individual reality. And that is whether these aspects have been brought articulated and brought to our consciousness by the theoretical synthesis of meaning, or whether these aspects remain unarticulated and experienced in the pre-theoretical consciousness.

This cosmic a priori character of the aspects over against all modal individuality of meaning reveals itself in their structural constancy over against the individual variability in temporal reality.

Since in their temporal coherence of meaning they constitute the functional structure of our cosmos, they cannot be transitory in time.

The individual sensory impression [indruk] of a sunset, which I am at this moment experiencing, may pass away in time. But the psychical aspect in which this impression
is objectified, can not itself pass away in time. For this aspect belongs to the functional structure of reality and as such it belongs to the *a priori horizon* of all human experience. [That the constancy of the modal horizon is not identical with *rigidity* has already been seen in the discussion of the unfolding process in the modal meaning-structure].

It is really a fundamental error to limit the modal a priori nature of human experience to the psychical and the logical aspects of reality.

The modal horizon is founded in the cosmic horizon of time, which includes all law spheres without any exception.

[WdW II, 484] Study Notes #91

The synthetic a priori of theoretical experience

The structure of the *inter-modal synthesis of meaning* is the cosmological a priori of theoretical knowledge as to its law-side. It forms the horizon of all true theoretical knowledge. This theoretical horizon remains enclosed in the horizon of cosmic time and by the religious horizon of the selfhood. It first becomes subjectively theoretically *accessible* to us in actual transcendental self-reflection.

*Insight* into this horizon is the *subjectively fallible a priori* of all epistemology. Again there is no reason to refer to specific theoretical joining of meaning as subjective a priori while denying the a priori character of all other possible syntheses.

With respect to the law spheres, the subjective synthetic a priori in our theoretical knowledge does not reach further than the theoretical insight into the structure of the aspects in their law and subject sides under the *hypothesis* of the law-Idea. In this law-Idea, theoretical thought is directed both to the religious horizon and to the temporal horizon of human knowledge.

Of course, insight into the law-conforming functional coherence of all individual structures within each separate theoretically embraced law sphere is also of a subjective a priori character. For example physics tries to bring all individual functional operations within the physical viewpoint under one common denominator [i.e. energy] in order to detect the functional law-conforming coherence among these operations.

And jurisprudence looks for the functional juridical relation among constitutional law, civil law, non-civil industrial law, international law, etc., which diverge so widely as to their particular internal structure.

In both cases (physics and jurisprudence), this systematic striving finds its epistemological justification only in the a priori insight in the modal structure of the law spheres concerned. It keeps all individual structures within its sphere, in the functional coherence of its modality of meaning.

Mathematics and so-called formal logic are usually mentioned as wholly a priori sciences. With respect to formal logic, we have already seen how it in fact always presupposes the synthesis of meaning. Its (subjective) a priori character can only concern the modal horizon of the logical law sphere in a synthesis of meaning with the modal horizon of the remaining law spheres.
The mathematical sciences can only have a subjective a priori character in the theoretical embracing of the modal horizon of the numerical sphere and the spatial sphere with the functional conformity to law founded in them. As soon as we come to the determination of individual functions of number or spatial relations in reality (we need to only think of Planck’s quantum \( h \)), we are in the domain of the individually determined. These can never be established in an a priori manner, but only by means of an experiment, within the horizon of the physical viewpoint that has been set by a synthesis of meaning.

[WdW II, 486] Study Notes #92
Even the synthetic a priori may not be understood as a constructive creation of the human mind [geest]

Now the word ‘a priori’ has received a bad reputation in the special sciences, except in mathematics. And rightly so! For the word is heavily laden by the rationalistic prejudices of the humanistic science Ideal, which granted to human consciousness a logically creative function and supposed that the structure of the given reality must first be broken down into a chaos in order to thereafter to impose on reality an ‘a priori’ constructive ordering of “creative” thought.

Even Kant’s so-called formal “Grundsätze des reinen Verstandes” were inspired by this science Ideal, and appear not to have been able to stand the test of the progressive development of the natural sciences.

The constructive view of the subjective a priori elements of our knowledge, grounded as it is in the humanistic law-Idea, is in fact a consequence of the hubris, the arrogance of the man who in his supposed self-sufficient thought does not want to subject himself to the divine world order. We have from the outset rejected this view, since we have broken with the law-Idea that lies at its foundation. The knowing subject does not himself create the horizon of his experience; the law-conforming structure of this horizon does not find its origin in a sovereign “transcendental subject.”

Even the modal structure of the law spheres abstracted in the theoretical synthesis of meaning must be carefully read from the horizon of the structure of full temporal reality created by God. And in this task, the modal analysis of meaning, philosophic thinking that orients itself to the Christian law-Idea is by no means infallible.

[WdW II, 487] Study Notes #93
The openness of the system of law spheres

The system of the law spheres that we have designed can never make a claim to material completion. Deeper research may always bring to the light new aspects of reality that have not been noticed until now. And the discovery of new law spheres may necessitate again and again a revision and further development of our modal analysis of meaning. Theoretic thought never completes its task, and whoever thinks he has created a philosophic system that can be taken over unchanged by each following generation shows no insight in that all theoretic thought is bound to history. But all of this does not take
away from the truth that theoretic thought remains bound to a modal horizon of meaning, which has a constant determining character over against all changing concrete facts. This is so even in research of the individual states of affairs within the law sphere that has been made to a ‘Gegenstand,’ that can never be understood in an a priori way.

If we want to avoid an arbitrary construction, the concept of function in the special sciences must become oriented to this modal horizon. This modal horizon is necessarily a priori because it determines the functional structure of all individuality of meaning within the law sphere. And where the analysis of modal meaning is philosophically operative, which cannot be complete without the hypothesis of a law-Idea, all thinking in the special sciences is necessarily philosophically founded, even though the special science theoretician gives no account of this.

**[WdW II, 488] Study Notes #94**

The horizon of the structural principles of individuality

Now the horizon of human experience has still another essential and important dimension, which plays the dominant role in naïve pre-theoretical experience, as we have repeatedly noted. This dimension is the individuality structure of reality, just as it is manifested in concrete things and social relations, created by God or formed by man, and in their mutual connections.

Here it no longer concerns a merely modal, functional meaning-structure, but it concerns the internal structural principles of concrete things and social relations, which in principle function equally in all law spheres.

And it concerns structural principles, not the individuality of things which is determined by these structural principles. The individuality of things cannot be comprehended by human experience.

We come here to a new level of the structural a priori, that forms a component of the human horizon of experience.

Although in Volume III we will discuss in more detail these individuality structures of reality, we may not neglect in the present context to point to this dimension of the human horizon of experience.

This horizon displays various peculiarities as against the other a priori levels. First, the internal structural principles of individuality presuppose all the earlier named dimensions of the horizon of human experience and of creaturely cosmic reality.

**[WdW II, 489] Study Notes #95**

The plastic character of the horizon of individuality structures

Second, these individuality structures carry a strong *plastic* character because of their more concrete nature. This gives an extremely rich and varied aspect to the human horizon of experience. The modal horizon, in its spanning of the horizon of cosmic time is the same for all things. But the plastic horizon of individuality structures is varied
by *types*, which are different for different groups of things and in which things alternately appear, form themselves or are formed, and disappear.

The older pre-humanistic metaphysics tried to approach this plastic side of the horizon of reality with its teaching of the substantial or *essential forms* of things. Aristotle has developed this theory in great detail. He tried to apply the rigid metaphysical form-matter schema to the plasticity of the individuality structures of reality. He did this by conceiving form as a dynamic principle of development that is immanently operative in [plastic] things. He also conceived of the *lower* essential forms again in a plastic way, as capable of a higher formation.

In the modern eidetics of Husserl, the motive of plasticity as been lost in his static Platonic view of a “Welt der reinen Wesen” [“world of pure essences”].

But even the Aristotelian theory, which is rooted in the metaphysical immanence standpoint, is as we shall show, not able to do justice to the individuality structures of temporal reality. Even this side of the human horizon of experience is not capable of being understood from the immanence standpoint.

[WdW II, 489b] Study Notes #96

The structural coherence of these structural principles

The plastic character of the structural principles of individuality reveals itself in the typical form-able interlacements and coherences in which they reveal themselves in variable, individual things (and social relations). Because of this, that side of our horizon of experience that is turned towards things does not display a rigid atomistic character, but it offers itself to us in a continually dynamic structural coherence.

We will return in more detail to all of these points. In the present context we need only to point to the particular kind of *a priori* character that is carried by the plastic side of the horizon of experience and reality. The fact that the typical structural principles of individuality reality cannot in any way be *constructed* a priori by human thought is also a fact of the modal horizon of our experience. What is unique in the plastic horizon is that the structural principles themselves display types of individualized meaning. Even in *theoretic insight*, these principles only reveal themselves in the structural analysis of the variable reality of things and social relationships that constantly change their forms in time. Without the structural principles of individual reality we could have no real experience of concrete things and human social relations. The functionalistic epistemology with its abstractive constructive *form-matter schema* can never really give account of the possibility of concrete experience, since it must eliminate the structural character of individuality.

Because of the divine creation order, this structural character belongs especially to our horizon of experience and to the horizon of full creaturely reality.

The things of concrete experience are not the product of a meaning-synthetic forming of a chaotic sensory matter by abstract forms of thought and intuition.

God’s wisdom as Creator has disposed the human horizon of experience to the individuality of things, and this structural plastic side of our horizon of experience
belongs to the horizon of the created reality itself. It is therefore a priori in this sense, that it determines and first makes possible our experience and the changing individuality of things.

[WdW II, 491] Study Notes #97

Note on the so-called “universalia ante rem” in God’s Mind

The a priori horizon of cosmic reality is the divine order of creation itself, in which humans as well as all things in the cosmos are giving their structure and order. Before the foundations of the world, this order of creation was in the Divine counsel.

The Christian philosophic accommodation in patristic and scholastic thought has taken this revealed truth that transcends human reason, and changed it into the speculative ideas of realistic metaphysics. In this way the order of creation became a lex aeterna grounded in divine reason, and the divine principles of creation became the universalia ante rem (in Divine reason) and in re (in temporal things).

Now after everything that we have said about this, it should be clear that we reject such a metaphysics, which in the ground of the matter sets aside the divine order of creation and substitutes absolutized reason in its place. Whoever tries to conclude from this that our view, like nominalism, elevates divine arbitrariness to the throne, only shows that he remains caught in the schemas of immanence philosophy.

§ 3 The Perspective Structure of the Horizon of Experience, the Dependence of our Knowledge about the Cosmos on Self-Knowledge and on Knowledge Concerning God

[WdW II, 491b] Study Notes #98

The various levels of the a priori, which we have discovered in the structure of the human horizon of experience as the horizon of cosmic reality, do not lie arbitrarily next to each other. They are much rather placed into a perspectival coherence in accordance with the divine order of creation. They form in their mutual order and coherence the perspective in which we experience the cosmos.

All human experience, in the pre-theoretical as well as the theoretical attitude, is rooted in the structure of the transcendent unity of self-consciousness as it participates in the root of creation, which is directed either to God or fallen away. This religious horizon is the transcendent horizon of the selfhood and it encompasses the horizon of cosmic time in which we experience the indissoluble coherence of meaning and the modal refraction of the meaning of reality. By the continuity of the horizon of time, this temporal horizon encompasses and determines the modal horizon, both in its theoretical articulation as well as in its pre-theoretical veil [‘oordekking’]. Finally, both the temporal horizon and the modal horizon encompass and determine the plastic horizon of the individuality structures of reality.

All temporal knowledge is therefore religiously founded (whether for good or for evil). And this temporal knowledge is restricted and relativized by the temporal dimensions of
the horizon of experience and reality. It is therefore illusory to think that the structure of human knowledge stands alone or that the apparatus of human knowledge is self-sufficient. For the transcendent horizon of the selfhood, which radiates perspectivaly through all human experience, does not rest in itself, but existsonly in the creaturely mode of being of meaning, which in and of itself is nothing.

Even the religious root of the cosmos is no “Ding an sich” [thing in itself]. In its creaturely mode of being of meaning, this root is determined and limited by God’s sovereign will as Creator.

The religious meaning of the created cosmos binds true knowledge of the cosmos to true self-knowledge, and it binds true self-knowledge to true knowledge about God. This view is set out in an unsurpassable and concise way in Book I of Calvin’s *Institutes*. It is the only purely Biblical view, and the alpha and the omega of each truly Christian epistemology.

Theoretical truth, which is relativized and limited by the temporal horizon, is not self-sufficient. It is related to the absolute supratemporal Truth. By attempting to become self-sufficient it turns to a lie. Because there does not exist any self-sufficient partial truth.

We cannot truly know the cosmos outside of true knowledge about God.

But, like all human experience in this [earthly] dispensation, our knowledge about God, although directed to the absolute Truth, is restricted and relativized by (but not at all relativized to) our temporal cosmic existence

[WdW II, 493] Study Notes #99

The limitation of human experience from the religious fullness of meaning by time is not a restriction to time

That is to say that in the human experience of those reborn in Christ, the religious fullness of meaning remains bound up with temporal reality. Therefore each spiritualistic view that wants to make self-knowledge and knowledge about God separate from the temporal, is in conflict with the divine order of creation. Such a spiritualistic view necessarily leads to an internally empty idealism or to a confused mysticism, in spite of its own will or intentions.

In the order of this life—that of the hereafter is hidden as to its positive character—all human experience remains bound to a perspectival horizon, in which the transcendent light of eternity must break through time. In this horizon we become aware of the transcendent fullness of meaning of this life only in the light of the Divine Revelation refracted through the prism of time.

For this reason Christ, as the fullness of God’s Revelation, *came in the flesh*. And it is for this reason that the Divine Word-revelation came to us in the temporal garment of human language.

If critical and positivistic epistemology were correct that our experience is limited to our cosmic functions, or rather to an abstractum from out of our temporal complex of cosmic functions, then we could not truly know God, nor our self, nor the cosmos. And this lack
of true knowledge is what actually occurs in the state of fallenness, in which falsehood rules instead of truth. These lies are at the foundation of the whole epistemology of immanence philosophy, grounded as it is in the self-contradictory hypostasis of the theoretical meaning synthesis, and in a serious misunderstanding of the groundedness in meaning of all human experience.

In the transcendent, religious subjective a priori of cosmic self-consciousness, the whole of the human act of cognition is directed either to the absolute Truth or to the spirit of lies.

In this cosmic self-consciousness, we know that temporal cosmic reality is related to the structure of the human selfhood qua talis [as such]. In its conformity to law, this structure is universally valid, and in its essence, it is a structure of religious community into which individuality is fitted [gevoegd].

All theoretical attempts to force the human selfhood away from this central position in experience are based on a lack of philosophic self-reflection.

We cannot come to true self-knowledge without true knowledge of God. This knowledge cannot be obtained outside of the divine revelation in Christ.

Now that we have reached this point, many a reader who has with difficulty come this far to follow our argument, may perhaps turn away in annoyance. Must this epistemology end in a Christian sermon? But can you have any more confidence in the dogmatic statement with which the fallen epistemology begins—the declaration of the self-sufficiency of the human cognitive function in the domain of theoretical knowledge?

Our philosophy dares to accept the “stumbling block of the Cross of Christ” even as the cornerstone of its epistemology. And it thereby accepts also the cross of scandal, of misunderstanding and of dogmatic rejection.

In the knowledge concerning God from His revelation, is given the religious ‘principle’ in the fullest sense of that word—the foundation of all true knowledge. This is so even thought we can only prayerfully understand it in the limitation and the weakness of the flesh.

This revealed knowledge carries primarily a religious enstatic character. It does not primarily rest in a theoretical meaning-synthesis. Nor does our cosmic self-consciousness rest in a theoretical meaning-synthesis.

The knowledge concerning God, wherein religious self-knowledge lies enclosed, is thus primarily not obtained in a scientific or theological way. What in a rather inadequate way is termed 'theology' is a theoretical knowledge, in a meaning synthesis of the logical function of thought and the temporal function of faith. Such theology is a knowledge that itself it totally dependent on the law-Idea from which the thinker begins.

True knowledge of God and of our self has its point of contact [raakt] in the horizon of human experience, and therefore also with the horizon of theoretical knowledge. It rests on a child-like trusting acceptance with our full personality, with the heart, of Divine Revelation both in an indivisible unity of it transcendent-religious sense as well as in its immanent-cosmic sense.
True self-knowledge means a turning of the personality, a making alive in the fullest sense of these words. It is a restoration of the horizon of our experience, which again allows reality to be understood perspectively in the light of truth. This is not with a mystical so-called supernatural cognitive ability, but in the horizon that God in His order of creation has set for human experience. This perspective had been darkened and distorted by sin, because it had been closed up to the light of Divine Revelation.

True self-knowledge opens one’s eye to the complete corruption of fallen man by the radical lie that has caused his spiritual death. True self-knowledge therefore leads to a complete surrender to Him, the New Root of the human race. The surrender is to Him who overcame death through his death on the cross, and in whose human nature our Father in Heaven has revealed the fullness of meaning of His Creation. And in His divine nature God has created all things through the Word of His power.

The primary lie that has darkened the human horizon of experience, is the rebellious thought that we can do without this knowledge of God and of ourselves in any area of knowledge, and that we ourselves can [autonomously] find truth.

[WdW II, 496] Study Notes #100

The law-conforming structure of human experience is originally a law of freedom in the transcendent horizon

The law-conforming structure of the human horizon of experience continued to be maintained following the fall into sin, but the rebellious selfhood can from out of itself no longer obtain insight into this structure. It supposes to be able to itself create a horizon of experience. It has misused its religious freedom and has given itself prisoner to the slavery of darkness.

For the law-conforming structure of human experience is according to its transcendent horizon a law of freedom which in its fullness of meaning determines all temporal dimensions of the horizon of experience.

When this fullness of human freedom became subjectively lost through the fall into sin, the human selfhood fell away into the temporal horizon and, insofar as it sought a fixed standpoint, sought to hypostatize the temporal horizon to a transcendent one that lacked the character of meaning.

This is also the apostasy from the fullness of meaning of truth, which first makes all temporal truth possible.

[WdW II, 496b] Study Notes #101

Standing in the Truth as freedom in the transcendent horizon of experience.

Christ, as the fullness of the revelation of God, is the Truth.

Standing in the Truth, as the participation in the fullness of meaning of the cosmos in Christ, is the absolute condition for insight into the full horizon of our experience. That is to say, that we have once and for all broken with the illusion that we possess the norm of
truth in our own fallen selfhood; we have come to the self-knowledge that outside the light of Divine Revelation, we stand in falsehood.

Whoever grasps the God’s Revelation with all of his heart stands in the Truth.

Standing in the Truth also makes insight in the human horizon of experience free from the prejudices of immanence philosophy; it also again makes possible the directing of theoretic knowledge to the Truth. This cuts off by its roots the overestimation of the meaning synthesis of scientific knowledge, which remains bound to the temporal horizon.

[WdW II, 497] Study Notes
The problem in the matter of the relation between thinking and believing

Knowledge about God, which in our selfhood transcends the horizon of time, remains nevertheless bound to our temporal function of faith, in accordance with the divine order of creation. As we have seen, faith is the leading boundary function in the whole unfolding process within the temporal coherence of meaning, and therefore also gives direction to logical thinking.

In the light of the Christian law-Idea, the nominalistic division between believing and thinking [faith and reason] is a patent impossibility and always testifies to a lack of critical self reflection in philosophic thought. In the light of the immanence standpoint it is understood as a hidden or openly confessed hypostasis of meaning-synthetic thought.

Naturally the faith function cannot take the place of theoretic thought, any more than any other non-logical function may do so.

Whoever supposes that a science that believes in Christ should mean the substitution of truths of faith for theoretical knowledge, the lowering of faith to the position of “Lückenbüszer” [stopgap] for science, is very seriously on the wrong track.

It would also be a fundamental mistake for anyone to suppose that the philosophy of the law-Idea should again fall back into a pre-Kantian rationalistic metaphysics.

The modal meaning of the temporal faith function is different from the logical function of thinking. And therefore the faith function can “lead” scientific thought and still maintain sovereignty in its own sphere.
Foreword to Volume III of De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee (pages v to ix)

The publication of this third book of “The Philosophy of the Law-Idea,” which brings this work to its provisional conclusion, was delayed by unforeseen circumstances.

As a result of further revisions, the contents of this volume were expanded so much that I had to omit certain parts of the manuscript. These omitted parts include a detailed critical-historical examination of the development of the problem of individuality. And second, I have omitted a broader discussion of the topic “Man's place in the cosmos.” I hope to later publish on both of these topics, although separately from this work.

The problem of causation, which I have touched on several times, will be dealt with in a systematic way in the fourth volume in the discussion of the problem of time. I cannot say when this fourth volume will be published, since at the present time I must focus my attention on making ready for publication my Encyclopedia of the Science of Law. And after that there are various articles of a more specialized nature waiting for publication.

Meanwhile, I am filled with inner gratitude towards God that the appearance of the first two volumes of this work has given the impetus for the founding of the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy, and for the publication of Philosophia Reformata, the journal [organ] of this Association.

The wish that I expressed in the Foreword of Volume I has in this way become initially fulfilled. What gives me the greatest joy is the quick growth in the number of scientific researchers, also outside of the country, from all faculties of the universitas scientiarum, who have been gripped by the basic Christian idea of this new philosophy—to allow Christ's Kingship over science to again be experienced as a powerful reality in their own thinking.

The radical break with the synthesis between the Christian standpoint of transcendence and that of immanence philosophy has come as a liberating act in the

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44 JGF: Dooyeweerd still planned a fourth volume, dealing in more detail with the problem of time. This fourth volume was never published, although Dooyeweerd did make substantial revisions to the text for the English translation, A New Critique of Theoretical Thought. See my Concordance for a list of some changes. Dooyeweerd also published additional articles on time, such as his 1940 article “The Problem of Time in the Philosophy of the Law-Idea.”


46 JGF: With respect to the importance of Dooyeweerd's philosophical anthropology, see the Conclusion of Volume III (below). Dooyeweerd never completed his work on philosophical anthropology. But he did set out his ideas in his article “De leer van den mensch in de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee”, Correspondentie-Bladen VII (Dec. 1942), translated as “The Theory of Man: Thirty-two Propositions on Anthropology.”
lives of many people. Having made this great choice, they do not want nor can they ever go back.

It is understandable that some people, who have not yet understood the impossibility of such a synthesis, and who in their whole way of thinking still strive for a compromise, regard the Philosophy of the Law-Idea as something like a revolutionary power, which tears down everything that had been built up in a process of centuries.

Here there is still a great deal of misunderstanding, which can only gradually be overcome by a calm and objective exchange of ideas. This exchange of ideas, provided that it is carried out in a Christian tone, will necessarily lead to mutual clarification and deepening of insight.

But at this time, we must give all emphasis on one point. The Philosophy of the Law-Idea does not seek its firm ground in ideas, or in a closed system of thought, but only and exclusively in the living Word of God. We have not fixed ourselves on anything other than this point of departure for our philosophy. An inferior imitation [epigonism] can arise among its followers only where the living dynamic ground-Idea has become fossilized into a scholastic concept, which can no longer be fruitful or productive.

But we have at the same time seen that when one really takes this point of departure seriously, one's whole view on the temporal world order is radically overturned. It brings our thinking into a new movement, which no longer finds rest in anything within time. And that in which immanence philosophy supposes to find its supratemporal point of rest is itself disclosed as being subjected to time; immanence philosophy tries to make what is merely temporal to be eternal [het ver-eeuwigen daarvan], and therefore ends up in idolatry.

From the very beginning, this new philosophy has emphasized that, in accordance with divine Word revelation, human existence is concentrated not in “reason,” but in the heart, as the religious root of existence. How then can a critic see a fundamental change of standpoint in the followers of this philosophy, and how can such a critic assert that we earlier understood man as merely a “complex of functions?” I really cannot understand such criticism; it only shows that such a critic has still understood nothing of our point of departure.

In the United States, theologians have asked whether the Philosophy of the Law-Idea should be seen as amounting to a denial of what has been called “common grace.” To this we can only answer: This is not at all the case. On the contrary, we again want to take this Scriptural doctrine seriously, in contrast to a certain tendency to take a humanistic interpretation of this doctrine. What the Philosophy of the Law-Idea denies is merely the...
unscriptural dualism of “common” and “special grace.” In this dualism, “common grace” is seen as a self-sufficient “terrain,” and is removed from Christ's Kingship.

Whoever wants to plead for such a dualism should consider, that although he may try to use a scholastic or modern synthesis in philosophy to serve between ancient or humanistic philosophy and the Christian line of thought, such a dualism has shown itself to be hostile to the working through of Christian Truth in scientific thought, because such dualism continues to halt between two opinions. One cannot give fifty percent of one's thought to Christ and fifty percent to Aristotle or Kant.

And whoever does not arrive at a radical surrender of his thought to Christ, withdraws his whole thought from the Source of Truth.

In its point of departure, the Philosophy of the Law-Idea is not at all “new.” Instead, it builds on the foundation of all Ages. What it opposes is the falling away from this fixed foundation. This falling away appeals to the autonomy of thought, or with a completely misplaced appeal to the doctrine of “common grace.”

Whoever reproaches this philosophy with “desire for originality” does not know what he is saying. It does not have a desire for originality, but rather a desire for the Origin, in the sense that it restlessly drives thought above its supposed resting points, and it points to its true Origin in Christ Jesus.

If indeed there is any “originality” hiding in our philosophy, this is due only and exclusively to the new view, which is the fruit of the opening of thought to the Word of God, which is discovered by the true Archimedean point. But this means the opposite of any revolutionary assault against the great law of historical continuity. It is much rather the living fundamental ideas of the Calvinistic Reformation, taken up in the previous generation by Dr. A. Kuyper, which find their philosophical expression in Philosophy of the Law-Idea.

The second serious misunderstanding, against which the Philosophy of the Law-Idea shall continue to have to fight, is its identification with a Christian theology. Such an [incorrect] identification is a well-tried recipe to exclude a philosophy whose presuppositions are not accepted by immanence philosophy from the community of officially acknowledged philosophy, in order to avoid the difficulty of really becoming acquainted with this philosophy and of seriously weighing its insights.

Meanwhile, the Philosophy of the Law-Idea does not allow itself to be put on the sidelines in this way. Its critique of the foundations of current philosophical movements penetrates too sharply into the very joints of the immanence standpoint that those who adhere to the immanence standpoint will not be able to avoid this critique by appealing to the boundaries between philosophy and theology.

The Philosophy of the Law-Idea is no theology. And it wants to take “universal human experience” more seriously than does the so-called ‘critical direction’ in immanence philosophy. Its critical basic attitude really makes problematic the dogmatic view of these “boundaries” in the Kantian immanence standpoint. It does this by disclosing the religious pre-suppositions in this view, and by bringing to light its immanent antinomies.

Finally two more remarks. The course of my research brought me with inner necessity into contact with various questions in the special sciences, which lie outside my own
juridical specialty of research. I express my heartfelt thanks to all who have hereby 
served to enlighten me. Nevertheless to devote oneself to these other areas remains a 
perilous undertaking, and I am fully conscious of such dangers.

Second, I need to give an explanation of why in addition to this third volume, there is no 
index of names and subjects. To compile a really usable index of the three bulky 
volumes would have required so much space that it would have expanded the scope of 
the last volume out of all proportion. Since I have meanwhile become convinced that an 
index is indispensable for the consultation of this work, I have entered into discussions 
with the publisher about a separate publication of such an index. I very much hope that 
this discussion will soon lead to a favourable result, and that its composition will not 
require so much time that the publication of such an index would be unduly delayed.

**Conclusion**

[Volume III, pages 627-630]

Man's place in the cosmos is really the basic 
theme of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea

The theory of the individuality-structures of temporal reality, and their 
mutable enkaptic interlacement in the cosmos has certainly not been completed by the 
results of the philosophical investigations set out in this third volume of *De 
Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*. On the contrary, apart from the fact that in this third 
volume we have only given an *introduction* to the theory of the enkaptic structural 
interlacements, now that we have developed up to this point the first three themes of our 
systematic plan, a question arises that should really be answered as the conclusion of the 
theory of individuality structures, but because of its broad reach, must be left until later 
for a more detailed discussion.

The question is this: Does man as an individual personality also have a temporal 
individuality-structure, comparable to that of natural beings, or is man's temporal 
existence enclosed in an enkaptic intertwining of various individuality-structures, and 
is his individual unity only guaranteed by his supratemporal selfhood in the religious 
root of his existence?

The answer to this question belongs to the task of philosophical anthropology, whose 
theme has been formulated by Scheler as concerning “man's place in the cosmos.”

Already in the point of departure of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, the whole theory of 
the law-spheres and of individuality-structures has really been continually set against the

48 JGF: The English translation did include such an index, although it was not compiled 
by Dooyeweerd himself. It was compiled by H. de Jongste. De Jongste was not involved 
in translating Volume I, and he had his own ideas of what needed to be indexed. The 
index is not at all complete, and anyone doing a search would be well-advised to use a 
computer search of the online version of *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee.*
background of this central theme. And in this regard, complete clarity must be obtained on at least one central point of true Christian anthropology. Man as such has no temporal qualifying function such as is possessed by temporal things and societal structures; man transcends all temporal structures.

Because of this, any search for a “substantial form of being” of human nature, in the sense of Aristotelian-thomistic metaphysical anthropology, cannot be reconciled with what Holy Scripture has revealed to us about created human nature. According to the divine order of creation, man, in his relation of coherence with the human race, is not qualified as a “rational-moral being,” but primarily through his kingly position as the personal religious-creaturely center of the whole of the cosmos. In this center, the rational-moral functions first find their concentration point, and all of creation stands in a covenantal relation with God the Creator.

All structures that are qualified by a temporal qualifying function, including the “rational-moral” temporal social structures, are perishable [vergankelijk]. But man is destined for eternity, not in an abstract, speculative rational existence, but according to his full personality in its rich concrete individuality.

In connection with this, it is in any event certain that the distinguished concepts of “body” and “soul”—or of “body,” “soul,” and “spirit”—which have been developed from out of the immanence standpoint, are fundamentally unusable in a Scriptural, Christian anthropology.

Man's all-sided temporal existence, his “body” in the full Scriptural sense of the word, can only be understood from out of its supratemporal religious center, the “soul” or “heart” in Scripture's sense. Every conception of “immortal soul” that seeks its supratemporal essential center in rational-moral functions remains rooted in the point of departure of immanence philosophy.

But with all of this we have still only determined the only possible point of departure for a Christian anthropology.

Whoever supposes that from our standpoint, human existence is merely a complex of modal temporal functions, which find their center in the “heart,” has made a very simplistic and erroneous notion of what we understand under “anthropology.”

Only after firmly setting our Christian standpoint do the scientific questions arise for this area. And the problems that arise here can in no way be viewed as already having been solved.

What is evident from the whole development of our research in this third volume is that in man's temporal existence, and also in his life of thought and feeling, we can point to a most complicated system of enkapctic structural intertwinements, and these presuppose a whole series of individuality-structures.

And what is also evident from our standpoint is that man's temporal existence cannot be explained or set out as two or three abstract complexes of functions (under the name of “body,” “soul,” and “spirit”). We have seen that such theoretical abstractions come into
collision with the temporal structures of individuality and that in essence they depend upon a *hypostatizing of isolated functions*.

In this way, the problem concerning the temporal relation of “soul” (as the complex of psychical and logical functions) and “body,” in the sense of separate “substances,” is recognized as a self-created pseudo-problem of immanence philosophy. In due time, I hope to demonstrate this in a detailed way in the further development of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea.

Finally—and this is of primary importance—we need to fundamentally reject every notion of the human “ego” [ik] which makes human personality independent, or which is understood as an immanent “psychological” or “spiritual” “Act-center.”

Only the divine Word revelation in Christ Jesus can disclose to us what the human “selfhood” is. Not philosophical speculation, not “act psychology” or “spiritual metaphysics.”

The question “What is man?” cannot be answered from the immanence standpoint. It remains a problem for the immanence standpoint, which time and again with its oppressive force will continue thrust itself on apostate thought, as a symptom of the inner unrest of an unrooted existence, which no longer understands itself.49

**Endnote JGF: Notes regarding this translation:**

1. This translation of excerpts, notes and commentary are intended for study purposes. I love Dooyeweerd’s philosophy, but I believe that it has been seriously misunderstood. The primary purpose of this translation of excerpts from his work is therefore to correct the widespread ignorance of what Dooyeweerd really said.

2. *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee* [*WdW*] has been translated before, as *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought* (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1969; first published in 1953, and recently republished by the Mellen Press). I have re-translated only excerpts from the *WdW*. For those who are seriously interested in Dooyeweerd's philosophy, a copy of the 1953 translation remains essential.

3. However, the 1953 translation did not translate all parts of the *WdW*, and it added many more sections. The page numbering therefore does not coincide between the *WdW* and the English translation, *A New Critique*. I have therefore compiled a rough concordance (in .pdf format) between the *WdW* and the *New Critique*.

4. The New Critique's translation of the *WdW* was inconsistent. Volume I had a different translation team than Volumes II and III, and consequently there was not always a

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49 JGF: Dooyeweerd never completed his work on philosophical anthropology. But he did set out his ideas in his article “De leer van den mensch in de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee”, *Correspondentie-Bladen* VII (Dec. 1942), translated as “The Theory of Man: Thirty-two Propositions on Anthropology.”
consistency in terminology. At least one of the translators was himself unsympathetic to this philosophy. Volume I was translated by David Hugh Freeman and William Young. Volume II was translated by David H. Freeman and H. De Jongste. Verburg reports that Dooyeweerd had so many problems with the translations of the first two volumes that he translated Volume III himself. Volume III is therefore a very free and quite revised translation.

(5) In *The Twilight of Western Thought*, Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the “key of knowledge” is the knowledge of the supratemporal self, the root of temporal reality that has no existence apart from this root. Even the Christian Ground Motive of creation, fall and redemption must be read using this key, as is Scripture itself. He has also stated that the ideas of the supratemporal self and cosmic time were essential for "any truly Christian philosophy." I have therefore tried to translate the text with this fundamental supratemporal/temporal distinction in mind. In some cases, this has made a big difference in understanding the text.

(6) We must be careful not to try to simplify what Dooyeweerd himself acknowledges is complex (*WdW*, x; NC I, viii, ix). Dooyeweerd does not set out his philosophical arguments in a series of syllogisms. I believe that the main difficulty with these texts is the fact that Dooyeweerd is using ideas in a new way. We cannot understand Dooyeweerd if we try to interpret him from the standpoint of empiricism, or from a dualistic kind of theism. Furthermore, Dooyeweerd's ideas are inter-related and cannot be understood apart from each other. There is a kind of circularity here that is unavoidable, and if we try to understand his terminology from another viewpoint, we will miss his entire philosophy. Dooyeweerd continually uses terms that he says will be explained later in the text. Dooyeweerd’s translators were well aware that some terminology could only be explained later. The footnotes refer to later discussions. (NC I, 4, ft. 1, 6 ft. 1).

(7) The same circularity of Ideas, and indeed many of the same Ideas, also appear in the Christian Philosophy of Franz von Baader. Baader speaks of this circularity in *Werke* 14,60. The reference also appears in the collection of Baader excerpts *Die Weltalter*, 4. Kuyper read and appreciated both Baader's *Werke* and *Die Weltalter*. Baader says that true knowledge is a circle, which is not understood gradually more and more, but rather all at once. He says that we should therefore not wonder when one concept always refers again to another, and how when we hold to one concept, we must anticipate others. Because each of our concepts refers to our center. True knowledge does not build a row of concepts, but rather a circle. Concepts point to the Center and from there point to others either regressively or in an anticipating way [*Werke* 8, 11; *Weltalter*, 105]. Elsewhere, Baader distinguishes between concepts and Ideas, as does Dooyeweerd.

(8) I believe that the circularity of Ideas--and their inter-related nature--can now be captured using hypertext links. I did this on an earlier website, but cannot replicate it here without a lot of work.

(9) The circularity of Ideas also makes evident how many of the interpretations of Dooyeweerd over the last fifty years have not done justice to his thought. Because the ideas are inter-related, we cannot reject or accept isolated parts of his philosophy. And yet many who claim to be his adherents have tried to do just that. Very early on, many of
the central ideas for Dooyeweerd's philosophy were rejected by most of his colleagues, including his brother-in-law Vollenhoven, whose name has been associated with Dooyeweerd. When Dooyeweerd's philosophy has been interpreted without these central ideas, it has not been properly understood. They have rejected Dooyeweerd's Ideas of the supratemporal selfhood, the religious root, and cosmic time. Others have tried to replace his Gegenstand-relation with another view of theory such as the abstraction of universals from things. Dooyeweerd himself says that this is to fall back into a logicism.

(10) Although it is desirable to avoid sexist language in the translation, this would be an anachronism. It would also greatly complicate the translation of many already difficult passages. Dooyeweerd's sentence structure is complicated and often very long. To interpose dual pronouns is sometimes not really possible. I have therefore not always aimed for political correctness, although in places I have substituted ‘humanity’ for ‘Man.’ It might also be misleading, since to say “himself or herself” implies an individuality that may not be present in his central idea of humanity. But if we say ‘humanity,’ it is difficult to speak of ‘I-ness,’ since one idea is plural and the other more unitary. Baader’s view was that humanity was originally androgynous.