

Lieuwe Mietus, *Gunning en de theosofie: Een onderzoek naar de receptie van de christelijke theosofie in het werk van J.H. Gunning Jr. van 1863-1876*, (Gorinchem: Narratio, 2006) 352 pages. ISBN 90-5263-000-0.

Lieuwe Mietus is a pastor in the Federation of Free Evangelical Churches in the Netherlands (Bond van Vrije Evangelische Gemeenten in Nederland), and a lecturer at that church's seminary in Utrecht. In 2006, he obtained his doctorate from the Theological University in Kampen, with a dissertation on J. H. Gunning, Jr. (1829-1905).¹ It is a most impressive scholarly work, the result of eight years of research. It is important not only for understanding the Christian theosophical influences in Gunning's theology, but also for understanding the roots of reformational philosophy, as it was developed by Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) and Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977).² For in the 1860's, Gunning introduced Christian theosophical ideas to other representatives of Dutch Protestantism, such as Kuyper. And although Mietus does not mention him, these theosophical ideas were also transmitted to Dooyeweerd's Christian philosophy.³

The term 'Christian theosophy' will sound strange to many reformational philosophers. The word 'theosophy' literally means "the Wisdom of God." Christian theosophy is a tradition that extends from Jacob Boehme (1575-1624) to William Law (1686-1761), Friedrich Christian Oetinger (1702-1782), Louis-Claude de Saint-Martin (1743-1803), and Franz von Baader (1765-1841), and from Baader to others, including Gunning and Kuyper. Mietus points out that Gunning also influenced his friend D. Chantepie de la

¹ I am indebted to Kornelis A. Bril for drawing my attention to Mietus's dissertation. Bril and I recently met with Mietus to discuss his research on Gunning.

² Herman Dooyeweerd: *A New Critique of Theoretical Thought*, (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1997; Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1969; first published 1953) ['NC']. This is an English translation and revision of *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1935) ['WdW'].

³ I do not include Dirk H. Th. Vollenhoven here, for Vollenhoven disagreed with most of Dooyeweerd's ideas. See J. Glenn Friesen: "Dooyeweerd versus Vollenhoven: The religious dialectic within reformational philosophy," *Philosophia Reformata* 70 (2005) 102-132, online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Dialectic.html>]. Vollenhoven's disagreements with Dooyeweerd seem to relate to those ideas that are most closely linked to Christian theosophy.

Saussaye, the founding father of “ethical theology.” Ethical theology emphasized that God is a living, holy and loving Person, as well as the idea of man’s rebirth, which restores man’s personality from its distortions caused by the fall into sin.

Mietus restricts his study to the years 1863-1876, because that was the time that Gunning was most influenced by Christian theosophical authors like Boehme, Oetinger, Baader, J. Hamberger, F. Fabri, Ph. Th. Culmann, G.H. von Schubert, C.A. Auberlen and others. In later years, Gunning’s interest in theosophy was less pronounced, but nevertheless still important (Mietus 280-282). Christian theosophical ideas helped Gunning to respond to the problems raised by nineteenth century modernism. He opposed the naturalistic views of science and culture, which lead to the annihilation of Christian faith. Instead, Gunning struggled to attain a living faith and a living church.

Mietus is careful to emphasize the orthodox nature of Christian theosophy, as found in Gunning and Baader. Christian theosophy is theistic, and holds firmly to the Christian ideas of creation and redemption of the world and of men by God. Relying on the previous work of Antoine Faivre and Peter Koslowski⁴, Mietus contrasts Christian theosophy with the later theosophy of Madame Blavatsky (Mietus 11-17). Here is a summary of some Christian theosophical ideas that Mietus finds in Gunning:

1. Christian theosophy emphasizes the role of God’s Wisdom, or *Sophia*. Wisdom is not a Person distinct from the Trinity, but it is the mirror of God:

For she is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness (*Wisdom 7:26*).

Sophia, the original mirror of God, mirrors itself in the *nature* of God. By His Wisdom, God *expresses* Himself in his “nature.”

2. God’s divine nature must not be confused with the nature of created reality. Baader introduced the philosopher Schelling to the ideas of Boehme. But Baader criticized both Schelling and Hegel for failing to distinguish between these two “natures”—the *natura*

⁴ Antoine Faivre: *Theosophy, Imagination, Tradition: Studies in Western Esotericism* (Albany: State University of New York, 2000). Peter Koslowski: *Philosophien der Offenbarung. Antiker Gnostizismus, Franz von Baader, Schelling*, (Vienna: Ferdinand Schöningh, 2001).

non creata creans and the temporal *natura creata*. Schelling and Hegel confused the non-creaturely process that exists in God with the processes that occur within creation as an image or copy (*Abbild*) of the divine process. Baader disagreed with their pantheistic and Gnostic views, and in particular with their view that God was required to create the world in order to fulfill Himself (a view also found in today's "process theology"). W.J. Hanegraaff maintains that Baader did not interpret Boehme correctly, and that Boehme was in fact pantheistic.⁵ But Mietus emphasizes that Baader and Hamberger interpreted Boehme in an anti-pantheistic way, rejecting any pantheistic identification of the two natures. It is this interpretation that is of importance in understanding Gunning, especially his most important works *Blikken in de Openbaring* (1866-1869)⁶ and *Spinoza en de Idee der Persoonlijkheid* (1876) (Mietus 71-74, 89-95, 122).

3. Thus, it was not necessary for God to create; God is independent of His creation. But God creates in order to let "other beings" share in His Glory, and for His own self-revelation, to "open" His eternal nature (Mietus 96, 112). By an act of love, God freely creates and reveals Himself by the expression of His Wisdom. This was a central idea for Gunning, and it is related to Baader's idea of a nature in God. Gunning believed that this was the only way to overcome the depersonalization of the idea of God, and the devaluation of Christianity by modernist thinkers of his time. In emphasizing God's freedom of creation, Gunning opposed the ideas of Spinoza, whose philosophy was at that time experiencing a revival in the Netherlands.

4. Gunning also followed Baader in rejecting Hegel's idea of a dualistic opposition within God. Evil is not to be sought outside of God, since that would result in Manichaeism or dualism. But neither is evil to be found within God. God's nature gives only the possibility of evil, and God eternally overcomes any such tendencies in His divine

⁵ Mietus 114 fn 104, referring to W.G. Hanegraaff:

⁶ J. H. Gunning, Jr.: *Blikken in de Openbaring*, (Rotterdam: J.M. Bredée's, 1929, originally published 1866), four volumes [*'Blikken'*]. My citations are from the 1929 edition, whereas Mietus cites from the 1866 edition.

nature.⁷ Evil was therefore not necessary; it was only revealed in the fall of the angels (Mietus, 90-93, 96-97).

5. Christian theosophy stresses that man was created in the *image* of God. As the image of God, man also reflects God's Wisdom, and man can image or imagine God's Wisdom for the temporal world. Just as God expresses Himself in His divine nature, so man's heart center expresses itself in his temporal body, and in the temporal world, the created cosmos.⁸ Especially in the third volume of *Blikken*, Gunning focused on the idea that man was created "in and to" the image of God. Using the work of Culmann and others, Gunning elaborated an anthropology in which man has an "historical task" to fulfill—to overcome by his spirit the dark forces in the ground of his nature. Here again, Gunning was following Baader's opposition to modernism. Modernism regards man not as the image of God, but as a product of nature. And in such a naturalistic view, there can be neither a rebirth into a higher life and resurrection, nor any final spiritual destination for mankind and the world.

6. Gunning shares the Christian theosophical idea that man's heart is the center of his existence, the source of his actions. Gunning refers to the heart on every other page of *Blikken*. For example, "De bronnen des levens zijn in het hart" (*Blikken*, 1929 edition, I, 24, 52). Our heart is the central source of our acts of life ("de centraalbron der levensverrichtingen"), (Mietus 151 fn12; *Blikken* I, 24).⁹ It is the deepest point of man's being, the central point of his spiritual existence ("Het hart is het diepste van 's menschen

⁷ In his article, "Intellectual influences upon the reformational philosophy of Dooyeweerd," *Philosophia Reformata* 69 (2004), 151-181, D.F.M. Strauss mistranslates Baader on this point. See J. Glenn Friesen: "Dooyeweerd and Baader: A Response to D.F.M. Strauss," (2005), online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Strauss.html>].

⁸ Faivre says that just as God expresses Himself in the divine nature, so man expresses himself in his body. Antoine Faivre: *Philosophie de la Nature: Physique sacrée et théosophie XVIII-XIX siècle* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1996), 109. The relation in both divine and human expression is that of a center relating to its periphery.

⁹ Cf. Dooyeweerd: "All our acts [*verrichtingen*] come forth out of the soul (or spirit) but they function within the enkaptically structured whole of the human body." *De leer van den mensch in de W.D.W., Corr. Bladen* 5 (1942).

wezen, het middelpunt van zijn geestelijk bestaan”) (*Blikken*, I, 26). Our heart is our very self (*Blikken* I, 52). The temporal body is the organ of man’s spiritual heart (Mietus 161; *Blikken* III, 162).¹⁰

7. And man’s central heart is supratemporal. Gunning emphasizes that God has placed a sense of eternity in our hearts. Gunning follows F. Fabri in citing Ecclesiastes 3:11 in support of that idea (Mietus 152, 156; *Blikken* III, 23-24, 29).¹¹ Gunning sometimes uses the word ‘eternity’ in a creaturely sense, but he also uses the word ‘supratemporal’ (*boventijdelijk*), which he admits is an unfamiliar word (*Blikken* I, 317, 349; II, 233, 235, 237). Baader had also used the word ‘supratemporal’ (*überzeitlich*). Gunning says that man, especially the genius, is always influenced by both the higher world of God and the lower world of Satan. Our temporal world occupies a twilight-position between the higher and lower world. But man does not merely have a sensitivity to the eternal. Rather, even now, man exists both as a supratemporal and a temporal being. This is why man, as the image of God, can express his supratemporal selfhood in his temporal body, as well as in the temporal world, although a full and complete expression is not possible in this fallen dispensation.

8. Gunning frequently refers to the ‘supernatural.’ But he does not use the term in a dualistic sense. Gunning says that most people who call themselves ‘supernaturalists’ are really ‘infranaturalists,’ failing to recognize how God dwells in nature. We must be like those who live in the mountains, who regard that level as their true life, and not like those who dwell in the valley and who always speak about “there above us.” But the supernatural is not suprahuman, because man was created in the image of God. The supernatural is really the truly natural (*Blikken*, III, xi).

¹⁰ Cf. Dooyeweerd’s Third Response to Curators: “The soul is the *full human selfhood*, one’s *heart*, in the sense of the center of one’s whole existence, of which the body is only the temporal organ.” Online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandoooyeweerd/Response3.html>] And “The human body is the free plastic instrument of the I-ness, as the spiritual centre of human existence” (*NC* III, 88).

¹¹ This is also a central text for Dooyeweerd’s view of the heart. *NC* I, 31 fn1.

9. Christian theosophy holds that man's purpose was to use his imagination to send the Wisdom of God into nature in order to repair the cosmos that had been disturbed in the fall of the angels.¹² The fall of the angels is distinguished from Adam's subsequent fall, and Genesis 1 and 2 describe different creations (Mietus 97, 113, 115-120). Man was to bring the powers within creation to realization, and to spiritualize temporal nature (Mietus 121 fn135; *Blikken*, I, 341; III, 121). But man failed at this task.¹³

10. The temporal world was concentrated in man as the image of God, and that is why the temporal world fell along with man in his fall into sin. The present world is thus not the expression of God's perfected will (Mietus 113).¹⁴ That is also why the temporal world will be redeemed through man, as he participates in Christ.¹⁵ Man must repeat what Christ did, in order to overcome sin and darkness. Such self-sacrifice leads to openness and honesty in science and in public life, and it is the ultimate form of love. Gunning finds the basis for this in God's self-limitation (*zelfbeperking*). The idea of self-sacrifice is a central notion in ethical theology; Gunning was influenced here both by Chantepie de la Saussaye as well as by Baader, who also developed a theory of sacrifice.

11. Unlike a world-denying kind of mysticism or pietism, which seeks to flee the temporal world, Christian theosophy concentrates on seeking God's wisdom within

¹² Faivre, 139. The fall of the angels is distinguished from Adam's subsequent fall, and Genesis 1 and 2 describe different creation. Mietus 97, 113, 115-120. Kuyper was aware of this view. See J. Glenn Friesen: "The Mystical Dooyeweerd Once Again: Kuyper's Use of Franz von Baader," *Ars Disputandi* 3 (2003), online at [<http://www.arsdisputandi.org/publish/articles/000130/index.html>]. Dooyeweerd expressly distinguished between the creation narratives in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2. Man was first created as a supratemporal being and then "fitted into" [*ingesteld*] the temporal world. ("Na vijf en dertig jaren," *Philosophia Reformata* 36 (1971), 1-10 at 9. See also "leer van de mens," p. 9.

¹³ *Blikken*, I, 341 ("de krachten der verheerlijking werden niet [door Adam] ontvouwd").

¹⁴ Cf. Dooyeweerd: "the fallen earthly cosmos is only a sad shadow of God's original creation" (*NC II*, 34).

¹⁵ Herman Dooyeweerd: "Kuyper's Wetenschapsleer," *Philosophia Reformata* 4 (1939), 193-232. He cites Kuyper's *Lectures on Calvinism*: "Just as the whole creation culminates in man, its glorification can only first find its fulfillment in man, who was created as God's image."

temporal reality, of learning its true structure, and elevating it to its true nature.¹⁶ Theosophy is a world-affirming mysticism, which does not seek to avoid or to destroy nature, but to redeem and to glorify it (Mietus 99). Gunning does not view ‘nature’ and ‘matter’ [*stoffelijkheid*] as synonymous. Following Fabri and Baader, Gunning regards nature in terms of spiritual embodiment, and he emphasizes the importance of nature being penetrated by central spirit. God dwells in nature as its original King, glorifying everything, and everything must be subjected to Him. ‘Matter’ is nature as a result of the fall. True nature is supra-material (*bovenstoffelijk*) (Mietus 65-66, 71, 101-102, 217).

12. Gunning says that God’s greatest revelation is in Christ’s incarnation, the turning point in human history.¹⁷ The incarnation is an embodiment, and an expression of God. He humanizes Christology by stressing that Christ himself had to struggle against evil and was ever more spiritualizing himself. The divinity in Christ’s humanity was not at the outset already a fulfilled fact, but had to be gained in real human life by Christ’s will. At the cross and by His resurrection, Christ restored the rule of the spirit over the flesh, and he restored fallen nature as the organ for man’s spirit. Gunning relies here on Oetinger’s theosophical notion “Christ for us and Christ in us.” In Christ we see our true nature, and as we participate in this true nature, the image of God is restored in us.

¹⁶ Faivre says that the theosophist “prefers to sojourn, to travel, on Jacob’s ladder, where the angels—the symbols, the mediations—are ascending and descending,” rather than attempt to go beyond like the mystic. He quotes Madame de Staël’s observation that theosophers attempt to penetrate the secrets of creation; mere mystics are content with their own hearts (Faivre, xxiii, 25).

¹⁷ Gunning followed Baader in his belief that the idea of the heavenly glorification of that which is embodied is the basis for understanding doctrines of creation, redemption and glorification, of the sacraments and of eschatology (Mietus, 105-106). Dooyeweerd also says that Christ reveals God most fully. And in his 1964 lecture “Center and Periphery,” Dooyeweerd says that the doctrine of the incarnation cannot be understood apart from the idea of our own supratemporal heart, which is the center of our existence. See Herman Dooyeweerd: Center and Periphery: the Philosophy of the Law-Idea in a changing world.” Both original Dutch and English translation online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/1964Lecture.html>] [‘1964 lecture’].

13. Finally, theosophy emphasizes man's direct access to superior worlds. Gunning uses the term 'aanschouwing' for this immediate knowledge (*Blikken* III, 23-24).¹⁸ Following G.H. von Schubert and others, Gunning emphasizes that our conscience is a remnant of the higher spiritual-life, by which we can awake from sin and darkness. Man's self-conscious awakening includes deep-rooted emotions of terror and repentance about sin.

In chapter 7, Mietus gives some information about Gunning's meetings and correspondence with Kuyper. Both men lived in The Hague. Gunning even published some articles in *De Standaard*, of which Kuyper was the editor.

Kuyper himself showed great admiration for Baader's philosophy, which he acknowledges learning from Gunning:¹⁹

Franz von Baader, wiens persoon en werk vooral door Ds. Gunning en Dr. d.l. Saussaye ten onzent wierd ingeleid, vindt daarin zijn hoofdbeteekenis, dat hij de realiteit van het geestelijke tegenover het spiritualistische vervluchtigen van den geest in zijn afgetrokken gedachtenvorm handhaaft, en ten andere, het dualisme, tweelingbroeder van het spiritualisme, in beginsel opheft. Hij is een reusachtige persoonlijkheid, uit wiens geest een eigen denkstroom gevloeid is, die nu reeds elk gebied van wetenschap met zijn bevruchtende wateren besproeit. Zijn school is geen theologische, maar een wereldschool. Zijn beginsel is kosmologisch meer dan theologisch. Al misken ik de gevaarlijke zij[de] niet, die zijn optreden heeft, in de richting van Rome, toch houd ik vol, dat tegenover de ijlheid van het modernisme, zich geen beter tegenwicht denken laat. Reeds Hoffmann, *Die Weltalter. Lichtstrahlen aus F. von Baaders Werke*, Erlangen 1868, geeft die signatuur van zijn persoonlijkheid vrij juist terug.

¹⁸ Faivre, xvi, 7-8. *Blikken* I, 237-39 ('hemselse dingen'). This emphasis on immediate knowledge of supratemporal matters is in both Kuyper and Dooyeweerd. Kuyper speaks of this in *To Be Near Unto God*. And see Dooyeweerd's 1964 lecture. See also *NC* I, 15, 33; II, 473, where Dooyeweerd speaks of the immediacy of our heart experience. And Dooyeweerd speaks of our being able to see the invisible things as well as the visible. Dooyeweerd also uses the term 'aanschouwing' for this immediate knowledge. See *WdW* II, 228 ("de volle religieuze aanschouwing"). In his 1923 article "Rooms-katholieke en Anti-revolutionaire Staatkunde," Dooyeweerd speaks of our intuitive consciousness ("schouwend bewustzijn"). Modalities, a form of our experience, are a primary form of this consciousness. We intuit [*schouw*] the world in the light of eternity.

¹⁹ See J. Glenn Friesen: "The Mystical Dooyeweerd Once Again: Kuyper's Use of Franz von Baader," *Ars Disputandi* 3 (2003), online at [<http://www.arsdisputandi.org/publish/articles/000130/index.html>].

[Franz von Baader, whose person and work was introduced to us especially by Ds. Gunning and Dr. de la Saussaye, finds his main significance in this [idea of embodiment]. He maintains the reality of the spiritual over against merely spiritualistic flights of the spirit in abstracted forms of thought. And on the other hand, he abolishes in principle all dualism, the twin brother of spiritualism. He is a powerful personality, from whose spirit his own special stream of thought has flowed, which has already sprinkled each area of science with its fructifying waters. His school is not a theological one, but rather a world school. His principle is more cosmological than theological. Although I am not unaware of the dangers that his ideas have in the direction of Rome, I nevertheless maintain that we can conceive of no better counterweight against the ravings of modernism. Hoffmann, [who edited] *Die Weltalter, Lichstrahlen aus F. von Baaders Werke*, (Erlangen, 1968), has already fairly accurately reflected the signature of his personality].²⁰

Kuyper therefore appreciated Baader's rejection of pietistic spirituality, and his emphasis on the necessity of "embodiment"—the expression of a center within its nature or periphery. Kuyper says that modernism had attempted to bridge idealism with the world, and how it could have achieved a glorious if it had only accepted Baader's idea of embodiment (an idea that Baader obtained from Oetinger). He quotes Baader, "daß Leiblichkeit das Ende der Wege Gottes ist," ["embodiment is the goal of the ways of God"]. Gunning emphasizes this same idea of embodiment (*Blikken* I, 62, 65, 309). Kuyper expressly acknowledges the importance of Baader's opposition to the dogma of the autonomy of thought. He also appreciates Baader's opposition to dualism, and his desire to reform the special sciences. He uses Baader's idea of the 'Silberblick'—the glimpse of eternal things—for his view of aesthetics. Baader even anticipated Kuyper's idea of a university free from state or church control.

Kuyper attended revival meetings in Brighton, England, held by the American R. Pearsall Smith. Smith spoke of a distinction between justification and sanctification. Kuyper discussed this with Gunning. Gunning opposed Smith's distinction as mistaking the relation between the natural and the spiritual (Mietus 235-36). It was following this meeting in Brighton that Kuyper suffered one of his two nervous breakdowns.

²⁰ Abraham Kuyper, *Het Modernisme: een Fata morgana op Christelijk gebied*, (Amsterdam, H. de Hoogh, 1871). [<http://www.neocalvinisme.nl/ak/broch/akfatam.html>]. The term 'Fata Morgana' was likely derived from Gunning (*Blikken* I, 226; II, x).

In 1878, Kuyper had a serious disagreement with Gunning. Gunning denied Biblical infallibility; he said that the stories of Christ's birth were pious legends, mythological accounts of basic ideas about man as the image bearer of God. Kuyper attacked Gunning's ideas in various articles. Gunning thought that Kuyper had misunderstood his position as a kind of modernism (Mietus, 215-217).

Although Kuyper had praised Baader's opposition to dualism, he later criticized Baader for not maintaining a dualism between body (matter) and (spirit). In 1888, Kuyper said that the denial of this dualism leads to pantheism.²¹ Yet in his *Lectures on Calvinism* (1898), Kuyper retained the nondualistic idea of the heart as the center of man's existence.²²

Although Mietus does not mention him, these theosophical ideas are also found in the Christian philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977).²³ Dooyeweerd speaks of God's creation Wisdom (*Schepperswijsheid*)²⁴, and of how God expressed His image in

²¹ Abraham Kuyper: *Het Calvinisme en de kunst: rede bij de overdracht van het rectoraat der Vrije Universiteit op 20 October, 1888*, (Amsterdam: J.A. Wormser, 1888), at 10, 61 fn19, and 72 fn65. Dooyeweerd later criticized Kuyper for this scholastic dualism (see note 49 below).

²² Abraham Kuyper: *Lectures on Calvinism: The Stone Lectures of 1898*, online at [http://www.kuyper.org/main/publish/books_essays/article_17.shtml?page=1]. At p. 20, which Dooyeweerd later cites with approval, Kuyper refers to our heart as:

...that point in our consciousness in which our life is still undivided and lies comprehended in its unity—not in the spreading vines but in the root from which the vines spring. This point, of course, lies in the antithesis between all that is finite in our human life and the infinite that lies beyond it. Here alone we find the common source from which the different streams of our human life spring and separate themselves. Personally it is our repeated experience that in the depths of our hearts, at the point where we disclose ourselves to the Eternal One, all the rays of our life converge as in one focus...

²³ J. Glenn Friesen, "Imagination, Image of God and Wisdom of God: Theosophical themes in Dooyeweerd's philosophy," (2006), online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Imagination.html>].

²⁴ See Dooyeweerd's Second Response to Curators, 24, online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Response2.html>].['Curators']. Also *WdW* II, 490 ['*God's Schepperswijsheid*'].

man, who in turn then expresses his supratemporal selfhood in the world. Like Gunning and Baader, Dooyeweerd uses the terms ‘expression’ [*uitdrukking*] and ‘revelation’ [*openbaring*] synonymously.²⁵ Dooyeweerd specifically relates being created in the image of God with man’s being able to express his supratemporal selfhood within the temporal.²⁶ The temporal world is concentrated in man. It therefore fell with man, and it needs to be redeemed by man as he participates in Christ, the New Root. Like Gunning, Dooyeweerd also speaks about man recovering the powers of God in creation.²⁷ and of ,spiritualizing [*doorgeestlijking*] the temporal world.²⁸

²⁵ *NC II*, 307. See also *Curators*, 26, 27. Dooyeweerd refers to “temporal revelations of the heart.”

²⁶ Dooyeweerd says that we are the *expression* of God's image (*NC I*, 55), and that we in turn *express* our selfhood in the coherence of our cosmic (temporal) functions (*WdW I*, 6; *NC I*, 4). And see *In the Twilight of Western Thought* (Nutley: Craig Press, 1968), where Dooyeweerd says at p. 189:

Just as God is the absolute Origin of all that exists outside of Himself, so He created man as a being, in whom the entire diversity of aspects and faculties of the temporal world is concentrated within the religious center of his existence, which we call our I, and which the Holy Scripture calls our *heart*, in a pregnant, religious sense. As the central seat of the image of God, the human selfhood was endowed with the innate religious impulse to concentrate his whole temporal life and the whole temporal world upon the service of love to God

²⁷ Herman Dooyeweerd: *Roots of Western Culture* (Toronto: Wedge, 1979), at 30: “The powers and potential which God had enclosed within creation were to be disclosed by man in his service of love to God and neighbour.” And in his 1946 *Encyclopedia of Legal Science*, online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Encyclopedia.html>], Dooyeweerd says at p. 35:

Man's task was to lead the unfolding process in the temporal cosmos in such a harmonious way, that in each law-sphere, the supratemporal religious fullness of meaning of human existence would completely shine through [*doorlichten*], and that in each meaning-side of reality, the fullness of meaning in its own meaning-tone would be completely reflected.

²⁸ Herman Dooyeweerd: “Het juridisch causaliteitsprobleem in it licht der wetsidee,” *Anti-revolutionaire Staatkunde 2* (1928) 21-124 [‘Causaliteitsprobleem’], at 61:

De “ontsluiting der anticipatiesferen,” als actieve “door-geestelijking” van de wetskringen, is een religieus thema in de Calvinistische levens- en

Dooyeweerd obtained some of his key ideas from Kuyper, so he was indirectly also influenced by Gunning (and Baader). Indeed, Dooyeweerd's central idea of the supratemporal heart, which expresses itself in the body, man's temporal mantle of functions [*functiemantel*], is an idea that can be traced back to Baader.

But there were other ways that Dooyeweerd obtained knowledge of Baader's Christian theosophy. There was a renaissance of interest in Baader in the 1920's, just when Dooyeweerd was formulating his philosophy.²⁹ Othmar Spann's *Herdflamme* series of books included a volume on Baader. Dooyeweerd cross-referenced a notation to Baader in one of the books that he owned. Dooyeweerd also learned of Baader's ideas through A.H. de Hartog's book *Uren met Boehme*. That book had been favourably reviewed in *Opbouw*, a journal to which Dooyeweerd contributed, and of which Vollenhoven was the editor. De Hartog refers there to Baader, as well as to Baader's student, Julius Hamberger, whom Gunning also cites (Mietus 77, 87). I believe that Gunning, together with other works by and about Baader that also became available in the 1920's, are the sources of Dooyeweerd's Ideas of cosmic time and of the supratemporal heart. Dooyeweerd's three transcendental Ideas relate to eternity (God as Origin or *Arché*), the supratemporal *aevum* (the Idea of Totality), and to cosmic time (the Idea of temporal

wereldbeschouwing, een thema, dat zijn hoogste spanning verkrijgt door de onmetelijke kracht der in universeelen zin genomen allesbeheerschende praedestinatiededachte. Overal, in alle wetskringen moet de religieuze zin doordringen en den zin der wetsgedachte "voleindigen," al wordt in deze zondige bedeeeling dit ideaal nimmer vervuld, tenzij dan door Christus!

[The "unfolding of the anticipatory spheres," as an active "in-spiration" [lit. "spiritualizing-through"] of the law-spheres, is a religious theme in the Calvinistic life and worldview, a theme that reaches its highest tension through the immeasurable power of the all-ruling idea of predestination, taken in its universal meaning. Religious meaning must penetrate everywhere, in all law-spheres, and it must "complete" the meaning of the law-idea, although in this sinful dispensation this ideal is never fulfilled, except through Christ!]

²⁹ See J. Glenn Friesen: "Dooyeweerd, Spann, and the Philosophy of Totality," *Philosophia Reformata* 70 (2005) 2-22, online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Totality.html>] ['Totality'].

coherence). These different levels of time are found in Baader and in Gunning.³⁰ I am not aware of any other source available to Dooyeweerd at the time he developed his philosophy.³¹

And in the 1920's, there was also a revival of interest in Gunning. Mietus points out that in 1920, the article "Prof. Gunning als wijsgeerig denker" appeared in the periodical *Stemmen des Tijds*.³² It describes Gunning's theosophy, and his view that faith is the ground of all true science. True knowledge arises in man's heart, the center of his entire existence. Dooyeweerd must have been aware of that article. The journal discussed topics in which he was interested, and the editors included many people whom he knew, such as W.J. Aalders, A. Anema, H. Bavinck, H. Colijn, P.A. Diepenhorst and others. And in 1922, two years after this article, Vollenhoven contributed one of his first articles to this journal. In 1926 he published a second article in the same journal.³³

³⁰ See Mietus, 104, 155 regarding the distinction between the earthly and the heavenly world. There is also the realm of the subtemporal, the infernal. Kuyper makes use of this idea in relation to aesthetics (See J. Glenn Friesen: "The Mystical Dooyeweerd Once Again: Kuyper's Use of Franz von Baader," *Ars Disputandi* 3 (2003) [<http://www.arsdisputandi.org/publish/articles/000130/index.html>] ['Kuyper and Baader']). Dooyeweerd distinguishes between the heavenly and the earthly. The heavenly is the realm of the supratemporal. The earthly is the realm of cosmic time. See *NC II*, 53 fn1, 549, 559, 593 ("Man transcends the 'earthly' cosmos in all its aspects").

³¹ Dooyeweerd opposed Heidegger's view of time. See *NC II*, 527-531. Dooyeweerd's own copy of *Sein und Zeit* contains many marginal notes criticizing Heidegger. Heidegger does not agree with a distinction between eternity, *aevum* and cosmic time, but instead he reduces everything to the temporal. This may be consistent with Vollenhoven's temporalized view of man, but it is entirely inconsistent with Dooyeweerd's insistence on supratemporality, an idea also found in Gunning and Baader.

³² Mietus, 27, referring to O. Norel: "Prof. Gunning als wijsgeerig denker," *Stemmen des Tijds: Maandschrift voor Christendom en Cultuur* 9 (1920) 69-80; 139-160 ['Norel']. Norel also refers to De Hartog's book *Uren met Boehme*.

³³ D.H.Th. Vollenhoven: "Eenige methodologische opmerkingen aangaande Dr. T. Hoekstra's *Geschiedenis der Philosophie I*," *Stemmen des Tijds: Maandschrift voor Christendom en Cultuur* 11 (1921-22), 293-301. And "Enkele Grondlijnen der Kentheorie," *Stemmen des Tijds: Maandschrift voor Christendom en Cultuur* 15 (1926), 380-401.

In 1929, Gunning's major work, *Blikken in de Openbaring*, was republished. Both Norel's 1920 article and *Blikken* contain many ideas that are later found in Dooyeweerd, such as:

(1) Gunning's idea of a Christian religious thought, a Christian science. Mietus says that Gunning discovered this idea in 1856 in a work by F. Fabri, a student of E.A. von Schaden, the publisher of Baader's diaries (Mietus 65, 198; *Blikken* I, 1, 40—"gelovige wetenschap"; Norel 159). Chantepie de la Saussaye also helped Gunning to develop this idea (Mietus 52, 60).

(2) Our knowledge depends on faith. Faith is the ground of all true science, and it gives certainty to knowledge (Norel 71; *Blikken* I, 218; II, xii).

(3) We must theoretically "give an account" of this knowledge (*Blikken* I, 23, 230).³⁴

(4) We are not to fear theoretical critique, but we should engage in it in a Christian way. Gunning even uses the term 'New Critique,' a term that Dooyeweerd later used to describe his own philosophy (*Blikken*, I, 7, 'een nieuwe kritiek, een nieuwe wijsbegeerte'). Like Baader before him, and Dooyeweerd after him, Gunning turned Kant's arguments against Kant's own philosophy.

(5) The heart is "the center of man's existence"; man is not to be understood in any dualistic way, but as a unity in the wholeness of his existence.³⁵ Gunning (like Baader), even uses the idea of white light refracted through a prism to refer to an existence above

³⁴ Cf. Dooyeweerd: *WdW* I, 49-51; *NC* I, 83; II, 579. In "Causaliteitsprobleem," he says,

To the question, "How is knowledge of the law-spheres possible?" the answer is: by the deeper divine coherence of all law-spheres and subject functions, of which only the law-Idea "gives an account" (the *logon didonai* in the Platonic meaning).

³⁵ At p. 76, Norel says,

Verstand en hart zijn nooit in de werkelijkheid, slechts in het afgetrokkene van elkander te scheiden. En dan is het hart het diepste van 's menschen wezen, het centrum van zijn geestelijk bestaan. "De bronnen des levens, en dus ook van het verstand, dat een onderdeel van het geheel des levens is, liggen in het hart.

time and space, shown especially to us in Christ's glorified body (Norel 71, 75; *Blikken* II, 235)³⁶.

(6) The Holy Spirit works in our hearts (*Blikken* III, 112).³⁷

(7) Our worldview is determined by our spiritual direction (Norel 72; *Blikken* I, 355; II, v, “*christelijke Gods-en wereldbeschouwing*”; III, v).

(8) True knowledge is from the center to the periphery (Norel 71).³⁸

(9) The rejection of autonomy of thought (*onafhankelijk denken, autonomie*)—the idea that “I think” is the basis of our existence. Autonomy is the *proton pseudos*, the primordial lie (Norel 72; Mietus 157, *Blikken* I, 26).³⁹

³⁶ In *Blikken* II, 235, Gunning says:

In Zijn [Christus'] verheerlijking is gegrond een toestand, waarin de Idee en de krachten der lichamelijke geheel met elkaar verzoend zijn, de laatste geheel tot openbaringswerktuig der eerste dienen, gelijk het licht onafgebroken en geheel door het kristal heen schijnt. Een eeuwig, boven tijd en ruimte verheven bestaan. Of, zoo men wil, er is een hogere tijd dáár, het zaligheden der eeuwigheid.

³⁷ Dooyeweerd's 1964 Lecture.

³⁸ “Niet door de veelheid tot de eenheid, maar door de eenheid tot de veelheid.” At p. 71, Norel contrasts theosophy, which starts from above, with those views of knowledge that start from below and try to obtain universals from things:

Daarentegen gaat de *theosophie* van God, den in Christus geopenbaarden, aan het hart bekend geworden God, als van het scheppend beginsel van alle dingen uit. Van deze hoogte dealt zij tot het lagere af en in Gods word vindt zij derhalve de verklaring der wereld. Met blijdschap stelt zij het geloof tot *grond* van alle waarachtige wetenschap

For Dooyeweerd, philosophy is directed to a supratemporal Totality, which individuates in time. He opposes beginning with things and then attempting to abstract properties from those things. See my article ‘Totality.’ In Dooyeweerd's 1964 lecture, he deals with the relation between religious center and temporal periphery. And in his 1946 *Encyclopedia of Legal Science*, he relates Ideas to the center and concepts to the periphery. We can obtain Ideas that transcend temporal knowledge only by means of our supratemporal selfhood.

³⁹ Norel 72-73, 78, 151 (“Het wezen der zonde is de hoogmoed des menschen die zich intellectualistisch op zich zelf stelt.” Mietus 157 (absolutizing of reason). *Blikken* I, 26. Dooyeweerd: *NC I*, 561-63.

(10) Our thought also requires redemption, an inner reformation (Norel 78; *Blikken I*, xiv).⁴⁰

(11) Our temporal knowledge must find rest in the Eternal, in the living God (*Blikken I*, 3, citing Augustine; III, 115).⁴¹

(12) Created nature is fallen; it must be dominated (*beheerst*) and made spiritual (*vergeestelijkt*) by man (Norel 139, 148).⁴²

(13) The rejection of naïve realism (Norel 73)⁴³

(14) Opposition to pantheism. Creation is “in God.”⁴⁴ This is not pantheism, but might be regarded as panentheism.⁴⁵

There may also be some differences between Dooyeweerd and Gunning. If by ‘ethical,’ Gunning means that man is the lord of nature, then this corresponds with Dooyeweerd’s

⁴⁰ See Dooyeweerd *WdWI*, 132; *NC II*, 563.

⁴¹ See Dooyeweerd *NC I*, 11.

⁴² Norel 139, and 148: “In de verheerlijking der schepping zal de geest dus de natuur volkomen doordringen.” Cf. Dooyeweerd’s view of ‘*doorgeestelijking*,’ discussed above.

⁴³ See Dooyeweerd *NC I*, 43.

⁴⁴ Norel, 140, 147. Instead of pantheism, the emphasis is on what might be called panentheism: “*in God is de grond der wereld*”—Gods wezen gaat niet op in het grond-der-wereld-zijn.” See also the references above.

⁴⁵ *Blikken I*, 35, 44, 198, 301; III, 11, 29, 142. Dooyeweerd also emphasizes that creation is “from, through and to” God as Origin, (*NC I*, 9, 102). Dooyeweerd criticizes those views of *creatio ex nihilo* that suppose ‘nothingness’ to be outside of God:

“But it is well known that the words *ex nihilo* have turned out to be not entirely harmless in Augustine’s theological exposition of the doctrine of creation, since they foster the idea that nothingness would be a second origin of creaturely being bringing about a metaphysical defect in the latter.” (“Cornelius Van Til and the Transcendental Critique of Theoretical Thought,” *Jerusalem and Athens*, p. 460, fn15).

For Dooyeweerd, the boundary between God and creation is one of *dependence* of creation on God (See Curators).

view of the centrality of man in relation to the temporal world.⁴⁶ But frequently Gunning relates the ethical to the idea of personality and freedom. Dooyeweerd seems to regard such an emphasis on freedom as related to the humanistic Ground-Motive.⁴⁷ Gunning sometimes speaks of transcendental realism. Dooyeweerd initially accepted, but later criticized that view.⁴⁸

Was Dooyeweerd aware of Gunning's influence on Kuyper? Dooyeweerd may have learned about this during his work at the Kuyper Institute until 1926. Did Dooyeweerd use Kuyper's writings to advance a theosophical tradition that he did not dare to publicly acknowledge? In his 1964 lecture to the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy, Dooyeweerd says that even Kuyper could not publicly acknowledge some ideas: "What drove Kuyper, what did he really envisage? And what has he not said? What could he probably also not have been able to say?" But it is also possible that Dooyeweerd formed his ideas of cosmic time and of the supratemporal selfhood based on his reading of Gunning, Othmar Spann, A.H. de Hartog and Baader, and that he then noted parallels with Kuyper, but that he himself was unaware of the inner connection of Christian theosophy with that line of thought in Kuyper that he regarded as genuinely reformational.⁴⁹

But why did Dooyeweerd not disclose the influence of Gunning and Baader? First, Dooyeweerd did not acknowledge all his sources. This is clear from the investigation by the Curators of the Free University. As an example, he did not acknowledge Max

⁴⁶ Norel, 154. Cf. Dooyeweerd: "But man is created after the image of God, as the lord of the "earthly" temporal world" (NC III, 88).

⁴⁷ When Dooyeweerd was interviewed by Magnus Verbrugge in 1974, he hesitated to agree with Verbrugge as to the importance of personality and freedom.

⁴⁸ See Dooyeweerd's unpublished article from 1922 and 1926, "Een kritisch-methodologische onderzoeking naar Kelsen's normative rechtsbeschouwing." (excerpts in Verburg 34ff). In that article he defends critical realism.

⁴⁹ Herman Dooyeweerd: "Kuyper's Wetenschapsleer," *Philosophia Reformata* 4 (1939), 193-232. I believe that Kuyper's "reformational line," as opposed to his scholastic line of thought, is really theosophical, and is based on Kuyper's influence by Gunning and Baader.

Scheler as his source for the idea that animals are *ek-statically* absorbed by time.⁵⁰ And he did not acknowledge Max Wundt as the source for his ideas on *enkapsis*.⁵¹ With respect to Gunning, Dooyeweerd was aware of the controversy regarding his ethical theology, and that might have been a sufficient reason for him not to acknowledge his influence.

This meticulously researched dissertation should encourage reformational philosophers to further investigate Gunning's theology, which Mietus recommends as a truly orthodox theology with continued relevance for today. And it should encourage a comparison of Gunning's Christian theosophy with the reformational ideas of both Abraham Kuyper and Herman Dooyeweerd.

J. Glenn Friesen

⁵⁰ Dooyeweerd does not acknowledge Scheler as the source for this idea at *WdW* II, 415, *NC* II, 479-80. Dooyeweerd only acknowledged this source in his 1961 article, "De Taak ener Wijsgerige Anthropologie," 26 *Philosophia Reformata* (1961) 35-58, at 48.

⁵¹ See my discussion of this point in "Individuality Structures and Enkapsis: Individuation from out of Totality in Dooyeweerd and German Idealism," online at [<http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Enkapsis.html>] ['Enkapsis'].