LYDIA JAEGGER AND HERMAN DOOYEWERD: DIALOGUES ON THE FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN SCHOLARSHIP

Author: Renato Coletto
Affiliation: 1School of Philosophy, North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus
Correspondence to: Renato Coletto
Email: Renato.coletto@nwu.ac.za
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This article introduces and discusses Lydia Jaeger’s dialogue with and critical evaluation of a few aspects of Dooyeweerd’s philosophy. From her critical realist position, Jaeger evaluates Dooyeweerd’s rejection of the ‘Logos-speculation’ and his definitions of truth. As he deviates from the Christian epistemological tradition referring to the ‘correspondence between thought and reality’, Jaeger argues that he fails to connect subject and object sufficiently. I argue that in Dooyeweerd’s ontology subject and object are thoroughly interwoven by the law-order. I also question Jaeger’s critique that, in his epistemology, Dooyeweerd doesn’t make sufficient use of biblical resources and is too inclined towards idealism. I suggest that Jaeger’s contentions could be re-considered and that a more positive approach to reformational philosophy may open new avenues for her own research.

Key words: Christian philosophy and scholarship, Lydia Jaeger, Herman Dooyeweerd, Critical realism, Logos doctrine/speculation, Correspondence theory of truth, Reformational and Scholastic attitudes in philosophy

Hierdie artikel is ‘n inleiding in, en bespreking van Lydia Jaeger se dialoog met, en kritiese evaluerings van enkele aspekte van Dooyeweerd se filosofie. Jaeger evalueer Dooyeweerd se verwerpings van die ‘Logos-spekulasie’ en sy definisies van waarheid vanuit haar krities-realistiese posisie. Omdat hy van die christelik epistemologiese tradisie afwyk, laasgenoemde verwysende na die ‘korrespondensie tussen denke en realiteit’, argumenteer Jaeger dat hy nie daarin slaag om subjek en objek genoegsaam met mekaar te verbind nie. Ek argumenteer dat Dooyeweerd se epistemologie subjek en objek deeglik met mekaar verweef deur middel van die wetsorde. Ek bespreek ook Jaeger se bewerings dat, in sy filosofie, Dooyeweerd nie genoegsaam gebruik maak van bybelse bronne nie en dat hy geneig is tot idealisme. Ek suggereer dat Jaeger se bewerings herbedink behoort te word en dat ‘n meer positiewe benadering tot Reformatoriese filosofie nuwe weë ook vir haar eie navorsing kan oopmaak.

Sleutelwoorde: Christelike filosofie, Lydia Jaeger, Herman Dooyeweerd, Kritiese realisme, Logosleer/-spekulasie, Korrespondensie waarheidsteorie, Reformatoriese en Skolastiese benaderings tot die filosofie
INTRODUCTION

Lydia Jaeger is an Evangelical philosopher of science, with specialisations in theology, philosophy and physics. She is a prolific author who writes in several languages and has been associated with several universities in Germany, France and England. She is at present also Dean of the Biblical Institute of Nogent-sur-Marne, near Paris. As I regard myself too as an Evangelical and I lecture in philosophy of science, I was immediately interested in her work. We are both well-acquainted with the neo-Calvinist 1 tradition of Kuyper, Vollenhoven, Dooyeweerd, Van Til (in South Africa also Steker, in France also Lecerf). While I lean more on the Dooyeweerdian side, I had the impression that she leans more on the Van Tilian side. But then she clearly stated that, as far as she is concerned, she ‘takes inspiration from both’ these giants of the Kuyperian tradition.2

Given this background, when I came across an essay3 of hers dedicated to Dooyeweerd’s philosophy, I was somehow surprised to find that it harbours a rather radical critique of Dooyeweerd’s position. In that text, in fact, she advances several objections against Dooyeweerd’s epistemology and ontology. These objections are rather fundamental and seem to leave little hope for further dialogue. They seem to parallel Blocher’s trenchant verdict on several aspects of Dooyeweerd’s epistemology: ‘I have had to conclude that he is wrong’ (Blocher, 2010:227). Nevertheless, Jaeger begins her essay by saying that her critique is ‘too close’ to the Logos doctrine, and that Dooyeweerd’s philosophy and concludes by pointing out several areas of agreement between herself and Dooyeweerd (2012:309-310). I am therefore encouraged to think that my present ‘ecumenical’ exercise will not be perceived as irrelevant.

In this article, I will reply to Jaeger’s essay by trying to argue that her contentions against the Dutch-reformed philosopher should be re-considered. On the one hand, in my opinion, Dooyeweerd’s philosophy is closer than she may think to several themes, concerns and results that she pursues and develops in her own writings. On the other hand I will also deliver a few criticisms. My sole purpose of suggesting that a reformational alternative might fit better with a/her Christian approach. In the next section, however, the first step is to introduce her epistemological convictions and her critiques of Dooyeweerd’s philosophy.

Jaeger’s theses and contentions

Jaeger’s epistemological position is rooted in the Christian tradition, in what she calls the ‘traditional Christian theory of knowledge’ (Jaeger, 2012:309). Her conception is based on the idea associated on the doctrine of the Logos, the personified self of the Trinity. According to Jaeger, this doctrine excludes all nominalist and idealist views and invites to a (moderate) form of realism. Jaeger’s epistemology, therefore, is a realist one, which she articulates through her conception, quite popular in Christian circles, can be defined as critical realism. From that point of view, the object of knowledge is not isolated from the knowing subject: the two are ‘tuned’ to each other.

The Logos doctrine allows overcoming a traditional problem of classical realism, the problem of connecting the subject and the object. It is not always clear, in fact, that or how the two should be related to each other, in other words why/how the object should be open to human knowledge. On this junction the doctrine of the Logos plays an essential role. The human subject, created in God’s image, can recognize in the object a creature that is known by the Logos. As she writes: ‘the correspondence between (…) knowing person and world to be known is granted by the double presence of the Logos’. (Ibid: 309). The Logos is ‘present’ to both of them.

The knowing subject too has a double connection to the Logos: true thought is in reality, given that the Logos is mediated between thought and object but also between thought and Thought (human and divine thought – Ibid: 308-309). There are no ‘brute facts’ in the cosmos, they are always pre-known and pre-understood by the Logos before it corresponds to divine thought. As Van Til used to say, it is a matter of ‘thinking God’s thoughts after Him’.

The Logos is the ordering principle of the universe, from which all things derive. The Bible, says Jaeger, affirms this truth in the Prologue of the Gospel of John. Several Greek philosophers recognised the Logos as the rational order of the cosmos. Christians should not shy away from this recognition: ‘all truth is God’s truth’, even when it is proclaimed by pagans (Ibid: 307).

Conversely, when John wrote about the Logos [in the Prologue to his Gospel], he knew that the idea was already present in the Greek world and that it had connotations that were not exactly biblical. Nevertheless, his Prologue creates a bridge between the Old Testament and Greek culture (Ibid: 305).

These are Jaeger’s theses briefly summarized. Her critiques against Dooyeweerd’s philosophy are the following.

1. Dooyeweerd rejects what he calls the ‘Logos-speculation’ on the basis that there are very unsatisfactory versions of the doctrine of the Logos (e.g. in Clement, Origens, Tertullian). Yet the cost of this rejection is that he cannot properly connect to the object. In Dooyeweerd’s philosophy the Logos is substituted by the (naive experience of the) self (Ibid: 309). The previous allegation is stated from a different angle:

Jaeger is supported in her (moderate realist) position by several regained giants of the past, not only Kuyper but also Bavink and Wolter. It might be objected, however, that Jaeger finds herself also in the company of Thomas Aquinas and other Scholastic authors. In addition, the reformed theologian Geerhardus Vos (1980:478-484) expressed clear reservations concerning critical realism and, even more interesting, Van Til himself articulated a few perplexities concerning the use of the Logos doctrine in Bavink’s epistemology (Van Til, 1975:94-99). To complicate the picture even further, one might add that both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven did initially accept a form of critical realism similar to Kuyper’s and equally informed by ‘trinitarian’ themes (cf. Til, 2011:192-199).

Only at a later stage they found it un-satisfactory and decided to opt for an alternative (i.e. reformational) solution.

But apart from the supporters and detractors of critical realism and the Logos doctrine, Jaeger recognises that a similar connection is envisaged in his conception of naive realism. When it comes to theoretical thought, the situation is definitely worse: there Dooyeweerd introduces an antithesis, an opposition between subject and object. True, the antithesis is followed by a synthetic attitude of thought which is characterised by an antithesis. In addition, the self is again the ‘hidden player’ making possible (after a theoretical antithesis is intentionally set up) the synthesis between the logical aspect of the set of thought and the non-logical aspects of the object of scientific investigation (Dooyeweerd, 1984, 1.45). Dooyeweerd then fails, then to see the direct correspondence between subject (or thought) and object. Furthermore, does he not anchor his epistemology to the subject, thus creating a rather subject-ivist, or idealist type of approach, reminiscent of Kant and Husserl? This is how I understand Jaeger’s arguments on this topic.

The theoretical attitude of thought

Concerning the theoretical attitude of thought (in which an ‘antithesis’ is established) I would say that the comparison proposed by Jaeger is not completely linear. While in the Logos approach the connection to be explained is the correspondence of thought and facts, in Dooyeweerd this is not the case.
When Dooyeweerd speaks of antithesis, it is not an antithesis between a subject and an object, regarding a logical aspect of our act of thought as opposite to the non-logical aspects of reality (Dooyeweerd, 1948:3). His problem is the functioning of theoretical thought. The antithesis concerns the laborious process of theorizing, the effort which we put in to obtain theoretical knowledge. Subjects and objects may be thoroughly interwoven by the Logos, yet this does not mean that we have instant understanding of concrete reality and its law. Dooyeweerd wanted to clarify the false assumptions of scientific investigation, the sense of ‘opposition’ or resistance experienced in the process of analysis.

Now, Dooyeweerd’s account of theoretical thought can sound more or less convincing, plausible or accurate. But it does not crucially depend on the idea of opposition. For example, Strauss has re-phrased and simplified the whole theory by focusing on the idea of abstraction. (Modal) abstraction is the ‘heart’ of theoretical thought and it includes both analysis and synthesis (definition and distinction) as its two ‘legs’. Synthesis is then not the counterpart of opposition but of distinction (i.e. analysis - Strauss, 2009:13 ff., 365-368). In this re-construction of Dooyeweerd’s theory, the theoretical ‘opposition’ between aspects is no longer necessary. Could this open new avenues of dialogue between Kuyperian scholars and circles?

While keeping this hope, we need to return to my previous remark that Jaeger has not responded to a fundamental objection concerning his definition of the Logos. That the Logos speculation implies a logic-ization of the created order. In his commentary on Dooyeweerd’s philosophy, Troost writes: ‘what one could call ‘revolution’, even though the secular versions of it do not recognize the ‘object’ only in naive thought, while in theoretical thought it is more in line with the Christian tradition and so forth. Yet she does not show philosophically that and how this turning or correspondence occurs, is or possible.

Does this logicization affect Jaeger’s discourse as well? For example, the emphasis on the law (i.e. actively) in the first six modalities: they have four paws and so forth. Yet she does not show philosophically that and how this turning or correspondence occurs, is or possible.

4 Dooyeweerd (1948: 1-55) argues that, in his transcendental critique, Kant committed precisely the fallacy of confusing the ‘transcendental logical ego’ (logical aspect) with the self that directs the ego. As a result, the logical aspect of the act of thought in theoretical thought is not identical with the logical aspect of the act of thought. Consequently, the true character of theoretical thought and its true starting point have remained hidden, and the autonomy of theoretical reason has been accepted as a truism.

5 Strauss’ ‘reconstruction’ uses materials provided by Dooyeweerd himself, as the latter does sometimes characterize theoretical thought in terms of abstraction (ibid. 1948: 42; 1956: 101, though he may not necessarily abandon the idea of ‘opposition’).

According to Dooyeweerd, all entities function in all modal aspects, the mathematical objects or objects of thought use Clousier’s language: passively or actively - Clousier, 2005: 50). Cat function as subjects (i.e. actively) in the first six modalities: they have four paws (numerical aspect), when they are born they have a small size (spatial), then they learn to move around (kinematic), they get stronger (physical) and eventually grow older (biotic); and their sight is not sharp at night (sensory). In the subsequent aspects of the cat function passively, they have not got any conceptual concepts, but they can be analysed conceptually. They do not give names to their kittens but they get names. They do not see anybody but they may belong to someone, thus functioning in the juridical modal aspect. They have subjective functions as objects (passively) are always present, but they might not always be actualised. Actualisation occurs through a subject. For example, the photographs of the lunar environment provided by satellites allow our appreciation of the beauty of those landscapes. The potential for aesthetic admiration was always present, not only for the subject but also for the subject by subjects. In other words the mentioned object-functions were latent but have been made patent (disclosed) by a subject.

At this point it is necessary to avoid the (wrong) impression that, in Dooyeweerd’s philosophy, the subject-object relation presents itself only in the logical or rational modal aspect. The subject-object relation presents itself in every and each modal aspect, and therefore is not only about knowledge. For example in the sensory aspect we can perceive an object or feel an emotion. In the physical aspect a subject can hit an object (for example kick a ball). In the ethical aspect a subject can love an object, for example one’s country or friends. This is made possible by the fact that objects and subjects function in the same modalities and are subjected to the same laws. Basically, then, we can say that objects and subjects are connected through the modalities in which they function. Troost (2012: 96) observes that this is not an external or superficial type of link between entities that have little or nothing in common. On the contrary, it is an internal link, as entities are qualified by specific modalities.7 The world does not only contain subjects and objects (as philosophers of science often assume), but is an ordered cosmos, in which objects and subjects are subjected to the law-for-creation, the structural modal order.

From this point of view, the very distinction between subject and object should be handled with care. Objects are never only objects: they are also subjects, at least in some the rational aspect has re-phrased and simplified the whole theory by focusing on the idea of abstraction. (Modal) abstraction is the ‘heart’ of theoretical thought and it includes both analysis and synthesis (definition and distinction) as its two ‘legs’. Synthesis is then not the counterpart of opposition but of distinction (i.e. analysis - Strauss, 2009:13 ff., 365-368). In this re-construction of Dooyeweerd’s theory, the theoretical ‘opposition’ between aspects is no longer necessary. Could this open new avenues of dialogue between Kuyperian scholars and circles?

7 In his commentary on Dooyeweerd’s philosophy, Troost writes: ‘we call the external world is to interfere with our human subjectivity, that the so-called subject-object split can be little more than a faulty material construction, an erroneous fantasy’ (ibid. 97).

In his opinion this idea of ‘law-conformity’ is required by the reformed culture of the Law’ (ibid. 241). One may agree or not with this specific proposal, but it is still a ‘correspondence-theory’ of knowledge and it is certainly not an idealist project, creating a gulf between knower and knowable.

According to Hart (1984:82-83), who blends in his ontology the positions of Dooyeweerd’s and Vollenhoven, the laws, the ‘nomic conditions’ are nothing else than the universals, that occupy such a strategic function. According to him, the ‘nomic conditions’ are not an idealist tradition. In the reformed tradition should leave no doubts concerning the fact that it is not an idealist tradition. In the reformed tradition concerning the fact that it is not an idealist tradition.

Connecting subject and object: the reformational tradition

The relevance of the law is a theme which is particularly prominent in Jaeger’s writings (cf. Jaeger, 2008, 2010a, 2010b). It might be that, on closer examination, she could find in reformational thought a ‘correspondence-theory of knowledge’ that she discerned as absent at present.8 In this tradition, admittedly, scientific truth or objectivity is not simply the result of a correspondence between thought and facts. However, Jaeger also gives alternative definitions of truth: as correspondence to the reality and world and ‘to be known’ (ibid. 309) or between b) ‘thought and reality’ (2012:307). This raises a question: to what precisely should our theories correspond to, within the world or reality? The reformed tradition suggests to create a correspondence between theory and (the conceptions or definitions of) the human subject of knowledge. The subject too is part of ‘reality’ and part of ‘the world’. From a reformational point of view, Stafleu suggests that scientific truth or objectivity should be re-defined as ‘correspondence to the law’ (Stafleu, 1987:241). In his opinion this idea of ‘law-conformity’ is required by the reformed conception of the law’ (ibid. 241). One may agree or not with this specific proposal, but it is still a ‘correspondence-theory’ of knowledge and it is certainly not an idealist project, creating a gulf between knower and knowable.

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Coming back to Dooyeweerd, there is one more difference between his thought and Jaeger’s. Dooyeweerd is a strict anti-realist. For Jaeger the biblical world-view suggests that the two must be (are always) ‘tuned’ to each other. From there she might argue that this is more suitable to promote the scientific enterprise. However, in his opinion, it constitutes an original position, an alternative inspired by the biblical revelation and rooted in the recognition of the law (cf. Hart, 1984:19 ff.). This ‘troll’ therefore is not a reformational one, but a doubt concerning the fact that it is not an idealist tradition. 8 I have in mind for example reformational scholars like Van Riessen and Stafleu. According to Stafleu the reformed (and reformational) conception of the law is the one that prevailed since the Christian ‘reformation’, even though the secular versions of it do not recognize the Origin of laws (Stafleu, 1987:239-241). Van Riessen observes how the recent reluctance to recognise the law, in several academic disciplines, is often due, on the religious level, to a refusal to recognize a law-giver (Van Riessen, 1995:55).
That no antithesis or disconnection between 'subject and object' is included in its all-sided coherence within the synthesis as to its intentional meaning with the modal direction of time and is dependent on the structural laws, in the first quotation above and the 'the modal conscience'. Jaeger's conception is also derived from the Scriptures, both from particular texts and from general themes. As far as themes are concerned, her epistemology is based on the theme of Creation, in particular on 'the distinction between creation and Creator' (Jaeger, 2012:306). And then of course she relies on the biblical texts dealing with the Logos: 'Now who might not be the best candidate for exegetical discussions?' Fortunately, in this case I can rely on a (Van Tilian) theologian (i.e. Oliphant, 2010:377-382) who objects to the use of the Logos doctrine in support of realist epistemology, and does so by way of biblical exegesis.

What type of knowledge does the Logos provide, according to the doctrine of the Gospel of John? Surely, it is a type of knowledge that all men share, knowledge that 'enlightens all men' (v. 9). Surely, it is knowledge that the Logos supplies since the creation of the world. According to Oliphant, however, it is not knowledge of 'objects' or 'facts'. It is rather the knowledge of God, of the Logos himself (Oliphant, 2010:387).

In this line with the verses in Romans 1, teaching that God is known by all human beings, although this type of knowledge is then, so to speak, repressed or removed. Obviously, these findings constitute a non-marginal blow to the use of the Logos doctrine in support of [critical] realism.

Yet is not the Logos also the rational order of the world? This was the understanding of the Greek readers of the Gospel of John, says Jaeger (2012:305), and the apostle would not have ignored and compromised upon general knowledge. In the word Logos he would have induced his readers to think of the cosmic rationality, and he did not write anything to prevent or counteract that understanding. Should we not conclude that in the doctrine of the Logos the biblical meaning and the `natural' understanding of its Greek readers contribute to a richer picture? Oliphant is rather clear-cut on this point:

The true meaning of the term, however, is not to be gleaned from a synthesis of its historical use and its biblical use. God infallibly inspires the use and its true meaning in the writing of his own word (Oliphant, 2010:377; fn. 57).

The Logos, therefore, says Oliphant (2010:388-389) by supplying the knowledge of God, supplies what Bavinck calls the principium essendi of epistemology, the source or foundation of knowledge. This principium is necessary, says Oliphant, but not sufficient. All this brings Oliphant (ibid:390) to the conclusion, which I gladly support, that the Christian scholar should stick to the principle of Sola Scriptura. Not in the sense that the Scripture is the only reference point for epistemology, but in the sense that the Scripture should have prominence over all other reference points shedding light on the matter. From this point of view, therefore, the Christian scholar, working in epistemology, should remain faithful primarily to the Scriptures, not to realism or to any other `conception traditionelle'.

This whole discussion is of course linked to the attitudes of accommodation and reformation in philosophy. Dooyeweerd himself in 1984, already concludes that Dooyeweerd's correspondence still does not declass his epistemology on biblical grounds. Yet, should one start counting the instances when he quotes Scholastic philosophy too as the result of a synthesis between Christian and pagan elements. Yet Jaeger, too, from her position as a 'Christian epistemologist', regards Dooyeweerd's philosophy, and sees it as a philosophy that aims to remain faithful primarily to the Scriptures, not to realism or to any other 'conception traditionelle'.

One may notice that in both definitions truth is regarded as a correspondence to modal dimensions (see the 'a priori structural laws' in the first quotation above and the 'the modal structure of the Gegenstand' in the second). In other words, the theme of 'correspondence to the law' emerges again and if the previous discussion is taken into account, it will become clear that no antithesis or disconnection between 'subject and object' is in view.

Dooyeweerd's epistemology is still one of correspondence. He opens his first quotation: that the theme of the Logos is 'thought and being' and takes belief to be 'intellectual assent'. Dooyeweerd (1984, 2:566) disagrees because Aquinas' solution relates knowledge and truth only to the intellect, to the logical aspect of knowing. For him knowledge (qua intellekt) is impossible, now he is engaged in semantics. In that way they involve the whole person in all his or her aspects (Dooyeweerd, 1984, 2:572).

Jaeger (2012:307, fn. 26) does report that she noticed Van Woudenberg's (2005:116-117) observation that Dooyeweerd's epistemology is still one of 'correspondence'. Yet she did not pursue that direction to find out where it may lead. She quickly concludes that Dooyeweerd's epistemology still does not create a direct contact between the human spirit and the world to know (ibid: 308). The simple fact that Dooyeweerd does not fully conform to the 'conception traditionelle' (or even to a specific 'formula') is considered sufficient to disclaim his proposals. The fact that Dooyeweerd dares criticizing Bavinck's realism seems to be regarded as a proof that he does not create a direct contact between the knower and the world (Jaeger, 2012:308, fn. 29). On this point, one has the impression that Jaeger is a bit too hasty in delivering her verdict.

In the next section we need to proceed to discuss her third allegation, concerning the relationship between Dooyeweerd's philosophy and Scripture. Philosophy and Scripture

Although recognizing that Dooyeweerd wants to erect his epistemology on biblical grounds, Jaeger (2012:307, fn. 24) observes that he does not engage in a deep interaction with the biblical text. Admittedly, Dooyeweerd usually refers to broad biblical themes, rather than to specific verses. In his opinion Christian scholarship cannot be derived from a few texts and fragments, but requires a historical and theological understanding of creation, fall and redemption. Ample use of biblical texts is sometimes even regarded with suspicion by Dooyeweerd. He once wrote about both Augustinian and Protestant

Scholastics that 'the more alien the foundation of their philosophy were to the Christian religion, the more copious... they became their appeals to the biblical texts' (Jaeger, 2012:30).

This remark is a somewhat 'classical' assessment of Dooyeweerd's use of Scripture. Yet, should one start counting the instances when he quotes or refers to specific biblical texts, one might be quite surprised by the abundance of scriptural references. In this regard it would mention in a few words the works of Western culture (1955b). For Dooyeweerd however biblical quotations do not have the function of constituting or proving philosophical arguments but to show an agreement between the philosophical or scientific 'building' and its (religious) `foundations' (Dooyeweerd, 2012:30).

In regard to this, I find it difficult to follow some of Jaeger's remarks concerning Dooyeweerd's understanding of this biblical theme. Firstly she claims that Dooyeweerd `was well aware that the distinction between Creator and creature is in an anthropological mode'. Nevertheless, her further explanation of this idea in footnote 24 (ibid:307) speaks of Dooyeweerd's insufficient distinction between Creator and (human) creature. Dooyeweerd himself states: 'the temporality of the super-temporal heart (a divinisation of the self)'. Nevertheless, in his footnote 25 (ibid: 307) Jaeger refers to Acts 28, 17 ('for we are also His offspring') to defend 'the continuity between God and humanity.'
After such declarations, what complaints could one address to Dooyeweerd, concerning syntheses or compromises?

One might consider that, probably, from Jaeger’s point of view, joining an established Christian tradition is a much more legitimate choice than joining secular traditions (like those initiated by Kant and Husserl). Yet this provides an opportunity to say that the Scholastic tradition in philosophy is deeply rooted in the pagan tradition. In certain respects, Scholasticism is as pagan as Humanism (it is true that Humanism too can be regarded as a re-embodiment of Christian and biblical themes). Humanism is not simply paganism: it passed through centuries of (synthesis-) Christianity, and it could be regarded as a by-product of this. 

15 The only clue given by Jaeger (Ibid: 310) about Dooyeweerd’s “idealism” is that his ontology may not be regarded as idealistic.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The dialogue between Jaeger and Dooyeweerd is a precious conversation on the very foundations of Christian science and scholarship. It is also part of a long standing dialogue between the different branches of the Kuyperian tradition. In some cases the distance between these circles might remain substantial, yet the attempts at dialogue and mutual understanding are necessary if the biblical authors are not afraid of corrupting the purity of their teaching by resorting to the categories utilised by Greek philosophers’ (Jaeger, 2012:307).

Jaeger’s essay is constructive, clear, and, from his own philosophy, it is fair to conclude that Dooyeweerd’s philosophy could be more positive and several of her critiques should be reconsidered. Admittedly, this exercise would imply some self-critique as well. But it would lead to a (re-)discovery of many and valuable resources, not only in Dooyeweerd’s philosophy but in the reformational tradition as well.

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