A Christian Theory of Social Institutions

Herman Dooyeweerd

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Preface

This book contains a translation of Herman Dooyeweerd's lectures on sociology delivered in 1946-47 at the Technical University of Delft in The Netherlands. These lectures were published in revised form in 1947 under the title Tien Voordrachten over Sociologie (Ten Lectures on Sociology). They were reprinted with minor corrections in 1962 under the title Grondproblemen der wijzigerij Sociologie (Fundamental Problems of Philosophical Sociology). None of these versions has previously been translated into English. The present translation is based upon the 1962 reprint.

The translation adheres as closely as possible to the original Dutch text. Certain inordinately long sentences and paragraphs have been broken up where such division did no violence to the continuity or meaning of the discussion. Minor typographical and grammatical errors in the original text have been silently corrected. Certain Dutch maxims and idioms with no English equivalent or parallel have been reduced to simple prose. A few parenthetical comments that provide incidental biographical or bibliographical information have been relegated to footnotes. Titles have been added to each of the lectures. In general, however, the translation has sought to preserve the structure, wording, and flavor of the original text and to convey the author's meaning clearly and accurately. The

translator, Dr. Magnus Verbrugge, has adopted the conventional translation of most of Dooyeweerd's technical terms and neologisms. On occasion, however, he has seen fit to offer a novel translation and has explained his reasons therefor in footnotes.

In this tract, Dooyeweerd presents his ideas and offers his criticisms tersely, at times even cryptically. He demands of his reader more than a passing knowledge both of his own philosophical system and parlance and of the tradition of sociological thought. It has thus seemed appropriate to add (1) a substantial introduction, which summarizes Dooyeweerd's activities and achievements and outlines the sources and contours of his social theory or philosophy; and (2) footnotes which furnish information on authors briefly mentioned in the text or which cite the reader to Dooyeweerd's more extensive discussion of a given point in his other writings.

This is the first of a number of Dooyeweerd's works to be translated and published under the auspices of The Herman Dooyeweerd Foundation. This Foundation was established in 1982 by Dooyeweerd's family for the purpose of making more of Dooyeweerd's writings available in English translation. The Foundation has already undertaken to translate Dooyeweerd's two-volume Encyclopedia of Legal Science, his three-volume Reformation and Scholasticism in Philosophy, as well as a number of his

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3. Herman Dooyeweerd, A New Critique of Theoretical Thought, D.H. Freeman and W.S. Young, trans. (Philadelphia: 1953, reprint 1969) is considered by most concerned parties to be the authoritative translation of Dooyeweerd's technical terms and neologisms since Dooyeweerd himself helped to edit and approved of this translation.

Professor Albert M. Wolters, a careful student of Dooyeweerd, has provided a glossary of the most frequently used technical terms in an Appendix to L. Kalibbeek, Contours of a Christian Philosophy: An Introduction to Herman Dooyeweerd's Thought, B. Zylstra and J. Zylstra, eds. (Toronto: 1965), pp. 346-354, reprinted with some revisions in C.T. McIntire, ed., The Legacy of Herman Dooyeweerd: Reflections on Critical Philosophy in the Christian Tradition (Lanham, MD: 1985), pp. 167-171. Professor Wolters has graciously permitted us to reproduce the revised version of this glossary in an appendix to the present volume.
shorter works and articles. While each of these translations will be published separately upon completion, all extant and forthcoming translations will ultimately be assembled and published as Dooyeweerd's Collected Works.

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Introduction

Biography of Dooyeweerd

Herman Dooyeweerd was born in Amsterdam in 1894, the child of Calvinist parents. In 1912 he matriculated as a law student in the Free University of Amsterdam, a Christian institution established in 1880. Five years later he took the doctorate in law. From 1918 to 1921 he worked in the Dutch Department of Labor as a legislative draftsman. From late 1921 to mid-1926 he served as assistant director of the newly organized Dr. Abraham Kuyper Foundation, a research and policy organ of the Anti-Revolutionary Party of The Netherlands. There he was responsible not only


2. Dooyeweerd's dissertation, ***De Ministerraad in Nederlandse Staatsrecht*** (The Cabinet in Dutch Constitutional Law) was written under the supervision of D.P.D. Fabius, a constitutional theorist.

3. The Foundation was established on the death of Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920), a brilliant Calvinist theologian, pastor, journalist, and politician. As theologian and pastor, Kuyper had articulated a rich systematic Calvinist theology, revitalized a grass-roots Calvinism in The Netherlands, and led the 1886 Separation (Scheiding) of the new reformed churches (Gereformeerde Kerken) from the old reformed church (Hervormde Kerk). As a politician and journalist, he had reorganized the Anti-Revolutionary political party and brought it to power, serving as Prime Minister of The Netherlands from 1901-1905. Throughout his career, Kuyper remained committed to applying
to address the immediate issues of policy that faced the Anti-Revolutionary Party, but also to elaborate the Calvinist principles of law, politics, and society upon which the Party had been established some 80 years before. It was in discharging this latter responsibility—a responsibility upon which he had himself insisted—that Doyeweerd began (1) to study systematically traditional Calvinist legal, political, and social theories; (2) to explore the structures and organization of a number of historical societies; and (3) to engage critically a wide range of present and past theories of law, politics, and society. His work in these four years culminated in five major articles, including a fifteen-part tract "In the Struggle for a Christian Politics" and an important monograph _Calvinism and Natural Law_.

In 1926 Dooyeweerd returned to his alma mater as a pro-

reformed beliefs to all walks of life. In that spirit, he had founded the Free University of Amsterdam in 1880, requiring in the University Constitution that all spheres of scholarship be imbued with Calvinist principles. In that spirit, he had also delivered his _Lectures on Calvinism_ at Princeton University in 1898, articulating basic Calvinist principles of religion, politics, law, science, and art. In the spirit also, Kuyper's followers (Colijn and Idenburg) had, on his death, developed the Dr. Abraham Kuyper Foundation to provide a forum for articulating Calvinist principles of law, politics, society, and economics and applying them to resolve specific issues of policy.


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Professor of legal philosophy, Dutch legal history, and encyclopedia of law. He retained this position until his retirement in 1965. For the first five or six years of his professorship, he shifted the focus of his research and publications from the broader issues of Calvinist political and social theory to intricate questions of legal doctrine and legal philosophy. In a series of brilliant articles, he analyzed, historically and philosophically, the intricate questions of juridical causality, fault, responsibility, rights, and sources of law. All along, however, he insisted upon viewing these legal questions, as well as questions of politics and society, in the context of a broader theory of the nature and destiny of man (anthropology), of being and order (ontology), and of knowledge and its sources (epistemology).

In the 1930s Dooyeweerd began to elaborate systematically and in detail these latter three philosophical theories and to show their importance for defining and resolving issues of law, political science, sociology, and many other sciences. He first articulated his views in The Crisis of Humanistic Political Theory in the Light of Calvinist Cosmology and Epistemology (1931). This work was quickly eclipsed by his path-breaking three volume work The Philosophy of the Law-Idea (1935-1936). While his articles of a decade before had made only rudimentary advances in traditional Calvinist teachings, the ideas and analysis set forth in these latter volumes were profound and original contributions, rooted in Calvinist thought. They remained at the center of Dooyeweerd’s philosophical system for the rest of his life. His work over the next forty years was, in many respects, an amplification and application of the seminal ideas developed in this formative period. He amplified his anthropology and his critique of traditional theories in a series of articles and reviews and then in a three volume work Reformation and

Scholasticism in Philosophy. He amplified his ontology and epistemology in several subsequent articles and in later editions and translations of his The Philosophy of the Law-Idea. At the same time, he resumed his detailed treatment of questions of law, politics, and society with which he had started his career. He systematized many of his concepts of law and politics and sharpened his earlier analysis of the history of legal and political theory, in his two volume work Encyclopedia of Legal Science. He also elaborated his social theory in a number of articles and reviews in the 1940s and 1950s. One of the most important of these works is his Ten Lectures of Sociology, which is translated in the present volume.

Doooyeweerd remained a profound and prolific scholar until his death in 1977. Over the course of his life, he published more than 200 books and articles, presided over numerous legal and philosophical societies and symposia, edited a variety of academic and popular publications, and lectured widely in Europe and North America. Though the novelty of his ideas, and the acuity of his critiques of others, often made Doooyeweerd’s work an object of controversy, he garnered respect and praise from adherents and antagonists alike. He was a premier Chris-


9. Id., Encyclopaedie der Rechtswetenschap (Amsterdam: 1946), 2 Vols. Doooyeweerd revised this early edition several times thereafter, but never published any of these revised editions.

10. An exhaustive bibliography of Doooyeweerd’s writings through 1960 is provided by C. Groen, “Publicaties van Dr. H. Doooyeweerd,” Perspectief: Festschrift van de Jongeren (1961), pp. 71-86, updated selectively in Kalsbeek, supra note 1, pp. 310ff. A comprehensive bibliography of Doooyeweerd’s writings, with only a few minor omissions, is provided in Hommes, supra note 1, pp. 126-148.

11. A contemporary Roman Catholic jurist, Professor G.E. Langemeyer of the University of Leiden, wrote that Doooyeweerd “has awakened an unusual flowering of philosophy in reformed circles . . . and can be called the most original philosopher Holland has ever produced, even Spinoza not excepted.” Quoted in Kalsbeek, supra note 1, p. 10. Giorgio Delvecchio, the great Italian neo-Kantian philosopher, regarded Doooyeweerd as “the most profound, in-
tian polymath who commands the attention of scholars in every discipline who seek to integrate faith and learning.

Having summarized, in the briefest of terms, the history of Dooyeweerd’s activities and achievements, I shall outline the developments of his social theory as it emerged out of his Calvinist beliefs and his broader philosophical system. His ultimate goal was to provide a philosophical account of the various institutions which comprise society. The analysis will pay particular attention to the analytical stages through which Dooyeweerd passed to develop this account.

The Development of Dooyeweerd’s Social Theory

1. Every social theory, Dooyeweerd argued, is inevitably founded upon certain religious beliefs. These beliefs shape one’s general understanding of the origin, nature, and purpose of societies and communities as a whole and of the various institutions that comprise them. They also provide general criteria to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate institutions and between appropriate and inappropriate relations among these institutions.

Already in his earliest years, Dooyeweerd isolated four traditional Calvinist beliefs which would henceforth remain the cornerstones of his social theory. Neither his emphasis upon these beliefs nor his characterization of them strayed far from the traditional formulations of John Calvin, Johannes Althusius, Herman Bavinck, and Abraham Kuyper. Dooyeweerd went beyond his predecessors, however, in moving these beliefs beyond the province of theological discourse. To be an effective foun-
dation for all theoretical work, including social theory, such beliefs had to be seen as integral parts of a broader Calvinist world-view. "Merely to rehearse Calvin's work historically . . . or to restrict its significance to theology," Dooyeweerd wrote in 1924, "is to cast doubt on the possibility of developing an independent Calvinist principle which will guide and dominate the development of our culture." A theory of society, like any other theory, must form part of and proceed out of a Calvinist world-view.

Although, in his early years, Dooyeweerd vacillated in his definition and description of these four beliefs, his general views admit of short summary: 12

(1) All social institutions, whether past or present, find their ultimate origin in creation. In creation, all things were separated "after their own kind" and vested with "the right to exist" and develop.

(2) God is the absolute sovereign over all creation, at its inception and in its unfolding. Through His word, He called creation into being. Through His providential plan, He guides its becoming. His sovereignty is absolute and constant: no creature and no activity is ever exempt from His authority.

(3) God's authority is a legal authority. He established creation and governs His creatures by law. Though God Himself is above law, and not bound by it, He promises covenant faithfulness to it. The laws of creation com-

municate the will of the Creator. They provide order and constancy, not chaos and indeterminacy. Because God’s sovereignty is absolute and constant, His law is comprehensive and continually obligates all creatures in all their activities. The laws of creation, therefore, assume a plurality of forms. Some govern the activity of inorganic and organic things. Others govern the multiple activities of man, such as his language and logic, his legal and social activities, or his moral functions. Still others govern the formation and function of human institutions, such as the family, church, or state.

(4) Under the laws of creation, each social institution has a “legal right” to exist alongside other individuals and institutions. It also has a “legal duty” to function in accordance with God’s creation ordinances and providential plan, to fulfill its task or calling in history. The laws of creation, therefore, make possible a plurality of social institutions or spheres, each with a measure of autonomy or sovereignty vis-à-vis all others. The sovereignty of any social sphere, however, is always limited by the sovereignty of co-existing spheres and limited to the task or function to which it is called. Moreover, this earthly sovereignty is subservient to the absolute sovereignty of God. It is delegated by God and remains ever dependent upon Him.

2. These four beliefs—in creation, God’s absolute sovereignty, creation ordinances, and sphere sovereignty—recur as a constant refrain in Dooyeweerd’s earlier writings on law, politics, and society. On the strength of these beliefs, he repeatedly defended the sovereign independence of the church, state, family, and various economic organizations. He also criticized at great length historical theories and polities that countenance the hegemony of church and state.

As Dooyeweerd sought to build a social theory on this foundation, however, he realized that these beliefs, as formulated, left critical questions unanswered. They did not provide specific criteria to identify the institutions that are
part of the created order. They did not define, in more than a general way, the nature and function of each of these institutions or the proper relationship among them. Though they insisted on a transcendental origin for all social institutions, these beliefs did little to describe the effect of such a pedigree. Without a greater degree of specificity, without being amplified in the form of tangible principles for society and polity, these Calvinist beliefs could easily be adduced, as they had been in the past, to rationalize any number of social forms. Their application in social theory was prone to submit to the demands of utility or political expediency.

In response to this problem of knowledge, this epistemological problem, Dooyeweerd began to develop a method of social theory. In his writings of the late 1920s and early 1930s he began to distinguish between the tasks of these foundational religious beliefs and those of social theory. The task of religious beliefs, he argued, is simply to orient theoretical work, to set its outer boundaries, to describe in general terms the origin, nature, and task of all parts of creation, including parts of human culture. These beliefs are "pre-theoretical" or "pre-scientific": they are known prior to any theoretical work, and they are the foundation upon which theoretical work must build. The task of a theoretical science, such as social theory, is to provide a detailed understanding of the requirements of God's law for social life.

With this distinction between "pre-theoretical" and "theoretical" knowledge, Dooyeweerd was able to challenge social theory with the questions about society left unanswered by his religious beliefs alone. Every social theory, he averred, had to fulfill four interrelated tasks: (1) to identify the independent structures or institutions which comprise society; (2) to describe the nature, the inner norms and constituent parts, which renders each of these

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14. See, particularly, id., supra note 6, pp. 84-96.
social institutions distinctive; (3) to define the purpose, function, or reason for which each of these structures exists; and (4) to analyze the proper relationship among them. These four tasks demand far more than a mere empirical description of the different aggregates and groups which happen to exist in a given society. Such empirical work is the task of social science, of positive sociology. The task of social theory is to inquire into the abiding ontic order and laws that constitute all social institutions, prescribe their functions, and dictate their interaction. It demands the social theorist to penetrate beyond the positive forms of a given society to underlying social norms and principles.

To develop a social theory that fulfills these four tasks, Dooyeweerd argued, requires both historical analysis and philosophical reflection on one's basic religious beliefs. A social theory that rests upon a study of contemporary society alone can be little more than a parochial apologia for the status quo. It must also be based upon the study of historical societies and of the tradition of social thought. Past societies reveal a great variety of organizations and institutions, which attest, albeit obliquely, to an underlying ontic order. Likewise, the tradition of reflection on society has yielded important insights into the identity and requirements of the norms and principles prescribed by this ontic order. Dooyeweerd thus viewed the history of social action and thought as an important source of knowledge of God's law for society.

An even more important source of such knowledge is philosophical analysis of one's basic religious beliefs. It was the downfall of earlier Calvinist social theorists, Dooyeweerd wrote, "that they never did think through [their beliefs] philosophically . . . and never indicated a methodical criterion for the determination of what [they] understood by sphere sovereignty . . . even though they had given this conception profound biblically religious anchorage in relating it to God's absolute sovereignty over all
that He has created after its inner nature in subjection to His law." Just as an understanding of the method of social theory has to draw upon the insights of epistemology, so the content of a social theory has to draw upon the broader insights of a Christian philosophy, particularly ontology.

3. In the early 1930s Dooyeweerd began to apply this method for social theory. He focussed his attention initially on the historical and philosophical analysis necessary to fulfill the four tasks he had prescribed.

Dooyeweerd had begun his historical analysis in his earlier writings. He now expanded this analysis into an exhaustive critical account of, inter alia, the concept of the Greek polis; the relation between the church and the Roman Empire, before and after Constantine; the problems of Carolingian absolutism; the hierarchical view of social institutions (headed by the church) in medieval scholasticism; the contest between papal and civil authorities in the conciliar period; fourteenth through seventeenth century theories of absolute monarchy; the wide range of theories of church, state, family, and other institutions born of the Reformation; sixteenth through eighteenth century theories of social and governmental contract; and a wide range of theories of society from Grotius, Hobbes, and Locke in the seventeenth century, to Weber, Tönnies, and Oppenheimer in his own day. Dooyeweerd subjected many of these traditional views, and their underlying beliefs, to elaborate and exacting criticisms, extracting their valuable insights and refining his own views in light of these insights.

While this historical analysis helped Dooyeweerd refine his social theory, his philosophical analysis of creation and its laws gave it its definitive form. For, out of this analysis,

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Dooyeweerd produced an intricate ontology which came to full expression in his theory of social institutions.16

Every creature, Dooyeweerd argued, reveals a number of distinct aspects or modes of being. He distinguished fourteen such aspects, which he arranged hierarchically: (1) numerical (discrete quantity); (2) spatial (extension); (3) physical (motion); (4) biotic (organic life or vitality); (5) psychic (sensitive or feeling); (6) logical (analytical distinction); (7) historical (cultural formation); (8) lingual (symbolic meaning); (9) social (social association); (10) economic (frugality or sparing of resources); (11) aesthetic (harmony or balance); (12) jural (just recompensing; balancing multiple interests); (13) moral (love); (14) faith (belief or assurance) aspects.17

16. This cryptic summary of Dooyeweerd’s theory of modalities is a distillation of the rich discussion in A New Critique of Theoretical Thought, supra note 1, Vol. 2, pp. 1-413. To do justice even to the highlights of this discussion requires more space than is available here. Thus I have simply drawn out those ideas which are crucial to an understanding of Dooyeweerd’s theory of social institutions. Dooyeweerd provides a more comprehensive introduction to his ontology in In the Twilight of Western Thought: Studies in the Pretended Autonomy of Theoretical Thought (Nutley, NJ: 1960, 1980), pp. 1-26. See also Kalsbeek, supra note 1, pp. 76-159.

17. In later years, after the initial publication of these sociology essays, Dooyeweerd identified a fifteenth modality, called the kinetic (energy) aspect, which he inserted between the physical and biotic aspects. This modification of his general ontology, however, had little apparent impact upon his theory of social institutions.

Dooyeweerd’s discussion of a social modality and law, on the one hand, and of social institutions, on the other hand, has given rise to considerable confusion even among those sympathetic to Dooyeweerd’s views. The confusion stems, in part, from the extremely laconic treatment of the social modality in A New Critique of Theoretical Thought and other writings, in part, from a misunderstanding of Dooyeweerd’s broader philosophical system. By identifying a social modality, Dooyeweerd averred that all human activities, interactions, and institutions reveal distinctive social aspects and characteristics which are governed by social norms. These are defined narrowly as aspects of “courtesy, modesty, politeness, tact, fashion, etc.” which manifest themselves in “for example, making a bow, giving a handshake, lifting one’s hat, letting a superior proceed.” (Id., Vol. 2, pp. 227-228) Dooyeweerd also spoke of “social institutions,” a phrase which described, more conventionally, the human organizations, structures, associations, and interrelationships in a given culture. All of these social institutions do reveal social aspects and characteristics (now in the modal sense), but the social modality is not what necessarily renders these institutions to be social (now in the broader sense). There are gentry and etiquette clubs, which
Each modal aspect is distinct and irreducible. Dooyeweerd identified this irreducibility as the "sphere sovereignty of the modality" — a phrase which had traditionally been used to describe the created independence of social institutions. 18 With this phrase, he expressed the inviolable and irreducible status of these various aspects or modes of being which creatures display. A living thing, for example, cannot be understood only as matter in motion—that is, the biotic aspect cannot be reduced to the physical or spatial aspects. The justice of a man's act cannot be understood simply as a product of economic, logical, or mathematical calculus—that is, the jural aspect cannot be reduced to the economic, logical, or numerical modal aspects.

Each modal aspect also builds on those below it. Spatial extension, for example, cannot be understood without a concept of numerical multiplicity. Beings that are alive do move in space and can be counted—that is, they have physical, spatial, and numerical functions. For a thing to be symbolic presupposes that its symbolic character has previously been formed in an analytically discernible manner which can be perceived by living beings—that is, that it has underlying historical, analytical, psychic, and biotic aspects, which, in turn, presuppose the lower aspects.

Creatures display such modes of being, and these modalities remain distinctive and ordered, Dooyeweerd believed, because they are governed by the laws of creation. God has created groups of specific laws for each

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18. The phrase "sovereignty within its own sphere," (sovereiniteit in eigen sfeer), was coined by the great Dutch Calvinist historian and political philosopher Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer (1801-1876) and was memorialized by Abraham Kuyper, who entitled his address at the founding of the Free University in 1880 as "Sovereiniteit in Eigen Kring" (Amsterdam: 1880). Gordon Spykman has traced the idea of sphere sovereignty in the history of Calvinist thought in an important essay, "Sphere Sovereignty in Calvin and the Calvinist Tradition," in David Hollenwess, ed., Exploring the Heritage of John Calvin (Grand Rapids, MI: 1976), pp. 163-208.
moeldility. Thus, alongside a hierarchy of modes of being, Dooyeweerd also identified a hierarchy of modal laws: laws of counting and arithmetic, geometry, motion, life, sensitivity, logic, history, language, society, economics, aesthetics, legal science, ethics, and theology. These laws are not derived from scientific inquiry; they are simply discovered by scientists and given positive form. They are “ontic a prioris,” which provide order and constancy in the creation and make distinctive aspects of being possible.

This plurality of modalities is an essential source of the plurality of distinct creatures. All inanimate things, living beings, cultural things and relationships, including social institutions, are subject to at least some of these modal laws. These laws govern the function of each of these creatures in each aspect. Creatures can thus be classified, in part, by the laws to which their functioning is subject. Inorganic things are subject to the first three modal laws of number, space, and motion; plants, to the first four laws through the biotic; animals, to the first five laws through the psychic or sensitive. Man himself is subject to all the laws, but human social institutions are subject to a select number of higher modal laws.

The highest modal law to which each creature is subject helps to render it distinctive. It gives the creature its distinguishing character or purpose, its unique created calling in this world, and prescribes a creaturely form in which this calling can be fulfilled. Dooyeweerd frequently describes this highest modal law as the qualifying modality, the structural principle, or the internal law of the creature. Thus the physical laws, for example, dictate that the physical thing move in space. The biotic laws mandate that the constituent parts of the plant not only move in space but that this motion be in service of and directed by a living process. The sensitive laws prescribe that the animal feel or sense things or events around it and react in a way that preserves its life. The jural laws which qualify the state command that the institutions of government, which men
form, develop and implement laws and policies of justice, peace, and harmonious balance. The moral laws obligate the family and marriage communities to serve the ends not only of justice and equity, but also of love, service, and cooperation.

4. Dooyeweerd invoked this philosophical theory of created order and law, this ontology, to fulfill the four tasks he had posed for social theory.\textsuperscript{19}

A plurality of social institutions, he argued, is made possible by the plurality of modal laws which govern them. Their irreducibility or sovereignty is guaranteed by the irreducibility or sovereignty of these underlying modal laws and aspects. The abiding structural principles, the inner constitution of each social institution—and thus also its “typical” nature and function—are prescribed by the modal laws to which that institution is subject.

Dooyeweerd utilized this modal analysis to classify a broad range of contemporary and historical social institutions. I shall summarize only the broadest outlines of his classificatory scheme since in the text Dooyeweerd subjects each separate institution to close modal analysis. He identifies the grounding and leading modal functions and laws of each institution, its distinctive purpose and function, and the various forms which these institutions have assumed in the past.

First, Dooyeweerd distinguished between undifferentiated and differentiated societies. The former are usually found in earlier cultures that have not yet developed separate institutions, each with its own defined form and task. Instead, one or two institutions perform several tasks. Dooyeweerd cites as examples of such undifferentiated societies the tribe, the folk sib, the Roman family, the medieval guilds, and others. Differentiated societies,

\textsuperscript{19} The following section is a very brief summary of Dooyeweerd’s \textit{A New Critique}, supra note 1, Vol. 3, pp. 157-626 as well as the discussion in later chapters of the text.
by contrast, have a far clearer separation of institutions and a greater specification of the distinctive task and social role of each.

Second, Dooyeweerd separated natural institutions from social institutions. Natural institutions, though subject to a variety of lower modal laws, are founded in particular on the biotic modality of life and are qualified by the moral modality of love. Such institutions include marriage, the family, and the cognate family. All other institutions are social institutions.\textsuperscript{20} They are founded primarily on the historical modality—that is, they are the product of human cultural formation. They are qualified or directed by a variety of higher functions from the analytical to the faith aspects.

Third, Dooyeweerd distinguished between communities and intercommunal or interindividual relationships. Communities bind people together more or less permanently as members of the same social whole. Such communities include the state, church, or family. Intercommunal or interpersonal relationships are the cooperative or antagonistic interactions between (1) two institutions; (2) two individuals; or (3) an institution and an individual. Examples of such relationships include the interaction between church and state, between a buyer and seller, or between an individual and the family.

Fourth, Dooyeweerd separated authoritative social forms and free social forms. The former type are organized institutions with a relatively permanent internal communal character and a distinct division of authority and subjects. They embrace their members non-voluntarily for their entire lives or a substantial portion thereof. Such institutions include the church (at least with baptized members), states, natural institutions, and some undifferentiated communities. Free social relationships are generally non-

\textsuperscript{20} This more technical definition of a "social institution" is to be distinguished from both the narrower and broader definitions of the phrase discussed in supra note 17.
organized institutions that are voluntarily formed and dissolved and based on a general democratic equality among all members. Such relations include the numerous forms of economic, labor, scientific, artistic, academic, and many other associations.

While Dooyeweerd explicated in detail the distinctive structure and function of a variety of social institutions—and thereby defended the sovereignty of each—he also explicated the structural interaction between certain institutions. He described these interactions as encaptic relations. In such relations the internal modal constitutions of two distinct institutions are interwoven to form a more complex social whole. This new institution is qualified by the highest modal function to which either of the two institutions had been subject. In the text, Dooyeweerd describes various types of encaptic relationships, and the mutual dependence among various social institutions which arise from such relations.

Specialists in the history of Continental social theory will find ready analogies between Dooyeweerd’s ideas and terminology and those of several of his immediate predecessors and contemporaries, most notably Karl Friederich von Savigny, Otto von Gierke, Wilhelm Dilthey, Max Weber, Maurice Haurouli, and Ferdinand Tönnies. Such analogies, however, do not support the charge, levelled by certain critics, that Dooyeweerd’s social theory is nothing more than an eclectic assemblage of commonplaces. In this text, and in many of his other writings, Dooyeweerd sharply distinguishes himself from these and many other social theorists. For Dooyeweerd’s social theory rests upon a new ensemble of religious and philosophical beliefs. These underlying beliefs not only furnish him with a new hermeneutic, a penetrating critical assessment and interpretation of the traditional teachings of social theory and their underlying assumptions. They also permit him to create a new synthesis of his own in-
sights and those traditional teachings which survive his criticisms.

Summary of the Text

In these ten lectures, Dooyeweerd presents a terse overview of his social theory. He remains committed to the method he had developed two decades before: historical and philosophical analysis are brought to bear on the first-order questions of the origin, nature, function, and interrelationships of social institutions. But here his exposition is more balanced and systematic. It avoids the abrasive polemicism and annoying digressions of the earlier writings. It is the product of a more tempered and seasoned judgment and is thus more authoritative and arresting.

In the first two lectures, Dooyeweerd defends the role of social theory (or social philosophy) against the claims of modern sociologists. In their attempt to establish the independent task of sociology vis-à-vis other sciences, modern sociologists have depicted it either as (1) a unique science of the totality of society; or (2) a distinctive special science of society. Sociologists of both schools have sought to sever all relations between sociology and philosophy. The first group of sociologists, from Comte to Oppenheimer and Sorokin, saw it as their task to describe society as a whole, to define the broad causal relationships between "scientific social facts" discovered by the other special sciences. Theirs was to be an objective scientific analysis, free from appeal to any normative criteria or philosophical judgments. A second group of sociologists, most notably Pareto, have despaired of any ability to offer such a totality view of such an objective causal explanation. Sociology was simply one of many special sciences whose own task was to offer a functional explanation of certain social facts.

To Dooyeweerd, both positions were unsatisfactory.
First, any such causal or functional explanation inevitably invokes normative criteria. For social relationships are not objectively presented facts, simple effects of non-normative causes, or functional parts of a larger whole. They are independent complex social institutions which are the manifestations of underlying social norms. They can be understood and explained only in light of such norms, even when the particular social form deviates from them. "Even the actual activity of a gang of thieves," Dooyeweerd writes, "cannot be recognized as such without the application of the norms of a given society." Second, neither group of sociologists properly recognizes the indispensable task of social theory. The task of social theory is "to gain a total overview of distinctive modal aspects of social relationships." It is to describe their underlying norms, their ontic status, their origin, nature, functions, and interrelationships. Only with such an understanding, Dooyeweerd argues, can the positive science of sociology be properly defined and directed.

In Lectures III and IV, Dooyeweerd shows how any such social theory is shaped by certain religious beliefs and by the exigencies of the theorist's social milieu. He adduces proof for this thesis from history. He describes (1) the religious form/matter ground-motive which undergirded the Greek concept of the polis; (2) the religious grace/nature view upon which the Roman Catholic Church built its hierarchic view of society as well as the two-swords theory; (3) the religious freedom/nature ground-motive which manifested itself in both the individualist natural law and social contract theories of Grotius, Hobbes, Locke, and others as well as in the communitarian historical theories of the German Idealists and Romantics. Modern sociology, Dooyeweerd contends in the last portion of these two lectures, was ultimately born of this third set of religious beliefs.21 It was based on a synthesis between the historical-cultural concepts and

methods of the German schools and the natural-scientific concepts and methods of seventeenth and eighteenth century theorists. This bifurcated source has spawned the subsequent struggles between sociological universalism and individualism and between the Marxist materialist method and Weber's ideal-typical method of analyzing the history of social development.

In Lecture V, Dooyeweerd shows how a fourth, Christian, religious ground-motive can found a new concept of society and social institutions. The Christian concept of creation grounds one's belief in abiding structural principles, which, in turn, are rooted in the various modal laws. These principles guide sinful man in his social development and provide unity for the multiplicity of social forms which are revealed in history. It is the task of a general ontology to study the modal laws; of social theory to study the structural principles; and of positive sociology to study the forms of a given society.

In Lecture VI, Dooyeweerd provides a cryptic modal analysis of simple and more complex social institutions. Each simple institution, Dooyeweerd argues, has an internal structural constitution or "idionomy" (individualiteitstructuur) that renders it distinctive or "typical." A grounding and a leading modal law combine to prescribe for each social institution a unique destination or task and a distinctive positive form. Dooyeweerd cites as an example the family, with its founding biotic function and its leading moral function. More complex social institutions originate from encaptic interrelations between the structural constitutions of two or more social institutions. This encaptic relation is either unilateral (where one institution cannot exist without the other) or correlative (where the two institutions presuppose each other). The two encaptically related institutions, Dooyeweerd insists, are originally distinctive, with their own "typical" individual structure and function. Thus, even with unilateral encapsis, neither institution can be seen as a part of the
other whole. He cites the encaptic relation between marriage and the family as a particularly provocative illustration. By eliding the encaptic relation into a part-whole relation, Dooyeweerd argues, modern sociologists have inevitably been drawn to a sociological universalism.

In Lecture VII, Dooyeweerd makes a number of distinctions which, as was shown, are crucial to his social theory: (1) social genetic forms and existential forms; (2) social and natural institutions; (3) communal and social relationships; (4) institutional and non-institutional communities; and (5) differentiated and undifferentiated communal and social relationships. Dooyeweerd then utilizes these distinctions to criticize the famous theory of Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft propounded by the German sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies.

In Lectures VIII-X, Dooyeweerd provides a lucid modal and structural analysis of the social institutions which he had distinguished, in principle, in Lecture VII. He describes, seriatim, (1) undifferentiated social organizations, such as the Roman familia, and ancient sibs and other folk bonds, medieval social relations, such as feudal bonds, guilds, mark communities, and others; (2) natural communities, such as marriage, the family, and extended family; (3) the differentiated institutional organizations of church and state (he also includes in this section a critique of Ernst Troeltsch’s distinction between “church-type” and “sect-type”); and (4) non-institutional social organizations, such as economic, scientific, artistic, and other free associations.

In his conclusion, Dooyeweerd summons us all to continue to discover and implement God’s creation norms for social institutions and to heed Christ’s call to love our neighbors in all our relationships with them.