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DOOYEWEERD VERSUS VOLLENHOVEN: THE RELIGIOUS DIALECTIC WITHIN REFORMATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

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1. *Introduction*

The philosophy of Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977) is frequently linked to that of his brother-in-law Dirk H.Th. Vollenhoven (1892-1978). Both men taught at the Vrije Universiteit of Amsterdam, although in different faculties, and they are often referred to as the founders of reformational philosophy. It is often assumed that Dooyeweerd provided the systematic philosophy, whereas Vollenhoven wrote about the history of philosophy, and that their ideas can therefore be combined. But Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven disagreed on almost every key point. They differed in their ontology, epistemology, and theology. Although there has been some discussion of these disagreements in the Dutch literature,[1] there has been no detailed exploration of the implications of these philosophical differences for reformational philosophy.

Vollenhoven himself lists many differences between his philosophy and that of Dooyeweerd. He lists these differences in three articles or transcribed lectures:

a) "Divergentierapport I" ("Report of Divergences I"),[2] a report from 1953 ['*Divergentierapport*']. Marked "Strictly confidential," the report is directed to the Board of the Foundation for Special Chairs of Calvinistic Philosophy (het Bestuur der Stichting Bijzondere Leerstoelen Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte).

b) "De Problemen rondom de tijd" ("Problems about time"), private lectures from 1963 ['*Problemen*'].[3] Vollenhoven's notes of this lecture were only in fragmentary form, and they were completed by A. Tol, using notes taken by a student who attended the lecture, J.C. Vander Stelt. In the text, Vander Stelt's notes are indicated between the symbols '>' and '<'.

c) "Problemen van de tijd in onze kring" ("Problems about time in our circle"), a lecture given by Vollenhoven in 1968 ['*Kring*'].[4]

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[1] See especially A. Tol and K.A. Bril: *Vollenhoven als Wijsgeer* (Amsterdam: Buijten & Schipperheijn, 1992), 107-211 ['*Wijsgeer*']. This book contains several lectures and articles by Vollenhoven in which he expresses his disagreements with Dooyeweerd, as well as some helpful notes. Some comparisons between the two philosophers were made by Johan Stellingwerff: *D.H.Th. Vollenhoven (1892-1978) Reformator der Wijsbegeerte* (Baarn: Ten Have, 1992) ['Stellingwerff']. See also Marcel Verburg: *Herman Dooyeweerd. Leven en werk van een Nederlands christen-wijsgeer* (Baarn: Ten Have, 1989) ['Verburg'].

[2] D.H.Th. Vollenhoven: "Divergentierapport I," (1953), *Wijsgeer* 107-117 ['*Divergentierapport*']. The Dutch version is made available online by the Association for Reformational Philosophy [http://aspecten.org/vollenhoven/52ms.htm]. See my translation online at: [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Divergentierapport.html].

[3] D.H.Th. Vollenhoven: "De Problemen rondom de tijd", (1963), *Wijsgeer* 160-198 ['*Problemen*']. Online at [http://aspecten.org/vollenhoven/63b.htm]. See my translation: [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Problemen.html].

[4] D.H.Th. Vollenhoven: "De Problemen van de tijd in onze kring", (1968), *Wijsgeer* 199-211

In *Problemen* (p. 170) Vollenhoven says that his *Isagoogè*[5] is not the same as Dooyeweerd's *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*.[6] Vollenhoven also says that he had made a conscious decision not to disclose his differences with Dooyeweerd. He gives three reasons for this non-disclosure: (1) the fact that there was a serious attempt to arrive at a Scriptural philosophy, and that it was important to maintain a united front, (2) he thought his primary responsibility was that of chairman of the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy, and (3) he was occupied with other work. While perhaps historically understandable, it may be questioned whether this non-disclosure of their disagreements was the right decision. The resulting conflict of ideas has caused a great deal of confusion both to students of reformational philosophy as well as to the wider public. I also wonder whether it was Dooyeweerd or Vollenhoven who most benefited by this pact of silence. On the one hand, both men were able to maintain a common front during the lengthy university investigation of their philosophies.[7] On the other hand, it seems to me that because Vollenhoven taught in the Faculty of Letters and Philosophy, whereas Dooyeweerd taught in the Faculty of Law, the result of not disclosing these differences was to reinforce Vollenhoven's ideas at the expense of Dooyeweerd's, and that in general, this has resulted in Dooyeweerd's philosophy being interpreted through the lens of Vollenhoven's quite contradictory ideas.

Dooyeweerd was even more cautious about publicly disagreeing with Vollenhoven,[8] but there are some parts of his *New Critique* where he clearly refers to such disagreements.[9] And in 1964, the year before his retirement, Dooyeweerd

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['*Kring*']. Online at [http://aspecten.org/vollenhoven/68b.htm]. See my translation: [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Tijd.html].

[5] See D.H.Th. Vollenhoven: *Isagoogè Philosophiae* (Vrije Universiteit: Uitgave Filosofisch Instituut, 1967) ['*Isagoogè*']. This publication was intended for internal use at the university. It has not yet been translated or otherwise published. Drs. A. Tol is preparing a new edition with commentary.

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

[7] On March 17, 1936 Valentijn Hepp of the theology faculty threatened that within two years both Vollenhoven and Klaas Schilder would be outside the Gereformeerde Church (Stellingwerff 130). Both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd were subjected to an intense university investigation that was initiated by Hepp and that lasted 10 years. Dooyeweerd provided three written responses from April 1937 to March 1938. His August 1937 response was 39 pages long. Vollenhoven's initial response was a 17-page letter dated October 17, 1937. These responses are in the Dooyeweerd Archives maintained by The Historical Documentation Centre for Dutch Protestantism ['the Dooyeweerd Archives']. See my translation at [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Curators.html] ['Curators']. The investigation was never really completed, but ceased when there was a change in the theological faculty after the Second World War.

[8] Verburg says that Dooyeweerd did not want to jeopardize the positive aspects of Christian philosophy as it was being taught at the Free University. When Dooyeweerd was asked by a journalist whether Vollenhoven had helped in developing this philosophy, he gave the tactful [*charmante*] response that Vollenhoven was "the first to be at his side" [*medestander*] (Verburg 89, referring to a taped conversation between Dooyeweerd and M. Verbrugge on August 11/74). In 1964, Dooyeweerd said privately that his talks with Vollenhoven had had no influence on the direction in which his philosophy developed (Verburg 88, 89).

[9] *NC* I, 31-33, fn. 1. A. Tol has shown that this long footnote, although it does not

did make some comments in his January 2, 1964 address to the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy [Vereniging voor Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte]. The subject of the meeting was "Center and Circumference of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea in a changing world" ["Centrum en omtrek van de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee in een veranderende wereld"]. Dooyeweerd said that the center of his philosophy was religious:

> The core [*kern*, kernel] of the philosophy of the Law-Idea is not of a philosophic nature. The core of the philosophy of the Law-Idea is of a central religious nature. And I believe that its strength is there, and that is also where its meaning for the future will lie. [Verburg 380, transcript of tape recording, my translation]

Dooyeweerd acknowledged that much of his philosophy had been rejected or criticized:

> Each part of this philosophy [of the Law-Idea] must be critically weighed, because don't forget, it is the work of humans. I have had an alarming success in [being subjected to] such criticism! After the Second World War it came to the point that I sometimes thought, "No pillar remains standing. At the moment everything lies knocked down flat. There is no part of this philosophy that has not been subjected to a sharp critique. The teaching of time, in my opinion a very fundamental piece of the philosophy of the law-Idea, has been struck at in its foundation." The teaching of the law-spheres…has in various parts been so injured that I thought, "Okay, now where are we going?" It was in fact said to me, "Yes, we agree with you, there is a diversity of modes of experience…, but we hesitate to speak of a historical aspect of experience," and "We do not want to become historicists. That [aspect] must remain outside." And others said, "Now, the intuition of time; it is such an all-encompassing time, in which all the aspects are fitted. That we can't accept. There are aspects — the arithmetical aspect, the spatial aspect — which are timeless. We must maybe make time itself into an aspect…etc." I thought, "There goes the whole philosophy of the Law-Idea." [Verburg 380-81, my translation]

Verburg says that a long discussion ensued. Vollenhoven perceived that Dooyeweerd had been referring to him, and Vollenhoven responded:

> The theory of the law-spheres, the theory of the modalities — that has been splendidly developed by Dooyeweerd. The theory of retrocipations and anticipations, the theory of the object — these are rather mixed up [door elkaar geslagen], as I have recently shown. 'Individuality structures' — I have always hesitated about that idea; I thought, "I don't need that word." And the theory of time — yes, I have a very broad understanding of that. But as for the place of religion in philosophy, we are in precise agreement and therefore these other questions are of a different nature. [Verburg 381, my translation]

Vollenhoven's response shows many disagreements with Dooyeweerd: anticipations, retrocipations, the theory of the object, and individuality structures. And

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specifically name Vollenhoven, is a response to Vollenhoven's *Divergentierapport*, which Vollenhoven had discussed with Dooyeweerd (See *Wijsgeer* 110). Dooyeweerd pointedly speaks of "my philosophy." It is curious that Vollenhoven seems to have ignored these clarifications in his subsequent criticisms of Dooyeweerd. It is possible that Vollenhoven never read this footnote, just as he apparently never read his copy of Dooyeweerd's *Reformatie en scholastiek*. See A.P. Bos: "Dooyeweerd en de oudheid," in *Herman Dooyeweerd (1894-1977): Breedte en actualiteit van zijn filosofie,* ed. H.G. Geertsema et al (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1994) 223 note 25.

although both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven emphasized the importance of religion in relation to philosophy, it is certainly not correct to say that they were "in precise agreement" about the place of religion in philosophy.

During the same address in 1964, Dooyeweerd made a plea for a wider ecumenism, and a reaching out to those who agreed with the philosophy but who did not want to join the "narrow circle" of Calvinism.[10] Vollenhoven opposed this plea for ecumenism.

In 1974, Dooyeweerd gave an interview for a book about Dutch civil lawyers; the book was only published after his death.[11] Dooyeweerd says in that interview that in some respects he had failed, and that his work had taken a direction beyond his control:

> Nu, op die laatste twee punten heb ik gefaald, dat heb ik niet kunnen volbrengen. Maar dat komt omdat ik het niet in de hand had. De richting die je werk neemt kun je niet van te voren programmeren. Je kunt het wel doen, maar dan komt opeens over je: ik heb te hoog gemikt, ik heb geen rekening gehouden met bijzondere omstandigheden.[12]
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> [Now, concerning the last two points, I have failed; I could not accomplish it. But that is because I was not in control of what happened. The direction that one's work takes cannot be determined in advance. You can try to do that, but then suddenly you realize: I have aimed too high, I did not take account of special circumstances.]

The next year, in the last article that he ever wrote, Dooyeweerd gave some details of how the use of his philosophy by others had taken a wrong direction.[13] He refers to criticism of his philosophy by H.G. Stoker, F. Kuyper, H. van Riessen, A.L. Conradie, A.M.T. Meyer, V. Brümmer and C.A. van Peursen. He says that what was at stake in these discussions was the "philosophical view of theoretical thought and of experience that lies at the basis of the whole transcendental critique." Dooyeweerd says that he did not want to intervene prematurely in these discussions.[14] What prompted him to finally speak out

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[10] Verburg, 381. In the *New Critique*, Dooyeweerd distances himself from those who refer to his philosophy as 'Calvinistic' (*NC* I, 524, ft 1). The line of antithesis runs through the heart of each of us [and not between Calvinists and other groups] (*NC* I, 524). He even tried to change the name of the Calvinistic Association for Philosophy [Vereniging voor Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte]. He was unsuccessful in that attempt. He said that the term 'Calvinism,' already "dangerous in itself," can lead to a label for a definite group or sect (Verburg 344). Vollenhoven believed antithesis to be between believers and unbelievers, and thought that Dooyeweerd did not do justice to this idea (Stellingwerff 249).

[11] Dunné, J.M. van et al: *Acht civilisten in burger* (Zwolle: Tjeenk Willink, 1977). The interviews were conducted by the lawyers J.M. van Dunné and P. Boeles.

[12] Letter September 1976 to Dooyeweerd from P. Boeles of the law firm Goudsmit & Branbergen (in the Dooyeweerd Archives, Lade I, 1). The reference is to page 14 of the original transcript. Dooyeweerd wanted to delete this from the interview. Mr. Boeles tried to persuade him to keep it. He thought that it showed Dooyeweerd's humanity, and that even a great man could fail.

[13] Herman Dooyeweerd: "De Kentheoretische Gegenstandsrelatie en de Logische Subject-Objectrelatie", *Philosophia Reformata* 40 (1975) 83-101 ['*Gegenstandsrelatie*']. See my translation online: [http://www.members.shaw.ca/jgfriesen/Mainheadings/Kentheoretische.html]. This article was previously not fully translated into English, so the full extent of Dooyeweerd's disagreement is not widely known.

[14] Dooyeweerd had previously strongly criticized the views of the South African reforma-

was the publication of the thesis *Begrip en Idee* by D.F.M. Strauss, directed by H. van Riessen. Dooyeweerd's article is a strong critique of Strauss's ideas. As we shall see, the ideas that Dooyeweerd criticizes so strongly in Strauss are also found in Vollenhoven. It is therefore important to look at Dooyeweerd's critique of Strauss in more detail.

Dooyeweerd says that Strauss's rejection of the *Gegenstand*-relation leads to an absolutization of the logical aspect, and to "insoluble genuine antinomies" (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 100). Now such "genuine antinomies" occur "by making certain modal aspects absolute." In doing so, we "overstep the limit of the order of cosmic time" (*NC* II, 38). Such absolutization causes a "religious dialectic" between the first absolutized aspect, and its *correlata*, driving human action and thought "from one pole to another" (*NC* I, 64, 123). The non-Christian ground-motives of modern philosophy contain such a religious dialectic. Dooyeweerd says that Strauss's ideas of the nature of theory reflect "the most current prejudices of modern epistemology" (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 97).

My own philosophical sympathies are with Dooyeweerd rather than with Vollenhoven (or Strauss who continues Vollenhoven's ideas[15]). I do not believe that it is possible to compare Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven without choosing a standpoint, and my criticism of Vollenhoven reflects my acceptance of Dooyeweerd's point of view. Even the title of my article refers to a "religious dialectic" — an idea that depends on Dooyeweerd's idea of religious ground-motives. But my purpose is not so much to decide which philosopher is right as to begin to disentangle the two philosophies so that they can be judged on their own merits. Each of the differences that I enumerate below could be the subject of a separate article, but I believe that it is useful to put them in summary form.

2. *Ontology*

2.1. Dualism, Monism, Nondualism

Vollenhoven's problem-historical method presupposes an ontological dichotomy between monistic and dualistic philosophies. Vollenhoven uses the terms 'monism' and 'dualism' in two different ways: an ontological sense (the issue of whether ultimate reality is one or many) and an anthropological sense (the

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tional philosopher Hendrik Stoker. Dooyeweerd found "un-Biblical dialectical basic motives" in Stoker's thought (*NC* III, 69ff). As we shall see, several of the ideas he criticizes in Stoker are also found in Vollenhoven.

[15] Strauss's philosophy therefore continues the confusion between the ideas of Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven. This confusion was compounded when, several years after Dooyeweerd's death, Strauss published an article in which he repeated the same ideas that Dooyeweerd had so strongly criticized. See D.F.M. Strauss: "An Analysis of the Structure of Analysis: The Gegenstand-relation in discussion", *Philosophia Reformata* 49 (1984) 35-56. Furthermore, when Strauss became Editor-in-Chief of the *Collected Works of Herman Dooyeweerd*, references to Strauss's article were included as footnotes to Dooyeweerd's work. See Herman Dooyeweerd: *Encyclopedia of the Science of Law* (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2002), 28, fn. 1 and 90, fn. 1.

issue of whether the soul and body derive from separate sources or from one source). I will discuss the anthropological issue later.

Ontological monism accepts an original ontological unity that diverges into either a duality[16] or a multiplicity. An example of monism is pantheism, where the world of multiplicity is assumed to be ultimately identical with God. But in dualism, multiplicity is original. An example of dualism is the belief that God created the world from eternally pre-existing matter.

Vollenhoven says that Christian philosophy must not accept either dualism or monism (*Kring* 210). Vollenhoven therefore wants to exempt himself from his own problem-historical philosophical analysis.[17] But although Vollenhoven privileges his own philosophy, he does not extend this same exemption in his analysis of Dooyeweerd. He classifies Dooyeweerd first as a dualist (semi-mysticism) and then as a monist (monistic monarchianism).[18] I believe that both characterizations are wrong; there should be a category that is neither dualistic nor monistic. Dooyeweerd himself said in 1964 that Vollenhoven applied his method too tightly and rigorously (Verburg 89).

Both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd deny a dualistic view of reality. God did not create the world from eternally pre-existing matter or substance.[19]

If Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd are not ontological dualists, are they monists? Both philosophers also deny ontological monism in the sense of a pantheistic identity with God. The difficulty is that Vollenhoven, because of the rigidity of his dichotomy monism/dualism (at least for others), classifies Dooyeweerd along with philosophers who are monists. It is therefore necessary to look at this issue of monism and pantheism in more detail, particularly since the issue always comes up when discussing Dooyeweerd's "mysticism."

Dooyeweerd is not a monist. He speaks of a "boundary" between the *Being* of God and the *meaning* of creation (*NC* I, 99). Although Dooyeweerd regards creation as distinct from God, it is also related to God in a continuity of "expression." God as Origin *expresses* Himself in created reality, and created reality *refers* back to God for its *meaning* (*NC* I, 4). All of temporal reality is "from, through and to" God as Origin (*NC* I, 9). God is the *Arché* of the

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[16] Vollenhoven distinguishes between a duality and a dualism. A dualism points to a fundamental dichotomy that cannot be reconciled. A duality is a distinction ultimately deriving from the same source.

[17] It seems to me that a philosopher should be able to set out his or her own position before classifying the ideas of others. Vollenhoven seemed to take the position that all philosophical types were pagan, and that Christian philosophy should therefore not fit within any type. In later years Vollenhoven attempted to fit his philosophy into his problem-historical method, but he never succeeded. See my article "Monism, Dualism, Nondualism: A Problem with Vollenhoven's Problem-Historical Method," (2005) where I show that Vollenhoven's problem-historical categories are inadequate to describe either his own philosophy or that of Dooyeweerd. Online at [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Method.html].

[18] D.H.Th. Vollenhoven: *Schematische Kaarten*, ed. K.A. Bril and P.J. Boonstra, (Amstelveen: De Zaak Haes, 2000), 92, note 11 ['*Kaarten*'].

[19] K.A. Bril points out that some Christians are cosmological dualists but that they also hold to a belief in *creatio ex nihilo* (*Kaarten* 330). In my view, such theists wrongly interpret *creatio ex nihilo* as a creation from a "nothingness" that pre-exists alongside of God instead of interpreting the doctrine in terms of our total dependence on God and God's total freedom of creation. Dooyeweerd understands the boundary between God and creation in this sense of dependence (See 'Curators').

cosmos, "through whom and to whom it has been created" (*NC* I, 102).[20] Dooyeweerd certainly uses mystical language and ideas. All human experience "participates" ['*wordt deel te hebben*'] and "partakes" ['*in haar deel hebben aan*'] in the totality of meaning, the religious root (*NC* I, 8; II, 560; *WdW* I, 11; II, 491). We "have part" ['*waaraan wij deel hebben*'] in Christ, the new root of mankind (*NC* I, 99; *WdW* I, 64). And Dooyeweerd emphasizes the importance of "religious self-reflection" (*NC* I, 15, 165). But Dooyeweerd's mysticism is not a mysticism of identity between God and creation. We are "from, through and to" God, and yet distinct. Dooyeweerd speaks of the beatific vision when we will behold God "face to face" (*NC* II, 298). This is not a pantheistic identification with God. I believe that it is more accurately described as nondualism.[21]

Although the ideas are not identical, we can obtain some understanding of nondualism by examining the idea of panentheism. In contrast to pantheism, panentheism does not assert that we are identical with God; rather, we are in God who nevertheless transcends us.[22] God is always transcendent to creation and never identical with it. Vollenhoven classifies pantheism as monistic and panentheism as dualistic (*Kaarten*, 351-52). Again, Vollenhoven's classification can be questioned, but it is important to note that he makes a distinction from pantheism. As students, both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven became aware of the term 'panentheism' in connection with the controversy surrounding A.H. de Hartog, who was criticized by the theologian J.G. Ubbink for pantheism. De Hartog denied that his views were pantheistic, but spoke of panentheism:

> We have elsewhere said, that the pantheist "I-dentifies" (notice the "I"), whereas the theist "distinguishes them and yet knows them to be one." "Unity in diversity" absolutely does not mean the same as "identification" (however much Dr. Ubbink may rely on his philosophical dictionary). The Lord in His sovereign omnipotence and love wants to communicate Himself to his creature, where He so "unites" divine and human nature that they remain "undivided and unseparated, unmixed and unchanged"' but He has thereby not "identified" the divine and human nature. [my translation] [23]

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[20] Romans 11:36 affirms this: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

[21] I use the word 'nondualism' or *advaita* in the sense that "not-two" [*a-dvaita*] does not mean the same as "only one." A denial of dualism does not entail monism. Many of the Rhineland mystics, such as Meister Eckhart or Jan van Ruusbroec should also be interpreted in this nondual way.

[22] For a recent discussion of panentheism, see Philip Clayton and Arthur Peacocke, eds.: *In Whom We Live and Move and Have Our Being: Panentheistic Reflections on God's Presence in a Scientific World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004). Unfortunately, the book blurs the distinction from pantheism by the many articles it contains on process theology. But see for example the excellent article by Kallistos Ware, "God Immanent yet Transcendent: the Divine Energies according to Saint Gregory Palamas" (pp. 157-168).

[23] A.H. de Hartog: Letter to the Editor, *Opbouw: Maandschrift in dienst der Christ. Levens-en wereldbeschouwing, van en voor jongeren*, 2 (1916), 169 ['*Opbouw*']. De Hartog plays on the meaning of the word 'identifies' as "vereen-zelf-igt." Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven contributed several articles to *Opbouw*, sometimes using pseudonyms. Vollenhoven was one of the editors, under one of his pseudonyms, Th. Voorthuizen (Stellingwerff 17).

De Hartog also translated excerpts of the work of Jacob Boehme.[24] He refers to Boehme in terms of panentheism.

2.2. Being and meaning

For Dooyeweerd, God alone is Being. He distinguishes between "the *Being* of God and the *meaning* of His creation" (*NC* I, 99). God as Origin *expresses* Himself in the supratemporal totality of our selfhood, which in turn expresses itself in temporal reality. Temporal reality is dependent and non-self-sufficient (*NC* I, 4). Created reality, as *meaning*, points to the Origin, which is *absolute* and *self-sufficient* (*NC* I, 10). The temporal cosmos, having no being in itself, is restless, and refers to our supratemporal heart, which also is restless and refers to God.

Vollenhoven takes exactly the opposite approach. For Vollenhoven, only the cosmos has being, and God is beyond being: "…ontology relates only to the cosmos" (*Problemen* 173).[25] Vollenhoven denies that the temporal cosmos is restless; he opposes speaking of temporal reality as "insufficient" or of God as "all-sufficient." He denies the whole idea that created reality refers outside of itself. For Vollenhoven, 'transcendence' means "reaching out" to God and not a "pointing-beyond." Vollenhoven says that pointing beyond refers only to the ontical and does not involve human activity (*Problemen* 186). Vollenhoven does not seem to consider the transformative effect that "pointing beyond" can have in giving us a rich symbolic life (or, to use a term that Dooyeweerd does not use, a "sacramental" view of reality).

Because he rejects this view of pointing beyond, Vollenhoven's whole idea of meaning is different from Dooyeweerd's. Vollenhoven objects to the idea that temporal reality is a refraction of meaning (*Divergentierapport* 113; also Stellingwerff 249). For Vollenhoven, the aspects are not moments of refracted time; time has only indirect meaning for the functions — by the changing of things that appear in those aspects. Vollenhoven's view of meaning is restricted to how "things" and "events" function within time. Things exist as subjects in the first four aspects and they have meaning according to how they function in the other aspects:

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[24] A.H. de Hartog: *Uren met Jacob Boehme* (Baarn: Hollandia-Drukkerij, 1915), 35, 51. This book was favourably reviewed in *Opbouw*, and so would have come to the attention of both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven. The review included excerpts of Boehme's views of the relation of time and eternity. Boehme's writings, as translated and annotated by de Hartog, may well have influenced Dooyeweerd's later philosophy. There are references to our heart as our inner being, to living beyond time and space, and to immediate knowledge as opposed to a dead Biblicism. He describes Boehme as a seer ('*schouwer*'), to which Dooyeweerd's later use of intuition ['*schouwen*'] may be related. De Hartog explicitly refers to Franz von Baader's work on Boehme. De Hartog also gives his own view of science as seeking to understand the coherence of the universe as it is revealed in its cosmic, organic order, which has both its subjective and its objective sides.

[25] One would think that such a strong emphasis on God being beyond being would lead Vollenhoven to an apophatic theology. Yet Vollenhoven also rejects any idea that God is "totally other" than creation (*Isagoogè* par. 13, note 1).

> Physical things [are] *purely* subject. But their *meaning* [is] greater: the object-function plays a role in the mutual relation of two realms, therefore by inter-regnal relations.
>
> >The definition of an object function can now be described as "the repetition of the meaning of the subject-functions of *things of lower realms.*" (*Problemen* 178)[26]

Therefore, for Vollenhoven, things *have* meaning, but he denies that they *are* meaning. Stoker had the same view, which Dooyeweerd criticized:

> …philosophical thought which tries to discover a substantial being of created things as the independent *bearer* of meaning, must always land in meaningless absolutizations of theoretical abstractions. […] But the absolutization, as such, which is inherent in this attempt, is incompatible with the Biblical conception of creation and reveals the influence of un-Biblical dialectical basic motives (*NC* III, 66).

2.3. The place of the law

Vollenhoven's basic idea is the triad God–law–cosmos. God is not in the cosmos. Nor is God's law in the cosmos; law stands outside, and governs and structures the cosmos. Law is the boundary between God and cosmos. As we shall see, this has implications for Vollenhoven's views of the nature of things, the nature of time, and the nature of theory.

Vollenhoven contrasts his triadic view of reality with Dooyeweerd's view that both law and subject are found in the cosmos (*Divergentierapport* 113). For Dooyeweerd, the temporal cosmos has two sides, the law-side of order and the factual-side of duration (time in its cosmic sense has a cosmonomic and a factual side). Its cosmonomic side is the temporal order of succession or simultaneity. The factual side is the factual duration, which differs with various individualities. But the duration remains constantly subjected to the order (*NC* I, 28).

Vollenhoven criticizes Dooyeweerd's philosophy as implying that the law is restricted to this temporal cosmos. But it is only the temporal law that is a side of the cosmos; Dooyeweerd also allows for a "central law" which limits and determines the centre and root of our existence (*NC* I: 11). This central law is correlated to a central subjectivity that is also differentiated only in cosmic time. Both law and individual subjectivity have religious unity and temporal diversity (*NC* I, 507). The cosmic law protects the temporal world, which fell with man, from falling into nothingness.[27] As we shall see, Vollenhoven rejects

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[26] Vollenhoven's emphasis on things having meaning in things of higher realms seems similar to Woltjer's view of levels of individuality, which Dooyeweerd criticizes in "Kuyper's Wetenschapsleer", *Philosophia Reformata* 4 (1939), 193-232 ['Kuyper's Wetenschapsleer']. According to Woltjer, as the kind is higher in level, it acquires more meaning ["Naarmate de soort hoger staat in trap, krijgt het individuele meer betekenis"]. Dooyeweerd distinguishes his own view from this idea of levels of reality in that he holds to the idea of the religious root.

[27] Herman Dooyeweerd: *Roots of Western Culture*, (Toronto: Wedge, 1979) ['*Roots*'], 37. *Roots* is a partial translation of *Vernieuwing en Bezinning* (Zutphen: Van den Brink, 1959) ['*Vernieuwing*'].

Dooyeweerd's idea of a supratemporal selfhood. Because of this, he does not seem able to appreciate the distinction between a temporal law-side of reality, and a supratemporal fullness of the law.

2.4. Totality, realms and individuality structures

Vollenhoven refers to differences with Dooyeweerd regarding "subject and individuality" (*Divergentierapport* 112). Vollenhoven does not specify what those differences are. Dooyeweerd's philosophy depends on the idea of a supratemporal totality.[28] This supratemporal totality *expresses* itself within time. Temporal things are "individuated" from out of that totality. Dooyeweerd develops the idea of an "individuality structure" to explain this individuation into individual things.[29] This idea of individuality structure is very different from the idea that things are substances or that they exist in themselves. It is also different from Vollenhoven's view of individual things.

Vollenhoven does not accept the idea of a supratemporal created totality. He therefore does not have an idea comparable to Dooyeweerd's idea of individuation from out of totality. And because of this, he also rejects the idea of individuality structures.[30] Vollenhoven's philosophy depends on the idea of individual temporal "realms," "kinds" and "things." Their development occurs only in relation to the temporal "earth", in an order of earlier and later (*Isagoogè* par. 22, referring to Gen. 2:1). Vollenhoven says that to speak of 'totalities' ['*Ganzheiten*'] is too vague if we do not take into account these different realms of created reality (*Isagoogè* par. 22). Because he views the law as outside the cosmos, Vollenhoven gives more independence to things that are within the cosmos and that are subjected to the law that is outside the cosmos. Vollenhoven refers to the two simplest determinations of the diversity that comes from out of temporal wholeness: the "thus-so" [*zus-zo*] difference, which he calls "modal," and the "this-that" [*dit-dat*] distinction that he calls "individual" (*Isagoogè* par. 32, 36. 43). The analysis of modalities is "vertical" and the analysis of individual things is "horizontal" (*Isagoogè* par. 42). The idea of distinct "realms" — mineral, plant and animal — is fundamental for him. Vollenhoven says that the realm of physical things arises in time before the realm of plants, and the realm of plants comes before the realm of animals, which in turn

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[28] J. Glenn Friesen "Dooyeweerd, Spann and the Philosophy of Totality", *Philosophia Reformata* 70 (2005) 2–22.

[29] J. Glenn Friesen: "Individuality Structures and Enkapsis: Individuation from Totality in Dooyeweerd and German Idealism" (2005) ['*Enkapsis*'] Online at [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Enkapsis. html].

[30] Vollenhoven's response to Dooyeweerd address to the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy on January 2, 1964 (Verburg 381). Vollenhoven found the term 'individuality structure' to be confusing and superfluous (Stellingwerff 242). H. van Riessen also objected to the idea of individuality structures, which his students found confusing. He, together with Piet Verburg proposed the idea of an "idionomy" –a particular law for each thing. Dooyeweerd rejected this (Personal communication to me from Magnus Verbrugge, who learned of it from Piet Verburg). It seems to me that the basis for Dooyeweerd's objection was his idea that the law is one *side* of an individuality structure, and that the idea of idionomy presupposes that structural law and individual things are in some sense independent of each other.

comes before that of humans. But the higher realms do not derive from the lower (*Isagoogè* par. 22, note 2).

The different realms are therefore important for Vollenhoven in opposing evolutionism. Dooyeweerd was not as opposed to evolutionary theories that argue that there has been development from one realm to another. See for example Dooyeweerd's letter to Duyvené de Wit:

> I thought that it should be clear at the outset for readers and listeners: whether there is a genetic line that runs from a one-celled being via multi-celled organisms to the first man — about this we can say neither yes nor no.
>
> […] Whenever we try to oppose "macroevolution" with the help of the "mechanisms of microevolution," such as mutations and so on that we can observe today, we may say, "Gentlemen, in this way the "gene pool" can only grow smaller and can never become greater." That is of great importance scientifically, but it does not prove, and cannot prove that there has been no macroevolution.[31]

So whereas both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd speak of the various realms of mineral, plant and animal, Vollenhoven's concern is primarily to show that one realm did not derive from another realm. For Dooyeweerd, what is important is not opposing evolutionism, but to show the temporal differentiation from out of the supratemporal totality. For Dooyeweerd, creation is supratemporal, and both evolutionism and creationism are speculative because they try to describe creation in temporal terms.

2.5. Cosmic time

Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the idea of cosmic time is the basis of his philosophical theory of reality (*NC* I, 28). Dooyeweerd says that Vollenhoven had raised objections to his understanding of time, but that Vollenhoven had not completely thought through his critique.[32]

For Dooyeweerd, cosmic time is what differentiates supratemporal totality into temporal diversity: it is the medium through which the meaning totality is broken up into the modal diversity of aspects (*NC* I, 16). It also differentiates the central law into the temporal cosmic law. Cosmic time is given with and limited to the cosmos. There is also a more complete time, the *aevum*. The *aevum* is the time that governs our supratemporal selfhood as well as the angelic realm (about which Dooyeweerd does not speculate). The *aevum* is thus different from cosmic time. But it is also different from God's eternity. It is a "created eternity," in contrast to *aeternitas increata*, the uncreated eternity of God.[33]

Where does time fit within Vollenhoven's triad of God-law-cosmos? For Vollenhoven, nothing that has been created is above time [*Problemen* 179].

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[31] My translation of an excerpt from Dooyeweerd's letter dated Feb. 11, 1964 to Prof. J.J. Duyvené de Wit of Bloemfontein, South Africa, who had sought Dooyeweerd's advice regarding creation science (in the Dooyeweerd Archives).

[32] Taped conversation with M. Verbrugge August 11/74, referred to in Verburg, 89.

[33] Herman Dooyeweerd: "Het Tijdsprobleem en zijn Antinomieën op het Immanentiestandpunt", *Philosophia Reformata* 1 (1936), 69 ['*Antinomieën*'].

Even the angels are within time. But the law is above time:

> Now the law is supratemporal; the law […] [is related to] temporality, but then [only] insofar as it affects subjects in that which is subjected [to law]. (*Problemen 179).*

Vollenhoven has no separate *aevum* concept. He thought that any view of supratemporality in man would lead to dualism (see *Kaarten* 280). It seems that this is due to his belief that the supratemporal referred to the unchanging, since he warns against anthropological dualism in the sense of: "the transcendent [part of man] is unchanging, the non-transcendent is changing" (*Problemen* 185). And yet Vollenhoven himself, unlike Dooyeweerd, links time with change! Vollenhoven says, "Time implies change in and through creatures" (*Problemen* 176). In linking time with change, Vollenhoven assumes (1) that time and eternity are the only options (2) that time corresponds to temporal change in creatures and (3) eternity corresponds to God as Creator. Vollenhoven himself therefore presupposes a fundamental dualism between changing creaturely temporality and God's eternity.

For Dooyeweerd, all becoming and perishing [ontstaan en vergaan] takes place in time. But time itself is not a becoming (*Antinomieën* 68). To limit time to change is therefore to miss its fundamental importance for the cosmos. Nor does Dooyeweerd agree that the eternal is to be viewed as the changeless. Dooyeweerd denies that the supratemporal religious center is to be found in a rigid and static immobility. "That is a metaphysical-Greek idea of supra-temporality" (*NC* I, 31-33, ft. 1). Dooyeweerd says that the Bible does not even ascribe to God any supratemporality in this Greek metaphysical sense (*NC* I, 106, ft. 1). There is therefore a dynamism even within God. And man, as the supratemporal religious root of temporal reality, is also dynamic, since man as religious root is the image of God.

2.6. The Selfhood

a) The supratemporal heart

For Dooyeweerd, the idea of the supratemporal heart is "the key of knowledge."[34] He says that the idea of the supratemporal selfhood must be the presupposition of any truly Christian view.[35] Without this idea of the supratemporal selfhood, we cannot even understand the idea of the irreducibility of the modal aspects (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 100).

Like most reformational philosophers, Vollenhoven rejects Dooyeweerd's idea of the supratemporal heart. Conflicting reasons are given for rejecting the idea. At first, the objection of the theologian Hepp was that Dooyeweerd

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[34] Herman Dooyeweerd: *In the Twilight of Western Thought. Studies in the Pretended Autonomy of Theoretical Thought*, (Nutley, N.J.: The Craig Press, 1968, first published 1961), 125, 145. ['*Twilight*'].

[35] Herman Dooyeweerd: *De Crisis der Humanistische Staatsleer* (Amsterdam: W. Ten Have, 1931), p. 113: "…voor iedere wezenlijk Christelijke beschouwing der tijdelijke samenleving." ['*Crisis*']

denied the dualism of soul and body.[36] Later, Vollenhoven objected that the supratemporal heart was too dualistic.[37]

The early Vollenhoven followed Poincaré's ennoëtism (*Kaarten*, 168, 245). The word 'ennoëtism' is derived from the Greek word '*nous*.' It is the belief that from one origin (e.g. a fertilized egg), a higher soul diverges from a lower living body (*Kaarten* 371). In his 1918 thesis, Vollenhoven regarded ennoëtism as dualistic. He later changed his classification of ennoëtism to monistic. But whether monistic or dualistic, ennoëtism regards the higher soul as supratemporal. In his thesis, Vollenhoven says that the soul is a supratemporal substance.[38] He refers to his views as "theistic, dualistic intuitionism" (Stellingwerff 27). Again in 1919, Vollenhoven argued for the metaphysical existence of the selfhood as substance: he said that there must be a soul to perform the act of counting.[39] This appears at first to have some similarity to Dooyeweerd's later view that a supratemporal selfhood is required for all acts.[40] But Vollenhoven's view of the soul was different from Dooyeweerd's idea of the supratemporal selfhood, because Vollenhoven did not conceive of the soul as the center of temporal being, but rather as one part of the self that needed to relate to another part. In any event, whatever similarity there may have been in 1919, Vollenhoven later rejected a dualistic view of soul in favour of a monistic anthropology. He believed that in human reproduction, the soul and body come from one source, the fertilized egg. God does not create the soul separately at or before birth.[41] In his problem-historical method he then classified philosophers according to how they viewed the relation of the soul to the body (i.e., parallelism, interactionism, etc.).[42] But this whole discussion of the origin of the soul and body, and the way they are viewed as relating to each

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[36] The theologian Valentijn Hepp criticized Dooyeweerd for denying the dualism of body and soul (Verburg 208). But Hepp subjected Vollenhoven's ideas to even greater criticism. Of 79 references given by Hepp of passages that he found offensive, 78 referred to Vollenhoven and only one to Dooyeweerd (Verburg 210). For Vollenhoven, there is nothing in a human being that survives death, at least until the resurrection. But Dooyeweerd believed that our supratemporal heart survives the death of our temporal body or "mantle of functions" ['*functiemantel*'].

[37] Vollenhoven makes this objection in *Kring* 211. See also the references in *Kaarten* 280. Many other reformational philosophers have regarded a reference to the supratemporal as dualistic. I believe that like Vollenhoven, they have misunderstood the nature of the supratemporal. W.J. Ouweneel has an extensive discussion of Dooyeweerd's idea of the supratemporal heart in his 1986 thesis, *De leer van de mens. Proeve van een christelijk-wijsgerige antropologie* (Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit, 1986), 346ff.

[38] See Vollenhoven's thesis, *De Wijsbegeerte der Wiskunde van Theïstisch Standpunt* (Thesis, Free University of Amsterdam, 1918), 439, 441 ['*Wiskunde*'].

[39] Vollenhoven and A. Janse: "De Activiteit der Ziel in het Rekenonderwijs", *Paedagogisch Tijdschrift voor het Christelijk Onderwijs* (1919), 97-109 ['*Rekenonderwijs*'].

[40] Herman Dooyeweerd: "De leer van den mensch in de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee", *Correspondentie-Bladen* VII (Dec. 1942), translated as "The Theory of Man: Thirty-two Propositions on Anthropology", (mimeo, Institute for Christian Studies) ['32 Propositions']. See also *NC* III, 88.

[41] Bril points out that this is in contrast to 'creatianism' [distinct from 'creationism'], where the soul comes from elsewhere, as in reincarnation, or as in traducianism (*Kaarten* 288).

[42] Vollenhoven changed his own view from a zoological interactionism to a pneumatological interactionism (*Kaarten* 8, 9, 168; Charts 45 and 46c). In both cases, Vollenhoven regarded the soul as wholly temporal.

other, is foreign to Dooyeweerd's idea of the supratemporal selfhood, which is neither dualistic nor monistic, but nondual in its relation to the temporal body. Dooyeweerd uses nondualistic language in referring to the duality/unity [*twee(-een)heid*] of the supratemporal religious heart center and its temporal mantle of functions [*'functiemantel'*]. The supratemporal heart is the root-unity of the temporal mantle of functions ('Kuyper's Wetenschapsleer,' 204).

Vollenhoven's rejection of a dualistic view of the soul was related to his discussions with A. Janse, a teacher at Biggekerke, who had written about scholasticism in Reformed dogmatics. Janse concluded that the "immortal soul" was neither immortal nor a soul.[43] Vollenhoven says that Janse had come to a more fruitful view of the "living soul" (cf. Genesis 2:7) than traditional speculation. He refers to Janse's work concerning Lourens Ingelse (a mystic born in 1742, who was banished from Zeeland, Holland and West Friesland because of his fanatical opposition to the new versification of the Psalter). Janse was concerned about the extreme "subjectivism" in some of these experiences. Janse warned that we should not replace our childlike faith with an inner experience that he regarded as posing in the literal sense a "deadly danger." [44]

Vollenhoven replaced his dualistic idea of soul with the idea of a "pre-functional" and fully temporal unity (*Isagoogè* par. 90). He wanted to avoid any dualism within the self. Dooyeweerd specifically rejected such a view of a pre-functional center (*NC* I, 31-33 fn. 1). Dooyeweerd says that we have no experience of such a pre-functional unity. Dooyeweerd emphasizes that our selfhood is more than just a temporal functional coherence (*NC* I, 4 ft 1).

b) Man as the image of God

The idea that man is created as the image of God is key to Dooyeweerd's anthropology. Being created in the image of God is related to the concentration of temporal reality in our selfhood as religious root:

> He [God] has expressed His image in man by concentrating its entire temporal existence in the radical religious unity of an ego in which the totality of meaning of the temporal cosmos was to be focused upon its Origin (*NC* I, 55).

We are the *expression* of God's image, and as such we exist only as *meaning*, *referring* back to God. This idea of expression and meaning is related to Dooyeweerd's view of creation as being "out, from and towards God" (cf. Romans 11:36). *Expression* is "out and from," and *meaning* or referring is "towards."

In our selfhood, all the different modalities coincide in a radical unity:

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[43] See the talk on Jan. 8, 2000 by H. Nijenhuis, Vollenhoven's son-in-law. Online at [http://http://aspecten.org/teksten/teks.html]. Vollenhoven's struggle with these issues led to a nervous breakdown in 1922. In the beginning of 1923 he was admitted to a clinic for ten months.

[44] D.H.Th. Vollenhoven: "In Memoriam Antheunis Janse 1890–1960", online at [http://aspecten.org/vollenhoven/60d.htm]. Vollenhoven's nervous breakdown occurred while he was giving a sermon, emphasizing the importance of our "becoming as a little child." This appears to relate to Janse's emphasis on "childlike faith." With respect to Lourens Ingelse, see his *Merkwaardige Bekeringsgeschiedenis van Lourens Ingelse* (Middelburg: Stichting Gihonbron, 2001, originally published circa 1787); online at [http://www.theologienet.nl/westerbeke/ingelse_bekeringsgesch.rtf].

> The radical unity of all the different modalities in which they coalesce, is [...] the concentration of meaning in the *imago Dei*, which is nothing in itself, but rather the reflection of the Divine Being in the central human sphere of creaturely meaning. And since the fall of mankind this *imago Dei* is only revealed in its true sense in Jesus Christ (*NC* III, 68-69).

Dooyeweerd's ideas of the image of God as 'expression' and of its true expression in Christ's incarnation are also found in Kuyper:

> Moreover, you must understand that all this rests upon sober reality. It is not semblance, but actual fact, because God created you after His Image, so that with all the wide difference between God and man, divine reality is expressed in human form. And that, when the Word became Flesh, this Incarnation of the Son of God was immediately connected with your creation after God's Image.[45]

Vollenhoven specifically rejects the idea that man *is* the image of God (*Kring* 201, 202; *Problemen* 186). Vollenhoven thought that to say that man *is* the image is too ontological an interpretation, and that it results in a static passivity. Instead, Vollenhoven says that we are called to become the image of God. By this he means that we are called to live in accordance with God's commandments:

> In the Scriptures, to be the image of God is a characteristic of human life that we can lack if we do not live in accordance with God's commandments (*Kring* 202).

Vollenhoven's opinion regarding static passivity rests on a misunderstanding of the nature of man's supratemporality and God's eternity. It is true that Dooyeweerd says that Christ shows us the meaning of *imago Dei* as being self-surrender (*NC* II, 149). But such self-surrender is not passivity. Rather, it is love in the fullness of its meaning, as demonstrated by Christ. We are not the image of a static God. God is not like that (*NC* I, 106, ft. 1). Nor is man's supratemporal religious center to be found in a rigid and static immobility (*NC* I, 31-33, ft. 1). God as Trinity is dynamic, and so is our regenerated selfhood: the *dynamis* of the Holy Ghost "...brings man into the relationship of sonship to the Divine Father (*NC* I, 61). The idea of image of God gives the real account of why our self-knowledge is dependent on knowledge of God, in that God has expressed His image in man by concentrating its entire temporal existence in this radical religious unity (*NC* I, 55). Just as God expresses His image in our selfhood, so our selfhood expresses itself in the coherence of temporal functions (*NC* I, 4). Dooyeweerd even refers to this expression of our selfhood within temporal reality as 'revelation' [*openbaring*] (see 'Curators').

c) Created temporal reality and the religious root

Vollenhoven says that by 'cosmos' Dooyeweerd means "that part of creation that finds its center in man" (*Divergentierapport* 113). Dooyeweerd believes that

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[45] Abraham Kuyper: *To Be Near Unto God* (New York, Macmillan, 1925), section 5, "When He Turneth Himself Unto Prayer." This is a translation of *Nabij God te Zijn* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1908), 22. Online at [http://www.kuyper.org/main/publish/books_essays/article_25.shtml?page=6]. The phrase "after his Image" is a translation of "naar zijn beeld."

all of temporal reality finds its center and existence in the religious root, the supratemporal selfhood. In fact, temporal reality has no existence except within this supratemporal religious root. Apart from this religious root-unity, the temporal world has no meaning and so no reality. Because of this, the world fell with man in the fall into sin:

> Hence the apostasy in the heart, in the religious root of the temporal world signified the apostasy of the entire temporal creation, which was concentrated in mankind (*NC* I, 100).

Expanding on Augustine, Dooyeweerd says, "Inquietum est *cor* nostrum et mundus in corde nostro!" (*NC* I, 11). The Latin phrase is not translated. It means that our *heart* is restless, and that the world is restless in our heart! So the phrase includes the fact that the temporal world has its meaning and existence in our heart, the supratemporal center or totality.

Since Vollenhoven rejects the idea of the supratemporal selfhood, he also rejects Dooyeweerd's view that the cosmos is concentrated in humanity.[46] As we shall see, this affects Vollenhoven's view of the fall into sin. And Vollenhoven has only a weak denial of the idea that things exist in themselves. For him this means only that a thing cannot exist without coherences [*samenhangen*] with other things, and without its own internal coherence (*Isagoogè* par. 69). Dooyeweerd's denial is much more radical: the diversity of the temporal world has no meaning or reality except in relation to its religious root in mankind (*NC* I, 100). Dooyeweerd specifically links his denial of the idea of substance with the "radical individual concentration of temporal reality in the human I-ness." (*NC* II, 417; see the discussion in my article *Enkapsis*).

d) Distinction between selfhood and ego

Humans exist both as temporal and supratemporal beings. "The central and radical unity of our existence is at the same time individual and supra-individual" (*NC* I, 59, 60). We are individual within time and supra-individual in our supratemporal existence.

> Het zelfbewustzijn draagt noodzakelijk tegelijk een den tijd transcendeerend en den tijd immanent karakter. De diepere identiteit, welke in de zelf-heid beleefd wordt, is een trans-functioneele, het is het zich een-dezelfde weten in en boven alle kosmisch-tijdelijke zinfuncties en het zich zijn tijdelijke zinfuncties als eigen weten (*Crisis*, 97).
>
> [Self-consciousness necessarily carries with it a character that both transcends time and is immanent within it. The deeper identity, which is experienced in the selfhood, is trans-functional; it is a knowing oneself as the same in and above all cosmic-temporal meaning-functions, and to know one's temporal meaning-functions as one's own.]

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[46] The South African reformational philosopher Hendrik Stoker also rejected the idea of the religious concentration point of our temporal world. He rejected Dooyeweerd's idea of the central position of mankind in our "earthly cosmos" and wanted to view everything "in its immediate relation to God" without the intermediary of Jesus Christ [the new religious root]. Stoker called Dooyeweerd's viewpoint 'Christocentric' (*NC* III, 75).

This relation of knowing the temporal functions as "one's own" has not been much commented on in reformational philosophy. Dooyeweerd says that in our naive experience, our intuition is involved in this relation between temporal reality and our selfhood. Our intuition shows us that our temporal functions are "our own." The aspects are our own "cosmically" (*NC* II, 474; *WdW* II, 409). We have an immediate enstatic experience of temporal reality as our own (*NC* II, 479; *WdW* II, 414). Even the identification of a sensation such as a sweet taste would be impossible without this intuition:

> How could I really be *aware* of a sweet taste, if I could not relate this sensory impression to *myself*, by means of my intuition entering into the cosmic stream of time? (*NC* II, 478)

Although the *New Critique* does not always correctly translate the distinction, Dooyeweerd emphasizes that our supratemporal selfhood, the concentration point of temporal reality, is different from our temporal ego. Our temporal ego is merely the concentration point of our individual existence, not of the entire temporal cosmos (*NC* I, 59).

Vollenhoven has no such distinction between selfhood and temporal ego. In fact Vollenhoven objects to speaking at all about "the self" and "the I" (*Problemen* 185).[47]

e) Enkapsis

Enkapsis is the intertwinement of different individuality structures.[48] For Dooyeweerd, our temporal embodiment is an interlacing or *enkapsis* of four different individuality structures: the inorganic, the organic, the psychical and the act structures. These individuality structures apply only to our temporal body, and not to our supratemporal selfhood. Our acts proceed from out of our supratemporal selfhood, but they function within the *enkapsis* of our temporal "body" or mantle of functions [*functiemantel*] (32 Propositions).

Since Vollenhoven does not accept the idea of individuality structures, the idea of *enkapsis* also plays no role in his philosophy. For him, only things are related to each other, and not individuality structures.

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[47] Vollenhoven's rejection of "the self" and "the I" seems to show the influence of Janse, who also objected to any idea of a directing higher selfhood. See A. Janse: *Rondom de Reformatie* (Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre N.V., 1939). Vollenhoven expresses the fear that Dooyeweerd's reference to the supratemporal has associations of higher and lower realms, and that it will lead people to make connections with monists like Leibniz, or even stronger, with dualists, or non-dichotomistic thinkers like Barth [1886-1968], dichotomistic thinkers like Ludwig Klages [1872-1956], phrenological thinkers and spiritualists, and to some extent C.G. Jung [1875-1961]. Instead of the term 'supratemporal,' Vollenhoven proposes using the term 'buitentijdelijk' or "outside the temporal" (*Divergentierapport* 116). Dooyeweerd did not follow this advice.

[48] Dooyeweerd's idea of *enkapsis* was very likely obtained from the philosophy of totality, and in particular from the writings of Max Wundt (1879-1963). Wundt refers to the sources that Dooyeweerd was later to use, Rudolf Heidenhain (1834-1897) and Theodor Haering (1884-1964). And Wundt's criticism of Heidenhain and Haering is similar to Dooyeweerd's later criticism. See my article *Enkapsis*.

2.7. Modalities

Reformational philosophers have extensively analyzed the modal aspects. But they do not seem to have considered the implications of the disagreement between Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven concerning the very nature of the aspects. Dooyeweerd emphasizes that without the idea of the supratemporal religious root, the modal aspects have no meaning (*NC* II, 474). And Vollenhoven clearly rejects the idea of the supratemporal religious root.

a) The prism

Dooyeweerd regards cosmic time as the medium by which the supratemporal totality is split up into the modal aspects. Time splits up totality into the various aspects just like light passing through a prism breaks into a spectrum of colours, none of which is reducible to any other colour, but all of which find their origin in the totality of the white light (*NC* I, 101, 102).

Vollenhoven's rejection of cosmic time as the basis of temporal differentiation means that he also rejects this analogy of the prism (*Problemen* 179). Vollenhoven objects to the whole idea of the "temporal refraction of meaning" (*Divergentierapport* 113-14). For him, time does not determine the cosmic order, but rather stands in relations to things.

b) The ontological priority of the aspects

Dooyeweerd emphasizes the ontological priority of the modal aspects with respect to individuality structures. Individuality structures presuppose the aspects, and not the other way around:

> The modal structures *lie at the foundation of* the individuality structures, *and not the other way around* [Dooyeweerd's italics] (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 90).

Only after the modalities are individuated can we speak of structure.[49] Modalities are individuated into modal structures. These modal structures are not individuality structures. Nor are these modal structures the same as the functions of individuality structures. The modal structures have an ontological priority to individuality structures, which then function *in* these modal structures (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 90; and see my article *Enkapsis*).

Vollenhoven does not make this distinction between modal aspects and the functioning of things in the aspects. Vollenhoven expresses the fear that Dooyeweerd makes the aspects too independent (*Kring* 204). This is because for Vollenhoven, things come before aspects, and aspects are properties or functions of these things. Vollenhoven refers to aspects as the "not further analyzable determinations" [*niet te analyseren bepaaldheden*] of things. We begin by analyzing realms into kinds and kinds into things, and things into their aspects.

> …het concrete steeds verder analyserend komt men tenslotte bij niet verder to analyseren verscheidenheden uit. (*Isagoogè* par. 23)

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[49] Discussion following Vollenhoven's lecture '*Kring*' on March 29, 1968 (Verburg 248, fn. 42).

> […by continually further analyzing the concrete we finally arrive at a diversity that cannot be further analyzed]

This method of deriving the aspects from concrete things is precisely the method that Dooyeweerd so strongly criticized in his last article *Gegenstandsrelatie*:

> There is a serious misunderstanding concerning this cardinal point even by some adherents of the Philosophy of the Law-Idea, insofar as they are of the opinion that the modal structures can be discovered by an ever-continuing abstraction of the concrete experience of reality (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 90).

Vollenhoven refers to aspects as properties of things. This is not surprising, since his two fundamental distinctions are the "this-that" and the "thus-so" distinctions. The "thus-so" refers to the different ways that things function. Vollenhoven refers to aspects as "thus-so" [*zus-zo*] determinations; he says that these are "important properties for the structure of what has been created" (*Isagoogè* par. 43). Vollenhoven says that the spatial is not a mode of intuition (as in Kant), but a property [*eigenschap*] of all things (*Isagoogè* par. 31 note 2, para.54). Dooyeweerd rejects the idea that aspects are properties of things.[50]

c) The temporal succession of the modalities

Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the order of the aspects is a temporal order of succession. There is a "successive refraction of meaning" (*NC* I, 106). Each aspect represents a "moment" in our experience, and each such moment stands in an order of temporal succession, of before and after.

Vollenhoven denies that the order of the aspects is an order of cosmic time. According to Vollenhoven, the aspects are ordered by increasing complexity and not by time (*Isagoogè* par. 55). Vollenhoven sees Dooyeweerd's view as a "substantialization of time."

For Vollenhoven, time does not determine the cosmic order, but rather stands in relation to things:

> [The] *temporal order* is not an order of modalities. It is true that in retrocipation, the higher modality does presuppose the lower just as the more complicated presupposes the less complicated. But *temporal order is first present in the order of realms* (*Problemen* 178).

That is why Vollenhoven says Dooyeweerd begins "too soon" with time. For Vollenhoven, time does not appear in the modalities, but temporal order "begins with the different realms." Vollenhoven says that we can only speak of temporal order in "events" or in things that change: "We must see time in connection with change." (*Problemen* 177). Vollenhoven also disagrees with Dooyeweerd's views regarding anticipations and retrocipations. This was made clear in Vollenhoven's response to Dooyeweerd's address of January 2, 1964 to the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy (Verburg 381). Stellingwerff says that the whole issue of the order of the law-spheres was of secondary importance to

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[50] Dooyeweerd objected to referring to the aspects as "kinds of properties and laws" instead of "modes of experience." See Letter from Roy Clouser to Dooyeweerd dated June 21, 1972, in the Dooyeweerd Archives (Lade I, 2). This letter was written after Clouser had completed all but minor revisions to his doctoral thesis at the University of Pennsylvania, and after extensive discussions between Clouser and Dooyeweerd the year before.

Vollenhoven; what was primary for him was the distinction between the law-order of the lower realms in contrast to that which belongs to man. He did not want to finally determine the order of the normative functions (Stellingwerff 248-49).

d) Sphere sovereignty

In his last article *Gegenstandsrelatie,* Dooyeweerd says that not even the aspects can be understood apart from the supratemporal selfhood. The idea of the irreducibility of the modal spheres "cannot be separated from the transcendental idea of their root-unity in the religious center of human existence" (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 100). He says on the same page that the "meaning-kernels cannot be interpreted in an intra-modal logical sense without canceling their irreducibility." Statements in his other writings explain these statements. The nuclear meaning-moment, which guarantees the sovereignty of an aspect, is in the supratemporal center. There is a systatic coherence between the kernel and its analogies (*Crisis* 102-103, excerpted in Verburg, 143). The kernel or nucleus of each aspect is that which gives that aspect its sphere sovereignty. By this kernel or nucleus, the aspect maintains its individuality with respect to all the other aspects of temporal reality. It is the central and directive moment within each aspect. We cannot define the kernel or each aspect because by this kernel an aspect maintains its individuality even against the logical aspect. The central meaning moment can only be known in the other analogical moments that are not in the center. There is a unity and coherence within each aspect.[51]

Because Vollenhoven denies the supratemporal selfhood, he cannot have this same view of sphere sovereignty. Surprisingly, Vollenhoven says that the term 'sphere sovereignty' may even have to be changed (*Kring* 204).

e) Some specific modalities

Because of their different understanding of the meaning of the modal aspects, it is hard to compare Vollenhoven's understanding of a specific aspect with that of Dooyeweerd. But let us consider the historical aspect. Vollenhoven says that already in 1929 he had decided that history could not be a function (*Kring* 207). Vollenhoven's objection seems to ignore Dooyeweerd's distinction between the historical aspect, and the acts that proceed from out of our supratemporal selfhood and that are expressed in all temporal modalities.

Because Vollenhoven did not accept the historical aspect, he felt that he had to defend himself against the charge of historicism:

> If one says that the historical is a function, then of course whoever does not see history as a function is occupied in a powerful overestimation of a function, and you could then call that historicism. But [Prof. Dr. J.P.A.] Mekkes has made a distinction between 'historicism' in this sense and the sense in which everyone usually understands it. The latter historicism is correct insofar as it finds time in all relations (*Kring* 209).

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[51] Herman Dooyeweerd: "Introduction to a Transcendental Criticism of Philosophic Thought," *Evangelical Quarterly* 19 (1) (Jan 1947), 42-51.

It is not clear who made the charge of historicism against Vollenhoven. It is also unclear to me why Vollenhoven made this objection in *Kring* when already in 1943 he had included the historical as one of the aspects (*Isagoogè* par. 64).

Vollenhoven says that the distinction between normative and non-normative does not correspond to the higher and lower aspects (*Divergentierapport* 114). But he himself uses it that way: "Norm only appears after the logical, for only in the logical do we speak of distinguishing" (*Problemen* 188).

In later life, Vollenhoven rejected faith (the pistical) as the highest modality. For Vollenhoven, faith is something central in man's heart (although he believed this heart to be only pre-functional, not supratemporal). Vollenhoven said that Dooyeweerd's idea of the pistical modality pointing towards the transcendent had something to do with his idea of the image of God, which Vollenhoven also rejected (Stellingwerff 248). For Dooyeweerd, the supratemporal heart is the religious dimension of our experience, which is not to be confused with its temporal expression in faith.

3. *Epistemology*

Vollenhoven refers to differences with Dooyeweerd relating to "the whole question of epistemology" [*kentheorie*] (*Divergentierapport* 112). Here are some of their disagreements:

3.1. The subject-object relation

For Dooyeweerd, there is a subject-object relation within the modal structures. This is related to his view that the aspects occur in a temporal succession of earlier and later. The later aspects objectify the subject functions of other earlier aspects, in their retrocipations, such as when the subjective modal functions of number, space, movement, energy, and organic life are psychically objectified:

> *Now it appears that the possibility of objectification in the modal aspect of feeling is primarily bound to the retrocipatory structure of this modal aspect (NC II,* 373, italics Dooyeweerd)

So the subject-object relation is found in all law-spheres with retrocipations (*NC* III, 383). This objectification of earlier aspects is also important in Dooyeweerd's theory of perception. He gives an example of perceiving a tree. My perception in the psychical aspect objectifies the tree's subjective physical functions. Within my subjective psychical function, the tree does not function as a subject, but only as an object. Thus, when I observe a tree, the subjective physical ("reality") functions are objectified within my psychical perceptual image (*WdW* I, 50; II, 401; see also *NC* II, 370-382 regarding perception and retrocipation).

Since Vollenhoven denies the temporal succession of aspects, he cannot have the same idea of the subject-object relation. For him, the subject-object

relation occurs only in things; it is a "horizontal" relation between two things (*Problemen* 191, 193). Vollenhoven's view of perception is thus much closer to naïve realism than that of Dooyeweerd.

Vollenhoven denies that the first four aspects have any object functions; things only have subject functions in the first four aspects. This leads him to the formulation "The physicist does not deal with objects but only with subjects" (*Problemen* 177). Dooyeweerd limits the entire subject-object relation to naïve experience; therefore for Dooyeweerd, science (including physics) does not deal with either objects or subjects, but rather with a *Gegenstand* that does not have an ontical character (*NC* I, 39).

For Vollenhoven, object functions appear only following the physical aspect:

> >The definition of an object function can now be described as "the repetition of the meaning of the subject-functions of *things of lower realms*." Thus, object-functions appear [only] after the physical [aspect]; these object-functions are built [upon the physical].< (*Problemen* 177).

Vollenhoven says that the temporal order does apply to the remaining aspects (above the first four), but only because *things* have object functions in those aspects.

Vollenhoven discusses Dooyeweerd's idea of subject-object relations within the aspects, with particular emphasis on the mathematical and spatial aspects. For Dooyeweerd, there are both object and subject functions in the spatial aspect; a point is the objectification of the numerical in the spatial (*NC* III, 383ff).

Vollenhoven specifically denies that a point is the objectification of the numerical in the spatial. And Vollenhoven denies that there is a specific "moment" of time in the arithmetical and spatial aspects (*Problemen* 179).

If time is not in these aspects, does this mean that the mathematical and the spatial are outside of time? That is Vollenhoven's view in *Divergentierapport* 115: there is a "non-temporal order of small and large." But in his two later lectures, Vollenhoven seems to realize that if he says that the first two aspects (the mathematical and the spatial) are outside of time, then this means that they are somehow *a priori*. He wants to reject such an *a priori* in order to avoid the charge of rationalism. Vollenhoven therefore says that these aspects are in time because *things*, which have these aspects, are in time. In *Kring* 207 he says, "I certainly do not say that the functions belong outside of time — time is also in the functions." And in *Problemen* 177 he says,

> That does not mean that we must remove the arithmetical and spatial from time in order to make them a priori — as rationalism does — for time is always inherent in (physical) things.

It is certainly debatable whether Vollenhoven managed to avoid the problem of rationalism by saying that the arithmetical and the spatial occur in things. In any event, Dooyeweerd did not agree with Vollenhoven's view that the mathematical and spatial aspects are outside of time (Verburg 380-81).

3.2. Theoretical and pre-theoretical

Both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd distinguish between pre-theoretical and theoretical experience. But for Vollenhoven (and later for Strauss and Clouser), the difference is one of degree of intensity and focus of attention. In our theory, we direct our attention to specific fields of experience of which we were already aware in non-theoretical experience. To be involved in a special science is therefore to direct the analysis of the researcher to a non-analytical law-sphere. We analyze a non-analytical law-sphere from out of its cosmic coherence, making it into a "field of research." In the special sciences, there is a further isolation of progressively more precise [*fijner*] coherences in the separate law-spheres (*Isagoogè* par. 198).

For Vollenhoven there is also an implicit non-theoretical knowledge of the aspects: inter-individual perception only makes sense if there also exists an intra-individual perception (*Isagoogè* par. 158). And as discussed above, Vollenhoven believes that we theoretically distinguish the aspects by a process of ever further refinement of analysis.

In Vollenhoven's triadic idea of God-law-cosmos, the law sets out the structure of creation. In pre-theoretical experience, we have a "horizontal" relation with things. Theory involves a "vertical" distinguishing of the aspects. And the vertical is a relation between the logical and the non-logical functions:

> It is incorrect to state that the knowable is simply identical to the object. Fortunately, one sees again today something of the subject in the knowable, via the idea of the act. [But] we must not overestimate the horizontal subject-object relation, and we must clearly see and acknowledge the vertical relation (e.g. the logical and the non-logical). (*Problemen* 193)

For Dooyeweerd, the difference between non-theoretical and theoretical experience is much more fundamental. Dooyeweerd disagrees with the view that theory is only a matter of degree, or a different focus of intention, a making explicit what was implicit. There is no implied knowledge of the different aspects in our pre-theoretical experience; the distinguishing of the aspects first occurs in theoretical experience (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 92, 97). And as we have seen, Dooyeweerd strongly criticizes the view that this distinguishing is analytical, or an ever-increasing abstraction.

3.3. The Gegenstand Relation as opposed to abstraction

Dooyeweerd says that his idea of the *Gegenstand*-relation cannot be understood apart from the supratemporal selfhood. For in theory, we split apart into a distasis the temporal reality that in naïve experience we experience as an enstasis (*NC* II, 472-474). The splitting apart cannot itself be the logical function of thought, for that would imply a logicism (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 97, 100). Theory is an *epoché*; this is not to be understood in Husserl's sense, but in the sense of a refraining from the continuity of time (*NC* II, 468 fn.1). We refrain from our

own experience of continuity. Theory thus is intentional[52] and the *Gegenstand* of our theoretical thought does not have an ontical character (*NC* I, 39).

Since Vollenhoven rejects the supratemporal selfhood, he cannot share the idea that theory is based on a *Gegenstand*-relation. Vollenhoven rejects Dooyeweerd's view of science as an abstraction from time. Although Vollenhoven does speak of science in terms of a *Gegenstand*-relation, for him this relation is always coupled with the subject-object relation (which he sees as a horizontal relation between two things) (Stellingwerff 243). Thus, although Vollenhoven sometimes uses the word '*Gegenstand*' (e.g. in *Problemen* 178), he uses it in a different sense from Dooyeweerd. Dooyeweerd distinguishes between the subject-object relation and the *Gegenstand*-relation, and Dooyeweerd sees the latter in terms of an abstraction from the continuity of time.

If we look at the development of Vollenhoven's thought, it is also interesting to note that he changed his meaning of the term '*Gegenstand*' over time. In '*Rekenonderwijs*', Vollenhoven and Janse distinguished between (1) the act of thinking, (2) the *Gegenstand*, (3) the contents of the *Gegenstand* that distinguish it from other *Gegenstände*, and (4) the "given" that is independent of thought. They write:

> 'Gegenstand' is the object that is immanent within the spirit [*geest*], and that arises by the working together of the functions of the human spirit with the "given."

And yet even at that time, Vollenhoven had a view of the *Gegenstand* in terms of properties of things. He gives as an example the representation "blue." He distinguishes among:

(i) the act of representation, which is itself not blue
(ii) the *Gegenstand* "blue" which is the "what" of my representation
(iii) the content of the *Gegenstand*; that which specifically distinguishes it from "red" or from "chair" and
(iv) the "given" which in this case consists of vibrations by which we are made aware of colour.

Dooyeweerd does not speak of colours in terms of a *Gegenstand*. Nor would Dooyeweerd agree with this view of the given — as objects giving off vibrations that we then perceive as colour. That would involve us in the distinction between primary and secondary properties — a distinction that Dooyeweerd rejects. In any event, when Vollenhoven later rejected a dualistic view of the soul, the *Gegenstand*-relation became for him a wholly temporal matter. He says that all knowing and all consciousness is with the body (*Problemen* 191).

Although for Dooyeweerd, the *Gegenstand*-relation involves setting the logical aspect "over-against" the non-logical aspects, Dooyeweerd denies that the *Gegenstand*-relation is itself of a logical nature (*Gegenstandsrelatie* 85, 91, 100-101). Vollenhoven's analysis of the aspects must be of a logical nature, since

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[52] 'Intentional' is not to be understood in Husserl's sense, but in the sense of an intentional inexistence. See J. Glenn Friesen: "The Mystical Dooyeweerd: The Relation of his Thought to Franz von Baader," *Ars Disputandi* 3 (2003) [http://www.arsdisputandi.org/publish/articles/000088/index.html].

logic involves distinguishing, and analysis is making good distinctions (*Isagoogè* par. 153).

3.4. Intuition

In Dooyeweerd's view of theory, once we have split temporal reality apart into a dis-stasis, we need to bring it together again into a synthesis. We do this by means of our intuition. Our intuition is required for the inter-modal meaning synthesis. This intuition is "necessarily related to the transcendent *selfhood*" (*NC* II, 478). Our intuition relates this synthesis to our religious root (supratemporal selfhood):

> In this intuition I implicitly relate the intermodal meaning-synthesis to the transcendent identity of the modal functions I experience in the religious root of my existence (*NC* II, 479).

Only man has this ability to relate to a supratemporal selfhood:

> Only his [man's] selfhood is able to enter into the temporal cosmos by means of his intuition of time and to set apart and combine the modal aspects in theoretical thought (*NC* II, 480).

Dooyeweerd contrasts man, who by means of his selfhood and intuition of time is thus able to enter enstatically into the coherence of cosmic time, with creatures that have no such selfhood and who are ex-statically absorbed by their temporal existence (*NC* II, 479-80).

Dooyeweerd frequently uses the word '*schouwen*' to refer to intuition. Already in a 1922 article, Dooyeweerd says that the unity of intuition, thinking and knowledge [*schouwen, denken and kennen*] is rooted in our cosmic selfhood.[53] Dooyeweerd also uses the word '*aanschouwen*' or 'beholding.' True Christian faith will find its fulfillment in the full religious beholding ["*de volle religieuze aanschouwing*"], the "vision face to face" (*WdW* II, 228; *NC* II, 298).

Vollenhoven cannot accept such a view of intuition, since he rejects the idea of a supratemporal selfhood. Vollenhoven objects to the idea of beholding [*aanschouwen*] except for fantasy. For Vollenhoven, fantasy and imagination are useful in science only in forming a "working hypothesis" (*Problemen* 193).

4. *Theology*

4.1. Use of Scripture for philosophy

Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd use Scripture in different ways. For Vollenhoven, Scripture is one of our sources of knowledge. Nature is our other source of knowledge (*Isagoogè*, par. 171). Vollenhoven uses Biblical texts to philosophize about heaven and angels, because they also belong to the created world (*Isagoogè* par. 20). But Dooyeweerd thought that this was theology, not

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[53] Herman Dooyeweerd: *Normatieve rechtsleer: Een kritisch-methodologische onderzoeking naar Kelsen's normatieve rechtsbeschouwing* (1922, unpublished, excerpts in Verburg 34-38).

philosophy (Verburg, 90). He did not use Scripture as a source for philosophy. He says that the Scriptures do not speak to us in a theoretical way; they do not appeal to our temporal cognitive functions but rather to our religious root. The Scriptures transcend all theoretical thought; appealing to the heart of man in the language of naive experience (*NC* II, 52). Dooyeweerd criticizes Groen van Prinsterer's [1801-1876] method of Scripture reading:

> Dit is een wijze van schriftgebruik, die men nog steeds onder gelovige christenenen kan aantreffen, die Gods Woord als laatste richtsnoer ook voor het tijdelijk leven erkennen. Waar een schijnbaar ondubbelzinnige uitspraak in de Bijbel over bepaalde tijdelijke levensverhoudingen is aan te wijzen, buigt men zich onvoorwaardelijk voor de Goddelijke autoriteit en spreekt dan gaarne van een 'eeuwig beginsel.' (*Vernieuwing* 242).
>
> [This is a manner of using Scripture that we still find used by believing Christians. They use God's Word as a final guide for temporal life. Where an apparently unambiguous expression can be shown in the Bible about certain temporal relations in our life, man bows unconditionally before the Divine authority and speaks readily about an 'eternal principle.']

For Dooyeweerd, even the Ten Commandments are not intended to show the ordinances of creation. Therefore the jurist Julius Stahl [1802-1861], who emphasized the importance of the Ten Commandments for law, was on the wrong track (*Vernieuwing* 57).

We must bear in mind that Vollenhoven's education and training was as a theologian. Dooyeweerd believed that philosophy is not to be the servant of theology (*WdW* I, 57). He criticizes the view that philosophy is the servant of Christian theology, as being based on the influence of Greek *theoria*.[54] Theology is philosophically founded, and the only question is whether that philosophy is ruled by the central biblical basic motive or not (*Twilight*, 157).

Dooyeweerd emphasizes the importance of how we approach Scripture. Without the proper "key," we will misread and misinterpret it:

> The Jewish Scribes and lawyers had a perfect theological knowledge of the books of the Old Testament. They wished, doubtless, to hold to the creation, the fall and the promise of the coming Messiah as articles of the orthodox Jewish faith which are also articles of the Christian faith. Nevertheless, Jesus said to them: "Woe unto you, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge!" (*Twilight*, 145).

Thus, it is not enough to believe in "creation, fall and redemption." This Christian ground-motive must itself be interpreted by the "key of knowledge." For Dooyeweerd, this "key of knowledge" is our experience of the supratemporal heart as the religious root of temporal creation (*Twilight* 124, 125, 145).

Since Vollenhoven rejected the idea of the supratemporal heart, he could not share this view of the key of knowledge. Vollenhoven's use of Scripture is less mystical and experiential, and more theological.

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[54] Herman Dooyeweerd: *Transcendental Problems of Philosophic Thought*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 69.

4.2. The Christian Idea of creation, fall and redemption

a) Creation

Dooyeweerd says that it is possible for dogmatic theology to miss the point of the threefold ground-motive of creation, fall and redemption:

> The history of dogmatic theology proves that it is possible to give an apparently orthodox theoretical explanation of the articles of faith pertaining to the threefold central theme of the Holy Scripture, without any awareness of the central and radical significance of the latter for the view of human nature and of the temporal world. In this case theological thought does not really find itself in the grip of the Word of God. The latter has not become its central basic motive, its central impelling force. Rather, it proves to be influenced by another, a non-biblical central motive, which gives to it its ultimate direction (*Twilight*, 191).

Dooyeweerd says that our creation, fall and redemption all occur in a central sense in the supratemporal root. The doctrines have a "radical unity of meaning, which is related to the central unity of our human existence" (*Twilight* 125).

Since Vollenhoven denies the supratemporal root, it follows that he also has a different idea of creation, fall and redemption.

Dooyeweerd says that there is a difference in principle between the *creation* in Genesis 1 and the *becoming* (forming from a pregiven material) in Genesis 2.[55] This seems to suggest a double creation. Dooyeweerd also says that creation by God "in the beginning" was not a temporal event. God completed creation as a totality; this completed creation is worked out in time.[56] Vollenhoven seems to be responding to this view when he says that neither the reproduction of the human race nor its history is to be regarded as supratemporal (*Divergentierapport* 116).

b) Fall

In his first response to the curators of the Free University (April 27, 1937), in answer to Hepp's complaints, Dooyeweerd wrote that his philosophy makes a radical break with immanence philosophy in that it understands that our whole temporal human existence proceeds from out of the religious root, the heart. And the fall consisted in the falling away of the heart from its Creator. That is the cause of spiritual death [*geestelijken dood*]. This spiritual death cannot be confused with bodily [*lichamelijken*] death nor with eternal [*eeuwigen*] death. He says that the acknowledgement of this spiritual death as the consequence of the fall is so central to the *WdW* that if it is denied, no single part of the *WdW* can be understood (Verburg 212).

Because he denies the supratemporal selfhood, Vollenhoven also rejects the idea that the rest of temporal created reality has its existence within humanity

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[55] Herman Dooyeweerd: "Na vijf en dertig jaren", *Philosophia Reformata* 36 (1971) 7, cited by Verburg 395.

[56] Herman Dooyeweerd: "Schepping en evolutie," *Philosophia Reformata* 24 (1959) 114-116, cited in Verburg 352. '32 Propositions' also refers to the creation of man as body and soul, which according to Scripture was fully completed [*volkomen voltooid*].

as the religious root. And because of this, Vollenhoven's view of the fall is not as radical (from '*radix*,' 'root') as that of Dooyeweerd. Dooyeweerd has a very strong emphasis that the temporal world is fallen with humanity (*WdW* I, 65; *NC* I, 100).

Vollenhoven criticizes the view that there could be a fallen plant, animal or inorganic realm:

> Deze wet geldt primair slechts voor het menselijk leven: het heeft geen zin te spreken van Christelijke dieren, planten en fysische dingen (*Divergentierapport* 113).
>
> [This law primarily holds only for human life: it makes no sense to speak of Christian animals, plants and physical things.]

But Dooyeweerd says that all of creation fell, and that it is our duty to help to restore it by participating in Christ, the new root of creation. Christ's work of salvation includes all of God's work of creation, which was concentrated in man:

> En Christus betekent radicale vernieuwing van levenswortel en daarom betekent Christus' verlossingswerk in principe niet alleen de redding van den individueelen mensch, maar van heel het Scheppingswerk Gods, dat in den mensch geconcentreerd was. [57]
>
> [And Christ signifies radical renewal of the root of life and therefore Christ's work of redemption signifies in principle not only the salvation of the individual person, but of all of God's work of creation, which was concentrated in man].

For Vollenhoven, temporal creation is not itself fallen. What is fallen is humanity's "direction" in relation to it (*Isagoogè* par. 83). Vollenhoven says that "direction" makes sense only for creatures with a heart (by which he means his idea of a wholly temporal, pre-functional heart) (*Problemen* 191). Direction therefore does not apply to any part of creation except man. Vollenhoven does not view man as the religious root of temporal reality. And that is not surprising, in view of the fact that Vollenhoven rejects the supratemporal selfhood. Since he has rejected the supratemporal selfhood, all that Vollenhoven can say is that there is a "left" and a "right" direction in man for each normative function (*Isagoogè* par. 89). Vollenhoven gives a rather moralistic example of direction — an alcoholic, who stands outside of a bar, and who has a change of mind and runs away from that place (*Problemen* 190).

For Dooyeweerd, "direction" is much more radical. Our direction is not just within individual aspects. Direction is central and supratemporal; we are directed either towards our Origin, or away from the Origin and towards temporal diversity in an absolutized view of reality.

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[57] Herman Dooyeweerd: "Calvijn als Bouwer," *Polemios* 2 (Aug 23/1947), 6. (In Folder "Miscellaneous Articles, 1940-50," archives, Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto).

c) Redemption

For Dooyeweerd, the change of direction takes place in the root. In Christ's incarnation, the Divine Word has entered into both "the root and the temporal ramifications, body and soul, of human nature." This has effected a "radical redemption. Sin is not *dialectically* reconciled, but it is *really* propitiated" (*NC* I, 175). We may therefore wonder whether redemption has already occurred in Christ, the new root. Dooyeweerd says that it is still working itself out in cosmic time:

> It may be that this antithesis has been reconciled by the Redemption in Jesus Christ, but in temporal reality the unrelenting struggle between the kingdom of God and that of darkness will go until the end of the world (*NC* II, 33).

Certainly our temporal ego is still working out the effects of Christ's redemption. This is because until the consummation of the ages, we share in the apostate root of mankind (*NC* I, 175). But by regeneration, our reborn selfhood also participates in Christ, the new root of mankind (*NC* I, 99).

Humans are also responsible to assist in the perfecting of the temporal world:

> De anorganische stoffen, het planten- en dierenrijk, hebben geen zelfstandige geestelijke of religieuze wortel. Hun tijdelijk bestaan wordt eerst volledig in en door de mens (*Vernieuwing*, 30).
>
> [The inorganic materials, the plant and animal realms, have no independent spiritual or religious root. Their temporal existence first becomes complete [perfected] in and through man]

For Dooyeweerd, regeneration is of both humanity, and of the cosmos that finds its completion in humanity. The regeneration of both is related to Calvin's idea of the religious seed implanted by God in the human heart (*NC* II, 311). Dooyeweerd cites Kuyper in support:

> Maar gelijk heel de schepping culmineert in den mensch, kan ook de verheerlijking haar voleinding eerst vinden in den mensch, die naar Gods beeld geschapen is; niet omdat de mensch, die zoekt, maar omdat God zelf de eenig wezenlijke religieuse expressie door het *semen religionis*, alleen in het hart des menschen inschiep. God zelf *maakt* den mensch religieus door den *sensus divinitatis*, die Hij spelen laat op de snaren van zijn hart (*Kuyper's Wetenschapsleer* 211, citing Kuyper's *Stone Lectures*).
>
> [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; this is not because of man (who seeks), but because God Himself created in the human heart alone the only truly religious expression in the *semen religionis* [religious seed]. God himself *makes* man religious through the *sensus divinitatis* [the sense of the Divine], which He lets play on the strings of his heart].

Vollenhoven rejects Dooyeweerd's idea of a supratemporal conversion of the heart in Christians who are regenerated (*Divergentierapport* 116). And Vollenhoven specifically denies Kuyper's view of regeneration of a "seed" [*kiem*] that is coupled with a witness of the Spirit. For Vollenhoven, Scripture itself is more trustworthy than any such testimony of the Spirit. His emphasis on Scripture

over testimony of the Spirit seems to oppose any experiential or mystical view of regeneration in favour of a more mediated view. Vollenhoven says that one's belief is awakened through the Word that is preached by the office bearers of the church (*Isagoogè* par. 123, note 2). I believe that Vollenhoven's emphasis on the preached Word, and his opposition to the mystical testimony of the Spirit, can both be traced back to Janse's influence. There is a fear of "subjectivistic" experience, and the desire to control religious experience by institutional office bearers, communicating in a linguistic and rational way through preaching. Vollenhoven also cannot view regeneration in a cosmic sense. For him, regeneration is private and individual.

It seems that for Vollenhoven, there is a different Word for salvation than for creation. There are different revelations before and after the fall, before and after the flood and before and after the revelation in Christ. The Logos revelation is not the revelation of grace or restoration of the creation (*Isagoogè*, par. 118ff.). But Dooyeweerd expressly opposes any idea of a creation law for temporal reality that is separate from salvation for temporal reality. The very idea of cosmic law contains within it a saving aspect for the world. Without the law there is no sin; but the same law makes the existence of creation possible. Jesus Christ is the King of common grace; common grace is not to be understood apart from Christ, nor can we derive common grace only from God as Creator. Common grace is common because rooted in the Saviour. It is not given for the particular fallen man, but for humanity in Christ (*Vernieuwing* 36-38; see also *NC* III, 523).

5. *Conclusion*

Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven have different ontologies, epistemologies and theologies. I have shown this by references from their own work. The conflict is not merely one of incidental disagreements, but a conflict at the root of their philosophies that is expressed in ontology, epistemology and theology.

If Vollenhoven is right, then most of Dooyeweerd's philosophy must be rejected, since from Vollenhoven's viewpoint it represents a certain degree of synthesis with pagan thought. It is not just Dooyeweerd's idea of supra-temporal heart that would disappear, but also his understanding of the modal aspects. We must then abandon the image of time as a prism, and the idea of refraction of meaning. We would also have to reject the ideas of cosmic time, of individuality structures, of Dooyeweerd's understanding of retrocipations and anticipations, of the temporal order of succession of the aspects, of the distinction between aspect and function, of the subject-object relation in perception, of theory as a *Gegenstand*-relation, of our relation to God and to cosmos as having been created in the image of God, of temporal reality being the *expression* of God and of our existence as *meaning* referring back to the Origin.

But if Dooyeweerd is right, then reformational philosophy, which has attempted a synthesis of the two philosophers, must itself be reformed. I have shown that the same ideas that Dooyeweerd objected to so strongly in his last

article *Gegenstandsrelatie* are also found in Vollenhoven. Therefore, from Dooyeweerd's point of view, the attempted synthesis of his philosophy has resulted in an unacknowledged "religious dialectic" in reformational philosophy. This is ironic, since one of the primary goals of reformational philosophy is to expose the religious dialectic within other philosophies, and to show how such a dialectic can be avoided in a Christian philosophy.

Dooyeweerd's idea of the supratemporal heart is not an incidental part of his philosophy, but the "key of knowledge." Dooyeweerd's ideas are interrelated; we cannot reject part of his philosophy without changing the meaning of other ideas such as the *Gegenstand*-relation, the supratemporal heart, the religious root, the meaning and irreducibility of the modal aspects, the theoretical dis-stasis and the synthesis achieved by our intuition, by which we relate what has been split apart in theoretical dis-stasis to our supratemporal selfhood.

Reformational philosophy may choose to follow Dooyeweerd. Or it may follow Vollenhoven. But it cannot purport to follow both philosophers. It may of course decide to reject both and to strike out in some entirely new direction. Regardless of the choice made, much work remains to be done in the development of a truly Christian philosophy.