In 1937, both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven were asked by the Curators of the Vrije Universiteit to respond to accusations about their philosophy, which had been made by the theologian Valentin Hepp in a series of brochures that he published entitled *Dreigende Deformatie* [ Threatening Deformation]. The documents listed below are essential to understanding the philosophies of Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd, and how these philosophies fit or do not fit into the Reformed theological tradition.

- Dooyeweerd’s First Response to the Curators April 27, 1937 [Excerpts] ['Response1']
- Vollenhoven’s First Response to the Curators April 30, 1937 ['VollResponse1']
- Dooyeweerd’s Second Response to the Curators, October 12, 1937 [Draft] ['Response2']
- Vollenhoven’s Second Response to the Curators, October 15, 1937 ['VollResponse2']
- Dooyeweerd’s Third Response to the Curators, March 19, 1938 [Excerpt] ['Response3']
- Dooyeweerd's List of Propositions
- Vollenhoven's List of Propositions
- Vollenhoven’s Fourth Response to the Curators dated April 4, 1939 ['VollResponse4']
- Letter from the Curators dated July 8, 1939
- Dooyeweerd’s Fifth Response to the Curators (undated, signed draft) ['Response5']

There are other documents relating to this controversy that should also be located and translated. But the documents I have already translated give a sufficiently clear picture of the importance of these issues for understanding both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd.
I. Introduction

In 1933, D.H.Th. Vollenhoven published Het Calvinisme en de Reformatie van de Wijsbegeereerte. In 1935-36, Herman Dooyeweerd published De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee. Both philosophers found adherents, and in December 1935, the Association for Calvinistic Philosophy was established for furtherance of this kind of philosophy. But the ideas of both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd also soon attracted criticism.

In 1934 J. Waterink published articles in De Reformatie criticizing Vollenhoven’s opposition to philosophical synthesis. Waterink asked, how could God have left his people for centuries in the spell of Greek philosophy?

In April 1936, T. Ferwerda asked the Curators of the Free University whether there were possible reasons to give a judgment regarding the philosophy of Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd.

In 1936, Valentijn Hepp (1879-1050), the successor to the theologian Herman Bavinck at the Faculty of Theology at the Free University, published a series of brochures entitled Dreigende deformatie [Threatening deformation]. The word ‘deformation’ was a play on the word ‘reformation.’ As already mentioned, the book published by Vollenhoven referred to the reformation of philosophy. Hepp said that the new philosophy threatened the Confessions of Faith of the reformed churches. He argued that the new philosophy

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1 D.H.Th. Vollenhoven: Het Calvinisme en de Reformatie van de Wijsbegeereerte (Amsterdam: Paris, 1933) ['Calvinisme']. Two years before, Vollenhoven had published “De Beteekenis van het Calvinisme voor de Reformatie van de Wijsbegeerte,” Antirevolutionaire Staatkunde 5 (1931), 180-98; 266-334. This was translated in English as “The Significance of Calvinism for the Reformation of Philosophy.” Evangelical Quarterly 3 (1931), 87-403; 4 (1932) 128-160; 398-427) ['The Significance of Calvinism']. This latter article contains many of the points complained of by Hepp.


showed a “sickness of originality” [oorspronkelijkheidsziekte], instead of a proper progression that was still related to a historical continuity, which is what he desired. His first brochure was entitled *Diagnose* [Diagnosis]. The reference is to the “sickness” and its diagnosis. At the beginning of 1937, Hepp published the second brochure, entitled *Symptomen; Het voortbestaan, de onsterfelijkheid en de substantialiteit van de ziel* [Symptoms; the continued existence, immortality and substantiality of the soul]. The third brochure was also about Symptoms. A fourth brochure was entitled “*Algemene Genade*” [general grace]. Hepp did not specifically name Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven, but he did cite a passage from Dooyeweerd’s *De Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee*, and he also cited a passage (from Vollenhoven, although not identified), which he claimed denied the separate existence of the soul. At the request of the Curators, Hepp confirmed that he was indeed referring to Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven, and he provided the Curators with references from their works. 78 of the citations complained of were from Vollenhoven, almost all of which were from Vollenhoven’s *Calvinisme*, and only one citation was from Dooyeweerd (Verburg, 210-11).

In April 1937, the Curators sent the list of citations to Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd, asking whether they were accurate, and whether they wanted to reply to Hepp. I have translated several lengthy responses by each of them, together with excerpts from two other responses by Dooyeweerd. Hepp also sent further letters to the Curators, with more objections. He opposed the idea of law as a boundary between God and creation, their ideas of the meaning of “subject,” their interpretation of the idea of “the image of God,” and what he called their “heart-theory.” Hepp devoted 10 pages in these further letters to the topic of the “heart-theory,” although he had not mentioned the issue in his brochures (Verburg, 216-222). Hepp had hoped that Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd would have admitted that their philosophies were contrary to the Bible and to the Confession. They did not admit this.

During these investigations, Vollenhoven became seriously ill for a couple of months with the flu and a lung infection. He recovered by the end of 1937 (Stellingwerff, 140).
In addition to the written submissions, Hepp, Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd were also required to attend before the Curators at a meeting on January 7, 1938 to give further explanations as to what they had written.

On February 25, 1938, the Curators required both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd to submit a list of propositions on two topics: (a) the continued existence, the immortality and the substantiality of the soul and (b) the union of the two natures of Christ. These Lists of Propositions were to be delivered prior to April 4, 1938.

Verburg says that Dooyeweerd’s List of Propositions was submitted to the Curators on March 19, 1938 (Verburg, 226). A similar date can therefore be assumed for Vollenhoven’s List of Propositions. Hepp also sent in a further note of 7 propositions. There was then a conference on April 4, 1938. The result was that the Curators left the matters to be further worked out by the ‘professorkrans,’ an informal gathering of professors of the Free University. The Curators said that the matter would continue to have their attention.

The theological faculty of the Free University responded on November 18, 1938, trying to reverse the decision of the Curators. On March 28, 1939, the Curators wrote to Vollenhoven asking him for a further response. Vollenhoven provided this by letter dated April 4, 1939.

On July 8, 1939, the Curators wrote Dooyeweerd asking him to be a member of a commission to determine whether Reformed principles accepted the idea of a dichotomy between body and soul. Curiously, the Curators did not ask Vollenhoven to be a member of the commission. I have translated Dooyeweerd’s signed draft response.

The investigation of Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd by the Curators was never completed. After the war, there was a change in the theological faculty, and the investigation did not proceed further. It has been suggested that the judgment and removal of the Kampen professor Klaas Schilder during the war period also acted as a “lightning rod” to deflect attention from the Curators’ investigation (Stellingwerff, 203).

I will summarize some of the issues that are involved in this most interesting correspondence. These include (1) the way that Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd attempted
to maintain a common front (2) the issues concerning Scriptural revelation and theological exegesis (3) the issues regarding the nature of the soul (4) the issue of whether these philosophies were Calvinistic and (5) the issue regarding the two natures of Christ.

II. The Common Front

In another article, “Dooyeweerd versus Vollenhoven: The religious dialectic within reformational philosophy,” I have shown that Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven disagreed on almost every issue, whether ontological, epistemological, theological or the use of Scripture. But in these Responses to the Curators, they tried to maintain a common front against Hepp’s accusations.

In some cases, there appears to be more agreement between them than was later the case. For example, Vollenhoven speaks of Ground-Ideas [grondgedachten] and Ground-conceptions [grond-concepties], something that more reflects Dooyeweerd’s way of analyzing the history of philosophy than Vollenhoven’s own problem-historical method. During this debate, Vollenhoven also used the term Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee for his philosophy, too (Stellingwerff, 138), although Vollenhoven later distinguished his philosophy from the Philosophy of the Law-Idea. But it seems significant that they do not refer to each other as co-founders of a joint philosophy. Vollenhoven refers to Dooyeweerd as his “ally” [medestander].


7 Verburg (p. 89) refers to a conversation where Dooyeweerd called Vollenhoven his ‘medestander.’ Verburg regards this as evidence of Dooyeweerd being tactful.
On certain issues, there is evident discomfort by Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd with respect to areas where they disagree. Hepp is clever enough that he asks whether perhaps Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven disagree with each other, especially regarding the issue of whether the selfhood is to be understood in a functionalistic way (Response 2, 21). In the *WdW*, Dooyeweerd says on the second last page of the third and final volume that the selfhood cannot be reduced to a collection of functions:

> Any one who imagines that from our standpoint human existence is no more than a complex of temporal functions centering in the “heart”, has an all too simple and erroneous idea of what we understand by “anthropology” (last page *NC* III, 784; *WdW* III, 629).

Hepp seems to have been opposing this quotation with a reference to a work by Vollenhoven from 1929. The answers given by Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd frequently appear to be evasive, in the following ways:

1. Vollenhoven does not really answer the question. He says that the remark came from placing a work that he wrote in 1929 next to one written in 1933. But Vollenhoven does not repudiate the earlier statement; he objects to Hepp’s methodology in order to deflect the question. Vollenhoven tries to turn the tables by saying that Hepp could have asked Dooyeweerd. (VollResponse 1, 6-7).

2. Dooyeweerd responds by saying that as far as he is aware, Vollenhoven has never given any systematic publication criticizing his ideas (Response 2, 21). That may be true, but Dooyeweerd does not really answer whether there is disagreement regarding the issue raised by Hepp. Whether or not Vollenhoven had published his disagreement is not really an answer, especially since Vollenhoven did not get around to public publication of very many books or articles at all.

3. Dooyeweerd does say “in principle he [Vollenhoven] wholly shares my standpoint in the matter.” Just what is meant by “in principle” is not clear. Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd did agree in principle in that they both opposed the scholastic dualism...

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8 Dooyeweerd says that his philosophical anthropology, the idea of the supratemporal heart or selfhood, is the beginning and end of his philosophy. See my discussion of this point in my article, “Why did Dooyeweerd want to pull out his hair?” (2006), online at [http://www.members.shaw.ca/aevum/Hair.html].
between body and soul, and they both opposed the idea of substance. But with respect to the nature of the selfhood, they did not agree. Dooyeweerd tries to deflect this by saying that the whole is more than the sum of its parts (Response2, 21). Is this what he means by agreement in principle? Hardly, for Dooyeweerd goes on to contrast this idea of whole and parts with his own view of the selfhood as foundation. Dooyeweerd does not mention the disagreement he had with Vollenhoven regarding Vollenhoven’s view that the selfhood is not supratemporal but merely pre-functional. Later, in the New Critique, Dooyeweerd specifically opposes that view (NC I, 31-33, fn1).

4. At one point, the joint defence almost breaks down. Dooyeweerd complains that with respect to the meaning of the terms ‘soul’ and ‘body,’ Hepp draws his conclusions from Vollenhoven. Dooyeweerd again deflects the question, by saying that Vollenhoven’s book regarding soul and body is outdated and was never put on the market (Response2, 20).

5. Dooyeweerd downplays their disagreement regarding supratemporality. He acknowledges that there may be disagreement, but he indicates that he is still thinking about this issue. If Dooyeweerd was still thinking about it, he had already made some very strong statements. Already in 1931, he had written that the idea of the supratemporal selfhood must be the presupposition of any truly Christian view [“voor iedere wezenlijk Christelijke beschouwing der tijdelijke samenleving”]. In 1936 and 1939, Dooyeweerd published two installments of an article where he argued that the selfhood is in the supratemporal aevum, which he calls a “created eternity.” And in his 1940 article “Het Tijdsprobleem in de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee,” he says at p. 192,

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9 Herman Dooyeweerd: De Crisis der Humanistische Staatsleer, (Amsterdam: W. Ten Have, 1931), 113.

A real Christian philosophy of time is then also not possible whenever theoretical thought is not directed to the true supratemporal concentration point of the temporal cosmos.\textsuperscript{11}

6. In general, there is too much rhetoric in these responses to the Curators, and far too many arguments \textit{ad hominem}. In my annotations, I have commented on some of the most blatant examples, where the question is not answered at all, but rather a slur is cast on Hepp or on his manner of argumentation. The entire procedure sometimes looks like a bad courtroom melodrama, with overblown rhetoric and courtroom theatrics. Behind the formal expressions of respect for their opponent, there are some really nasty things said by all parties. I find myself sometimes sympathizing with Hepp’s frustration, and I sometimes want to say, “Why don’t you just answer the question?”

Although we may be critical of this evasiveness, we must also take into account the seriousness of the situation. Perhaps their jobs were not in jeopardy. But on March 17, 1936, Hepp had warned Vollenhoven that within two years both he and K. Schilder would be thrown out of the \textit{Gereformeerde Church} (Stellingwerff, 130). Schilder was thrown out in 1944, causing yet another split in the church.

The investigation was very serious, and both Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven were obviously being very careful. The experience was certainly one that they remembered. Dooyeweerd later said that one should never tell a theologian that he is wrong. He mentions the confrontation in the 1970’s by Toronto faculty at the Institute for Christian Studies as an example that should not be followed: “\textit{Dat moet je niet doen, vooral niet tegenover theologen.”} [You should never do that, especially against theologists], (Verburg 400). Dooyeweerd's Responses to the Curators are probably as theological as he ever got!

In the Dooyeweerd archives in Amsterdam, I found a \textit{Sinterklaasgedicht} (poem given on St. Nicolas Day), evidently presented to Dooyeweerd by someone in his family. It sets

out the unpleasantness of dealing with theologians. It begins by showing how it is not a treat to be given this treatment:

Door theologen
te worden bedrogen
is geen hapje.
Voor waar geen grapje.
Want het zijn heeren
die streng regeeren
ik zeg het zacht
ze hebben macht
Ze maken historie
tot eigen glorie...

[By theologians
to be threatened
is not a treat
And for sure no joke.
For they are men
who strongly rule
I say it softly
they have power
they make history
to their own glory]

This shows the strong feelings played out in this university investigation. It is not surprising that Dooyeweerd and Vollenhoven were not more forthcoming on some issues. Hepp wanted to know the sources of their philosophy, and he even tried translating some of Dooyeweerd's work into German to try to understand him better. Vollenhoven said that it was unlikely that Hepp would discover the *Ur-Dooyeweerd* in this way. But neither Vollenhoven nor Dooyeweerd gave any help in pointing Hepp towards their sources, except for some citations from Kuyper. But Dooyeweerd criticizes even Kuyper, and it is clear that Dooyeweerd’s idea of individuality structures was not derived from Kuyper (Response 2, 11). As I have shown in my article “Dooyeweerd, Spann, and the Philosophy of Totality,” the idea of individuality structures, and the related idea of *enkapsis* were most likely derived from German *Ganzheitsphilosophie* [Philosophy of Totality].

12 See my article, "Individuation Structures and Enkapsis: Individuation from Totality in Dooyeweerd and German Idealism," [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/]
I am disappointed in some of the rhetoric in these Responses, but there was clearly a power game being played out here. The motivations on both sides were probably well intentioned, trying to preserve what they believed was essential in the faith or in trying to reform it. And from these letters, we can get a real insight into these issues.

We need to look past the rhetoric, and we will then find some surprising statements that do not appear elsewhere in their works, or which are not stated as clearly. I will refer to a few of them here.

**III. Scriptural Revelation versus Theological Exegesis**

When we consider that in 1926, the Gereformeerde church judged and removed from office the pastor J.G. Geelkerken because he denied the literal nature of the fall, it is most surprising that Hepp accuses Vollenhoven of Biblicism. Hepp says that by ‘Biblicism’ he means an individualistic approach to Scripture, and he tried to distinguish this from Geelkerken who denied the infallibility of the Bible (Verburg 206). Whether the distinction makes sense can be disputed. The ground of Vollenhoven’s supposed Biblicism was his rejection of the *anhypostasis* doctrine (discussed below), based on his reading of Scripture.

From his side, Vollenhoven says that Biblicism is the carrying in of foreign ideas into one’s reading of Scripture. Vollenhoven, who was trained as a theologian, enters into exegetical debate on this and other issues.

Dooyeweerd take a different approach, and one that is not easily reconciled with Vollenhoven’s kind of exegesis. Dooyeweerd also refers to his philosophy as being “Scriptural.” He objects to Hepp’s attempts to poke fun at it by calling it “Biblicistic” (Response2, 22). But Dooyeweerd does not use an exegetical approach. He emphatically rejects the possibility that the truth of the heart as religious root is a matter of Biblical exegesis:

Enkapsis.html, where I show that Dooyeweerd's idea of individuality structures and of *enkapsis* were most likely derived from German philosophy in the tradition of Eckhart, Boehme and Baader.
For as a Christian I cannot and may not accept that he would make such a central point, one that concerns the whole view of fall into sin and redemption, into a question of theoretical exegesis about which one might therefore have differences of opinion! (Response 2, 27).

Instead, Dooyeweerd interprets Scripture by a key. His key of interpretation is his Ground-Motive of creation, fall and redemption. He says,

But there should be no difference of opinion among us that overall, where Scripture refers to the ‘heart’ (or the soul) of man in connection with sin or redemption, and in general in connection with the fundamental religious attitude toward God, only the religious centre of life, the root of man’s whole existence is in issue. That may above all not be made into a free, academic question of “exegesis,” no more than the question of what the Scriptures mean by sin, rebirth, incarnation of the Word, etc.

Only that view of the centre of human existence which conforms to the Word revelation concerning creation, fall and redemption may be called “Scriptural,” (that is, the opposite of “Biblicistic”) (Response2, 31).

and

What Scripture means by ‘sin’ and ‘redemption’ may not be made into a mere exegetical question, because the words ‘sin’ and ‘redemption’ are also used in other meanings (see for example David’s gratefulness for his ‘deliverance’ from the hand of Saul and from his other enemies [2 Sam. 12:7 and 22:1]. Or see the meaning of the word ‘sin’ in expressions like “Zonde en Jammer”! [It is a pity].

Just as little may the question of what the Scriptures mean by ‘heart’ in the religious fullness of meaning be denatured into a question of mere exegesis of words (Response2, 31).

For Dooyeweerd, Word revelation is always more than Scriptural revelation.13 And Scripture is to be interpreted according to this key of creation, fall and redemption. In his

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13 For example, he speaks of the “incarnation of the Word” (Response2, 31). That of course cannot mean incarnation of the Scriptures. Dooyeweerd’s philosophy is based on God’s Word expressing itself in his creation. In his 1940 article, “Het Tijdsprobleem in de Wijsbegeerte der Wetsidee,” Philosophia Reformata 5 (1940) 160-192, 193-234 [‘Tijdsprobleem’], online at [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Tijdsprobleem.html], he speaks of “the wisdom of God’s creative plan differentiates itself into a rich diversity of modal ordinances and subject functions” (p. 197). In Response2, Dooyeweerd refers to “aspects, which God’s Creation-wisdom has enclosed in the body” (p. 24). God’s Word or Wisdom expresses itself or reveals itself in temporal reality. And its most complete expression or embodiment, incarnation, is in Jesus Christ, the Word incarnate.
later book, *In the Twilight of Western Thought*, Dooyeweerd emphasized that not every view of creation, fall and redemption qualified, but only those views that refer to them as all occurring in the religious root. Any dogmatic theology that does not interpret Holy Scripture this way is not “in the grip of the Word of God.”

To be in the grip of the Word of God is something that occurs in our hearts, and not by means of theological exegesis. So for Dooyeweerd, the idea of the supratemporal heart as religious root is key not only to his philosophy, but also for his interpretation of Scripture. Since Vollenhoven did not share this view, then from Dooyeweerd’s point of view, Vollenhoven’s reading of Scripture would be Biblicistic! But in their letters to the Curators, these differences in the meaning of Scriptural were not made explicit.

The same difference between Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd is also evident in their stance towards the church Confessions of Faith. Vollenhoven takes a much more theological, exegetical approach, going back into history to see how the creeds and confessions were formulated, what was regarded as heresy, and the reasons for what was written. Vollenhoven distinguishes what is written in the Confessions with what dogmatic theology says. He does not consider that mere dogmatic theology is binding on him, and it is there that he distinguishes between the Scriptural elements of such dogmatics and the philosophical assumptions underlying such dogmatics.

But Dooyeweerd is not at all concerned with exegesis of the Confessions of Faith. He says that his denial of the idea of *anima rationalis* [*rational soul*] may be in conflict with the *Westminster Confession*, and his denial of the idea of substance may be in conflict with the *Confessio Helvetica Posterior*. But he says he that is bound only by the Dutch confessions, which do not refer to these terms. Now this may automatically make Dooyeweerd’s philosophy unacceptable to adherents of Cornelius van Til, who did subscribe to the *Westminster Confession*. But Dooyeweerd’s position is even stronger

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than that. He says that even if the *Westminster Confession* did apply to him (Response 2, p. 16), and even if the Dutch Confessions contained the word ‘substance,’ he would not be bound by any exegetical interpretation of those texts!

For I want to state with emphasis, that even if these *expressions* would appear in the Dutch confession of faith, I would not *think of them* as serving the ground for a gravamen. Why not? Because I deny in principle that such an expression in our written Confession may be shoved under a *technical-philosophical* meaning (p. 16).

The Confessions are grounded in Scripture, and are not based on philosophical axioms (p. 8). The confessions are matters of faith, “in confesso” (p. 10), and Dooyeweerd says he is not bound by any scholasticism they might contain even if Hepp could prove “that those who drafted the various *Gereformeerde* Confessions of Faith, or the editors of the Synopsis, stood on the foundation of this scholasticism,” or even if Kuyper and Woltjer stood on that foundation (p. 8).

Dooyeweerd says that “the basic truths of Christendom” are “embodied [belichaamd] in the reformed Confessions” (p. 8). This use of ‘embodiment’ should be interpreted in terms of the distinction between the central heart revelation and its temporal expression or embodiment. What is important is the supratemporal truth and not the way it is embodied! If the way that this truth has been embodied is interpreted solely in theoretical, theological terms, then Dooyeweerd says it will become “denatured.” This would result in the faithful congregation becoming “enslaved” to the philosophical assertions of the church (p. 8).

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15 The idea of “embodiment” of a higher ontical level by its expression in a lower level derives from Franz von Baader. Kuyper expressly acknowledged his indebtedness to Baader in this regard, and his appreciation for Baader’s rejection of any non-embodied spirituality like pietism. So in his reference to ‘embodiment,’ Dooyeweerd should not be seen as negating the value of such expression. On the contrary, he continues to affirm his faith in the Confession. But he interprets it as a fallible expression of a higher truth.

16 Like ‘embodiment,’ the idea of being ‘denatured’ derives from Baader. Temporal reality is denatured when it loses its connection to the supratemporal Center, and when in the autonomy of thought, the temporal periphery seeks to understand itself in its own terms. To be denatured is therefore to lose its true nature (as a dependent created reality), and to become absolutized.
Now it is true that Dooyeweerd still appeals to texts from Scripture. But he does not do this in a detailed exegetical way like Vollenhoven. Dooyeweerd’s reading is more a confirmation in the Scripture of what is known by the heart through God’s Word.

That knowledge is indeed possible of the human heart, is in confesso. But this does not concern any kind of knowledge that can be put on one line with theory about the temporal things in the given diversity of their functions or aspects, which can be understood by theoretical analysis and abstraction. It much rather relates to true self-knowledge, and is completely dependent on the true knowledge of God, as CALVIN has brought to light, completely in accordance with Holy Scripture, in the magnificent first chapter of Book I of his Institutio (p. 26).

The knowledge of the human heart, even as it is expressed by Calvin, “accords with” Scripture. But that is different from saying that our knowledge must be based on theoretical exegesis of the Scripture.

Dooyeweerd’s reading of Scripture is based on a religious meaning of words, which he says can be only a metaphorical one.

And in order to obtain an accurate idea of the metaphorical use of a word, one must always reach back to the original meaning, something that is simply neglected by my highly esteemed colleague in his desire to disqualify in every possible way the supposed “heart theory” of the WdW, and to stamp on it the stigma “Biblicistic” (p. 30).

When Scripture refers to the ‘heart,’ it is referring to the “religious centre of life,” the “root man’s whole existence.” I do not believe that Dooyeweerd’s very positive view of metaphor in this letter has been previously commented on.17

If one asks why Dooyeweerd is so sure that we do not need to rely on exegesis, and so sure that we need to take a religious, metaphorical view of language, I believe the answer is in his 1940 article Tijdsprobleem, where he emphasizes the importance of our experience, which provides the basis of all definitions and all concepts:

Without immediate insight into the indefinable, a real concept of what is definable is excluded. And “insight” itself remains rooted in a final

foundation of experience [believing], which oversteps the boundaries of the theoretical attitude of knowledge, and which excludes an absolute split between theoretical and pre-theoretical experience. Only in experience does the knowledge of reality become our own, and the sense of it being our own is the first condition for real knowledge. That which is foreign in principle to our knowing selfhood also then in principle falls outside the boundaries of the human ability to know (Tijdsprobleem, 161).

The experience is that of relating our supratemporal selfhood to its temporal embodiment, and its expressions and actions within time. When Dooyeweerd speaks of making something “our own,” it is this experience of relating the supratemporal to the temporal that he is referring to.\(^\text{18}\)

### IV. The issue of the nature of the soul

Both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd opposed any dualism between body and soul, at least in the sense where soul is viewed as one or more temporal functions that are hypostatized. But they did not agree on the alternative. And Hepp was clever enough to try to show that they did disagree.

Vollenhoven’s solution was to relativize everything that scholasticism had supposed was eternal in man. He proposed a purely temporal model of the selfhood, where the heart is pre-functional but not supratemporal. Dooyeweerd did the reverse. He relativized everything temporal by the idea of the supratemporal selfhood.\(^\text{19}\) The supratemporal

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\(^{18}\) Dooyeweerd’s use of the phrase “our own” relates to our appropriation of temporal events by our supratemporal selfhood. Dooyeweerd says that we have an immediate enstatic experience of temporal reality as our own (WdW II, 414; NC II, 479). The aspects are our own "cosmically" (WdW II, 409; NC II, 474). Even the identification of a sensation such as a sweet taste would be impossible without 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).

\(^{19}\) See WdW I, vi:

> From out of this central Christian viewpoint [the heart, the religious root of human existence], it appeared to me that a revolution was necessary in philosophic thought, a revolution of so radical a character, that, compared with it, Kant’s “Copernican revolution” can only be qualified as a revolution in the periphery. For what is at stake here is no less than a relativizing of the whole temporal cosmos in what we refer to as both its
selfhood is the Totality from which temporal reality individuates. It expresses itself within temporal reality. Let us look at both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd as they respond to these issues regarding the nature of the soul.

**A. Vollenhoven’s ideas about the soul**

To understand Vollenhoven’s ideas about the soul, we have to look at the influence on him of Antheunis Janse. Janse was a teacher at Biggekerke; he had written about scholasticism in Reformed dogmatics, and had said that the "immortal soul" was neither immortal nor a soul. Part of Hepp’s attack was directed against Janse’s ideas. Hepp called Janse the “enfant terrible” of the movement. Vollenhoven criticized Hepp for his attacks on his friend Janse.

The influence of Janse on Vollenhoven has not been sufficiently explored. Vollenhoven later expressed appreciation for Janse’s influence on him.\(^{20}\) The Janse archives were recently added to the archives at the Historisch Documentiecentrum voor het "natural” sides as well as its “spiritual” sides, over against the religious root of creation in Christ. In comparison with this basic Scriptural idea, of what significance is a revolution in a view of reality that relativizes the “natural” sides of temporal reality with respect to a theoretical abstraction such as Kant’s “homo noumenon” or his “transcendental subject of thought?” [my translation]

The English translation in the *New Critique* does not adequately bring out this relativizing of the temporal world. It also fails to translate ‘periphery’ as ‘periphery.’ For Dooyeweerd is here contrasting the central (supratemporal) and peripheral (temporal) ideas.

On the basis of this central Christian point of view [the heart, the religious root of human existence] I saw the need of a revolution in philosophical thought of a very radical character. Confronted with the religious root of the creation, nothing less is in question than a relating of the whole temporal cosmos, in both its so-called ‘natural’ and ‘spiritual’ aspects, to this point of reference. In contrast to this basic Biblical conception, of what significance is a so-called ‘Copernican’ revolution which merely makes the ‘natural-aspects’ of temporal reality relative to a theoretical abstraction such as Kant’s ‘transcendental subject’? (*NC* I, v).

\(^{20}\) See “In Memorium Antheunis Janse 1890-1960,” online at [http://www.aspecten.org/vollenhoven/60d.htm].
Nederlandse Protestantisme in Amsterdam. These archives contain many letters from Vollenhoven to Janse. They have not yet been translated or published.

But we already know much about the way that Janse influenced Vollenhoven. Vollenhoven says that contact with Janse began when, after reading Vollenhoven's doctgroal dissertation, Janse sent him a long letter. Vollenhoven invited Janse to meet with him. Together they published an article about the activity of the soul in the teaching of math, “De Activiteit der Ziel in het Rekenonderwijs.” It was published in 1919 in Paedagogisch Tijdschrift voor het Christelijk Onderwijs. The article is interesting because it argues for the metaphysical existence of the selfhood as substance: there must be a soul to perform the act of counting.

In 1920, Vollenhoven went to Leipzig for four months to study psychology with Felix Krüger. He wrote to Janse from Leipzig that he had thought he could agree with Heinrich Rickert’s views, but then discovered that his epistemology could not be reconciled with metaphysics and the results of psychology. Nor was he satisfied with Krüger’s ideas. Vollenhoven said that he did not want a trichotomy of matter, life and soul. He thought that there was also a soul in plants and animals. The psyche in humans was either somewhat different, or it had a different relation with the other factors (Stellingwerff 42-45).

After this, Vollenhoven was called to be a pastor in The Hague. He says that when he moved to The Hague (May 21, 1921), he had deeper contact with Janse’s ideas, particularly concerning anthropology. He says that Janse had come to a more fruitful view of the "living soul" than traditional speculation. Vollenhoven refers to Janse's work concerning Lourens Ingelse (a mystic), and Janse's warning that we should not replace childlike faith for an inner experience that posed in the literal sense a “deadly danger.”

On April 19, 1922, Janse wrote that Freud’s psychoanalysis showed a life of the soul that was deeper than the conscious working of our brain. He said that he saw a certain agreement between the psychology of Oosterlingen, the heart in the Biblical sense as the center of the life of the soul, and the facts that Freud pointed to.

On November 1, 1922, Janse wrote, “but we are a living soul” [maar we zijn levende ziel]. Janse had studied a lot of works by Hans Driesch, Herman Bavinck, Los and Max
Scheler. He said that he was inclined to a dualism between (1) the spiritual that was from heaven and (2) an earthly world that consisted of matter and of living soul [geestlijk van den hemel en aardsche wereld (stof en levende ziel)] (Stellingwerff 60).

Vollenhoven responded on November 7, 1922 regarding this distinction between spirit and soul. He said that he found Driesch and Scheler to be too Aristotelian, in that they viewed the faculties as layers above each other. First the anima vegetiva, then the anima sensitiva, and then the anima rationalis. But then the soul is no longer a unity but rather a houses with three separate stories. And only the rational soul is then regarded as immortal. The immortality of the soul as a whole is then impossible. This also causes problems for the science of psychology, since it does not have only one field to investigate and therefore cannot postulate a unity of method. Finally, he says that this teaching is the basis for the doctrine of the donum superadditum. Vollenhoven says that the relation between “soul” and “spiritual” should not be regarded in terms of a contrast between body and reason, but as the relation between the unregenerated and the regenerated person. Then Vollenhoven gives his preliminary solution, where man is not distinguished from other the animal, plant and inorganic realms by the number of faculties that he possesses, but the relation between the soul and various “worlds” such as a world of values, a world of physical being, and a biological world.^[21]

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21 Vollenhoven says in this letter (Cited in Stellingwerff, 62):

Er is een ideeële wereld van ‘t gelden, noch psychisch, noch redelijk, maar ‘geldend’. Dan een wereld van waarden: ethische en rechts en religieuze waarden enz. Ook een wereld van ‘t physisch zijnde, waarschijnlijk ook een van ‘t biologische waaraan ‘k meer zelfstandigheid toe ga kennen dan vroeger. De vermogens zijn niet lagen, maar relaties van de eene ziel tot die onderscheiden terreinen. Dan is planten, dieren en menschenziel [te] onderscheiden niet door ‘t aantal vermogens, resp 1,2 en 3, maar door den aard der relaties tusschen die onderling onderscheiden zien eener- en deze werelden [anderzijds]. Dan blijft de ziel een eenheid. De geheel menschenziel is als eigen nieuw project van den Goddelijken Kunstenaar onsterfelijk, de psychologie blijft één methode houden nl. die der innerlijke waarneming. De physiologische psychologie is geen psychologie maar physiologie, die ons kan inlichten hoogstens over de relatie van ziel en lichaam, waarschijnlijk alleen over ‘t laatste en z’n
In a long letter (32 pages) of December 30, 1922, Janse objected that this was not what he meant by ‘living soul.’ He says that man as a living being cannot be separated into factors such as a soul plus a body. ‘Soul’ refers to the factual human being, with both an outer and an inner side. Psychology studies this inner side of the soul. But in addition to this idea of soul, Janse wanted to retain the idea of a spirit of man that continued after death. Spirit is what remains of the man when he dies, the principle of life [‘het levensbeginsel’] which God breathed into man, so that man could become a living soul (Gen. 2:7). In the margin of the letter, Vollenhoven writes ‘no’ by the word ‘spirit.’ This is an indication of the problems that would continue to face Vollenhoven in the development of his philosophy. For if the soul is wholly temporal, how can anything of man survive death? At this time, Janse proposes that ‘spirit’ survives, while soul dies when man as “living soul” dies. But that solution was not acceptable to Vollenhoven.

About this time, Vollenhoven suffered a severe nervous breakdown. On January 14, 1923, Vollenhoven preached at the Westerkerk in Amsterdam. He preached about

psychische akten, begeleidende reacties enz. En we hebben niets wat wedergeboorte als een donum superadditum moet opvatten.

[There is an ideal world that holds for [other worlds]. It is neither psychical nor rational, but a ‘holding for.’ Then there is a world of values: ethical and juridical and religious values, etc. Also a world of physical being, probably also of the biological, to which I am now inclined to give more independence than previously. The faculties are not layers, but relations of the one soul to the distinguished fields. Then plants, animals and the human soul are not to be distinguished by the number of faculties, respectively 1, 2 and 3 [anima vegetiva, anima sensitiva, anima rationalis] but through the nature of the relations between mutually distinguished souls on the one hand, and on the other hand, relations [of the soul] with these worlds. Then the soul remains a unity.

The whole human soul is immortal, as a peculiar new project of the Divine Artist. Psychology continues to hold to one method—that of inner perception. The physiological psychology is not a psychology but physiology, which can at most enlighten us about the relation between soul and body, and problem only about the latter and its psychical acts and accompanying reactions, etc. And we have nothing that must view rebirth as a donum superadditum.]
“becoming as a child”—something that Janse had also emphasized. Vollenhoven collapsed during the sermon. He had to be admitted to a clinic for ten months. For the first month he was almost unconscious (Stellingwerff 63). This was at a time that he was 30 years old, married with three children. Vollenhoven only recovered at the end of the year. He first preached again on Dec 2, 1923. H. Nijenhuis, Vollenhoven’s son-in-law says that Vollenhoven’s breakdown was due to a combination of his duties at the time as well as “a wrestling with difficult philosophical matter of a sensitive nature” (moeilijke en gevoelig liggende wijsgerige stof). And this had to do with Janse’s ideas that the “immortal soul” was neither immortal nor a soul.  

In a letter dated February 20, 1924 (after Vollenhoven’s recovery), Janse seems to come closer to Vollenhoven’s views. He says that he can no longer think of a selfhood as being above or in the living being. In this letter, Janse accepts partial blame for Vollenhoven’s breakdown (Stellingwerff 63-65).

In a letter dated Jan 28, 1928 to J.J. Buskes, Janse says that he came to Aristotle’s philosophy via vitalism and the philosophy of life (Levensphilosophie). Through Aristotle’s emphasis on psyche he came to look at the use of the word ‘nephesh’ in the Old Testament. In the letter, Janse speaks of his fights against pietism. He criticizes pietism for regarding one’s “own soul” as a more pious object than one's hand or foot or consciousness (Stellingwerff 40).

For Janse, “living soul” is our temporal, living existence. Vollenhoven also followed Janse in relating this to the Bible’s use of the term ‘nephesh.’  

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22 H. Nijenhuis: Address to Stichting voor Reformatorsiche Wijsbegeerte, Jan. 8, 2000, online at [http://www.aspecten.org/teksten/teks.html].

23 In his later writings, Vollenhoven continued this emphasis on the temporal nature of ‘nephesh.’ See Vollenhoven’s 1963 lecture, “De Problemen Rondom de Tijd” [The Problems Around Time], translation online at [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/Problemen.html]. The notes of J.C. Vander Stelt indicate that Vollenhoven said in the lecture:
a pastor, Vollenhoven preached a sermon on 2 Samuel 14:14, where are continued
existence is really only guaranteed by being maintained in the thoughts of God:

For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot
be gathered up again; God does not however take the soul away, but he
shall think thoughts, that He will not disown from Himself the banished
one.\textsuperscript{24}

Still another example: Saul says, “My soul has become beloved
[dierbaar] in your eyes,” after David did not kill him. ‘Soul’ here means
only ‘me.’ Psalm 124:4: “Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the
stream had gone over our soul,” over the nefesh, soul (Cf. nose, not lips
here). Nephesh: in other words to breathe through the nose. This is the
meaning of ‘soul’ in most instances in the Bible (Old Testament). The
word ‘ruach’ is also used: that is to say, through the mouth. This relates
to speaking! Example: “Through the Word of the Lord was the world
made.”< (p. 186)

\textsuperscript{24} In his 1968 lecture “Problemen van de tijd in onze kring” [Problems of time in our
circle], translation online at [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/
Tijd.html], Vollenhoven says,

I remember that I once preached on II Samuel 14:14. I did not willingly
preach on texts where the word ‘soul’ appeared, for I had heard so many
views of the soul, that I did not regard myself in a position to preach about
it until I had worked out in what sense the word ‘soul’ was to be
understood in the Scriptures. I was not satisfied with any of the current
views. Yet I then preached on this text. Joab had sent a wise woman to
King David to plead the case of Absalom, who had fled after the death of
his brother. She had to represent herself as a widow. She played her role
wonderfully, and she was even long-winded about it: “I am a widow, and
my husband is dead.” The text that now concerns me, spoken by her, goes
like this,

“ For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which
cannot be gathered up again; God does not however take the soul away,
but he shall think thoughts, that He will not disown from Himself the
banished one.”

However you interpret this text, it is impossible to take a dualistic view of a soul that
leaves the body. “We then are like water, which is spilled upon the earth, and which
cannot be gathered up again.” You must not derive an ontology from this, but in any case
the meaning is clear: we die, and then we live no more, and she wants to see Absalom
helped before he dies. She finds David’s views unmerciful: “God does not however take
the soul away, but he shall think thoughts, that He will not disown from Himself the
banished one.” Thus the “banished one” (Absalom) is the ‘soul’ that is referred to. That is
what you find repeatedly in the Bible: the living soul is man. At that time I did not yet
Vollenhoven had also been influenced by Bavinck’s last book, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie* (1920), where it is said that a dualism of body and soul only occurs in Matt. 10:28. And it is said that “living soul” means only that God breathed life. (Stellingwerff 60-61).

Vollenhoven’s correspondence with Janse continued. In April, 1932 Janse had prepared the manuscript of his book *Van Idolen en Schepselen* [Concerning Idols and Created Things]. Vollenhoven tried to dissuade Janse from publishing it. Vollenhoven said that they were gradually doing positive work and they were winning future leaders. But that if something like Janse’s book were to be published, everything would collapse [”Komt zoo iets al boek op de markt, dan komt het ineens”]. He advised Janse to first publish it in a journal; people will be busy with it for a while and grow in it (Stellingwerff 97). But Janse did publish another book in 1933, *Den mensch als levende ziel* and as Vollenhoven had predicted, this did cause problems, and it was one of the reasons that Hepp wrote his series of brochures, which caused the investigation by the Curators.

With this background, we can now look at Vollenhoven’s response to the Curators. For it is clear that Vollenhoven’s reluctance to speak about these matters is strategic. He did not want the progress in reformational philosophy to collapse. And, as Stellingwerff points out, Vollenhoven's own nervous breakdown made him cautious about placing before others his rejection of the dichotomy between body and soul (Stellingwerff 65).

Hepp refers to what Vollenhoven had said in his *Calvinisme*. Vollenhoven there referred to the “pre-functional” heart. Vollenhoven admits that “Kuyper also aimed at the all-governing character of the classification heart-life” (VollResponse2, 8), but Vollenhoven does not say whether he endorses this view as his own. And with respect to the idea of the immortality of the soul, Vollenhoven criticizes Hepp for his attacks on his friend Janse, based on Janse’s 1933 book *Den mensch als levende ziel*. Vollenhoven refers to Berkouwer’s criticism of Hepp’s attack on Janse. But Vollenhoven does not clarify his

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know Mr. [A.] Janse. With all my difficulties, I preached on the text–and it was a candidate’s sermon by which I made the land unsafe.

own view as to man’s immortality! He does say that the question of continued identity is not in issue. But he does not answer the question whether, as Janse says, after death one is immediately with the Lord. Instead, he refers to Dooyeweerd’s discussion of “soul.” This is an evasion of the issue, at least in this Response, since Vollenhoven’s own view of man’s heart was that it was merely pre-functional, and wholly temporal.

In an article he published in 1937, Janse admits that this 1933 book, *Den mensch als levende ziel* was the basis for Hepp’s complaint, but he then goes on to say,


[When man dies, there is no “seam” that is loosened between soul and body—as if those were the original two parts, which were originally two things. No, the earthen jar is broken (the whole man as created by God); Eccles. 12:6-7. *Dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return. We do not bury any “material remainder,” whereas the “better part” of the man remains whole; he is buried—although it is only according to the body, in which he resided away from the Lord. And not a soul-thing, but he himself “according to the inward man” is with the Lord. Both “pieces” continue to be called “he.” Scripture holds them both together.]

So Janse’s emphasis at this time was not to deny immortality, but only to deny immortality of a soul separate from a body. After death there are “two pieces.” The inward man continues to be with the Lord. Janse’s position is confusing, since the same

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26 Antheunis Janse: *Rondom de Reformatie* (Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre N.V., no date) [collection of articles], 47. apparently citing a 1937 article from “De Reformatie.”

27 Eccles. 12:6-7:

> Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.
article opposes any kind of mysticism of a “higher Self” or spirit that would give a mystical knowledge deeper than our ordinary knowledge. So Janse seems to be saying that in this temporal life, there is only soul and body, which are always connected. At death, the inner man of this man is present with the Lord; as he says, we will then be “in the bosom of Abraham” (p. 68). But prior to death there is no supratemporal selfhood linked to a temporal body. Although Janse denies a dualism, his view is therefore different from Dooyeweerd’s view of a supratemporal selfhood that is central even to our present existence (see Dooyeweerd's Responses to the Curators, as discussed below). For Dooyeweerd, our present supratemporal selfhood expresses and reveals itself in a body of temporal functions (the “mantle of functions” or ‘functiemantel’). And Janse does not explain how the inner man, fully temporal before death, can be with the Lord after death. This is a problem that Vollenhoven was also unable to solve. In my view, it is a serious shortcoming of Vollenhoven’s philosophy.

In the List of Propositions that Vollenhoven submitted to the Curators in 1937, Vollenhoven denies that immortality is an inherent quality of the soul. On the contrary, immortality is a gift that God graciously gives to His children at the time of the Last Judgment. But this does not answer the question of what occurs between death and the Last Judgment. Vollenhoven specifically denies the doctrine of soul sleep. But that is not because he believes that there is a soul that is awake. It is because both body and soul are dead. Thus, his position appears to be even more bleak than that of soul sleep. In this list of Propositions, he does not adopt Janse’s view of man as being with the Lord immediately after death.

In the same year (1937), Janse published Leven in het Verbond. Janse’s changing views have now lead him to reject the idea of rebirth in a higher selfhood, or the view that God sometimes reveals himself to us in our “inner chamber.” He says that these views are subjective and mystical, although they can be found in Kuyper. He specifically opposes Eckhart, Tauler, and Böhme.28 And at p. 17, Janse rejects any idea that we have a spiritual body after death. He says that it is this present humbled body that is changed:

28 Antheunis Janse: Leven in het Verbond (Kampen: Kok, 1937), 15.
“neem uw huid maar tusschen uw vingers met Calvijn en Tertullianus, en zeg: dit lichaam” [take your skin between your fingers and say with Calvin and Tertullian, this body].

The Curators continued to press Vollenhoven for further answers concerning the continued existence of the soul. In his Fourth Response to the Curators (1939), Vollenhoven finally says that it is the inner man [inwendige mensch] that continues after death.29 In referring to “the inner man,” Vollenhoven seems to be adopting what Janse said in 1937 about the inner man being with the Lord. But even in that 1937 article, Janse had denied that this meant anything like a higher self.

Janse rejected that man has any awareness after death. In 1938, Janse finally published Van Idolen en Schepselen. This is the book that Vollenhoven had tried to suppress, not because he disagreed with it but because he thought that it would shock adherents of his reformational philosophy. In this book, Janse says that it is not man’s immortal soul that is with God after death, but that man is maintained by God’s Providence in his state of being dead.30 Janse emphasizes at p. 62 that Lazarus himself was in his grave before being called forth, and that we should not speak of blessed souls in heaven, since the

29 See Vollenhoven’s Fourth Response where he speaks of the soul as the religious center of the will:

Als religious wilscentrum in Schriftuurlijken zin het aangrijpingspunt van Gods genade in de wedergeboorte en uitgangspunt der bekeering van doode werken niet slechts in de levenspractijk maar ook in de wetenschap, is het niet een abstactie uit het tijdelijk bestaan, maar sluit het in zich de volle eenheid van Godsbesef en zelfbewustzijn, en blijft het ook na den dood als “inwendige mensch” met het besef van Christus dan wel buiten Hem te zijn, voortbestaan.

[As the religious center of the will in the Scriptural sense, it is the point of application of God’s grace for our rebirth, and the point of departure for our conversion from dead works not only in practical life but also in science. It is not an abstraction from out of temporal existence, but comprises the full unity of our sense of God and of self-consciousness. As the “inner man,” it also continues to exist after death, and with our sense of Christ it also exists outside of Him.]

30 Antheunis Janse: Van Idolen en Schepselen (Kampen: Kok, 1938), 83.
desire for resurrection is then not as strong (p. 65). We now can see why Vollenhoven was so concerned when Janse wanted to publish these ideas in 1932.

And whatever Vollenhoven meant by his statement in 1939, his later views seem to correspond with those that Janse expressed. For Vollenhoven makes it clear that there can be no awareness after death. In a 1963 lecture, Vollenhoven says that there is no consciousness apart from the body: “Consciousness is always in the body!”

In 1939, Vollenhoven spoke of the soul as the religious center of the will. In this 1963 lecture, Vollenhoven speaks of “the soul in man” as that which gives direction, either “left” or “right” in the sense of being directed towards good and evil (p. 190). But he also says that he does not believe in a will that exists apart from the body. And he rejects any idea of “the self.” J.C. Vander Stelt’s notes indicate at p. 184-85:

Vollenhoven is afraid of substantializing. (Geesink, one of Vollenhoven’s teachers, once said, “The will wills” does not exist and also “Reason proposes that” does not exist, etc.). There is something to these statements, insofar as we can find considerations relating to will [and reason]. (Geesink really didn’t see this clearly enough), but Geesink was correct to oppose a substantializing of will and reason. Vollenhoven therefore opposes “the I” and “the self.” Already linguistically they are very dangerous and suspicious. Therefore Vollenhoven does not want to place soul between God and cosmos, as Dooyeweerd does, but rather sees the soul as belonging totally to the cosmos.

It is true that in this 1963 lecture, Vollenhoven speaks of ‘something’ that goes directly to God. Van der Stelt’s notes at p.189-90:

Vollenhoven finds nothing in the Old Testament about “the” [direction-giving] in relation to the determination of the direction; but he does find something of this in the New Testament, something that is maintained after death and goes directly to God. But don’t forget that man is created (and re-created) for the new earth; see the New Testament in relation to the “spiritual body.” Ontologically we can in any event say that death, the grave, is not the end. Christologically we can say that we are the Lord’s.

But Vollenhoven does not say what this ‘something’ is. It cannot be consciousness, for that is always bodily. And it cannot be the will or the selfhood, since he rejects both of those ideas. And nor can it be the soul, for the soul is temporal. And Vollenhoven does

31 De Problemen Rondom de Tijd, 191.
not explain how a purely temporal pre-functional heart could survive death. I cannot see the difference from Janse’s view that God maintains man in the state of death until the resurrection. As we have seen, Vollenhoven did not criticize Janse for the idea that God maintains man in the state of death. He had only urged Janse to delay publishing the idea, for fear that it would jeopardize the progress that was being made in reformational philosophy. For Vollenhoven and for Janse, both man’s soul and body are dead. Man is a wholly temporal being, pre-functional, but not supratemporal.

In his 1963 lecture, Vollenhoven cannot even explain what ‘pre-functional’ means in our temporal life:

Pre-functional; this is not [itself] functional [in a modal sense], but yet it is a functioning. This is such a difficult question, at least to be able to express it in words! (p. 190).

Dooyeweerd rejects this idea of a merely pre-functional but temporal heart. Dooyeweerd says that within the horizon of cosmic time, we have no experience of anything pre-functional. For Dooyeweerd, the pre-functional must also be supratemporal (NC I, 31 fn1). And as we shall see from Dooyeweerd’s response to the Curators, it is this supratemporal selfhood that survives death.

Vollenhoven does not explain how man’s fully temporal soul can survive death, or how man’s identity is preserved until the resurrection, when God grants immortality to His children. Vollenhoven is very clear that immortality is not an inherent quality of the soul. Immortality is a gift given by God to his children, but Vollenhoven says that he believes that Scripture also claims that not only man as a living soul, but the center of man’s being itself can be subject to death (VollREspone4, p. 2). And he later denies any idea of a selfhood or of awareness or a will that is separate from our temporal existence.

Although Vollenhoven claimed that he was merely setting out the Biblical position, his view of the soul cannot be reconciled with the parable of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus, who both are spoken of as having awareness after death [Luke 16:19-31] nor with Christ’s words to the thief on the cross, “Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise” [Luke 23:43].
Vollenhoven’s view of the soul is inconsistent and philosophically incoherent. Although he has a trust that God will raise us up at the time of the resurrection, Vollenhoven gives no philosophical anthropology that can explain what happens prior to the resurrection, and how our personal identity is maintained between death and resurrection. Vollenhoven’s wrestling with these issues had led to his serious nervous breakdown in 1922. In my view, he never solved the issues. And it is clear that he avoided speaking about it for tactical reasons, since to fully disclose his views would alienate his followers. This is evident in the way that he tried to dissuade Janse from publishing Van Idolen en Schepstelen. In my view, Vollenhoven did not give a satisfactory response on this issue raised by the Curators regarding the continued existence of the soul, and this is an indication of a serious problem in his philosophy. We now need to contrast Vollenhoven's viewes with Dooyeweerd's very clear statements about man's continued existence after death.

**B. Dooyeweerd’s ideas about the soul**

At least as early as 1931, Dooyeweerd had already made clear his idea of the supratemporal heart. But in Response2 to the Curators, Dooyeweerd sets out his reasons for the idea supratemporality of the heart in a more comprehensive way than I have seen elsewhere.  

Here are some of the things that he says:

1. Without the idea of a supratemporal selfhood, it would be difficult to maintain the continued identical existence of the “soul” after bodily death. (Response2, 33). Dooyeweerd says that the supratemporal is that which remains, in contrast to changing world of the senses (p. 4).

2. He says that the idea of the heart is the root and centre of our temporal life-revelations (Response2, 25). I have already commented on his use of the word ‘revelation’ in this regard. This idea of expression as revealing involves two different ontical levels. That is why Dooyeweerd places so much emphasis on Proverbs 4:23: “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.” (Response2, 28 and 31). For “to issue” is

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32 It is also evident that Vollenhoven’s idea of a merely temporal pre-functional heart does not meet all of these requirements, although it may meet some.
for the heart to reveal itself this way; it is the revelation or expression from a supratemporal selfhood to a temporal body and temporal created reality.

3. The heart as supratemporal religious root, which reveals itself in temporal reality is related to the idea of image of God. Just as God expresses himself in man as his image, so man expresses himself in his temporal functions and in temporal reality. This is said in NC I, 4. But it is also here in the letter Response2, 34:

According to my modest opinion, and in the light of the whole Scriptural revelation concerning human nature it is just this possession of a supratemporal root of life, with the simultaneous subjectedness to time of all its earthly expressions, that together belong to the essence [wezen] of man, to the “image of God” in him—by means of which he not only relatively but radically to go out above all temporal things. And that is how I also understand Ecclesiastes 3:11.

As I have shown in my article “Dialectic,” Vollenhoven rejects the idea that man is the image of God.

4. Supratemporality means really going above time. In the statement just quoted, he says that in our heart we “not only relatively but radically” go out above all temporal things. This is a strong statement against any view that our selfhood is merely pre-functional, as Vollenhoven believed, or Janse's view that there is no supratemporality while we are in this life. Dooyeweerd repeats this statement at Response2, 33, where he says that we go out above the temporal cosmic order of time.

5. We must participate in the supratemporal in order to know it. Since eternity is “set in our heart,” we do know it. Therefore we must have a supratemporal selfhood. We must go out above time in order to have a sense of eternity (Response2, 33).

If in fact man’s heart were also a “temporal thing” among other temporal things, than it would be difficult for this heart to know of the supratemporal. In order to have a religious sense [besef] of eternity, man must in the depths of his being participate in it, although our thinking always remains subjected to time. (Response2, 35)

6. Such participation does not mean a pantheistic sharing in the identity of God, for Dooyeweerd distinguishes between the eternity of God and man’s created supratemporality (the aevum)
I of course do not need to again expressly tell my colleague that this does not relate to “aeternitas”, which applies only to God, but rather over the creaturely aevum, the created supratemporality.

7. The sense of eternity is also evident in our absolutizations of temporal reality, for it is a misplacing of our known sense of eternity.

The sense of eternity expresses itself in the falling away from God only in an idolatrous direction. (Response2, 34).

8. Dooyeweerd says that the idea of a religious root is required in order to understand the Calvinistic idea of total depravity or corruption (Response2, 32). Without this idea of the root, we can maintain a belief in an uncorrupted part of our nature, for example the rational part.

9. The heart concerns the whole view of fall into sin and of redemption (Response2, 28). As I understand Dooyeweerd, he also argues that this root must be supratemporal for it to have taken all of temporal reality with it in the fall:

The question is: What does the radical fall into sin mean? Where are we to find the root, the source of the falling away? (Response2, 28).

10. Supratemporality provides the indefinable basis of all temporal definitions and concepts:

Philosophy as theory remains directed to the temporal revelations of the heart in the distinguished life-spheres. But what the heart itself is, what we ourselves are, that can be taught to us by no scientific theory in the world. The heart cannot be grasped by psychological analysis, for all theoretical analysis presupposes our heart, in the sense of our selfhood, which is active as thinking and analyzing. (Response2, 26).

and

That knowledge is indeed possible of the human heart, is in confesso. But this does not concern any kind of knowledge that can be put on one line with theory about the temporal things in the given diversity of their functions or aspects, which can be understood by theoretical analysis and abstraction. It much rather relates to true self-knowledge, is completely dependent on the true knowledge of God, as CALVIN has brought to light, completely in accordance with Holy Scripture, in the magnificent first chapter of Book I of his Institutio (Response2, 26).

11. It allows Dooyeweerd to distinguish between spiritual death (the fall into sin), bodily death (death of the temporal body, the complex of functions that Dooyeweerd calls the
functiemantel,’ or “mantle of functions,” and eternal death. See Response1, where Dooyeweerd says that without this idea of spiritual death, no part of his philosophy can be understood.

The acknowledgement of spiritual death as the consequence of the fall into sin is so central in the Philosophy of the Law-Idea that if it is negated, one can understand no part of this philosophy.

12. Dooyeweerd also clears up some confusion with respect to his idea of supratemporal selfhood. He says that Hepp falsely assumes that the Philosophy of the Law-Idea teaches that even before death of the “body,” the selfhood of man already leads a separated (and not merely distinguished) existence (Response2, 34). For Dooyeweerd, the supratemporal heart and what he later describes as the temporal “mantle of functions” [functiemantel] are always reciprocal. In Baader’s terms, the supratemporal heart must always be embodied. This emphasis on embodiment was something that Kuyper appreciated in Baader, since it was directed against spiritualistic views that tended to ignore temporal reality.33

13. Hepp had assumed that that everything that exists in time must on this basis also occupy a place in space. Hepp therefore asked where the selfhood was. Dooyeweerd’s answer to this is that the supratemporal selfhood expresses itself in the temporal body, but that does not mean that it is itself subject to a temporal aspect. To reveal itself in time, to exist in connection with a temporal body, does not mean that the supratemporal selfhood itself occupies a place in space.

Concerning the first supposition, suffice it to say that the heart (or the soul) of man in its (her) temporal expression in life (as spatiality, movement, organic life, feeling, thinking, acting, etc.) is of course subjected to time. These temporal expressions of life can during our life here on earth not be separated from their root or center. We ourselves are, in all of our temporal actions—that is in our whole life in this “body”—subject to time.

The question is merely whether in the heart, the religious center of life, we do not at the same time transcend (in the sense of going out above the

temporal) the cosmic order of time—into which all transitory things are fitted.

In my view it is indeed the case [that in our heart we also transcend and go out above time]. If that were not so, then the undeniable sense of eternity in man’s heart could not be explained, and it would indeed be difficult to maintain the continued identical existence of the “soul” after bodily death.

The idea that man’s soul (in the Scriptural sense of religious center of existence) would first have an essentially supratemporal existence in heaven is in my opinion one of the many apodictic assertions of my esteemed colleague that urgently ask for further argumentation.

(Response2, 34).

There are also other reasons that could be enumerated that are not directly referred to in these Responses:

14. Supratemporality allows Dooyeweerd to accept the Calvinist idea of predestination, without that being construed in terms of temporal mechanical causation. Indeed, Kuyper understood predestination in terms of the immediate relationship of our heart with God. He says that the direct and immediate communion of our inner self with God is “the heart and kernel of the Calvinistic confession of predestination.”

15. In his 1940 article Tijdsprobleem, Dooyeweerd also uses traditional language of the soul to refer to the heart, such as the “simplicity, indivisibility and immortality of the soul.” A supratemporal root fulfills these requirements, and allows Dooyeweerd to use traditional terminology even though he denies the scholastic dualism between body and soul.

V. Kuyper, Calvinism and Neo-Calvinism

Hepp wanted to show that the philosophy of Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd were contrary to Reformed theology. We have already looked at their views with respect to the


Confessions. Hepp also complains that Dooyeweerd does not favourably refer to many reformed theologians. Hepp says that all reformed theologians were devalued except for Calvin and Kuyper. Dooyeweerd criticizes many of the theologians favoured by Hepp on the grounds that they still carried with them remnants of scholastic philosophy.

A. Calvin

With respect to Calvin, Dooyeweerd mentions:

1. Calvin’s view of the law as a boundary.

Hepp challenged the idea that the law was the boundary between God and creation. Dooyeweerd appeals to Calvin and to Kuyper as authorities:

   I offer my colleague the following simple argument [redebeleid]: Calvin, Kuyper and the Philosophy of the Law-Idea all agree that God the Lord is not subjected [onderworpen] to his laws, but He has on the other hand set [gesteld] his creation under his ordinances.

   What is this except the confession of the Divine law as boundary between God and creature? (Response 2, 9).

Dooyeweerd says that law as a boundary has the meaning of the dependency of the creation on God (Response 2, 9). The boundary is not meant in a spatial sense. Both Vollenhoven and Dooyeweerd agree that the law is not meant to keep God from being immanent in His creation. For the law is also, at least for Dooyeweerd, an expression of God in that it is a side of His creation. And Dooyeweerd speaks here of the Wisdom of God that is so expressed, so the law has a deep connection to God. It is unclear whether Vollenhoven has this view of law as the wisdom of God. It seems to me that Vollenhoven’s view of a triad of God, law and cosmos tends to see the law only in terms of universal laws to which the creation responds, and which then can be abstracted by thought from creation.

In a letter to Janse dated October 27, 1929, Dooyeweerd emphasizes that the Law-Idea must always express the idea of the deepest origin and the mutual coherence of all areas of the law. It means leading back all temporal differentiation of law to its eternal
religious meaning, just as the colours of the rainbow are derived from the white light that is refracted.\footnote{H. Dooyeweerd: Letter to A. Janse dated October 27, 1929. Janse archive #157.}

As I have argued, the Law-Idea as used by Dooyeweerd is also found in Franz von Baader, who was not Reformed at all.

2. Dooyeweerd relies on the relation that Calvin sees between self-knowledge and knowledge of God. Dooyeweerd speaks in terms of “religious self-reflection,” a term that he also uses in the \textit{WdW} and \textit{New Critique} (e.g. \textit{NC} I, 5 and 55). I am not aware that Vollenhoven speaks of religious self-reflection. Since Vollenhoven denies the supratemporality of the selfhood, as well as an immediacy of religious experience, it is unlikely that he would acknowledge the importance of religious self-reflection. Whether Dooyeweerd is correct in his interpretation is something that can be debated. Josef Bohatec, a Calvin scholar who was also a close friend of Dooyeweerd, wrote that he could not find in Calvin any idea of the heart as meaning the whole of human \textit{Existenz} (Verburg, 191). Hepp also said that the idea of the heart as a supratemporal root of life could not be found in Calvin, and that it showed more a neo-Kantian viewpoint (Verburg [...]

\textit{De wetsidee, dat is voor mij, de terugvoering van alle differentiering in de goddelijke wetten (en daaronder vallen zowel natuurwetten als normen) op de eeuwige religieuze zin der wet, de onderworpenheid aan Gods souvereiniteit. Ik gebruik daarvoor steeds het symbol van de straalbreking van het licht in de regenboog.}

\textit{De wetsidee is de idee van de diepste oorsprong en onderlinge samenhang van alle wetsgebieden, waarin onze tijdelijke kosmos besloten is. [...]}

\textit{De wetsidee moet immers oorsprong en samenhang der wetskringen uitdrukken.}

[For me, the Law-Idea means leading back all differentiation of the divine laws (and under this are classified both natural laws as well as norms) to the eternal religious meaning of the law, the subjectedness to God’s sovereignty. To describe this, I always use the symbol of the refraction of light in the rainbow.

The Law-Idea is the Idea of the deepest origin and mutual coherence of all areas of the law, in which our temporal cosmos is enclosed. [...]}

The Law-Idea must always express origin and coherence of the law-spheres.]
I don't think that Hepp was right in seeing it as neo-Kantian, but a non-Calvinistic source like Baader is likely.

Dooyeweerd said in 1923 that he was not following the historical Calvin so much as the Calvinism that had since been worked out in neo-Calvinism of Kuyper.37 Dooyeweerd also said that it was not for nothing that Kuyper named his life and world view “neo-Calvinism.”38 In a 1956 article, Dooyeweerd said that he did not want his philosophy to be associated with a theological system that gave to Calvin an authority that a human should not deserve. See said that the term 'Calvinism,' already "dangerous in itself," can lead to a label for a definite group or sect (Verburg 344). He even tried to change the name of the Calvinistic Association for Philosophy [Vereniging voor Calvinistische Wijsbegeerte]. He was unsuccessful in that attempt. See Dooyeeerd’s 1964 Lecture to that Association.

Dooyeweerd's opposition to the term 'Calvinistic' also appears in the New Critique:

Therefore, I regret the fact that the philosophical association, which was formed in Holland [after the appearance of the Dutch edition of this work], chose the name “The Association for Calvinistic Philosophy.” But I will give due allowance for the fact that I, myself, in an earlier stage of my development, called my philosophy “Calvinistic.” (NC I, 524 ft. 1).

From his responses to the Curators, we can see that Dooyeweerd criticizes Calvin and Kuyper for maintaining some scholastic attitudes. He criticizes Calvin for accepting the idea that the conscience is rational. And he criticizes Kuyper for continuing to accept the scholastic distinction between body and soul in some of his works.

B. Kuyper

So what did Dooyeweerd value in Kuyper’s ideas? There were only a few works by Kuyper that Dooyeweerd really appreciated. In an article form 1971, Dooyeweerd mentions Kuyper's Stone Lectures, Kuyper's address on sphere sovereignty that he gave at the opening of the Free University, and works by Kuyper relating to “contemplation of

38 Verburg 230. The reference is to A. Kuyper, Souvereiniteit in eigen kring, 3rd ed. (Kampen, 1930). This was his lecture given at the opening of the Free University.
life and of a meditative nature” [van levenbeschouwelijke en meditatieve aard] The last category must almost certainly include Kuyper's *To Be Near Unto God.* Kuyper wrote this late in his life, after he had developed his ideas of sphere sovereignty.

1. The supratemporal heart

Although Dooyeweerd criticized some of Kuyper’s ideas in his article “Kuyper’s Wetenschapsleer,” he did not criticize Kuyper’s meditative and mystical ideas. On the contrary, Dooyeweerd continued to emphasize the importance of Kuyper’s rediscovery of the importance of the supratemporal heart.

This is the most important idea, and the one that Dooyeweerd says he thought would have been given more importance by Hepp. In his Responses, Dooyeweerd quotes extensively from Kuyper’s view regarding the supratemporal heart, especially from Kuyper’s *Stone Lectures.* But Vollenhoven did not accept the idea of the supratemporal heart.

2. Rebirth

Kuyper emphasized the idea of rebirth in the heart, an idea that Vollenhoven also rejected (See ‘Dialectic’). Dooyeweerd says that rebirth is “giving one’s self over to Christ that it can again be healed.” (Response2, 32) Dooyeweerd emphasizes the importance of this teaching:

> As Kuyper has clearly brought to light, it is only through the rebirth of the heart can it be truly directed again to God, its Origin. (Response2, 26)

This supratemporal rebirth in the heart leads to changes in our temporal lives. A few years later, Dooyeweerd wrote,

> Whenever we as Gereformeerde people believe that rebirth precedes conversion, then what is intended is certainly not a temporal succession in the sensory perceptible side of clock time, but much rather an order of

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time, which only has meaning in the boundary function of faith. 
\textit{(Tijdsprobleem, 174)}

In Response2, Dooyeweerd lists additional areas where he found support in Kuyper:

Whenever one regards the critical-realistic motives, or the Hegelian or scholastic-Aristotelian rudiments in Kuyper’s works as the really traditional Calvinistic-philosophical part [of Kuyper’s works], then the following powerful reformational ideas that he grasped [\textit{gedachttegrepen}] are more or less relegated to a lower level: the teaching of \textit{pistis}, the idea of the law, the doctrine of sovereignty in its own sphere, the powerful conception of the church as an organism, the radical antithesis in theoretical thought brought by the fall into sin, and idea of the rebirth of philosophical thought. (Response2, 10).

We have already looked at Kuyper’s view of the law and of rebirth. But from this quotation, we can identify the following additional points where Dooyeweerd found support in Kuyper:

3. The teaching of \textit{pistis} (faith). Dooyeweerd does not elaborate here. It is likely that it refers to Kuyper’s view that both believers and non-believers in Christ have faith, but that this faith is directed differently.\textsuperscript{42}

4. The doctrine of sovereignty in its own sphere. Dooyeweerd refers to Kuyper in support, although as already mentioned, Dooyeweerd acknowledges that the idea of individuality structures had not yet been worked out.

In this note it is sufficient to note that Dr. A. Kuyper in several of his works (e.g. his “Calvinism,” his discourse “Sovereignty in its own sphere,” “Our program,” etc.) expressly refers to a multiplicity and a distinction of law-spheres, respectively of areas of life \textit{with} their own life-law [\textit{levenswet}]. By this there is still not a sharp distinction between law-sphere and individuality structures of society; both are more or less mixed up with each other, whereby the criterion for sovereignty in its own sphere cannot be clearly given (Response2, 11)

5. The idea of the church as an organism. Dooyeweerd affirms this in his \textit{New Critique}:

In Christ, the root of the reborn creation, the transcendent fullness of individuality has been saved. The \textit{‘corpus Christianum’} in its radical religious sense is not a colourless conceptual abstraction without any

\textsuperscript{42} See Kuyper’s \textit{Enclopaedie}, excerpt online at [http://www.neocalvinisme.nl/ak/en2/aken20225.html], 220.
individuality. Rather it is, according to the striking metaphor used by St. Paul, a religious organism in which the individuality of its members is ultimately revealed in all its fullness and splendour. Individuality, in other words, is rooted in the religious centre of our temporal world: all temporal individuality can only be an expression of the fullness of individuality inherent in this centre. However obfuscated by sin, it springs from the religious root. (NC II, 418).

6. The radical antithesis. As I have shown in ‘Dialectic,’ Dooyeweerd regards the antithesis as a line running through each of our hearts (NC I, 524). Vollenhoven saw the antithesis more like Kuyper, between different groups of people.

VI. Anhypostatos

Hepp’s concern here was about a statement in Vollenhoven’s 1933 book Calvinisme:

…het Woord, Dat zich op geheel eenige wijze verbond met Hem, die ontangen uit den Heilgen Geest en geboren uit de maagd Maria, de tweede Adam is.

[…the Word, which in a wholly unique way was bound with Him, who was the second Adam, and who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary].

It will probably surprise many readers to see what a big issue this was for Hepp. The problem for him was the interpretation of the two natures of Christ. Were there two persons? Only one person with an impersonal nature? The doctrine of anhypostatos says that Christ had only an impersonal nature. In other words, His human nature was not a person. This is what Hepp was defending. Stellingwerff points out that Kuyper had also accepted the doctrine, and had made the statement that at the birth of Christ, the number of humans was not increased by one (Stellingwerff, 132, referring to Kuyper’s dictated Dogmatiek).

Much of Vollenhoven’s Response is taken up with a response to this issue. He did not satisfy the Curators. In 1939, the issue was still going on. In June 1939, Vollenhoven made the following clarification to the Curators:

De zg. dichotomie wordt wel degelijk door mij aanvaard, maar ik meen, dat ze slechts ten vole kan worden gevat, wanneer ze religieus is gefundeerd. En ook het ‘in eenigheid des persoons’ belijd ik van harte; mijn critiek ten dezen heeft slechts betrekking op de wijze, waarop de gesteldheid der menschelijke natuur van den Middelaar sometijds wordt omschreven. (Stellingwerff, 146)
The so-called dichotomy [between the two natures] is really and truly accepted by me, but I believe that it can only be understood in its full meaning, when it is religiously founded. And I also confess in my heart the “unity of persons”; my critique of this only relates to the way in which the human nature of the Mediator is sometimes described.

The curators still found this unsatisfactory. The Curators asked for a further explanation.

In further response, Vollenhoven also wrote his article “Anhypostatos?” in 1940. The issue had still not gone away! In that article, Vollenhoven said that the issue was not the “the union of two natures” as an act of God [the *henosis*], nor was it the question of the resulting union “in one person” (the *henotès*). The problem was the description of the human nature taken on by the Son of God. In particular, the issue was whether this human nature could be described by the terms “impersonal” and “anhypostatic.”

Vollenhoven says that these terms appear neither in Scripture nor in the Confessions.

Vollenhoven reviews the history of the Church Councils, showing that the word “anhypostasis” did not have a favourable meaning. Vollenhoven says that there are ten different meanings of the word, one of them being “insubstantial.”

He says that whether the human nature of Christ was personal or impersonal is a false dilemma. He says it is not a true dilemma, because a true dilemma must have only two possibilities. But there is a third possibility— that of *enhypostasis*. The doctrine of *enhypostasis* says that the natures are neither *anhypostatic* nor *hypostatic*. According to this idea, we can never speak of Christ’s human nature in isolation from this nature being united with his also being the Son of God. To try to separate it is an abstraction. This abstraction will lead to the Nestorian position that there were two Persons in Christ. The orthodox position is that there is only one Person.

And at the request of the Curators, Vollenhoven gives a clarification of the statement that he had made so many years before:

Naar aanleiding van Uw vraag, of ik bereid ben de uitdrukking voorkomende op pag. 47 van mijn *Het Calvinisme en de reformatie van de wijsbegeerte*, luidende: "Het Woord, dat Zich op geheel enige wijze

verbond met hem, die, ontvangen uit de Heiligen Geest en geboren uit de maagd Maria, de tweede Adam is..." in te trekken als zijnde in strijd met de Nederlandse Geloofsbelijdenis, verklaar ik gaarne, dat ik bij nader inzien die uitdrukking allerminst gelukkig geredigeerd vind en toestemmen moet, dat zij, hoezeer ook tegen mijn bedoeling, gegronde aanleiding geeft tot het bezwaar van strijd met de Blijdenis; terwijl ik openhartig verklaar, dat ik geheel en van ganser harte die Blijdenis onderschrijf en dus vanzelf in geen enkel opzicht daarvan wens af te wijken. Mitsdien verklaar ik de gewraakte uitdrukking terug te nemen en er voor zorg te zullen dragen, dat zij in een voorgenomen tweede druk van zijn [sic] vermeld geschrift niet meer zal voorkomen.

[In response to your question, whether I am ready to retract the following statement on page 47 of my book Het Calvinisme en de reformatie van de wijsbegeerte: “The Word, which in a wholly unique way was bound with Him, who was the second Adam, and who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary,” as being in conflict with the Dutch Confession of Faith, I willingly declare, that on further reflection I do not find the statement to be at all satisfactorily phrased, and I must agree that the statement, although not intended to me, provides good grounds the objection that it is in conflict with the Confession. And I openly state that I whole-heartedly subscribe to the whole of that Confession and therefore do not myself want to deviate from it in any single way. I therefore declare that I am withdrawing the challenged statement, and will take care to ensure that it will not appear again in the proposed second edition of my book that has been mentioned.]

Enhypostasis and reciprocity still does not answer the question whether Christ’s human nature will always be his nature, or whether He has a glorified nature that is somehow different. It appears to be Vollenhoven’s view that Christ will always be united to his temporal nature.

In the Mediator we distinguish between the Son of God and our covenant-head, the man Jesus Christ, who since the incarnation continually remain united (“Significance of Calvinism,” 32): This appears to be similar to the position that we saw was held by Janse, rejecting a spiritual body, and emphasizing that even for believers, the resurrection is of “this body” that we can pinch between our fingers.

Dooyeweerd does not say much about the issue except to turn it around and make Hepp seem the one who is advancing a strange doctrine:

…his [Hepp’s] idea of the three Persons in the Divine Being, his idea of the universal human nature of Christ and of the denial of its individuality
as being a “humiliation” of this nature, “new ideas” [noviteiten] over against which the question of whether they remain in the line of reformed thought is, in my opinion, more permissible than with respect to the Calvinistic Law-Idea developed by me (Response2, 11).

But I believe that Dooyeweerd in fact found assistance in Vollenhoven’s view of enhypostatos, that it was not a question of either/or, but that both natures were reciprocally related. To be a person is to have a nature. And it is quite possible that this idea of reciprocal enhypostatos is the basis for Dooyeweerd’s emphasis on our experience of enstasis in naïve experience.\(^4\) It is unclear from where he obtained that term. He sometimes uses it in relation to ‘systasis,’ a term that is also mentioned by Vollenhoven from the writings of the Church fathers.\(^5\) It is possible that Dooyeweerd uses ‘enstasis’ to refer to the reciprocity of supratemporal selfhood and temporal mantle of functions, and that he uses ‘systasis’ more for only the temporal coherence (which is transcended by the supratemporal selfhood). This temporal systasis is disrupted by our theory, where the aspects are split apart into a dis-stasis. Then our theoretical thought, through our intuition, tries to reach a synthesis of our theoretical concepts with the enstatic unity of our selfhood. More study is needed on this important question.

\(^4\) Note: I am not suggesting that our nature as supratemporal and temporal beings is the same as Christ’s eternal nature and His incarnatin. Vollenhoven strongly reacted against that suggestion in his 1964 Lecture to the Association, online at [http://www.members.shaw.ca/hermandooyeweerd/1964Lecture.html]. But Dooyeweerd does relate the revelation of our supratemporal selfhood in our temporal body to our being created in the image of God. So analogically, the idea of enhypostasis may also be helpful to understanding our enstatic relation of supratemporal and temporal.

\(^5\) For example, Vollenhoven cites Appollinarius in his article: “The Significance of Calvinism for the Reformation of Philosophy.” Evangelical Quarterly 3 (1931), 87-103; 4 (1932) 128-160; 398-427

And his chief concern is to maintain this sovereignty of the higher in every man [...].In the doctrine concerning the Saviour, the problem for him is stated thus: “Can these two sovereign wills work together in the one Mediator?” Coming to this he seeks refuge in a negative answer: the human sovereign fell out to make room for the divine Logos, which in turn together with the remaining part of the systase (that is, after the human sovereign had fallen out of the human “systase”) formed that which he had already called “one physis.” (at 149)